

DOCTRINAL THEOLOGY

ACCORDING TO
THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

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(SUB-DEACON)
1998

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COPTIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
SYDNEY
1998 AD - 1714 AM*



Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ King of Kings and
Lord of lords



*THE BEHOLDER OF GOD
MARK THE EVANGELIST
SAINT AND MARTYR*



*H.H. Pope Shenouda III, 117th Pope of
Alexandria and the See of St. Mark*

INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION

This edition was necessary as the second one was completely handed out

The reader will notice that we have included, in this edition, three enhanced lectures about the church as a corner stone of the Coptic Orthodox faith and Theology.

Orthodoxy is never satisfied by limiting the Church to means of speaking to the intellect of the parishioners. While we are teaching the Scriptures, we find it essential for the faithful to attend the Liturgy, and experience the actual dwelling of the Holy Spirit on the Sacrament as well as the parishioners. Many non Orthodox Christians attained their conversion to Orthodoxy during the Liturgy

A Coptic Orthodox parishioner is expected to leave the Liturgy with a renewed spirit which preserves his salvation and make him a moving gospel and a living apostle for Christ.

Every Liturgy in the church is an actual and renewed encounter with the Holy Spirit.

We have also included in the course the biblical necessity for the Sacraments and the communion with the saints.

Because the Church is the icon of heaven, eternity does not have to wait until we leave this world. We, through being at church, start our eternity there and then.

It is very pleasing to report and celebrate that this edition is issued during the Silver Jubilee of the enthronement of our beloved father Abba Shenouda III the 117th successor of Saint Mark, who ascended this blessed and apostolic throne on 14 November, 1971.

The Apostolic succession granted to His Holiness by the Holy Spirit, is definitely synonymous, through the Grace of God, with a great and shining Apostolic success.

I am indebted to His Holiness for the great majority of the material presented in these notes. We are all inspired by His Holiness's Orthodox and ascetic life and his orthodox teachings.

May the Lord grant us peace and blessings through the prayers of our beloved Mother Saint Mary the Virgin and all the angels and saints who pleased Him since the beginning. May the Lord protect and preserve the life and well being of our beloved Pope Shenouda III and his brother in the Apostolic Ministry Mar Aghnathous Zakka the Patriarch of Antioch, and their partners in the Apostolic Ministry the Metropolitan and the Bishops.

Amir Hanna (Sub-deacon)
14 November, 1996

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER # 1	20
CREATION VERSUS EVOLUTION	20
CREATION STEP BY STEP	20
BEFORE THE FIRST DAY	20
CREATION OF LIGHT & TIME THEN LIGHT BEARERS AND TIME MARKERS	20
<i>THE FIRST DAY</i>	20
<i>THE FOURTH DAY</i>	20
CREATION OF THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE THICK VAPOUR CANOPY AND THE CREATURES OF THE WATER AND THE AIR	21
<i>THE SECOND DAY</i>	21
<i>THE FIFTH DAY</i>	21
THE EMERGING OF DRY LAND AND THE CREATION OF THE ANIMALS AND THE CREATION OF MAN	21
<i>THE THIRD DAY</i>	21
<i>THE SIXTH DAY</i>	21
MAN CREATED ON THE SIXTH DAY.....	22
MAN ON GOD'S OWN IMAGE	22
MAN WAS VEGETARIAN	22
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BELIEVE IN CREATION?	22
(1) THE LORD JESUS REFERS TO GENESIS AS AN AUTHENTIC DIVINE BOOK	23
(2) THE CHURCH TEACHES US THAT CREATION IS TRUE	23
2.1 <i>The Nicene Creed</i>	23
2.2 <i>The Church Fathers</i>	23
2.3 <i>The Church Liturgy & Other Devotions</i>	23
(3) CREATION IS A CORNER STONE IN THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY	24
3.1 <i>Was There Death before Adam's Sin?</i>	24
3.2 <i>Was Death and Suffering A Normal Thing Not Related To Sin?</i>	24
3.3 <i>Evolution teaches that death existed before Adam's time.</i>	25
(4) THE BELIEF IN CREATION IS A FUNDAMENTAL CORNER STONE IN OUR CHRISTIAN ETHIC AND MORALITY	25
(4.1) <i>All moral issues are dependent on two things:</i>	25
EVOLUTION IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC FACT, IT IS ONLY A BELIEF	25
(1) THE FOSSIL EVIDENCE:.....	26
(2) THE GEOLOGICAL COLUMN	26
(3) THE LIVING FOSSILS	26
(4) WHERE ARE THE INTERMEDIARY CREATURES?	26
(5) THE PRESENT DATING METHODS ARE EMBARRASSINGLY CONTRADICTIONARY	26
(6) THE SAME EVIDENCE USED BY EVOLUTIONISTS COULD BE USED TO PROVE THE THEORY OF CREATION	26
FINAL END OF CREATION	26
THE PURPOSE OF CREATION	26
SUBSTITUTES FOR THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION	27
MATERIALISM.....	27
PANTHEISM	27
EVOLUTION	28
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	28
CHAPTER # 2	29
THE HOLY TRINITY	29

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE TRINITARIAN BELIEF	29
THE WORD “TRINITY”	29
OTHER CHURCHES AND THE TRINITARIAN BELIEF?	29
(A) THE NECESSITY TO BELIEVE IN A TRIUNE GOD?	29
A.1 NONE TRIUNE GOD IS DEFICIENT AND INACTIVE.....	30
1. <i>God is independent</i>	30
2. <i>God is Effective</i>	30
A.2 WITHOUT THE TRINITY WE HAVE NO SALVATION OR SANCTIFICATION.....	30
A.3 THE TRINITY IS A BIBLICAL TEACHING.....	30
A.3.1 <i>The Oneness Of God is described as a Unity and not just “one”</i>	30
OTHER BIBLICAL EXAMPLES.....	30
A.3.2 <i>Each of the three Hypostasis The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are very clearly displayed in the Bible as God</i>	31
(B) THE TRINITARIAN MYSTERY	31
(C) TRINITY FROM THE SCRIPTURES	31
C.1 GOD SPEAKS IN THE PLURAL.	31
C.2 THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH IS DISPLAYED VERY CLEARLY AS A DIVINE PERSON:	32
C.3 THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE SPOKEN OF AS DISTINCT HYPOSTASIS:	32
C.4 MOREOVER THERE ARE SOME PASSAGES IN WHICH THE MESSIAH IS SPEAKING AND MENTIONS TWO OTHER HYPOSTASEIS	32
C.5 THE CLEARER REVELATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT	32
C.5.1 <i>The Strongest Proof Is Found In The Facts Of The Redemption</i>	32
C.5.2 <i>There Are Many Places Where The Three Hypostaseis Are Expressly Mentioned</i>	32
(D) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE FATHER	33
D.1 AS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS	33
D.2 AS THE FATHER OF ISRAEL	33
D.3 THE FATHER OF BELIEVERS	33
D.4 AS THE FIRST HYPOSTASEIS OF THE TRINITY	33
D.5 THE FATHER IS THE SOURCE OF FATHERHOOD.....	33
D.6 THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FATHER	34
D.6 LITURGICAL EVIDENCE.....	34
<i>St Basil’s Liturgy</i> ”	34
(E) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE SON	34
E.1 THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON	34
E.2 BUT ALSO AS THE “MESSIAH” CHOSEN OF GOD	34
E.3 HIS SPECIAL IMMACULATE AND VIRGINAL BIRTH, THROUGH THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT	34
E.4 HIS CHARACTERISTIC AS THE SECOND HYPOSTASEIS OF THE TRINITY THAT HE IS ETERNALLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER,.....	35
E.5 THE SON AS THE MEDIATOR.....	35
(F) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT	36
F.1 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS SPEAKS AND <u>CALLS!</u>	36
F.2 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>HEARS!</u>	36
F.3 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>TEACHES!</u>	36
F.4 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>COUNSELS</u>	36
F.5 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS, <u>HE KNOWS THE FUTURE</u>	36
F.6 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>MAY BE LIED TO!</u>	36
F.7 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>FORBIDS!</u>	36
F.8 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>MAY BE GRIEVED!</u>	37

TABLE OF CONTENTS

F.9 THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DIVINE HYPOSTASEIS <u>INTERCEDES!</u>	37
(G) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD.....	37
G.1 ST PETER CALLS THE HOLY SPIRIT GOD.....	37
G.2 THE HOLY SPIRIT IDENTIFIED AS JEHOVAH.....	37
(H) THE THREE HYPOSTASIS ARE ONE GOD	38
H.1 EACH HYPOSTASEIS IS CALLED THE ONE LORD	38
<i>LORD</i>	38
<i>THE ONE SPIRIT</i>	38
<i>THE CREATOR</i>	39
<i>THE LORD DWELLS</i>	39
<i>The truth of the Scriptures is</i>	39
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVISION</i>	40
CHAPTER # 3.....	41
MAN IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION AND THE COVENANT OF GRACE.....	41
THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION	41
THE SCRIPTURES ARE THE BASIS FOR THIS BELIEF.....	41
<i>Part Of God's Plan</i>	41
<i>The Lord Christ Spoke About It</i>	41
THE SON IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.....	42
CHRIST AS A COVENANT HEAD.....	42
<i>He is evidently a "Covenant Head"</i>	42
CHRIST IS NOT ONLY THE HEAD BUT ALSO THE SURETY OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION,.....	42
REQUIREMENTS AND PROMISES IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.....	43
THE COVENANT OF GRACE.....	45
THE (CONTRACTING) PARTIES TO THE COVENANT	45
<i>God Is The First Party</i>	45
<i>Man Is The Second Party</i>	45
WHY THE COVENANT?.....	45
<i>As An End In Itself</i>	45
<i>As Means To An End</i>	46
THE PROMISES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE COVENANT	46
<i>The Promises Of The Covenant</i>	46
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COVENANT	47
CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTABLE FAITH	47
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COVENANT	48
<i>Eternal</i>	48
<i>Particular</i>	48
<i>One</i>	48
<i>The Essential Promise is the Same</i>	48
<i>The Mediator Is The Same</i>	48
<i>Conditional And Unconditional</i>	48
<i>Testamentary</i>	49
THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COVENANT	49
<i>Adults</i>	49
<i>The Children Of The Believers</i>	49
THE DIFFERENT DISPENSATIONS OF THE COVENANT	50
<i>The First Revelation Of The Covenant</i>	50
<i>The New Covenant</i>	51

