

MAHRAGAN EL KERAZA 2024









The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Ps 27:1





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WHOM SHALL I FEAR? "PS 27:1"

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION

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Hello Friends.

This year, we will learn about evidence that proves the Divinity of Christ, so that we can get to know Him more. The theme of our Mahragan this year is:





1- Evidence for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ: In this lesson, we

will learn about evidence that proves the Divinity of Christ, so that we can get to know Him more - **"The Lord Our God"**

2– St. John the Beloved: In this lesson, we will learn the meaning of discipleship to the commandments and teachings of our God, so that we may live in His Light - **"The Lord is the Light to Our Path."**

3– Pope Dioscorus I: In this lesson, we will learn the importance of keeping steadfast in the upright faith, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Mystery of Salvation - **"The Mystery of Our Salvation."**

4– King Jehoshaphat: In this lesson we will learn the importance of prayers, through which, we receive power from our God for our protection as God is -"The Fortress for Our Lives."

5– The Beloved Prophet Daniel: In this lesson we will learn that everyone who loves our Lord always lives in peace, whatever the circumstances are, because the Lord makes us feel - "His Peace in Our Distress"





Agion: Due to our great passion for software, I agreed with my friends Agape, Rashi, and Bishoy to participate in the engineering

and innovations competition at the Evangelism Festival this year. This year's theme is "The Lord is my light and my salvation" (Psalm 27: 1). When we told Uncle John, the servant responsible for the competition in our church, about our desire to participate, he was very happy. His encouragement was a major incentive for us to start! Uncle John's encouragement went beyond just words; He booked tickets for us to spend a full day in the "City of Lights." The City was designed using "artificial intelligence" to help us build up experience. Un-

cle John asked us to write down a spiritual benefit from every place we

visited. We met up and started head-

Uncle John: Good morning, Friends!



Agion: Good morning, Uncle John! We've been eager to visit the City of Lights. Agape and I have been reading a lot about AI in preparation for our visit.

Bishoy: So, what did you guys learn?

Agape: Artificial intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science which makes machines that can carry out tasks which require thinking in a human way. It is like making machines that have electronic minds. AI depends on programming to improve performance in carrying out various tasks such as image recognition, language translation, decision-making, etc. It's like having a robot or smart device that learns how to understand and do things without assistance. AI can help us work to solve problems or improve our performance on certain tasks.

Uncle John: You are right! God is the One Who created man and distinguished him with a reasoning mind. So God created man with a mind, and man used the mind God gave him to create AI.

Bishoy: What would you think if we searched the internet for a compar-

ison between the attributes of God, the attributes of man, and the attributes of AI?

The Search Result: 1- God's attributes are considered unique and individual



2-Human attributes are limited and variable 3 - Al's attributes depend on programming and the machine's capabilities; making them specifically useful for technical tasks.

Agion: What do you think if we investigated this question: Is there a human being who possesses the attributes of God?

Bishoy: What I understood from this Internet Search Result is that God's attributes seem to come in two types:

- 1) Attributes that humans can also possess
- 2) Attributes that are unique to God alone

Rashi: Uncle John, would you please give us more evidence that proves the Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ? **Uncle John:** Sure let's begin our trip, and I will tell you on the way to the City of Lights!





1) Attributes Humans can also posses:

These attributes include wisdom, strength, knowledge, love, tolerance, mercy, giving, beauty, and others. For example, God is characterized by love, but there are also many people who are characterized by love. But for God, love is unlimited, for He is all-loving. As for humans, however, love is limited.

2) Attributes Unique to God Alone

Among these attributes are God the Almighty (Pantocrator), God the Unlimited, God the Creator, and God the Unchangeable. This point is one of the many pieces of evidence which proves the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.



Evidence for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ Uncle John: First, we must understand the basis of the Christian faith, and then we will understand who Jesus Christ is. As Christians, we believe in the Holy Trinity, the unity of three Persons:

The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit – One God. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God – not three gods, but One. God has revealed to us in the Old Testament and the New Testament that He is one God, the unity of three Persons. It is clear in many verses. For example:

> [#]For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one" (1 John 5:7)

Memory Verse



The Lord our God, the LORD is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4, Mark 12:29)

Memory Verse

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Therefore, we understand that Hypostasis of the Father = Hypostasis of the Son (the Word) = Hypostasis of the Holy Spirit. There is no greater or lesser Hypostasis. They are all equal, have the same one divine nature, and have one essence.

In the Creed we say: **"We believe in one God, God the Father, the Pantocrator... We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages... Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-Giver, Who proceeds from the Father."** This is our belief in the Holy Trinity. Therefore, Jesus Christ is God. He is one of the three hypostases. He is the hypostasis of the Son, the Word. There is a lot of evidence for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1) Jesus Christ is the One in whom the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled. God has prepared our minds, through prophecies and some characters who lived in the Old Testament who symbolized the Lord Christ, for the incarnation of the Lord Christ, His birth from a



virgin, His crucifixion, His death, His redemption, His resurrection and His Ascension into the heavens. Many symbols, sacrifices, and rituals were given to prepare us to understand the meaning of the incarnation

> of the Lord Jesus for our redemption, which took place in the New Testament. Let's learn about some of these prophecies:

Prophecies about His birth from a virgin:

"Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,

and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:

14). This prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 1: 23: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"



Prophecies about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ:

"For dogs have surrounded Me; The congrega-

tion of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet" (Psalm 22: 16). This prophecy was fulfilled in Luke 23: 33: "And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left."

In order to get to know God, we must know how God reveals Himself.

Uncle John: Let us open our Holy Book to Exodus 3: 1-14. We are told that Moses the Prophet saw a bush of thistle growing in the desert, burning with fire but not being consumed. From the bush, God spoke to Moses saying, "Come, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and you shall bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." Because Moses felt his own weakness, he tried to avoid taking this responsibility. "Then Moses said to God, Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, What is His name, what shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3: 13-14).

