

**A lesson to every generation**

## **THE SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING**

**To our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. there was a king of Egypt Ptolemy IV Philopator, who decided to execute the Jews in retaliation to their priests in Jerusalem who forbidden him from entering the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies once a year.

Ptolemy returned to Alexandria with an evil plan to destroy the Jews of both Jerusalem and Alexandria. He ordered that the Jews of Jerusalem to be shipped to Alexandria tied and shoved onto a ship like animals. The Jews; men, women, children and elderly people were confined in the hippodrome, which had an immense outside perimeter on the border of Alexandria.

Back in those days, Egyptians often used to give the elephants alcohol to get them in their rage to kill their enemies. Ptolemy the king brought 500 elephants and gave them alcohol that they may trample upon the tied up helpless Jews. He invited the people (unbelievers) of Alexandria for entertainment to watch the elephants crushing the Jews. Then God delayed him three times from giving the order to kill those innocent people. Once He would make him fall into a deep sleep past the time for the event, and another time He would making him have a mental paralysis.

Once the king rebuked his ministers for what they would do to those innocent Jews who had been serving in his kingdom for a long time.

At last Ptolemy insisted on destroying the believers (Jews). When the doors of the hippodrome were opened and the believers saw the elephants and knew that their end was coming in a way that was never heard of before; here is what they did;

1. They cried out to the Lord with **broken and contrite heart**. “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit” (Psalm 34:18)

2. All the nursing moms gave their infants the last drop of milk; which symbolized the heart of a true believer who gives his responsibilities all that he got to the last breath.

3. They lovingly kissed one another while they were chained as if they had held the key of love to the last breath, which is surely pleasing in the sight God.

Lazarus the priest commanded the elders to stop crying and give a thanksgiving prayer to God who has done mercy to their forefathers across the ages. He was inviting everyone to give thanks during the trial and suffering showing trust in the mercies of God, and in His salvation that it was sure to come according to God’s divine plan. “Therefore I say to you whatever things you ask when you pray believe that you receive them, and you will have them,” Jesus says (Mark 11:24)

As they prayed giving thanks to God and showing love to one another; God sent two glorious angels to be only seen by the king and the Egyptian nonbelievers. The angels changed the direction of the raging drunken elephants to direction of their guide behind them. The raging elephants crushed the king’s men who were guiding them to kill the Jews in front of them. The king was furious and full of rage with what had happened to his men, yet he gave glory to God by sending a proclamation to the whole kingdom saying that “anyone who harms a true believer will be resisting the Almighty God whom no one could resist Him.

Now let us present **the sacrifice of Thanksgiving** to God in the time of trouble and suffering for there is a definite deliverance and liberation; That will happen as we give thanks and praises to God, showing **pure love to all mankind**, and by full heartedly trusting that God is the Savior of the world.

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