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>REVISION OF THE MAJOR VERSES</i>	51
THE PARTIES OF THE COVENANT:	51
<i>Its promises and requirements</i>	51
<i>Characteristics of the Covenant</i>	52
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	52
CHAPTER #4	54
THE ORIGINAL SIN	54
BABYLONIAN RETURN	54
WHO IS BEHIND THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT	55
THE FOUR PRINCIPALS OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT	55
THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL OR REINCARNATION.....	55
DANGERS OF THE TEACHING OF REINCARNATION.....	55
<i>Reincarnation is an encouragement for immorality.</i>	56
<i>Reincarnation corrupts our understanding of God.</i>	56
<i>Reincarnation and suicide</i>	56
<i>The Teaching Of "Karma"</i>	56
PANTHEISM, THE SECOND NEW AGE PRINCIPAL.....	56
DANGERS OF THE TEACHING OF PANTHEISM.	56
<i>Man Is Lowered To The Level Of Worms</i>	56
<i>Man Loses His Kingship Over The Creation</i>	57
<i>God Is Evil And Good</i>	57
<i>As Gods We Are Free From Any Authority?</i>	57
MORAL RELATIVISM, THE THIRD NEW AGE PRINCIPAL	57
DANGERS OF MORAL RELATIVISM.....	57
<i>Moral Relativism Destroys God's Commandments.</i>	57
<i>Moral Relativism Corrupts The World</i>	57
ESOTERICISM, THE FOURTH NEW AGE PRINCIPAL	58
THE DANGERS OF ESOTERICISM	58
<i>The Devil Craves To Receive Worship</i>	58
<i>If It Feels Good, Do It?!</i>	58
<i>False Enlightenment, And The False Light</i>	58
<i>Dabbling With The Occult & Breaking The Commandment.</i>	58
<i>Esotericism, Leads To Direct Encounter With Evil Spirits</i>	58
<i>"Esotericism" is a dangerous practice, as it leads people to direct contact with the evil spirits.</i> <i>Such contact is harmful, not only in eternity, but also on this world. Many people who walk this</i> <i>path end a nervous and psychological wreck.</i>	58
<i>Esoteric Experiences</i>	58
PARADIGM SHIFT	59
<i>One of his Methods Is Sowing The Seed Of Doubt.</i>	59
<i>Evolution, Philosophy & Psychology</i>	59
<i>His Other Method is to Package Satanic Practices As Means Of Help</i>	59
1) <i>He Is Selling His Principals As A Method For Success</i>	59
2) <i>He Is Selling His Principals As Health</i>	60
3) <i>He Is Selling His Principal As Science</i>	60
4) <i>He Sells His Principals As Entertainment</i>	60
IN CONCLUSION	61
SUMMARY	61
PANTHEISM	61
REINCARNATION	61
MORAL RELATIVISM	61

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ESOTERICISM.....	61
CHAPTER # 5	63
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST-TRUE MAN AND TRUE GOD.....	63
THE CREED	63
THE CREED'S BIBLICAL BASIS	63
EXPLANATION FOR HIS WEAKNESS AND MEAKNESS.....	64
BIBLICAL EXPOSE' OF JESUS THE FULL GOD AND THE FULL MAN	64
BIBLICAL STUDY IN THE DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS.....	66
IMPORTANT COMMENT ON THE METHOD OF BIBLICAL TRANSLATION USED BY JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.....	66
1. <i>The Watch Tower Translation Is False.....</i>	66
2. <i>The Translation "a god" Conflicts With the First and Foremost Commandment,.....</i>	66
3. <i>The LORD Jesus Is the Incarnated JEHOVA</i>	66
JESUS ACCEPTED TO BE CALLED AND TREATED AS GOD	67
JEHOVAH GOD DECLARES.....	67
THE LORD JESUS ACCEPTS WORSHIP	67
1- <i>The Lord Jesus is Not Less Honourable Than His Followers</i>	67
2- <i>The Deity of Christ Clearly Illustrated.....</i>	67
3- <i>Jesus The LORD of Nature.....</i>	68
4 <i>The Language Used By Jesus Revealed His Claim For Diety to the Jews.....</i>	68
<i>The Scripture clearly teach that while Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is true man, He is also true God.</i>	68
CHAPTER # 6	70
THE LORD JEHOVAH COMPARED WITH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST	70
SAME NAMES.....	70
WORTHY OF THE SAME HONOUR	71
SAME QUALITIES	72
SAME ACTS	73
" <i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	75
CHAPTER # 07	76
THE STATES OF CHRIST	76
THE INCARNATION.....	76
(A) THE STATE OF HUMILIATION	76
A.1 <i>The Incarnation and virginal birth of Christ</i>	76
A.1.1 <i>The Bible teaches us very clearly about the virginal birth:.....</i>	77
A.2 THE SUFFERING OF CHRIST	77
A.3 THE DEATH OF CHRIST	77
A.4 THE BURIAL OF CHRIST.	78
A.5 THE DESCENT INTO HADES.	78

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(B) THE STATE OF EXALTATION.....	79
B.1 THE RESURRECTION	79
<i>B.1.1 "The First Fruits Of Them That Slept,"</i>	79
<i>B.1.2 The First Born Of the Dead."</i>	79
<i>B.1.3 The resurrection of Christ has a threefold significance</i>	79
B.2 THE ASCENSION.....	80
B.3 THE SESSION AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND	82
B.4 THE PHYSICAL RETURN	82
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	83
CHAPTER #08	84
THE OFFICES OF CHRIST	84
(A) THE PROPHETIC OFFICE	84
A.1 HE SPEAKS OF HIMSELF AS A PROPHET.	84
A.3 FORETELLS FUTURE THINGS:	84
A.4 HE SPEAKS WITH SINGULAR AUTHORITY.....	85
A.5 CHRIST ALREADY FUNCTIONED AS A PROPHET IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:.....	85
(B) THE PRIESTLY OFFICE.....	86
B.1 BIBLICAL PROOF.....	86
<i>B.1.1 The Prophecy About His Priesthood</i>	86
B.1.2 IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE BOOK OF HEBREWS HAS REPEATEDLY CALLED HIM A PRIEST:	86
<i>B.1.3 However other books refer to His priestly work</i>	87
B.2 THE SACRIFICE.....	87
<i>B.2.1 Hence Christ is also called "the Lamb of God,"</i>	88
<i>B.2.2 Also Christ is called our "Passover,"</i>	88
B.3 THE SACRIFICIAL INTERCESSION OF CHRIST	89
(C) THE KINGLY OFFICE	90
C.1 HIS SPIRITUAL KINGSHIP.....	90
C.2 HIS EVERLASTING NONE ENDING KINGDOM	92
C.3 HIS UNIVERSAL KINGSHIP	92
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	93
CHAPTER # 09	94
THE DOCTRINE OF DEATH	94
(A) PHYSICAL DEATH.....	94
A.1 WHAT IS DEATH.....	94
<i>A.1.1 The Death of the Body</i>	94
<i>A.1.2 Termination or Loss of Physical Life</i>	94
<i>A.2.3 Separation of Body and Soul</i>	94
IMPORTANT NOTE.....	95
MAN WAS NOT CREATED TO DIE.....	95
DEATH IS THE RESULT OF SIN	95
A.3 DEATH IS NOT SOMETHING NATURAL,	95
<i>A.3.1 It is actually an expression of the Divine anger:</i>	95
<i>A.3.2 Also Death Is a Judgment:</i>	95
<i>A.3.3 Also Death Is a Condemnation</i>	95
<i>A.3.4 Death is a Curse</i>	95
<i>A.3.5 Death is also a Deterrent, Putting the Fear of God in Man's Heart</i>	95

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A4 DEATH OF THE BAPTIZED BELIEVERS.....	96
(B) THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.....	96
B.1 CHRIST OPENED THE PARADISE.....	96
B.2 CHRIST WENT TO HADES & FREED THE CAPTIVES TAKING THEM TO PARADISE	96
B.3 BEFORE CHRIST ALL WENT AWAY FROM GOD	97
B.4 THE WICKED WERE WARNED ABOUT THEIR FATE IN SEVERAL PLACES	98
SOMETIMES THE WORDS SHOEL & HADES ARE USED TO DENOTE THE GRAVE	98
(C) THE STATE OF DEATH AS EXPRESSED IN THE BIBLE.....	98
C.1 SOMETIMES THE STATE OR CONDITION OF DEATH, REPRESENTED AS A PLACE	98
C.2 SOMETIMES SHOEL OR HADES IS USED TO DENOTE THE PLACE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT	98
(D) SOULS ARE NEITHER ASLEEP NOR UNCONSCIOUS.....	98
THE DEATH OF CHRIST	99
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	99
CHAPTER # 10	100
THE RESURRECTION, THE FINAL JUDGMENT AND THE FINAL STATE.....	100
THE RESURRECTION.....	100
THE GENERAL RESURRECTION IS A BIBLICAL FACT.....	100
<i>Saint Paul Expounds the Fact of the Second Coming and the General Resurrection.....</i>	100
THE CHARACTER OF THE RESURRECTION.....	102
<i>Bodily Resurrection, But With A New Type of Body.....</i>	102
<i>Will Happen to All</i>	103
THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION.....	103
THE WRONG PRE-MILLENARIANS TEACHING	104
<i>The Orthodox Churches Are Post Millenarians</i>	104
<i>Majority of the Evangelical Churches are Pre-Millenarians.....</i>	104
THE LAST JUDGMENT.....	105
WILL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOW THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.....	105
THE JUDGE AND HIS ASSISTANTS.....	106
<i>Christ as the Mediator will be the judge:.....</i>	106
<i>His Assistants Are the Angels</i>	106
<i>Also the Saints Will Have Some Share In His Judicial Work.....</i>	106
<i>The Parties to Be Judged.....</i>	106
<i>The Time of the Judgment</i>	108
<i>The Standard of Judgment.....</i>	108
THE FINAL STATE	108
THE FINAL STATE OF THE WICKED.....	108
THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THE FURNACE OF FIRE	108
<i>The Bible Speaks of the Lake of Fire</i>	109
<i>The Bible Speaks of the Prison</i>	109
<i>There will be degrees in their punishment</i>	109
<i>The Punishment Is Eternal</i>	110
THE FINAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS	110
<i>Heaven will be the eternal abode of the believers.....</i>	110
<i>The Righteous Will Inherit Heaven.....</i>	110
<i>Their Life Is Eternal.....</i>	111
<i>There Will Be Degrees In Their Rewards.....</i>	111
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	111