Rashi: What is the meaning of the verse? **Uncle John:** I AM the origin of existence. God user this expression for Himself. No one may use it except God because it is a theological expression that belongs only to God. **"I AM"** describes His non-temporal character. So "I AM" in the past,



past, present, and in the future, God. In order for Jesus Christ to reveal His Divinity to us, He used this expression (I AM) in many situations in the New Testament. For example, Jesus said: **"Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am" (John 8: 58).** This is the same expression that God used when He spoke to Moses from the bush. Upon hearing these words, the Jews had a very severe reaction. They took up stones to stone our Lord Jesus because they understood

that He was saying He was God.

Christ is God because He declared and said about Himself: "I AM." This is a theological expression that concerns God only. All the attributes that are unique to God alone also apply to Jesus Christ:

God is unlimited, God is the Creator, God is unchangeable, God is all-knowing, God is Almighty (Pantocrator). Jesus revealed to us that He is God, as He said: "I AM" = Infinite = used for God alone.

God is Unlimited:

 Unlimited in Place: God's presence fills the heavens and the earth and every place. "Do I not fill heaven and earth? Says the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:24).
 Jesus announced that He is present everywhere as He said, "For where two or three are



gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

2) Unlimited in Time: "Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (Psalm 90:2). Jesus announced that He is eternal and everlasting:
a) He does not have a beginning (eternal) --> "Most assuredly I

say to you, before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58).

b) He does not have an end (everlasting) --> "I am with you al-ways, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

God is the Creator:

The meaning of this attribute is that our Lord is the only Creator who created everything. The word "created" means He created everything out of nothing - this is unique to God alone who can create things out of nothing. God being a "creator" is different than

being an inventor. Mankind can invent and make things using the resources available to him. Man did not invent anything out of nothing but, rather, he uses the material ALREADY created by God in order to invent other things. However, we know that **"In the beginning God created the**

heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). This



is the same kind of creation we saw when Jesus created eyes for the man who was born blind (John 9). In this story, Jesus created eyes out of the dust of the ground --> just like Adam was created from the dust of the ground in Genesis 2:7.





Agion: If God created everything, then who created God??

God is Eternal, He was not created:

Uncle John: God exists by Himself; He was not created by anyone. Let me give you an example to help you understand. A train is made up of a

group of individual cars that pulls the car behind it as it is pulled by the car in front of it. So, who moves the first car in the group that is pulling the rest of the cars? No one! It is the source of the movement! This is just as St. John assured



us in his gospel saying, "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has gratnted the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26).



God is Unchangeable:

We know that God does not ever change. He doesn't change His attributes, His Words, His Promises, or His love for us as the verse reminds us: **"For I, the Lord, do not change" (Malachi 3:6)**. This resembles

Christ as our teacher St. Paul the Apostle said in his letter

to the Hebrews, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

God is All-Knowing (omniscience):

Only God knows everything - all the things

that have



happened and all the things that
will happen. He has known them all since
eternity as He says, "I, the Lord, search the
heart, I test the mind" (Jeremiah 17:10).
This resembles Christ as we saw during His
conversation with the Samaritan Woman
when He knew all about her past life (John

4).

God is Almighty (omnipotence):

God alone has absolute authority over everything and there is nothing that is impossible for Him. As the Bible tells us, "Whatever the Lord wills, He has



done in the heavens and in the earth" (Psalm 135:6). We saw the same authority present in Jesus as He did all the works of God:

- 1) His authority over nature -> miracle of walking on the water
- 2) His authority over plants -> miracle of the Fig Tree
- 3) His authority over animals -> miracle of catching abundant fish
- 4) His authority over demons -> miracle of casting out unclean spirits
- 5) His authority over substances -> miracle of turning water to wine at Cana of Galilee
- 6) His authority over angels -> angels came and ministered to Jesus after the temptation on the mount

7) His authority over mankind -> miracles of raising the dead Agion: I have a question... the saints and apostolic fathers also performed miracles. Is there a difference between the miracles of Jesus Christ and the miracles done by the apostolic fathers/saints?

Memory Verse

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life" (John 3:36)

Agape: Of course! Jesus performed all these miracles by His OWN power because HE IS God! However, the saints all perform miracles through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:1-16). He is the One who gave the saints the power to do miracles as He commanded them to, **"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).**

Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is GOD because all the attributes that are unique to God alone apply to Him, and because He did all the works of God. Let us strongly defend our faith in the divinity of our Lord Jesus and make sure nobody makes us doubt. We must be ready to respond to nonbelievers with all the proofs and verses from the Holy Bible that show how our Lord Jesus Christ is really God manifest in the flesh. He is the second Hypostasis/Person of the Holy Trinity (the Word), the Son of God, equal to the Father in essence. Our Lord Jesus declared Himself as God through His attributes, actions (miracles), and testimony. God in the Old Testament is our Lord Jesus in the New Testament for "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). **Rashi:** I wrote everything down that you said and will continue researching these points.

Uncle John: Great, we have arrived!





Uncle John: The City of Lights is divided into streets, and each street has a distinctive feature. In order to exit a street, we must solve some questions so that the street gate will open for us. At the end we are required to obtain a

password. It will teach us how to be children of light.

Agion: It is clear that this will be an amazing journey. Let's go! Rashi: Look! The door is opening. Let's go in quickly.

Agape: What is that flying in the sky?

Uncle John: It's a hologram. This is a type of graphic technology that creates three-dimensional images. It makes the images appear as if they are real. The hologram appears as three-dimensional light radiation in the air, and it does not require special glasses for viewing. It relies on optical recording technology in a special way. This allows the image to appear realistically, as if it is floating in the air, so we see the image clearly from all angles. Holograms are used in fields such as entertainment, science, and education. They can also be used to create 3D displays in museums. **Agion:** Does this mean that we can choose any character, even one that is not present with us on Earth, and it can be projected?



Uncle John: Through light, a three-dimensional image forms any character you would like to see. Who would you like to see, Agion?
Agion: Saint John the Beloved.
Everyone: Why him in particular?
Agion: I love his story very much. He was a light for everyone around him, and there is a part of his life that I would like to ask him about.
Agape: Can you tell us about him first so that we know his story and can make sure that the hologram information is accurate?
Rashi: What do you want to ask him about?
Agion: I will tell you.