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER # 11	112
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST	112
CHRIST WILL COME BACK.....	112
ANGELS CALLED ATTENTION TO IT AT THE ASCENSION	112
THE EPISTLES SPOKE OF IT REPEATEDLY	112
EVENTS PRECEDING THE SECOND COMING	112
THE CALLING OF THE GENTILES	113
THE CONVERSION OF THE FULL NUMBER OF ISRAEL	113
THE GREAT APOSTASY AND THE GREAT TRIBULATION	113
THE COMING OF THE ANTICHRIST	114
SIGNS AND WONDERS	115
THE SECOND COMING ITSELF.....	115
THE TIME OF HIS COMING	115
THE MANNER OF HIS COMING	116
<i>The Person of Christ Will Return.....</i>	<i>116</i>
<i>His Second Coming Will Be A Surprise</i>	<i>116</i>
THE SECOND COMING WILL BE TRIUMPHANT AND GLORIOUS.....	117
<i>The Clouds of Heaven Will Be His Chariot.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>The Angels Will Be His Body Guard.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>The archangels are His heralds.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>The Saints of God His Glorious Entourage “Retinue”</i>	<i>117</i>
THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING	117
THE QUESTION OF THE MILLENNIUM.....	118
POST-MILLENNIALISM.....	118
<i>The Orthodox Faith.....</i>	<i>119</i>
PRE-MILLENNIALISM	119
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	<i>120</i>
CHAPTER #12	121
THE UNSEEN SPIRITUAL CREATION.....	121
THE EXISTENCE OF THE ANGELS.....	121
THE ANGELS ARE SPIRITUAL BODIES.....	121
DEALING WITH FOOD.....	122
THEIR SPIRITUAL NATURE IS EXPLAINED BY THE SCRIPTURES	122
THE TYPES OF ANGELS	122
THE HOLY & THE ELECT ANGELS	122
THE FALLEN & EVIL ANGELS	123
THE CLASSES OF ANGELS.....	123
THE CHERUBIM.....	123
THE SERAPHIM	123
ANOTHER CLASSES OF ANGELS	124
SOME ARCHANGELS	124
ARCHANGEL MICHAEL	124

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WORK OF THE ANGELS.....	125
THE ANGELS PRAISE GOD CONTINUOUSLY.....	125
THE ANGELS SERVE THOSE WHO INHERITED SALVATION.....	125
THE ANGELS REJOICE AT THE REPENTANCE OF SINNERS.....	125
THE ANGELS WATCH OVER THE BELIEVERS	125
THE ANGELS ARE PRESENT AT THE CHURCH.....	125
THE ANGELS CONVEY THE BELIEVERS TO THE BOSOM OF ABRAHAM	125
THE ANGELS BEAR SPECIAL REVELATION FROM GOD	126
THE ANGELS COMMUNICATE BLESSINGS TO PEOPLE	126
THE ANGELS EXECUTE JUDGMENTS ON HIS ENEMIES	126
THE EVIL ANGELS (THE DEVIL & HIS EVIL FORCES).....	126
WHAT WAS THEIR SIN?.....	127
THE CHIEF OF THE FALLEN ANGELS WAS AN ARCHANGEL	127
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	<i>128</i>
CHAPTER # 13	129
THE CHURCH.....	129
VARIOUS MEANING OF THE WORD "CHURCH".....	129
A.1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH.....	129
A.2 THE CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED FROM THE APOSTOLIC ERA.....	129
A.2.1 <i>Various Branches</i>	<i>129</i>
A.2.2 <i>A The Church in Your House</i>	<i>129</i>
A.2.3 <i>The Body of Christ</i>	<i>129</i>
(B) THE ESSENCE OF THE CHURCH	130
B.1 <i>The Church is the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven:</i>	<i>130</i>
B.2 <i>The Ark of Salvation</i>	<i>130</i>
(C) DISTINCTIONS APPLIED TO THE CHURCH	130
C.1 <i>The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant</i>	<i>130</i>
C.2 <i>The Visible and the Invisible Church</i>	<i>130</i>
C.3 <i>The Church as an organism and as an institution</i>	<i>131</i>
(D) THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH.....	131
D.1 <i>Its Unity</i>	<i>131</i>
D.2 <i>Its Holiness</i>	<i>131</i>
D.3 <i>Its Catholicity</i>	<i>131</i>
D.4 <i>It Is Apostolic</i>	<i>131</i>
D.5 <i>Christ Is Her High Priest</i>	<i>132</i>
(E) THE MARKS OR THE EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH.....	133
E.1 <i>The True and Correct preaching of the Word of God. This is a very important mark of the Church</i>	<i>133</i>
E.2 <i>The Right Administration of the Sacraments</i>	<i>133</i>
E.2.1 <i>Baptism</i>	<i>134</i>
<i>Baptism of Infants</i>	<i>135</i>
E.3 THE EXERCISING OF DISCIPLINE BY THE CHURCH.....	138
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	<i>139</i>
CHAPTER # 14	140
THE GOVERNMENT AND POWER OF THE CHURCH	140
(A) CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH AND THE SOURCE OF ALL ITS AUTHORITY:.....	140

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(B) THE OFFICES OF THE CHURCH.....	140
B.1 THE EARLY CHURCH	140
<i>B.1.1 The Apostles.....</i>	<i>140</i>
<i>The apostles had special privileges.</i>	<i>140</i>
B.1.2 OTHER OFFICES IN THE EARLY APOSTOLIC CHURCH.....	141
B.2 THE OFFICES OF THE PRESENT DAY ORTHODOX CHURCH.....	142
<i>B.2.1 Bishops & Priests & Deacons:</i>	<i>142</i>
<i>The Office Of Deacon.....</i>	<i>142</i>
(C) THE UNIVERSAL COUNCILS.....	143
(D) THE POWER OF THE CHURCH.....	143
D.1 THE TEACHING POWER.....	143
<i>D.1.1 The Church must preach the Word unceasingly among all the nations of the world.....</i>	<i>144</i>
<i>The Church must also draw up creeds and confessions, and must provide for the preparation and ordinations of more clergy.....</i>	<i>144</i>
D.1.2 THE SACRAMENTAL POWER OF THE CHURCH.....	144
D.2 THE GOVERNING POWER OF THE CHURCH	144
CHAPTER # 15	146
VENERATION OF THE SAINTS.....	146
PART 1 - GENERAL	146
(A) THE CHURCH IS COMMANDED TO VENERATE THE SAINTS.....	146
THE LORD JESUS COMMANDS THE DISCIPLES TO COMMEMORATE THE WOMAN WHO ANOINTED HIS BODY	146
(B) THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS ARE PRESENTED TO GOD	146
(C) THE LORD CONSIDERS THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS	146
C.1 EXAMPLES OF SAINTS INTERCEDING FOR OTHERS.....	146
<i>C.1.1 Abraham Intercedes For Sodom.....</i>	<i>146</i>
<i>C.1.2 Moses Intercedes for His People.....</i>	<i>146</i>
C.2 GOD RESPECTS THE INTERCESSIONS OF DEPARTED SAINTS	147
<i>C.2.1 Departed Saints Intercede to The LORD.....</i>	<i>147</i>
<i>C.2.2 Solomon is Spared for the Sake of David.....</i>	<i>147</i>
C.3 WE ARE IMploRED TO PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER.....	147
C.4 THE SAINTS AND ANGELS IN HEAVEN ARE ALERT & AWARE	147
<i>C.4.1 Abraham, Lazarus and the Rich Man</i>	<i>147</i>
<i>C.4.2 The Angels are Aware of the Repentant.....</i>	<i>147</i>
<i>C.4.3 The Angels Know Your Prayer Because They Carry it to God</i>	<i>147</i>
<i>C.4.4 At Heaven People's Knowledge is Increased.....</i>	<i>148</i>
<i>C.4.5 The Amazing Biblical Record About Prophet Elijah.....</i>	<i>148</i>
<i>C.4.6 Saints Who Departed are Still Living</i>	<i>148</i>
C5 EVEN SAINT'S BODIES AND RELICS ARE A BLESSING.....	148
<i>C5.1 The bones of Elisha the prophet were capable of resurrecting a dead person.</i>	<i>148</i>
<i>C5.2 Clothing Items of St. Paul Healed the Sick.....</i>	<i>148</i>
(D) THE SAINTS ARE FAVOURED BY THE LORD	148
D.1 GOD ASSOCIATE HIS NAME WITH THEIRS	149
D.2 MANY SAINTS USED TO REMIND GOD WITH THIS ASSOCIATION.....	149
D3 GOD SELECTED HIS SAINTS AND FAVOURED THEM.	149
<i>E THE VALUE OF THE INTERCESSIONS OF THE SAINTS.....</i>	<i>149</i>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 2 - THE VENERATION OF VIRGIN MARY	150
THE VENERATION OF SAINT MARY IS A BIBLICAL TEACHING.....	150
PROPHECIES ABOUT ST. MARY	150
<i>The Queen.....</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>The Desire of All Generations</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>The Mother of Light</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>The Mother of The Holy</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>The Mother of the Saviour.....</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>The Mother of God.....</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>The Gate of Life and the Gate of Salvation.....</i>	<i>151</i>
IS IT CORRECT TO ADDRESS PRAYERS TO THE VIRGIN SAINT MARY	151
<i>We Address the Angels in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary.....</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>We Address Nature in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary</i>	<i>152</i>
<i>We Address the Holy City of God in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary.....</i>	<i>152</i>
<i>We Address People in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary</i>	<i>152</i>
<i>We Address the Evil Spirit in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary</i>	<i>152</i>
THE PERPETUAL VIRGINITY OF SAINT MARY.....	152
<i>(1) Virgin Mary Was A Betrothed Wife But Was Not To Consummate the Marriage.....</i>	<i>152</i>
<i>Virgin Mary Was A Nazerite.....</i>	<i>153</i>
<i>Virgin Mary Refuses To Break Her Vow</i>	<i>153</i>
<i>How about Jesus' Brothers.....</i>	<i>153</i>
OTHER PROPHECIES ABOUT VIRGIN MARY	154
THE STAFF OF AARON	154
<i>The Ark of Covenant</i>	<i>154</i>
<i>The Ladder of Heaven.....</i>	<i>154</i>
<i>The Burning Bush.....</i>	<i>154</i>
CHAPTER # 16	156
TRADITION.....	156
OUTLINE.....	156
TRADITION IS THE OLDEST.....	156
EXAMPLES	156
<i>Abel's Faith.....</i>	<i>156</i>
<i>Noah, Abraham offered Sacrifices! how did they know?</i>	<i>156</i>
<i>Clean Animals? Altar? The Tithes?? How did they know.</i>	<i>156</i>
<i>Consecration With Oil, Jacob, Where did He Know About the Oil of Consecration?.</i>	<i>157</i>
<i>Here, The Lord Is Asking The Parents To Pass On The Tradition.</i>	<i>157</i>
<i>Where did Paul get these names from?</i>	<i>157</i>
<i>What gospel?? There was no written gospel at the time?</i>	<i>157</i>
(B) THE BIBLE DOES NOT MENTION EVERY THING.	157
(C) THE KINGDOM OF GOD.....	157
WHAT WERE THE LORD'S WORDS ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD?.....	157
D) SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS.....	158
(E) THE APOSTOLIC DISCIPLINES FOR THE CHURCH.....	158
<i>Obviously majority of the instructions were given verbally, other wise!.....</i>	<i>158</i>
<i>The Teaching Of How To Conduct The Eucharist Was Handed Down From The Lord Himself</i>	<i>158</i>
F) TRADITIONAL BASIS OF THE APOSTOLIC WRITINGS.	159