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Saint John, whose father's name was Zebedee, had a brother named James. John and James worked as fishermen. Their mother was a virtuous woman who followed and served the Lord Jesus



St. John the

Beloved

(Matt. 27: 55-56). Saint John was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist. He heard the testimony of Saint John the Baptist about the Lord Jesus, when he said, "He is the Son of God" (John 1: 34). One day while he was fishing with his brother James, the Lord

Jesus passed by them: "So He called them" (Matt. 4: 21) and they left everything and followed Him. John and James were among the first 12 disciples to follow the Lord Jesus.

Saint John remained with the Lord Jesus, listening to his teachings,

memorizing them, and taking care of their implementation. He saw many miracles that the



Lord performed, including some that only three of the disciples saw. For example, Saint John, along with his brother Saint James and Saint Peter, witnessed the miracle of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1-13). He also witnessed the miracle of raising Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5: 21-37).

was lucky because he heard and was taught by the Lord Jesus, and thus he was able to be filled with the light of knowing the Lord Jesus more and more.

Agion: Saint John was also one of the Lord's closest disciples, especially

when everyone abandoned him:



1- He was the only one who was with the Lord Christ during his trial and until His death on the cross.

There, Jesus called him and handed him His mother, the Virgin Mary.



Jesus said to him, **"Behold your mother,"** and then He said to the Virgin, **"Here is your son."** Saint John then took her and she lived with him **(John 19: 25-28).**

2- He also went to confirm the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus with Saint Peter early at dawn on Resurrection Sunday. He outran Peter to

the tomb and bent down and
saw the shrouds lying there.
However, he did not enter
(John 20: 1-10).
3- He was the only one of

the disciples who was able to recognize Jesus Christ during His appearance after the Res-



urrection on the Sea of Tiberias, and he said to Saint Peter: "It is the



Lord" (John 21: 7).

Agape: Saint John's love for the Lord Jesus was very great. Agion: Indeed. After the ascension of the Lord and the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples and apostles,

they began to preach to people and talk to them about our Lord. Saint John preached in many places, and he began his preaching in Jerusalem and the areas close to it. He spoke to people and taught them all the teachings that he received from the Lord with all honesty. For example:

1) In the city of Samaria, he and Saint Peter were laying their hands

on the people to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts

8:14-17).

2) He preached with Saint Peter after the miracle of healing the cripple at the temple's gate, which is called Beautiful (Acts 3 - 4).

3) He bore witness to the Lord Jesus before the Sanhedrin (the highest court in Israel) (Acts 4).







"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you" (1 Corinthians 11: 23).

Memory Verse

He lived in the city of Ephesus and from there he preached to many cities in Asia Minor.

During his preaching, Saint John encountered many difficulties and persecutions and **he was arrested during the rule of Emperor Domitian**,



81-96 AD and sent to Rome in chains. There, he suffered many torments, and the emperor ordered him to be **exiled to the island of Patmos located southwest of Ephesus**. He remained in exile there for about **a year and a half**,

during which he **wrote the** Book of Reve-

lation under the guidance of the Holy
Spirit (around 96 AD). Later, the emperor released him and he returned to
Ephesus to continue his preaching.
Saint John was a light that attracted



everyone around him to our Lord Jesus Christ. He was a living example of **a life of holiness.** He loved sinners and sought to bring them back to the Lord. One time he helped the **leader of a gang to embrace the Lord Jesus.**

Bishoy: What did he do?

Agion: There was a young thief who did not believe in the Lord Jesus. Saint John preached to him, so he believed in the Lord and repented. Saint John then handed the young man over to the bishop of the city and instructed the bishop to take care of him. Years passed, and the

young man returned to his sins and became the leader of a gang. When Saint John returned and asked the bishop about the young man, he learned that the man had returned (to his old sins. Saint John became very sad, so he rode his donkey and began to search for him in the



mountains. The young man recognized Saint John and escaped, but Saint John, despite his old age, chased him while asking him to have mercy on his old age and stop. The young man actually stopped, and Saint John spoke and preached to him. The young man offered true re-



pentance and returned to the life of light with our Lord again. Agape: Saint John's love is very great, for all people.

Agion: Indeed. The one commandment he spoke about the most in his sermons, letters, Gospel, and all his writings was **love**. He preached about it so much that when he became an old man, with the people carrying him to the church, he commanded them saying: **"My children**, **love one another. It is the most important commandment that God has taught us."** That is why Saint John was called the Apostle of Love. Our church also calls him **"John the Beloved."**

- Five books in the New Testament were written by Saint John under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: the Gospel of John, three epistles bearing his name, and the Book of Revelation.

- He departed in the year 100 AD. He was the only one of the disciples who was not martyred.

Rashi: Because Saint John wrote the Gospel of John, he is also known as **John the Evangelist.**

Agion: And he is the one who wrote the Book of Revelation, so he is called John the Beholder. He is the one whose sermons, epistles, and writings were filled with love. The Bible says about him: "The disciple whom Jesus loved." Therefore, he is also known as John the Beloved. Saint John reached the true light because he lived with the Lord Jesus,

followed His teachings, and was discipled by Him, thus fulfilling His commandment.

> **"I am** the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8: 12).

Memory Verse

Agape: It is indeed a very beautiful story. You are right to wish to see Saint John the Beloved. But what part of his life did you want to see on the hologram?

Agion: I wanted him to tell us about what he saw on the island of Patmos when he wrote the Book of Revelation. Did he see the heavens?

The group actually entered the hologram room and a three-dimensional image of Saint John appeared. He began to speak to the children and to tell his story. He told them about what he saw and wrote in the Book of Revelation, and at the end of his speech the hologram image told them that because we are the children of God. God has given us some of His attributes and commanded us, saying: **"You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5: 14).** This means that everyone who believes in Him, practices the sacraments of our Church, and lives by





all the commandments of our Lord, must be a light to the world. We must be role models for everyone around us. Everyone who sees us should glorify the name of God, as His commandment to us says: **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).** The life of discipleship, persisting in the teachings and commandments of the Lord, always makes us children of the light.