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(G) BENEFITS OF TRADITION.....	159
(H) VALID AND INVALID TRADITION.....	160
(I) CONDITIONS OF SOUND TRADITION.....	160
(J) CHURCH AUTHORITY.....	160
K) THE APOSTLES COMMANDED THAT THE TRADITION BE PRESERVED.....	161
FURTHER ARGUMENTS	161
THE UNWRITTEN WORD OF GOD.....	161
WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF GENUINE HOLY TRADITION.....	163
ST BASIL ON TRADITION.....	164
OTHER CHURCHES AND THE HOLY TRADITION	164
ALSO THE BIBLE URGES US TO KEEP THE TRADITIONS	165
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	<i>165</i>
CHAPTER # 17	166
THE HOLY BIBLE	166
THE HOLY BIBLE	166
(A) THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD.....	166
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TELL US.....	166
A.2.1 <i>The Old Testament.....</i>	<i>167</i>
A.2.2 <i>The New Testament.....</i>	<i>167</i>
A.3 THE SOURCE OF THE BIBLE	167
A.3.1 <i>Is Inspiration Literal & Mechanical?.....</i>	<i>167</i>
A.3.2 <i>Why Do We Believe That The Bible Is Divine?.....</i>	<i>167</i>
(B) THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE HOLY BIBLE	168
B.1 THE OLD TESTAMENT.....	168
B.2 THE NEW TESTAMENT.....	169
B.3 <i>AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE IS DETERMINED BY THE CHURCH.....</i>	<i>169</i>
(C) SUMMARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.....	169
C.1 THE FOUR GOSPELS	170
C.2 THE BOOK OF ACTS	170
C.3 THE EPISTLES.....	170
C.4 REVELATIONS.....	170
(D) METHODS OF GOD'S REVELATION.....	171
D.1 <i>General Revelation (Tradition).....</i>	<i>171</i>
D.1.1 <i>Insufficiency of General Revelation.....</i>	<i>171</i>
D.2 SPECIAL REVELATION.....	171
D.2.1 <i>Necessity of Special Revelation</i>	<i>171</i>
D.2.2 <i>The Means of Special Revelation.....</i>	<i>172</i>
FOR FURTHER STUDY	174
SOME EXAMPLES OF DREAMS.....	174
SOME EXAMPLES OF VISIONS.....	175
SOME EXAMPLES OF MIRACLES.....	175
CHAPTER # 18	176
PROVIDENCE.....	176

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ELEMENTS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.....	176
(A) DIVINE PRESERVATION.....	176
(B) DIVINE CONCURRENCE.....	176
(C) DIVINE GOVERNMENT	177
IT IS UNIVERSAL	177
INCLUDES THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THINGS,	177
BEARS ON BOTH THE GOOD AND THE EVIL DEEDS OF MAN	178
MISCONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE	178
(A) THE DEISTIC CONCEPTION	178
(B) THE PANTHEISTIC CONCEPTION	178
EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE OR MIRACLES.....	178
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.....</i>	<i>179</i>
CHAPTER # 19	180
THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD	180
THE ESSENCE OF GOD	180
THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD'S.....	180
THE PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD	181
HIS OMNI-PRESENCE (PRESENCE EVERYWHERE)	181
GOD IS IN HEAVEN.....	181
<i>Does this mean that God is confined to heaven?.....</i>	<i>181</i>
OMNIPOTENCE (UNLIMITED POWER).....	182
ETERNITY (NO BEGINNING & NO END).....	182
THE LOGICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.....	182
OMNISCIENCE	182
THE INFINITE WISDOM OF GOD.....	183
THE ETHICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD	183
HIS HOLINESS	183
HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS	184
HIS LOVE.....	184
HE IS OUR FATHER "ABBA"	184
HOW TO LEARN & EXPERIENCE GODS COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES	185
WHAT IS FAITH?	186
FIRST OF ALL FAITH IS AN ACT.....	186
FAITH IS AN ACT OF CHOICE.....	186
FAITH IS AN ACT OF FREE WILL.....	186
<i>Faith Is A Commitment To A Way Of Life.....</i>	<i>187</i>
<i>QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW</i>	<i>187</i>
CHAPTER 20	188

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE NICENE CREED	188
THE VALUE AND USE OF THE CREED.....	188
THE HISTORY OF THE CREED	189
THE COUNCIL OF NICEA	189
THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPOLIS.....	190
THE VALUE OF THE CREED.....	190
THE CREED IS THE OUTLINE OF THIS COURSE.....	190
THE CREED	191
GOD THE FATHER AND CREATOR.....	191
HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON.....	191
THE INCARNATION	191
CRUCIFIXION & DEATH OF CHRIST.....	191
THE RESURRECTION	191
THE ASCENSION	191
THE SECOND COMING.....	191
THE HOLY SPIRIT.....	191
THE CHURCH.....	192
THE ONE BAPTISM	192
THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.....	192
THE ETERNITY	192

CHAPTER # 1

CREATION VERSUS EVOLUTION

*"I believe in one God Maker of heaven and earth, and all things visible and invisible"
According to our own Creed, we as Copts believe in "Creation". (The Nicene Creed)*

CREATION STEP BY STEP

BEFORE THE FIRST DAY

Gen 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

This is the beginning of all temporal things. It is strictly creation **out of nothing**. The expression "creation out of nothing" is found in the II Maccabies 7:28. The idea is clearly taught in Gen 1:1;

Psa 33:9 For He spoke, and it was [done]; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Psa 148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.

Rom 4:17 (as it is written, I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed; God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

CREATION OF LIGHT & TIME THEN LIGHT BEARERS AND TIME MARKERS

THE FIRST DAY	THE FOURTH DAY
<p><i>{2} The earth was without form, and void; and darkness [was] on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.</i></p> <p><i>{3} Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.</i></p> <p><i>{4} And God saw the light, that [it was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness. {5} God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.</i></p>	<p><i>{14} Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; {15} "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. {16} Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. [He made] the stars also. {17} God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, {18} and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that [it was] good. {19} So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.</i></p>

The creation of light, preceded the creation of the sun and moon, the energy of light in many forms is much wider and bigger than the bearers of lights, i.e. the sun and the moon. Light travels at xx metres per second, this means time is synonymous with light.

But how did God support the earth without the solar system?

*Heb 1:2-3 has in these last days spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; {3} who being the brightness of [His] glory and the express image of His person, **and upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our*

sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

God upholds. If the sun's gravity is holding the earth, how is the sun being held? There must be time when God supported the earth through His power, as He is doing this with the whole creation, including the sun, right now.

CREATION OF THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE THICK VAPOUR CANOPY AND THE CREATURES OF THE WATER AND THE AIR

THE SECOND DAY	THE FIFTH DAY
<p>{6} Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." {7} Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which [were] under the firmament from the waters which [were] above the firmament; and it was so. {8} And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.</p>	<p>{20} Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." {21} So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that [it was] good. {22} And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." {23} So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.</p>
<p>1. The word "firmament" in Hebrew means "RAKISH", "pneumatic" this is like thin metal beaten by a mallet, this would of been the best way to express the mass of air with it's pneumatic characteristic.</p> <p>1. The question is this; where did all the water above the atmosphere go? Some say that it was all used at the time of the great flood.</p> <p>1. This huge canopy of water protected the earth from many of the cosmic rays we receive now, which could explain the huge difference in people life-span before and after the flood.</p> <p>It also appear that people before the great flood did not experience rain, change of seasons nor extreme weather fluctuations. This is probably what God tried to explain to Noah after the Flood.</p>	
<p><i>Gen 8:22 "While the earth remains, Seed time and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."</i></p>	
<p>It also appears that Adam did not have to irrigate or wait for rain, as God said <i>Gen 2:4-6 This [is] the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, {5} before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and [there was] no man to till the ground; {6} but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.</i></p>	

THE EMERGING OF DRY LAND AND THE CREATION OF THE ANIMALS AND THE CREATION OF MAN

THE THIRD DAY	THE SIXTH DAY
<p>{9} Then God said, "Let the waters under the</p>	<p>{24} Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth</p>

heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry [land] appear"; and it was so. {10} And God called the dry [land] Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that [it was] good. {11} Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb [that] yields seed, [and] the fruit tree [that] yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed [is] in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. {12} And the earth brought forth grass, the herb [that] yields seed according to its kind, and the tree [that] yields fruit, whose seed [is] in itself according to its kind. And God saw that [it was] good. {13} So the evening and the morning were the third day.

the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, [each] according to its kind"; and it was so. {25} And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that [it was] good.

MAN CREATED ON THE SIXTH DAY

{26} Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Man is the prince and the hegemony of the creation, inclusive of the environment. With this authority man has a responsibility to manage the environment.

It appears that some groups are turning the situation upside down by making the environment the master, and sometimes people refer to and deal with the environment as their god.

MAN ON GOD'S OWN IMAGE

{27} So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. {28} Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Man is in God's own image in holiness, love, eternity, wisdom, understanding, reasoning,.....etc.

MAN WAS VEGETARIAN

{29} And God said, "See, I have given you every herb [that] yields seed which [is] on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. {30} "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for food"; and it was so. {31} Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed [it was] very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BELIEVE IN CREATION?

The Bible stated clearly in the Book of Genesis that God created Heaven and Earth and every thing therein.

Some modern and liberal theologians are trying to tell us that Genesis is not an accurate record of how the world came to being. Some even say that Genesis and the other first four books, were not written by Moses, but rather collected by various people from "Babylonian Mythology".

We believe that the first five books of the Old Testament were given to Moses through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit., for many reasons:

(1) The Lord Jesus Refers to Genesis as An Authentic Divine Book

Mat 19:7-9 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" {8} He said to them, "Moses , because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. {9} "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

John 3:14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

John 5:45-46 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is [one] who accuses you; Moses, in whom you trust. {46} "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

If our Lord Jesus uses Moses Books as a reference. He is obviously considering them to be divinely inspired books. Was Jesus a liar or was He ignorant?. The Books of Moses are authenticated by Christ Himself.

(2) The Church Teaches Us That Creation Is True

All the Church's documents, prayers, creed and life are very clearly pointing to the Creation as a fundamental part of the faith.

2.1 The Nicene Creed

The Creed states that

"God Is Creator Of Heaven And Earth".

Do we agree with the Creed, or is it out of date?

2.2 The Church Fathers

The Church Fathers always believed in the Old Testament as authentic part of God's revelation for man. St John Crisostom , as an example, left us a great heritage on the creation and on the authentic Book of Genesis. We most certainly believe that the Church fathers are correct in their teachings.

2.3 The Church Liturgy & Other Devotions

St Basil's Liturgy

"O Great and Eternal God who created man in in-corruption; and by the life-giving manifestation of your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, You destroyed that death which was introduced into the world by the envy of the devil"

This Liturgical statement must rule out any struggle and blood shed as means of bringing the species to this earth. Especially that every thing God created was "GOOD" in His eye.

The Gregorian Liturgy

The Gregorian Liturgy declares the same thing, while speaking to God The Son.

"You 'Lover of mankind" created me.

You are not dependent on my service, but I am dependent on your master ship.

Through your unlimited grace you created me out of nothing .

You established and upheld the heaven as a ceiling for me, and you firmed the ground for my steps.

For me you restrained the sea.

For me you made the animals.

You subjected every thing under my feet, and satisfied all my needs, with your gracious works.

You created me, blessed me by the placement of Your Hand.

You have depicted in me the image of Your Authority.

Created in me the gift of reasoning and speech.

And opened your paradise "Garden" for my enjoyment.

You granted me to know You.

You materialized for me the Tree of Life.

And taught me the thorn of death.

One plant you prohibited me from eating.

This is the only one, which you told me not to eat from.

Through my own will I ate, rejecting Your Law through my own brainwork.

I ignored your canons.

I snatched for my self the death sentence."

In chanting these words we are affirming our belief in God the Creator.

The Tasbeha "Mid Night Vespers"

We sing Exodus Chapter 15, every night of the year declaring the crossing of the Red Sea as a Biblical and heavenly reality? This is the song of Moses, God's servant.

The heavenly creatures in heaven are singing this song for ever and ever. We most definitely believe St John's Revelation, especially when we read that the "Song of Moses" is a principal song of the heavenly hosts.

How could we accept the claim that this story was just a mythical story? or an illusion?

(3) Creation Is A Corner Stone in The Christian Orthodox Theology

3.1 Was There Death before Adam's Sin?

If we deny creation and adopt "Evolution", this means that we accept that Adam was not the first of the human creation, but there were many creatures and semi-humans before Adam. It then follows that these creatures struggled, died, and suffered.

3.2 Was Death and Suffering A Normal Thing Not Related To Sin?

Man's Salvation depends on the sacrifice of Christ and His death. We believe that Death is the wages for sin.

If we agree with evolution then it follows that we agree death and suffering was not introduced by sin? And we are in turn marginalising the death of Christ.

We have already started hearing non believing "Theologians" who reduce Christ's death to no more than a gallant stand of love and emotion, but not as "The Price" for our sin.

3.3 Evolution teaches that death existed before Adam's time.

If Shedding Of Blood Existed before Sin, Then Blood Shedding Is Of No Value for The Atonement Of Sin.

The principle of the "Blood Sacrifice" is the only acceptable means of forgiving man's sin. God killed the first animal to offer it as a sacrifice on Adam's behalf. Adam and the rest of the creation were mainly vegetarian, especially before the sin.

It is obvious that God prepared and used death and blood shed as part of His Plan for our salvation.

(4) The Belief in Creation Is A Fundamental Corner Stone In Our Christian Ethic And Morality

(4.1) All moral issues are dependent on two things:

- **If God Is The Creator, Then He Is Our Master & His Word Is A Canon**
- **If The Creation Is A Fact, Then The Book Of Genesis Is Authentic, And It's Teachings Are Binding On All.**

Some Examples:

- The validity of Christ's teaching on marriage and divorce, as Christ Himself referred back to Genesis.
- The validity of the teaching that Homosexuality is an abomination and a sin.
- The teaching of sexual fidelity and purity as taught in the story of Joseph, and subsequently in the Ten Commandments.

God Is our Creator and Maker, if He is So then His Word must be obeyed. If He is not then why bother about listening to His commands?. If we were evolved then let us make our own commands, and change them according to our development and society needs.

**IN SUMMARY AGREEING WITH THEORIES LIKE THE BIG BANG AND EVOLUTION DESTROYS ALL OUR FOUNDATIONS, NOT ONLY AS CHRISTIANS BUT AS ORTHODOX TOO.
BELIEVING IN CREATION IS THE ONLY VIABLE & STABLE THEORY, LOGICALLY & SCIENTIFICALLY**

EVOLUTION IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC FACT, IT IS ONLY A BELIEF

The theory of evolution is a theory in crisis.

- Evolution Is Not Science, It Is Only A Belief, especially that No scientist was there at the time of the so-called "Big Bang", or at the times of the so-called "Evolution".
- We believe GOD as He was there at the time of creation.
- But we cannot believe evolutionist scientists because of their obvious bias and their inability to repeat any of the events of Evolution in the laboratory.

(1) The Fossil Evidence:

The fossil evidence have not proven any thing, especially there are many embarrassing evidence that many objects have fossilized in a time span of less than hundred years.

(2) The Geological Column

The Geological column assumed by C Darwin was not consistently found in the form imagined by the science books writers. Most fossils as found are actually heaped in a manner, which points to a great flood, "like Noah's".

(3) The Living Fossils

The most embarrassing discoveries of creatures which were claimed to be totally extinct. The complexities discovered in some of the so called "primitive" species, where, for example, eye formations of many of these "primitive" creatures were found to be thousands of times as complex as the human eye.

(4) Where Are the Intermediary Creatures?

The total absence of any intermediary creatures or fossils of such creatures, for example nobody has yet announced any findings or sightings of the intermediary creature between the fish and the bird, i.e. a creature with one wing on one side and a fish fin on the other side of the body?

(5) The Present Dating Methods Are Embarrassingly Contradictory

The embarrassing contradictions and variations between various laboratories determining the age of the same fossilized sample. The Carbon 14 dating method and other similar methods are based on unproved assumptions. The explosion of Mount St Helen's in 1980 is an obvious example of the inaccuracy of such methods.

(6) The Same Evidence Used By Evolutionists Could Be Used to Prove the Theory of Creation

There is a great body of scientists who believe in Creation as more scientifically credible than evolution. These scientists are using the same evidence produced by the evolutionists to support the theory of creation.

FINAL END OF CREATION***The purpose of creation***

Some find the final end of creation is the happiness of man. As we see from the "Gregorian Liturgy", all creation was placed under our feet. We could say then, that the creator is the source of man's happiness, not the creation. Otherwise God could not Himself the final end, because He is sufficient unto Himself. But it would seem self evident that God does not exist for man, but man for God. The creature cannot be the final end of creation. The Bible teaches us clearly that God created the world for the manifestation of His Glory. Naturally the revelation of the glory of God is not intended as an empty show to be admired by the creatures, but also aims at promoting their welfare and attuning their hearts to the praise of the creator,

Isa 43:7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

Isa 60:21 Also your people [shall] all [be] righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.

Isa 61:3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Ezek 36:21-22 "But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. {22} "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do [this] for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.

Ezek 39:7 "So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not [let them] profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that [I am] the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Rom 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."

Rom 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him [are] all things, to whom [be] glory forever. Amen.

1 Cor 15:28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Eph 1:5-6 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, {6} to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Eph 1:12-14 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. {13} In Him you also [trusted], after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph 3:9-10 and to make all see what [is] the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; {10} to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly [places],

Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

SUBSTITUTES FOR THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

They who reject the doctrine of creation resort to one of three theories for the explanation of the world

MATERIALISM

(1) Some say that original matter is eternal, and out of it the world arose, either by mere chance, or by some higher directing force. But this is impossible because you cannot have two eternal beings and therefore two infinities alongside of each other.

PANTHEISM

Others maintain that God and the world are essentially one, and that the world is a necessary issue (outflow) of the Divine being. But this view robs God of His power of self-determination, and men their freedom and of their moral and responsible character. It also makes God responsible for all the evil in the world

EVOLUTION

Refer to the above discussion.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is creation?
2. Was the creation a free or a necessary act of God?
3. What are the dangers of not believing in creation?
4. Does the Bible prove creation out of nothing? Where?
5. What two views are there as to the final end of creation?
6. In what sense is the Glory of God is the final end?
8. What substitutes been suggested to the doctrine of creation.
9. Were the days of Genesis ordinary days or long periods?
10. What did God create on each of the six days?
11. Is the theory of evolution consistent with the doctrine of creation?
12. Can you name some of the points on which they differ?
13. Imagine that the Nicene Council is being held today. In your opinion how should the Creed state the creation issue?
14. What is your opinion about the coloured races "Aboriginal", "Nigros",..... etc. Would you agree that they are still evolving?

CHAPTER # 2

THE HOLY TRINITY

Let us Consider the Relation between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The God of us Christians is known to us as "Father, Son & Holy Spirit".

The Lord Jesus Christ commanded the apostles and disciples to baptise people, in the "Name of The Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit".

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Also St Paul writes a wonderful essay about The Son, in his epistle to the Hebrews, chapters 1&2,

Heb 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, {2} has in these last days spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

Also the Lord Jesus, spoke clearly about The Holy Spirit, as God. And St Peter while admonishing Hanania and his Wife Sapphira, told them in no uncertain terms, that they were lying to the "Holy Spirit", Who is God.

THE TRINITARIAN BELIEF

The Word "Trinity"

The word "Trinity" is a summary of a Biblical fact, to summarize that the God we worship is a Triune God, with three "Hypostasis", where "Hypostasis" is a Greek word signifying a person, who is indivisible from other persons. This is to say that the Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit are three "Hypostasis", in one God Head.

OTHER CHURCHES AND THE TRINITARIAN BELIEF?

This fact is the same through the Christian Church, the only so called "Churches" who oppose the belief in a Triune God are actually the "Heretic Sects", like "Jehovah Witnesses", the "Christodelphians", the "Mormons"....etc. But the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and the Evangelical "Protestant" Churches are in full agreement on the matter of the Trinity.

(A) THE NECESSITY TO BELIEVE IN A TRIUNE GOD?

Some times people may wonder, why should the Christians insist to evangelize and to believe the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, while such doctrine is causing them a lot of ridicule and arguments with the likes of the Jews, the Moslems and The Jehovah's witnesses?

(A.1) A None Triune God is deficient and inactive.

(A.2) The teaching of the Trinity is the key to our Salvation and Sanctification.

(A.3) The Trinity is a Biblical teaching.

A.1 None Triune God Is Deficient and Inactive.

1 God is independent

This is to say, He is the "reason and the cause for every thing", He exists in fullness without the need of any creation or other being. He is self sufficient and almighty.

If this is true about God, then how could we explain that God is Love! or mercy or powerful, if He is independent of all other creatures?. If "God is Love", and He does not need me or the angels to express His love, did this mean, that at some stage, God was "Not Love"???. This is also not true, because God is unchangeable.

If God is a Triune God, i.e. "Father, Son and Holy Spirit", then God The Father in His Love to God the Son, has fulfilled his loving attribute without being dependent on any creature/s.

2. God is Effective

A solid unitary God, could be resembled to a painting or a photograph of a flame, it looks like fire, but is cold and not effective.

God is effective by His "LOGOS", i.e. The Son. God is Alive by His Spirit, i.e. The Holy Spirit.

The difference between you and your portrait, that you are alive with your "spirit", effective through your "mind". You are still one person, but still have these other indescribable spiritual gifts of God which make you on God's own image of effectiveness and livelihood.