After this sentence, the hologram went off and the group headed to the exit gate. It had a large screen on it with a quiz that had to be answered in order to visit the next place. They started solving the questions to find the first password.





The children left the first street in the City of Lights and began to move towards the second street. There they saw the sky and the earth consisting of screens. The strange thing was that there was a tree and a plant in the sky. There were birds, clouds, and stars on the earth. They heard a voice asking

them to try to rearrange the misplaced items to their natural place; however, they had to move quickly as they were being timed. The friends returned everything back to its original place, as created by God.

Agion: The place became much more beautiful. Indeed, it is not good

to change the order of creation that our Lord created.

Uncle John: There are constants that our Lord gave to us, and we can-



not change them. Because God does not change, everything that He has handed over to us does not change.



Agape: Just like our faith. It cannot be changed.

Bishoy: Everything around us changes.

Agape: God does not change, and our belief in God does not change. It cannot be changed. That is why the Church, throughout the years, has rejected and confronted anyone who has tried to change the faith that we have received.

Rashi: You are right, Agape. I remember the research we did last year about heroes of the faith in which we talked about the hero of Orthodoxy.

Agape: Yes, of course. Agion and Bishoy, can you tell us about him? Uncle John: I think your research was wonderful. Can you talk to us about it on our way to the next street?

Agape: We began the research with very important questions:

- 1) Who did the Virgin give birth to?
- 2) Was He only divine?
- 3) Or just a human?
- 4) Or did she give birth to a god and a human?
- 5) Or was He God incarnate?



Pope Dioscorus The Champion of Orthodoxy 7th of Toot 1 It is impossible that she gave birth to just a god, because she gave birth to a child that everyone saw. She could not have given birth to just a human being, because in the angel's announcement to the

Virgin, it was said to her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1: 35).



Also, the Virgin did not give birth to

a human being AND to a god; otherwise she would have had two sons: one a god, the other a human. Therefore, she gave birth to God, the incarnate Word, who is able to redeem humanity.

This is our belief: In the fullness of time, meaning **the time in which our Lord prepared the world to receive the Savior**, God's promise to man, that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, was



fulfilled. "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will crush your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3: 15). This promise means that God dwelt in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He took a complete body from her and thus became a sinless human being (incarnation). His divinity was unit-



ed with His humanity without mixing, blending, or changing. Likewise, His divinity was not separated from His humanity for a single moment nor the blink of an eye. We believe in one nature of the Lord Christ, a complete human being united with complete divin-

ity, without mixing, blending, or change. They were not separated for a single moment nor the blink of an eye. That is, **"one nature for God, the incarnate Word, from two natures after the union."** Therefore, our Virgin mother gave birth to the Incarnate God, the Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ, and this faith is necessary and essential for redemption. **Agion:** Why is this faith essential to our redemption?

Rashi: Because **there are conditions for the Redeemer** who must redeem a person from his sin. I will explain the story to you from the beginning: When the first man (Adam) sinned, he obeyed the words of the serpent (Satan), he broke the commandment of our Lord, and ate from the tree which God had told him not to eat. He fell into sin, and all humanity fell with him

because we were all in Adam. The punishment for this sin is upon all humans born from him, until the last human being who will be born on earth **(Romans 5: 12).** Thus, man is the heir of Adam's sin, and heir to the sentence of death and the corruption of nature that resulted from sin. In order for the life that we lost to be restored to us again, and for the sentence of death to be lifted from

us, **our nature needs to be renewed.** *Our Lord, out of His great love, gave us the first sacred promise:* **that the seed of the woman would crush the**

head of the serpent (Genesis 3: 15). This meant that the Lord Jesus would come as a Redeemer who would die in man's place and redeem us from death. As a result, divine justice would be achieved through Him. Therefore, God our Redeemer was incarnated. He is the only One who meets the following condi-

tions for a Redeemer.

1- Human like us, but without sin

--> Our Lord descended to our earth and was born of our Virgin mother. He took on a human body, but without sin.

2- He could die --> Therefore, He was crucified by His own will and



died in our place to redeem us. His death fulfilled divine justice, so the sentence of death was lifted from us.



3- Stronger than death --> He was buried in the grave; but because He is God, He is stronger than death. He defeated death, and after 3 days He raised Himself from the dead.

4- Creator --> Because He is God the Creator, His resurrec-



tion gave us eternal life and renewed our nature, which had been corrupted by sin.

5- Unlimited --> Because He is the Unlimited God, His blood is sufficient to redeem all of humanity, from Adam to the last human being.

Agion: Now I understand the importance of the Redeemer's divinity. This faith is necessary and essential for redemption.

Agape: But there are those who tried to question, oppose and change this upright faith. They tried to change the teachings of our fathers the apostles, but the faithful fathers of our Church stood their ground with all courage and strength to preserve the teachings of our Church.
Among these fathers is Saint Pope Dioscorus, who our Church calls the Great Champion of Orthodoxy:

- Our great saint was **born in Alexandria** in a Coptic family. He studied the Greek language at the Alexandria Theological School.



Pope Cyril I, the 24th Patriarch, chose him to be his disciple.

- When Pope Cyril departed, it was agreed that Dioscorus would be the next Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church. After that,



Pope Dioscorus began his struggle in defending the upright faith.

Rashi: In the days of Pope Dioscorus, Leo, the Bishop of the city of Rome, tried to convince the young Emperor Theodosius of his false ideas. He said that Christ had two

natures: His human nature showed through His pain and fatigue, and His divine nature showed through His glory and miracles. He sent letters to Emperor Theodosius containing this false teaching. He called it "The Tome of Leo" (the word "Tome" means message), but he was unable to influence the emperor, who was convinced of the correct teachings of our Church.

Rashi: After the death of Emperor Theodosius, there was no heir to the



throne except his sister, Pulcheria, who married Commander Marcion, the head of the army. She handed the leadership of the country's affairs over to him. Pulcheria and Marcion agreed with Leo's false ideas, so they helped him. The Bish-



op of Rome published his corrupt teaching regarding the two natures of God. They tried to influence Pope Dioscorus to accept this wrong teaching, but the Pope refused. Emperor Marcion decided to hold a council in the city of Chalcedon, and Leo collected many signatures on his tome and sent it with the Roman delegates to the council.

Bishoy: Leo wanted to spread his false teaching, which contradicts the straight teaching of our Church! But what did Pope Dioscorus do to oppose this incorrect teaching?

Agape: Pope Dioscorus attended the Council of Chalcedon in the year **451 AD.** There he found that Leo, Bishop of Rome, had taught the people that **Christ had two natures and two wills after the union**. Therefore, Pope Dioscorus began to explain to them the errors of this statement. He asked them the following question: **"When Christ was invited**

to the wedding in Cana of Galilee, was He invited as a human being or a god?" They answered, "a human being." He then asked: "And when He transformed the wine, was it by divinity or by humanity? Christ is One, He is the One who was invited to the wedding as a human being, and He is the One who transformed water into wine as God. He was not separated in His deeds." Pope Dioscorus quoted Pope Cyril I when

he said, "The union of the word of God with the body is like the union of the soul with the body and like the union of fire with iron; even if they are of two different natures, they become one by their union."

- Many were convinced



by the words of Saint Pope Dioscorus, and none of those gathered in the council were able to resist him. They informed **King Marcion** and **Queen Pulcheria** that none had disobeyed their order except Dioscorus, the patriarch of the city of Alexandria. They then brought him, and the bishops gathered at the council and continued discussing and debating until the end of the day. Marcion **tried to force**



Pope Dioscorus to sign The Tome of Leo, but the Pope strongly refused

and adhered to the upright faith. - Queen Pulcheria then extended her hand and hit Pope Dioscorus on the mouth. He lost two molars. She ordered the men to pluck the hairs of his beard, and they did as she ordered them. The



Pope took the two molars along with the

hairs of his beard and sent them to his people in Alexandria with a message saying, **"This is the fruit of my struggle for faith."** As for the rest of the bishops, when they saw what happened to Pope Dioscorus, **they**

were afraid and signed The Tome of Leo, agreeing that Christ



has two different and separate natures.

Unfortunately, the council ended
by affirming two natures and two
wills for God, the incarnate Word.
This meant that there is a divine

nature and a human nature, and a divine will and

a human will. This contradicts the upright faith of our Coptic Orthodox Church, which believes **in one nature of God, the incarnate Word**,

which is fully divine and fully human, after the union.

- After that point, a **division occurred in the church**. Some churches accepted the wrong decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, including the **Church of Rome**. These churches are called the **Chalcedonian churches, and they believe in two natures and two wills of God**, the incarnate Word, after the union.



- As for our Coptic Church, it **rejected the Council of Chalcedon** and its decisions. Our Church preserves what we have received from our faithful fathers according to the teachings of the early church. Thus, **our Church became a non-Chalcedonian church, which believes in one nature of God after the union.** The other churches that rejected the Council of Chalcedon and its decisions are the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Armenian Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Tawahedo Church, the Eritrean Tawahedo Church, and the Indian Malayalam Church. When Pope Dioscorus learned what the council had concluded, **he sent for the tome, claiming that he wanted to sign it.** When he read it, he wrote on the bottom **excommunicating everyone who had signed** it, as well as everyone who deviated from the Orthodox faith. King Marcion became angry and ordered him to be exiled to the **Island of Gangra**. Pope Dios-



corus **stayed in exile for about five years,** enduring many persecutions, until he completed the struggle and departed in peace on the **7th of Toot in the year 457 AD on the island of Gangra.** May his prayers be with us. Amen.

Agion: Pope Dioscorus is a powerful hero. Indeed, he deserves to be named the **Champion of the Orthodox Faith** because he defended the upright faith.

Uncle John: Indeed, the word "Orthodox" is a Greek word meaning "correct belief." Therefore, our Church is called the Coptic Orthodox Church because it preserves the faith that we received from our saintly fathers.

Memory Verse

"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2: 2).



Bishoy: Hey, guys. Do you see the street over there? It is so dark! **Agion:** A dark street in the City of Lights? That's really strange! Let's check it out!

Agape: Do you see those loose wires over there?

Bishoy: Yes, it's true, this could be the reason for the darkness. But why

didn't anyone think of fixing it? **Rashi:** Look at the screen next to the wires. It says to connect the wires to the power source.

Agape: Is it possible that the matter is as





simple as that? The street could easily be lit. Why isn't anyone connecting it? It's so easy.

Uncle John: There is definitely a goal behind this topic. Look at the screen again. What does it say? *"If any electrical device is disconnected from its charging source, it will not work. Thus, if we stop praying, we will become like a device disconnected from its power source."*



idea to prayer.

Rashi: Look. There is a link for more information. Let's click the link.



Narrator: As soon as they clicked the link, they found screens everywhere and a documentary entitled "The Life of Prayer" started playing.

The Life of Prayer:

What is prayer? Many of our saintly fathers spoke about prayer. Here is what some of them have said:

- 1) Prayer is "the key to heaven" (Saint Augustine)
- 2) Prayer is "clinging to God in all moments of life" (Saint



Basil the Great)

3) Prayer is "a great weapon... a source and a foundation for countless blessings" (Saint John Chrysostom)

- Prayer is a **connection between us**

and God. Through it, we feel His presence with us and our presence with Him. It is a conversation with the One we love. Therefore, prayer is not just words that



we repeat without understanding. Rather, it is the **raising of our hearts and minds to God, speaking to Him with confidence** that He hears every word we say.