A.2 Without The Trinity We Have No Salvation or Sanctification

If the Son was not equal to God in every thing, then His atonement on the Cross is not enough to fulfill God's own Justice. If the Holy Spirit is not God then our fallen nature cannot be sanctified to match God's requirements of holiness. As we have been ousted and rejected by God as a result of our sin, to sanctify this fallen nature you need God to do it.

A.3 The Trinity Is a Biblical Teaching

A.3.1 The Oneness Of God is described as a Unity and not just "one".

In the story of Abraham and his great test by God. He was commanded by God to as follows:
*Gen 22:2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your **only** [son]Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."*

The word "**ONLY**" is a translation of the Hebrew word "**YACHID**". In Arabic [Wahid].

The Bible from the beginning to end consistently teaches us that there is only one God.

*Deu 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD [is] **one!**"*

The Hebrew word "**ONE**" used here is most significant. It is NOT "**YACHID**" as used to signify "Isaac The Only One", But rather the Holy Scripture used the Hebrew word "**ECHAD**".

"**ECHAD**" means "**Unity or the United One**". In Arabic [ETTEHAD] or [WEHDA].

OTHER BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

In Genesis 1:5 & Genesis 2:24

Gen 1:5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were ONE [YACHID] day.

Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one [ECHAD] flesh.

It is evident that the writer of Deutonomy 6:4 means to indicate that God is a united one. The obvious implication is that there is more than one Hypostasis in the one God.

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {2} He was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

As seen from the above St John indicates that the Son is God, and Was with God, and is also the Creator.

A.3.2 Each of the three Hypostasis The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are very clearly displayed in the Bible as God.

The Bible clearly teaches that while God is one, He exists in three Hypostasis. But not as three separate persons in the human sense but the "Three Hypostasis" are in one "God Head", or in one coherent none separable coexistence.

They are of such a nature that they can enter into personal relations. The Father speaks to the Son and vice versa, The Father sends forth The Holy Spirit, The Holy Spirit searches the Depth of God.

(B) THE TRINITARIAN MYSTERY

The real mystery of The Trinity is that each one of the Hypostasis possesses the whole of the Divine essence, and that each Hypostasis has no existence outside or apart from the other Hypostasis.

The three are not subordinate in being the one to the other, though it may be said that in order of our recognition and concept the Father is known first, then the Son then the Holy Spirit. This is only relative to our way of conceiving God.

(C) TRINITY FROM THE SCRIPTURES

To carry on from the previous argument, the Old Testament contains some indications of more than one Hypostasis in God:

C.1 God Speaks In The Plural.

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Gen 11:7 "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

C.2 The Angel of Jehovah is displayed very clearly as a Divine Person:

Gen 16:7-13 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. {8} And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." {9} The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." {10} Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." {11} And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you [are] with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction. {12} He shall be a wild man; His hand [shall be] against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." {13} Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"

Also refer to Gen 18:1-21, Gen 19:1-22.

C.3 The Son And The Holy Spirit are spoken of as distinct Hypostasis:

Isa 48:16 "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I [was] there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me."

Isa 63:10 But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, [And] He fought against them.

C.4 Moreover there are some passages in which the Messiah is speaking and mentions two other Hypostaseis

Isa 48:16 "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I [was] there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me."

Isa 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to [those who are] bound;

Isa 63:9-10 In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old. {10} But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, [And] He fought against them.

C.5 The Clearer Revelation Of The New Testament

Due to the progress of revelation from the Old Testament to the New Testament, The New Testament contains clearer proofs.

C.5.1 The Strongest Proof Is Found In The Facts Of The Redemption

The Father sends the Son into the world, and the Son ascends to Heaven to enable the Holy Spirit to be sent.

C.5.2 There Are Many Places Where The Three Hypostaseis Are Expressly Mentioned

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit [be] with you all. Amen.

Luke 3:21-22 When all the people were baptised, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptised; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. {22} And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove

upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, ["The] Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

1 Cor 12:4-6 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. {5} There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. {6} And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

1 Pet 1:2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

(D) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE FATHER

The Name "FATHER" is frequently applied in Scripture to the Triune God.

D.1 As The Creator Of All Things

1 Cor 8:6 yet for us [there is] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [are] all things, and through whom we [live].

Heb 12:9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected [us], and we paid [them] respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

D.2 As The Father of Israel

Deu 32:6 Do you thus deal with the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? [Is] He not your Father, [who] bought you? Has He not made you and established you?

Isa 63:16 Doubtless You [are] our Father, Though Abraham was ignorant of us, And Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O LORD, [are] our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting [is] Your name.

D.3 The Father of Believers

Mat 5:45 "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Mat 6:6 "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who [is] in the secret [place]; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Mat 6:9 "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Mat 6:14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

D.4 As The First Hypostaseis of The Trinity

In a deeper sense it is applied to the First Hypostaseis of the Trinity to emphasize His relationship to the Second Hypostaseis

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him].

John 8:54 Jesus answered, "If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing. It is My Father who honours Me, of whom you say that He is your God.

John 14:12-13 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater [works] than these he will do, because I go to My Father. {13} "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

D.5 The Father Is The Source Of Fatherhood

This is the origin of all fatherhood. The earthly fatherhood is but a faint reflection.

D.6 The Distinctive Characteristics Of The Father

The distinctive characteristic of the Father that He "Generates" or "Gives Birth" to the Son **from all eternity**. This is why the Creed states "**Begotten Not Made**". The works ascribed to The father are those of planning the work of redemption, creation and providence, and representing the Trinity in the Council of Redemption.

D.6 Liturgical Evidence

St Basil's Liturgy"

"O Great and eternal God Who Created Man in In-corruption"

" And by the Life-giving manifestation of your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, You destroyed that death which was introduced to the world by the envy of the devil".

(E) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE SON

The second Hypostaseis in the Trinity is called the "Son", or "Son of God." . He bears this name, as the only Begotten of the Father,

E.1 The Only Begotten Son

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him].

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

E.2 But Also As the "Messiah" Chosen Of God

Mat 8:29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Mat 26:63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

John 1:49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

John 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

E.3 His Special Immaculate And Virginal Birth, Through The Operation Of The Holy Spirit

Luke 1:32-35 "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. {33} "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." {34} Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" {35} And the angel answered and said to her, ["The] Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

E.4 His Characteristic As The Second Hypostaseis Of The Trinity That He Is Eternally Begotten Of The Father,

Psa 2:7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You [are] My Son, Today I have begotten You.

Acts 13:33 "God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'

Heb 1:5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?

By means of Eternal generation the Father is the cause¹ of the personal existence of the Son within the Divine Being. The works more particularly ascribed to Him are works of mediation. He mediated the work of creation.

E.5 The Son As The Mediator

John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Heb 1:2-3 has in these last days spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds: {3} who being the brightness of [His] glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and mediates the work of redemption

Eph 1:3-14 Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly [places] in Christ, {4} just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, {5} having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, {6} to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. {7} In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace {8} which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, {9} having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, {10} that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; in Him. {11} In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, {12} that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. {13} In Him you also [trusted], after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

¹ Being the "Cause" does not mean that The Father Created the Son, but due to the our limited human understanding the word "cause" is the closest to the meaning.

(F) THE HYPOSTASIS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Through the Bible the Holy Spirit stands out as a Hypostaseis, and not just a mere force

F.1 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Speaks And Calls!

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

F.2 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Hears!

John 16:13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own [authority], but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

F.3 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Teaches!

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

F.4 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Counsels

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever; {17} "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

F.5 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis, He Knows The Future

Acts 21:11 When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his [own] hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver [him] into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

F.6 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis May Be Lied To!

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back [part] of the price of the land for yourself?"

F.7 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Forbids!

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

F.8 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis May Be Grieved!

Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

F.9 The Holy Spirit As A Divine Hypostaseis Intercedes!

Rom 8:27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit [is], because He makes intercession for the saints according to [the will of] God.

(G) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

The Holy Spirit Is Personal, Not Just A Force!

Only a person can do what the Holy Spirit does. The Bible clearly speaks of the Holy spirit as a Hypostaseis "Person". the Bible also teaches that the Spirit is God.

G.1 St Peter Calls The Holy Spirit God

In the first Church in Jerusalem Annanias and his wife Sapphira sold some property and brought only a part of the money to the apostles, claiming it was the full price, St Peter said:
Acts 5:3-4 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back [part] of the price of the land for yourself? {4} "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

St Peter leaves no doubt about the matter: The Holy Spirit is God.

G.2 The Holy Spirit Identified As Jehovah

The Holy Spirit is identified in the Scriptures with the Lord (Jehovah).

The Lord told the prophet Isaiah

Isa 6:9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

In Acts 28:25-26 the Apostle Paul states that it was the Holy Spirit who spoke these words through Isaiah:

Acts 28:25-26 So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, {26} "saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive;

The Jews in the desert put the Lord Jehovah to the proof

Exo 17:2 Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?"

In Hebrews the Holy Spirit Says:

Heb 3:9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.

In Jeremiah The Lord Jehovah declares Jehovah to the proof

Jer 31:33 "But this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

In Hebrews 10: 16 the Holy Spirit Says:

Heb 10:16 "This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"

Thus there are three "Persons" Hypostasis mentioned in the Scriptures who shares equally the divine name of God. It is in their divine Name that we are to be baptised.

Again and again the Bible differentiates between the Father, Son, and Spirit. While the Scriptures ascribe specific works to each of the three Hypostases in the Godhead.

(H) THE THREE HYPOSTASIS ARE ONE GOD

H.1 Each Hypostaseis Is Called The One Lord

LORD

Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth

Mat 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from [the] wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

Son, Lord of Glory

James 2:1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with partiality.

Eph 4:5 (NKJV) one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Holy Spirit

2 Cor 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord [is], there [is] liberty.

THE ONE SPIRIT

The Spirit of God The Father

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The Spirit of Christ

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

The one Spirit

Eph 4:4 [There is] one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

THE CREATOR

The Father Creates

1 Cor 8:6 yet for us [there is] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [are] all things, and through whom we [live].
Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another By profaning the covenant of the fathers?

The Son Creates

Heb 1:10 And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

The Spirit Creates

Psa 104:30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth.

THE LORD DWELLS

The Father and Son make their Home In the man of Christ

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.
2 Cor 6:16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among [them]. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."
 :

Christ dwells in your Hearts

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

The Spirit of God dwells in you

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

The truth of the Scriptures is

- There are three distinct Divine Hypostaseis.
- These Three are equal in their characteristics, but they are one Being.
- They are properly called God, whether separately or collectively.
- They are not three separate Gods, but only one eternal God- Father, Son, and Spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR REVISION

- 1: Can we discover the Doctrine of the Trinity from Nature?
- 2: Are there three separate individuals in God?
- 3: Is one Hypostaseis subordinate to another in God?
- 4: How can we prove The Trinity from the Old Testament?
- 5: What is the strongest proof of the Trinity?
- 6: What New Testament passages best prove The Trinity?
- 7: In what different senses is the Name "Father" applied to God?
- 8: What works are more particularly ascribed to each one of the Hypostaseis?
- 9: In what different senses is the Name "Son" is applied to Christ?
- 10: What is the special Characteristics of each Hypostaseis?
- 11: How can you prove that The Holy Spirit is a Person, and not just a force?
- 12: How did St Peter indicate beyond doubt that the Holy Spirit Is God?
13. Prove that the Holy Spirit, The Son And The Father are dwelling in us?
14. Prove that the Holy Spirit Is The Creator?
15. Why do Christians insist on a Triune God?
16. Produce some examples from the Scriptures for the Trinity.