Because prayer is the most powerful weapon against the enemy, giving us strength from our Lord Jesus, the enemy of goodness tries to prevent us from praying.
But our Lord revealed to us the secret of victory over him when He said: "This kind can come out



by nothing but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9: 29).
One thing that indicates the importance of prayer is that the Lord Himself prayed. He did not need to pray, but He was teaching us to pray by

His example. We see Him praying in the following situations:

The miracle of the transfiguration – "And He went up into a mountain to pray, and as He prayed, the appearance of His face became changed, and His raiment became dazzling white" (Luke 9: 28-29).
 After Peter's mother-in-law was healed – "Very early in the morning, He arose and went out and went to a solitary place, and there He prayed" (Mark 1: 35).

3)Before the selection of the twelve disciples – "And in those days He went out to the mountain to pray, and spent the whole night in prayer to God" (Luke 6: 12). Therefore, the commandment of our Lord is this:



Now that we know the meaning of prayer and its power, as well as when we should pray, the last question is what we should say in our prayers. We have different types of prayers, including **personal prayers**



and memorized prayers:

In the Old Testament, the Psalms represented an important part of the memorized prayers, and the people used to repeat them. There were also fixed times for prayer. The seven prayers are a biblical teaching: "Seven times a day I praise

You, because of Your righteous judgments" (Psalm 119: 164).

In the New Testament, it is stated that, "Whenever you come together, each one of you has a psalm" (1 Corinthians 14: 26). The Lord Jesus and the disciples were committed to fixed times for prayer.
Also in the New Testament, His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, as John taught his disciples. He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come." Jesus confirmed the principle of memorized prayer with His

teaching.



"And we do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon You" (2 Chronicles 20:12)

- The Coptic Orthodox Church has arranged for us **seven prayers throughout the day, called the Agpeya prayers:** the First, Third, Sixth,

Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Midnight hours. Each prayer expresses a part of the life of Jesus Christ on earth.

- Agpeya prayers are not a substitute for personal prayers; instead, they teach us how to





talk to God. As His Holiness Pope Shenouda III said, "Agpeya prayers are a school of prayer that teach us how to pray."

The Agpeya allows us a chance to be with God

longer. It teaches us **persever**-

ance in prayer. For example, we repeat "Lord have mercy" 41 times. Finally, it teaches us the concept of constant prayer, as it occupies the day with prayers.

- Often, our personal prayers are just requests, and we forget many

other things. But the Agpeya prayers include all types of prayers that we must not neglect, including:

1) Thanksgiving: At the beginning of every prayer, we find the "Prayer of Thanksgiving" in which we thank



God for every condition.

2) Repentance: In every prayer we pray Psalm 50, saying "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy."

> 3) Praise and glorification: In many psalms as well as in the hymn of the angels, we say, "Let us praise with the angels."

4) Requests: Prayers for myself and others.

There are examples of people who experienced the power of a life of prayer. I will talk to you about one of them from the Holy Bible:

King Jehoshaphat was the **son of King Asa** and his mother's name was **Azubah**. He assumed the kingship after the death of his father and became the **fourth king of the Kingdom of Judah (the Southern Kingdom)**. The Kingdom of Israel was divided after Solomon, son of David, into a northern kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel, and a southern kingdom, the Kingdom of Judah. King Jehoshaphat assumed power when he was **35 years old**, and he ruled for **25 years**.

When Jehoshaphat became king, he began to organize the affairs of the





kingdom in a way that pleased God. He had great accomplishments, including the following: 1) He organized the

affairs of the kingdom

and its relationship with surrounding countries and made an army in all

the cities (2 Chronicles 17: 2).

2) He demolished all the high places and the groves and did not worship Baal. He followed the ways of his father David (2 Chronicles 17:

3-6). The high places and groves were places where idols were worshiped. Baal was the god of fertility among the Canaanites, and the people of Israel had begun to worship him.



3) He chose rulers for the country (judges) and sent them with the



Levites (helpers to the priests) to teach the people the religious law and the right way to worship the Lord God (2 Chronicles 17: 7-9).

King Jehoshaphat was
 a good king who ruled



his country according to the commandments of our

Lord. He took care of all the affairs of his country. He was always pray-

ing and seeking the face of our Lord in all the steps of his life. One day, a very large army of the children of Moab and the children of Ammon

and Mount Seir rose against King Jehoshaphat. Like any king, he pre-

pared his army and military equipment. plied his army, but with a new type of war weapon. Jehoshaphat did two important things:

1- He set his face to seek the Lord
2- He called for a fast in all the Kingdom of Judah

He gathered all the people and





prayed. At the end of his prayer, he Do you remember when I told you that he used a new type of war weapon? I was referring to **fasting and prayer.** He felt that he needed the Lord's help to protect him from his enemies. And surely, our Lord responded to the fasting and prayer.

- There was a prophet with Jehoshaphat whose name was **Jahaz-**



iel, the son of Zechariah the Prophet. He stood in

the midst of the people of Judah and said, "Do not be afraid nor dis-

mayed because of this great multitude, for the

battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow, go down against them. You will not need to fight in this battle. Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper''' (2 Chronicles 20: 20). Later, the





king did something very strange. He **appointed people to sing to the Lord**, to praise the beauty of holiness. They went out before the army saying: **"Praise the Lord, For His mercy endures forever" (2 Chronicles 20: 21).**

Agion: That's odd! He sent people to sing praises before the warriors? The documentary continued to explain that singing in front of the warriors was the war weapon of praise, joy, and thanksgiving. And the strangest thing was that they praised and gave thanks before they were even victorious. This was evidence of their great trust in our Lord. And now you will be even more surprised to learn that when they first began praising God, the Lord set traps against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, so that they were confused. Instead of fighting Jehoshaphat, they fought each other. The children of Ammon and Moab rose up on Mount Seir and destroyed each other.

This meant that Jehoshaphat defeated his

enemies without even fighting, because the children of God sought our Lord and trusted in His promises to them. After



that they returned to Jerusalem, their country, and they were happy and thanked the Lord who fought for them.

After the documentary ended, the friends began to complete the activity. Join them by completing the activity in your working and match each Agpeya hour with its theme!



THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION



Uncle John: Now we will go to the last street in the City of Lights, and there we will learn about Virtual Reality (VR). Agape: Rashi, what's virtual reality?

Rashi: I will look it up Online.

Virtual reality is a type of technology that helps you feel as if you are inside a different world. When you wear virtual reality glasses, you see three- dimensional images and objects, like movies, but very real, and you can move as if you were in this world you're watching. It can be



used in games, learning and other fun and useful things.

Uncle John: Let's wear the VR glasses so that we can enter the virtual world of our choice.

Agion: Wow! This is a very beautiful place. I wonder which character we will meet here.

Rashi: I have an idea. So far, we have learned 3 ways to help us be children of light (discipleship, steadfastness in the upright faith, and permanent companionship with God).

What do you think about choosing a character that will show us the other ways to be children of light?

Bishoy: We should be a beautiful image of our Lord, an enlightenment for all those around us, and bearing witness to our Lord. That way we can be called children of light.

Agape: We should also be full of peace, despite any distress around us. I know who we should meet: "the beloved man."

Everyone: Who is he?

Agape: The Prophet Daniel.

Uncle John: He was a faithful witness to our Lord at all times. I will adjust the beginning of the journey so that we can enter the story from the beginning. Do not touch or adjust anything.



Narrator: Unfortunately, Agyon did not follow Uncle John's instructions, and pushed the red button in front of him. As a result, the emergency alarms went off.

Rashi: What is that sound?

Agape: The lights are blinking! What happened?! Why did the street decor change?

Bishoy: I see animals running over there. Are those lions or dogs?

Uncle John: What happened? It looks like we entered the virtual world before I adjusted the game settings. This is a big problem. Who clicked the start button?

Agion: I did! But I did not know that all of this would happen.

Agape: What can we do now?

Artificial Intelligence: The rules must be followed in this region. The rules have been violated. In order to return to the real world, you must narrate the events of the story that you wanted to enter. If your story is accurate, you can return to the real world.

Agion: I don't know the story.

Agape: I know his story very well. Here, I will tell you.



Daniel was from the tribe of Judah and lived in the city of Jerusalem. King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came and besieged Jerusalem, taking many captives to Babylon. Then the

king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel, some of the king's descendants, and some of the noble young men in whom there was no blemish, good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. The king appointed for them

a daily provision of his **delicacies and of the wine which he drank**, and **three years of training** for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.

Daniel The

Beloved Man



THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION WHOM SHALL I FEAR? "PS 27:1"

Among these young men were Daniel and his three friends, who refused the food that the king ordered

to be served. Daniel and the three boys asked to eat legumes, like lentils and beans, and to drink only water. When the chief refused their request, Daniel suggested to him that he try them



for 10 days and see their bod-

ies after that. Surprisingly, after 10 days they were stronger and better

than the rest of the young men who ate from



the king's delicacies.

- The days passed and all the young men stood before the king, and God blessed Daniel and the three young men in the eyes of the king. He found them full of wisdom and understanding. They were 10 times better than the magi and

magicians in the kingdom of Babylon.

- One day, King Nebuchadnezzar woke up because of a dream that disturbed him greatly. He quickly **called the magicians** before him and asked them to tell him the dream first and then to interpret it (in order to make sure that what they said was true). The magicians could not carry out the king's words, so the king ordered that **all the magicians**



and wise men in Babylon be killed,

as well as Daniel and his three friends.

Agion: That's terrible. What did Daniel and his friends do? Agape: Daniel was a man of prayer. He felt the presence of God in his life at all times, and that filled him with peace, even when he knew he might be killed. With all courage, Daniel asked the

king to give him time so that he might tell the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house and made the decision known to his companions, that they might **seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this secret**, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish



with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

- Then the secret was **revealed to Daniel in a night vision**, and Daniel **blessed the God of heaven**. Daniel told the king that no one

could know the dream or its interpretation except God alone. By these words, Daniel was able to bear witness to our Lord, that God is the Mighty One.

Daniel told the king his dream: "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image



on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone



that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

- After telling the king his dream, Daniel explained it to him. His interpretation of the dream was that the parts of the statue symbolized **kingdoms that would rule the world**, one kingdom after another. The big stone symbolized the kingdom of Our Lord, which would reign forever.

 The king was amazed that Daniel was able to know his dream and interpret it. He bowed down to Daniel and commanded his servants to give Daniel many gifts. The king said to Dan-

iel, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets" (Daniel 2: 47).

The king assigned Daniel a high rank in the kingdom, and Daniel asked for his 3 friends to remain with him.

Bishoy: Daniel was truly **brave**. He was able to bear witness to God in front of the king and everyone around him. What did Daniel do after that?

Agape: Years passed, and the Kingdom of Medes and Persia took con-



trol of the Kingdom of Babylon. King Darius took over the kingdom, and he appointed Daniel as **one of the top 3 leaders** over the kingdom because he heard about his great wisdom and honesty. Darius loved Daniel very much. Daniel was about **90 years old at the time**, and some helpers of the king tried to get rid of him because they were jealous that he excelled above them. They plotted against Daniel and told the king, "King Darius, live forever! All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." King Darius signed the written decree. However, Daniel remained clinging to our Lord. He prayed as he was accustomed to do every day, and for that reason they put Daniel in the lions' den... but the king said to Daniel:

> Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you" (Daniel 6:16)

Memory Verse

- Indeed, our Lord saved Daniel. **He sent His angel and closed the lions' mouths** so they did not harm him. The king was very happy and or-



dered Daniel to be taken out of the den. He **punished the evil men** who complained against Daniel and ordered them to be thrown into the lions' den. King Darius testified before everyone that **the God of Daniel is the eternal living God,** and that His kingdom will not fade away. Thus, Daniel was able to bear witness to our Lord in every tribulation and every trial. - Daniel was loved by many kings,

such as **Nebuchadnezzar** in the Kingdom of Babylon and **Darius** in the King-

dom of Medo-Persia. He was also loved by the successor of King Darius, especially after what happened to him. This story confirms that **God gives His children wisdom**, so that everyone can know our Lord and glorify Him. One day the king asked Daniel to worship an idol named Baal. They considered him their god and cared for him. They also offered Baal food.