CHAPTER # 3

MAN IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION AND THE COVENANT OF GRACE

Who For Us & For Our Salvation Came Down From Heaven & Was Incarnated Of The Holy Spirit and Of the Virgin Mary & Became Man. Crucified For Our Salvation Under Pontios Pilate, He Suffered And Was Buried."

The Creed States that Christ was incarnated and Has come to this earth for our Salvation.

The Doctrine of Salvation through the Blood of our Lord Jesus, is a common faith shared by the Orthodox, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches.

The salvation is actually an act of God's grace and love.

For the sake of clarity we distinguish between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace. The two are so closely related that they can be and sometimes are considered as one. The former is the eternal foundation of the latter.

THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

This is also called the counsel of peace, a name derived from Zech 6:13.

Zec 6:13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

It is a covenant between the Father representing the Trinity and the Son as the representative of humanity (the elect).

The Scriptures Are The Basis For This Belief

Part Of God's Plan

It is clear that the plan of redemption was included in God's eternal decree,

Eph 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

Eph 3:11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

2 Tim 1:9 who has saved us and called [us] with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

The Lord Christ Spoke About It

Christ speaks of promises made to Him before He came into the world and repeatedly refers to a commission which He received from the Father,

John 5:30 "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

John 5:43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

John 6:38-40 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. {39} "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. {40} "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 17:4-12 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. {5} "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. {6} "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. {7} "Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. {8} "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received [them], and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. {9} "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. {10} "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. {11} "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We [are]. {12} "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

THE SON IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

Christ As A Covenant Head

He is evidently a "Covenant Head"

Rom 5:12-21 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned; {13} (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. {14} Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. {15} But the free gift [is] not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. {16} And the gift [is] not like [that which came] through the one who sinned. For the judgment [which came] from one [offense resulted] in condemnation, but the free gift [which came] from many offenses [resulted] in justification. {17} For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus

Christ is not only the Head but also the Surety of the covenant of redemption,

Heb 7:22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

A surety is one who takes upon himself the legal obligations of another. Christ took the place of the sinner to bear the penalty of sin and to meet the demands of the law for His people. By so doing He became the Second Adam, a life-giving spirit, in which He fulfilled the requirements of

the original covenant but for us it is the eternal foundation of the covenant of grace. Its benefits are limited to the faithful. They only obtain the redemption and inherit the glory which Christ merited for sinners.

Requirements And Promises In The Covenant Of Redemption.

THE FATHER

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Prepare For Him A Body

Heb 10:5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me.

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Anoint Him With The Holy Spirit

Isa 42:1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One [in whom] My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Isa 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to [those who are] bound;

John 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.

THE SON

The Father Required From The Son That He Should Assume A Human Body

The Father required of the Son that He should assume human nature with its present infirmities though without sin.

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom [are] all things and by whom [are] all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect

The Father Required The Son To Make God All In All, As Part Of His Reconciliation Act

1 Cor 15 (24-28) {24} Then [comes] the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. {25} For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. {26} The last enemy [that] will be destroyed [is] death. {27} For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under [Him]," [it is] evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. {28} Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Support Him In His Work

Isa 42:6 "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,

Isa 42:7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

Luke 22:43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Deliver Him From The Power Of Death And Place Him At His Own Right Hand

Psa 16:8-11 I have set the LORD always before me; Because [He is] at my right hand I shall not be moved. {9} Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. {10} For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. {11} You will show me the path of life; In Your presence [is] fullness of joy; At Your right hand [are] pleasures forevermore.

Phil 2:9-11 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, {10} that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, {11} and [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Enable Him To Send The Spirit For The Formation Of The Church

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

John 16:13-14 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own [authority], but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. {14} "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare [it] to you.

The Father Also Promised That He Would Draw and Preserve the Faithful.

John 6:37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

John 6:39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 6:40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

The Father Promised The Son That He Would Grant Him Numerous Seed

The father Also Promised that He would grant Him a numerous seed.

Psa 22:27 All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.

Psa 72:17 His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And [men] shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

On the basis of the covenant of redemption God established the covenant of grace. Several particulars call for consideration here.

The (Contracting) Parties to the Covenant

God Is The First Party

God is the first party in the covenant. He established the covenant and determines the relation in which the second party will stand to Him.

Man Is The Second Party

Man is the second party, but the question is, which group of men?

Is He The Repentant Man Only?

It is not easy to determine who the second party is. The prevailing opinion is that it is the repentant in Christ.

Why The Covenant?

We should bear in mind however, that the covenant may be viewed from two different angles;

As An End In Itself

A covenant of mutual friendship or communion of life which is realized in the course of history through the operation of the Holy Spirit. It represents a condition in which privileges are improved for spiritual ends, the promises of God are embraced by a living faith and the promised blessings are fully realized. So conceived, it may be defined as that gracious agreement between God and the repentant in Christ in which God gives Himself with all the blessings of salvation to this repentant, and the latter (the repentant) embraces God and all His gracious gifts by faith. This faith must be correct, active and fruitful.

Deu 7:9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He [is] God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

2 Cor 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Psa 25:10 All the paths of the LORD [are] mercy and truth, To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.

Psa 25:14 The secret of the LORD [is] with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.

Psa 103:17-18 But the mercy of the LORD [is] from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, {18} To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

As Means To An End

A purely legal arrangement for the realization of a spiritual end. It is evident that the Bible sometimes speaks of the covenant as including some in whom the promises are never realized such as Ishmael, Esau, the wicked sons of Eli, and the rebellious Israelites who died in their sins. The covenant may be regarded as purely a legal agreement, in which God guarantees the blessings of salvation to those who believe.

If we think of the covenant in this broader sense, we can say that God established it with the believers and their children.

Gen 17:7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

Acts 2:39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Rom 9:1-4 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, {2} that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. {3} For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, {4} who are Israelites, to whom [pertain] the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service [of God], and the promises;

The Promises And Requirements Of The Covenant

Every covenant has two sides; it offers privileges and imposes certain obligations.

The Promises Of The Covenant

The Main Promise

The main promise of the covenant, which includes all others, is contained in the oft-repeated words, "I will be a God unto you and to your seed after you".

Jer 31:33 "But this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jer 32:38-40 "They shall be My people, and I will be their God; {39} "then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. {40} "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

Ezek 34:23-25 "I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. {24} "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. {25} "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Ezek 34:30-31 "Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, [am] with them, and they, the house of Israel, [are] My people," says the Lord GOD.' " {31} "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you [are] men, [and] I [am] your God," says the Lord GOD.

Ezek 36:25-28 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. {26} "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. {27} "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do [them]. {28} "Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Heb 8:10 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

2 Cor 6:16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among [them]. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

This Promise Includes All Others, Such As

- The promise of temporal blessings
- The promise of Justification
- The promise of the Spirit of God
- The promise of final glorification
- The promise of life that never ends

The Requirements Of The Covenant

The covenant of Grace is mainly a result of God's own goodness. Mans works are only a result of Gods help. Man's works are a debt which is the manifestation of his faith. Without man's responsive acts his faith is suspect.

James 2:14-19 What [does it] profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? {15} If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, {16} and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what [does it] profit? {17} Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. {18} But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. {19} You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!

The works are a considered as compulsory debt rather than a merit. The covenant contains requirements and imposes obligations on man. By meeting the demands of the covenant man earns nothing, but merely puts himself in the way which God will communicate to him the promised blessings.

Rom 4:4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

Moreover it should be made very clear that even the requirements are covered by the promises: God gives man all that He requires of him (Faith is a gift of God) and without Christ (We cannot do any thing).

Conditions Of Acceptable Faith

That they accept the covenant ant the covenant's promises by faith, and thus enter upon the life of the covenant. This faith must be:

1. Correct, or canonical faith. For example a person who believes must be baptised with the water and the Spirit, must receive the Holy Spirit, must eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ.
For example person cannot believe in Christ but does not believe in the resurrection. No one could believe in the reincarnation, and still call himself a Christian.

2. Active faith (Works). For example the person must read the word of God, must pray and fast, must have love and charity towards the needs of others and must actively love other people.
3. To keep in the faith one should maintain agility, live in repentance, struggle for purity, struggle against the self, fast, pray ... etc. None of these acts should be separated from the Holy Spirit. Also one should be an active member of the body of Christ, i.e. the Church.
4. Fruitful (Service & Evangelism). For example the faithful must witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the whole world.

The Characteristics Of The Covenant

Eternal

The covenant of Grace is a gracious covenant, because it is the fruit and manifestation of the grace of God to sinners. It is God's grace from start to finish. It is also eternal and inviolable covenant, to which God will always be true, though men may break it.

Particular

Even in its widest extent it includes only a part of mankind, and is therefore particular. If its New Testament dispensation is called universal, this is done only in view of the fact that it is not limited to the Jews, as the Old Testament dispensation was.

One

This covenant is also characterized by unity. It is essentially the same in all dispensations, though the form of its administration changes (different method before and after Christ).

The Essential Promise is the Same

Gen 17:7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you."

Heb 8:10 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Gal 3:6-7 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." {7} Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

The Mediator Is The Same

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Conditional And Unconditional

The covenant is both conditional and unconditional. It is conditional because it is dependent on the merits of Christ and because the enjoyment of life it offers depends on the exercise of faith and resulting works and fruits. But it is unconditional in the sense it does not depend on the merits of man.

Testamentary

It is Testamentary as a free and sovereign disposition on the part of God. It is called a "Testament":

Heb 9:16-17 For where there [is] a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. {17} For a testament [is] in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

1. It is a free arrangement of God
2. It's New Testament dispensation was ushered by the death of Christ.
3. That in it God gives what He demands, Faith and Ability to heed the commandments.

The covenant of grace differs from the Old Testament's covenant of works (i.e. Old Testament offerings and blood sacrifices) , in that it has a mediator. Christ is represented as the Mediator of the new covenant:

1 Tim 2:5 For [there is] one God and one Mediator between God and men, [the] Man Christ Jesus, Heb 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Heb 12:24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than [that of] Abel.

He is a Mediator, not only merely in the sense that He intervenes between God and man to sue for peace and to persuade to it, but in the sense that He is armed with full power to do all that is necessary for the actual establishment of peace. As our surety:

Heb 7:22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

He assumes our guilt, pays the penalty of sin, fulfills the law, and thus restores peace.