Agion: How can an idol eat? What did Daniel do after the king's request?

Agape: Daniel, with the utmost courage, refused and said, "I do not worship idols made by man. I worship the living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth." Daniel could have just refused, but he insisted on bearing witness to our Lord, that He is the true God.



- The king responded and said to Daniel: "How can you say that about Baal? He is a god and he also eats and drinks." But Daniel responded to him and said: "Baal is just a statue made of clay and copper. He cannot eat or drink." The king was very upset, and he brought the priests of Baal. There were 70 priests and he said to them, "If you don't tell me who is eating the food, you will all die. But if you confirm to me that Baal is the one eating it, then Daniel will die."

Rashi: Daniel certainly agreed with the king's words, because he was sure that our Lord was the true God.

Agape: That's exactly what happened. The priests of Baal also agreed.



They told the king that they would bring the food to Baal and close the

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION

temple's door with the king's seal. The next day, if the king found the food untouched, all the priests would die. But if the food was finished, Daniel would die. And so they all left, and the food was put in front of Baal.

- Daniel asked his servants to bring ashes and spread them all over the ground. They locked the door with the king's seal and everyone left. The next morning, the king came with



Daniel, and when they opened the door, they found that the food was finished. The king was happy and shouted, **"You are great, Baal."** He thought that Baal actually ate the food, but Daniel laughed and asked the king to look at the ground. He saw **footprints of 2 men**, so they discovered that the priests of Baal had secret passages through which they could enter the place and eat the food. Thus, the people would think that Baal was the one eating the food. The king **arrested**

the priests and handed the statue of Baal over to Daniel,



who destroyed it.

- The life of Daniel, from beginning to end, was full of hardships and tribulations, but he lived without any anxiety or fear because he remembered the verse, **"The**

Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27: 1)

Narrator: As soon as

Agape ended her story, the lights

were restored to their normal colors. The children were back to the real world, and the doors of the city were opened for them to exit. The children wrote down the main points they learned from their adventure:

- **1- Discipleship**
- 2- Steadfastness in the upright faith
- **3- Permanent companionship with God**
- 4- Bearing witness to the Lord before everyone around us



Memorizations Psalm 62 (Agpeya)

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION

WHOM SHALL I FEARS "PS 27:1"

O God, my God, I will rise up early unto You; for my soul has thirsted for You: to make my flesh blossom for You, in a barren land and a trackless and dry place. So I have appeared before You in the Holy, to see Your power and Your glory. For Your mercy is chosen more than life: my lips shall praise You. So I will bless You during my life: I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be filled as with marrow and fatness; and my lips of joy shall praise Your name.

I have remembered You on my bed: in the time of early morning I have usually meditated on You. For You have become unto me a helper, and under the shadow of Your wings I shall rejoice. My soul has kept very close behind You: Your right hand has up¬held me. But those who seek to destroy my soul; shall go into the lowest parts of the earth. They shall be delivered up to the hand of the sword; they shall be portions for foxes. But the king shall rejoice in God; everyone who swears by him shall be proud; for the mouths of those who speak unjust things shall be shut. ALLELUIA.



Memorizations Gospel of the 1st Hour

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN (1:1-17)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light, but was sent to bear witness to the Light. That was the true Light that gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world did not know Him. He came unto His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of His Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, `He who comes after me is preferred before me: for He was before me.'" And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Glory be to God forever. Amen.





1. O the true Light Who gives light to every man coming into the world, You came into the world through Your love for mankind, and all creation rejoiced in Your coming. You saved our father, Adam, from the deception, and delivered our mother, Eve, from the pangs of death, and gave us the spirit of sonship. Let us, therefore, praise You and bless You saying :

Δοζα Πατρι κε Υιω κε ασιω Πηεγματι

2. As the daylight shines upon us, O Christ Our God, the true Light, let the luminous senses and the bright thoughts shine within us, and do not let the darkness of passions hover over us, that mindfully we may praise You with David saying, "My eyes hastened to awake before the dawn, that I might meditate on Your sayings." Hear our voices according to your great mercy, and deliver us, O Lord our God, through Your compassion.

Κε ηγη κε αι κε ic τογς εώμας τωμ εώμωμ: αμμή

3. You are the honored Mother of the Light; from the risings of the sun to its settings praises are offered to you, O Theotokos, the second heaven, as you are the bright and unchanging flower, and the ever virgin mother; for the Father chose you, and the Holy Spirit overshadowed you, and the Son condescended and took flesh from you. Therefore, ask Him to give salvation to the world which He created, and to deliver it from all tribulations. Let us praise Him a new praise, and bless Him, now and forever and unto the ages of all ages. Amen.



Memorizations Absolution 1 and 2 of the 1st Hour

FIRST ABSOLUTION

O Lord, God of hosts, who exists before all ages and abides forever, who created the sun for daylight, and the night as rest for all men; we thank You, O King of ages, for You have let us pass through the night in peace, and brought us to the daybreak. Therefore, we ask You, O our Master, the King of all ages, let Your face shine upon us, and the light of Your divine knowledge enlighten us. Grant us, O our Master, to be sons of light and sons of day, to pass this day in righteousness, chastity and good conduct, that we may complete all the rest of the days of our life without offence; through the grace, the compassion and the love of mankind of Your Only-Begotten Son Jesus Christ, and the gift of Your Holy Spirit, now and at all times and forever. Amen.





SECOND ABSOLUTION

O God Who causes the light to burst forth, Who lets His sun shine upon the righteous and the wicked, Who created the light which illuminates the whole world, enlighten our minds, our hearts and our understandings, O Master of all, and grant us to please You this present day. Guard us from every bad thing, from every sin, and from every adversative power; through Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom You are blessed, with the Holy Spirit, the Life-Giver and one essence with You, now and at all times and unto the ages of all ages. Amen.



THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & SALVATION WHOM SHALL & FEAR? "PS 27:1"



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