The Membership Of The Covenant

Adults

Adults can enter the covenants as a purely legal arrangement by faith, then baptism with the water and the Spirit and then with the "Mayroon" which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. And when they so enter it, they at the same time gain entrance into the covenant as a communion of life, i.e. **"Active Faith" & "Fruitful Faith"**. They therefore enter upon the full covenant of life at once.

The Children Of The Believers

Children of believers however enter the covenant as a legal arrangement by birth, and according to the faith of their parents they are permitted to baptism and confirmation. They enjoy a better chance of developing into a state where the Holy Spirit is working in them from within and not from without. They are in communion with the Church, especially by eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Christ. But this does not necessarily mean that they also at once enter it as a communion of life nor even that they will ever enter in that sense. Yet the promise of God gives a reasonable assurance that the covenant life will be realized in them. As

long as they do not manifest the contrary life we may proceed on the hope that they possess the new life. When they grow up they must accept their covenant responsibilities voluntarily **by a true confession of faith, in it's three forms " True, Active & Fruitful"**. Failure to do this makes them covenant breakers. From the preceding it follows that persons not fulfilling their faith obligations, may temporarily be in the covenant as a purely legal relationship.

Rom 9:4 who are Israelites, to whom [pertain] the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service [of God], and the promises;

They are recognized as covenant children and are subject to its requirements and share its ministrations. They receive the seal of baptism enjoy the other sacraments, and the blessings of the covenant and may even partake of some special operations of the Holy Spirit. If they do not accept the corresponding responsibilities, they will be judged as breakers of the covenant.

The Different Dispensations Of The Covenant

The First Revelation Of The Covenant

The first revelation of the covenant is found in Gen 3:15 which is usually called the original or the maternal promise. This does not yet refer to the formal establishment of the covenant.

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

The Covenant With Noah

The covenant with Noah is of a very general nature as a covenant with all flesh. It conveys only natural blessings and is therefore often called the covenant of nature or of common grace. It is closely connected however with the covenant of grace. It is also a fruit of the grace of God and the guarantees those natural and temporal blessings which are absolutely necessary for the realization of the covenant of grace.

The Covenant With Abraham

The covenant with Abraham marks its formal establishment. It is the beginning of the Old Testament particularistic administration of the covenant which is now limited to Abraham and his descendants becomes its seal.

The Covenant In Sinai

The covenant at Sinai is essentially the same as the established with Abraham, but now takes in the whole nation of Israel and thus became a national covenant. Though it strongly stresses the keeping of the law, it should not be regarded as a renewed covenant of works. The law increased the consciousness of sin, Rom 3:20 and became a tutor unto Christ, Gal 3:24. Passover was added as a second sacrament.

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law [is] the knowledge of sin.

Gal 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor [to bring us] to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

The New Covenant

The new covenant as revealed in the New Testament, Jer 31:31, Heb 8:8, 13 is essentially the same as that of the Old Testament Rom 4, Gal 3. It now breaks through the barriers of particularism and becomes universal in the sense that its blessings are extended to people of all nations. Its blessings become fuller and more spiritual and baptism and the Lord's Supper are substituted for the Old Testament deeds of circumcision and the various offerings and blood sacrifices.

Jer 31:31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

Heb 8:8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A new [covenant]," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

REVISION OF THE MAJOR VERSES.

The parties of the covenant:

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Gen 17:7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

Exo 19:5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth [is] Mine.

Jer 31:31-33 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; {32} "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. {33} "But this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Acts 2:39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Its promises and requirements

Gen 17:7, Ex 19:5, Jer 31:33 under a. above for the essential promise.

Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Exo 19:5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth [is] Mine.

Psa 25:14 The secret of the LORD [is] with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.

Psa 103:17-18 But the mercy of the LORD [is] from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, {18} To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

Gal 3:7 Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:9 So then those who [are] of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Characteristics of the Covenant

Eternal

Gen 17:19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his descendants after him.

Isa 54:10 For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

Isa 24:5 The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, Because they have transgressed the laws, Changed the ordinance, Broken the everlasting covenant.

Unity

Gal 3:7 Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:9 So then those who [are] of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Rom 4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which [he had while still] uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,

Testamentary

Heb 9:17 For a testament [is] in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

Heb 9:18 Therefore not even the first [covenant] was dedicated without blood.

The Mediator

1 Tim 2:5 For [there is] one God and one Mediator between God and men, [the] Man Christ Jesus,

Heb 7:22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) What is the covenant of redemption? By what other name is it known, and how is it related to the covenant of grace?
- (2) What Scriptural evidence is there for it?
- (3) What is the official position of Christ in this covenant?
- (4) Was it for Christ a covenant of Grace or a covenant of works?
- (5) Whom does Christ represent in this covenant?
- (6) What did the Father require of Christ, and what did He promise Him?
- (7) What distinction do we apply to the covenant of grace?
- (8) How does this affect the question, who is the second party to the covenant?
- (9) What is the all embracing promise of the covenant?
- (10) What does God require of those who are in the covenant?
- (11) What are the required categories of the faith?
- (12) What are the characteristics of the covenant?

- (13) In what sense is the covenant is unbreakable, and in what sense breakable?
- (14) How can you prove the unity of the covenant?
- (15) In what sense is it conditional, and what sense is it unconditional?
- (16) Where do we find the first revelation of the covenant?
- (17) Why can it be called a testament?
- (18) What was the nature of the covenant with Noah?
- (19) How did the covenant with Abraham and the Sinaitic covenant differ?
- (20) What characterizes the New Testament dispensation of the covenant?
- (21) What is the position of Christ in the covenant of Grace?
- (22) How do children of believers enter the covenant?
- (23) How can adults become covenant members?
- (24) What is expected from the children, who are entered the covenant?

CHAPTER #4

THE ORIGINAL SIN

The original sin was committed by our Father Adam and our Mother Eve. Since then the four principals of the first sin have repeated themselves through the ages. The latest format of the original sin is movement called the New Age Movement.

BABYLONIAN RETURN

The "NEW AGE" movement or the "Age Of Aquarius" is the resurrected form of the old "Babylonian Religion". This Babylonian religion was condemned by God in The Book Of Isaia and The Book Of Revelation.

Isa 47 (NKJV) "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers. 3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man." 4 As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel. 5 "Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms. 6 I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, And given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; On the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily. 7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them. 8 "Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children'; 9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments. 10 "For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, 'No one sees me'; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me.' 11 Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, Which you shall not know. 12 "Stand now with your enchantments And the multitude of your sorceries, In which you have labored from your youth; Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail. 13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you. 14 Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, Nor a fire to sit before! 15 Thus shall they be to you With whom you have labored, Your merchants from your youth; They shall wander each one to his quarter. No one shall save you.

Rev 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.

Rev 18:2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!"

Rev 18:7 "In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit [as] queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'

Rev 18:8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day; death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong [is] the Lord God who judges her."

WHO IS BEHIND THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

This movement is very similar to the Hindu Religion, it has no headquarters, no prophet, no leader, no set rules and is very illusive. It is a spiritual movement fueled by the spirit of the Satan himself.

This movement is based on the four principals which are peddled by Satan in all other false religions.

THE FOUR PRINCIPALS OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

The seeds of this Anti God worship started at Eden, it had four basic principals behind it:

1. The pre-existence of the soul "Reincarnation"
2. Pantheism
3. Moral Relativism
4. Esotericism

The seed of anti God religion was planted in man's mind at the Garden of Eden.

Gen 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" {2} And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; {3} "but of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die." {4} Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. {5} "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." {6} So when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make [one] wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

The Pre-Existence of the Soul Or Reincarnation

{4} Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die"

Death is an undeniable fact, even the most hardened atheist fears death. A visit to the local cemetery is enough to convince any person that death is an inescapable reality.

The famous actress and a guru of the New Age movement, Shirley MacLaine, Said: "Death is only a release of the spirit to go from one body to another"

She also said: "Life is like show business, one should keep trying, until he/she gets it right"

Coupled with the principal of reincarnation goes, hand in hand, the principal of "KARMA".

The pre-existence of the spirit is peddled by many other religions and sects like the Mormons, Islam,etc.

Dangers Of The Teaching Of Reincarnation

Reincarnation is a dangerous teaching, as it denies eternity and the principal of resurrection.

Reincarnation teaches that the spirit pre existed in a previous lives and will continue on moving from one body to another until it qualifies for Nirvana where it goes back to the great "It".

Reincarnation is an encouragement for immorality.

If we were to believe in unlimited number of chances to come back; this is by necessity obviates any need to repent, improve or to fear God

Reincarnation corrupts our understanding of God

Reincarnation with it's numerous cycles of the soul, denies God's creation and shows that every soul by returning to the great "It" or the "Force", is actually adding more and more to the god of the New Age, making god an ever changing object.

In Christianity God saves man, but in the reincarnation man saves God.

Reincarnation and suicide

Reincarnation encourages suicide, as means of expediting the next cycle.

The Teaching Of "Karma"

Definitions

- "Karma" is a strict cruel rule of debits and credits, which one carries from one life to the next.
- "Karma" Vindicate Mass Murderers, Like Hitler & Idi Amin. According to the law of Karma, the Jews deserved to be killed, hence Hitler was only an instrument in the hands of this cruel rule.
- "Karma" absolves it's followers from helping the needy. This is easily justified on religious grounds as human interference in the suffering of others. Such interference is could accumulate for one bad "Karma".
- "Karma" twists the facts about the origins of suffering, "Karma" is a used as a twisted explanation for suffering. The evil in the world and the injustice is attributed to man's "Karma" rather than the fallen state of this world.

A painful examples

Innocent children who may encounter sexual abuse are told that their dilemma is a result of the bad "Karma" in their previous lives. A deserted woman may be told that her husband left her for a younger woman as a direct result of what she did in one of her previous lives where she deserted her spouse.

Pantheism, The Second New Age Principal

Gen 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,

Christians believe in "Theism". They believe in an independent and personal God, who is distinguished and separate from the creation, but in full control. of it.

The New Agers believe that god is every thing, and every thing is god. Their god is every thing. To them God is an impersonal force, with many centers within it.

Dangers Of The Teaching Of Pantheism.

Man Is Lowered To The Level Of Worms

"Pantheism" means that animals and insects are gods, as much as man is a god. This lowered man's status bringing him down to the level of animal. Such belief led to disastrous results in

India where people are not permitted to kill rats or monkeys which destroy more than 40% of the "General National Product".

Man Loses His Kingship Over The Creation

"Pantheism" means that man is no longer the master of the creation, but instead he is a slave of the environment. We now have about "Mother Earth", and "Mother Nature" as new gods and masters of people who were appointed masters of the creation.

God Is Evil And Good.

"Pantheism" means that "All Is God, And God Is All". By necessity this means that God is both "Good and Evil". And that God and the devil are actually good friends, behind the scene..

As Gods We Are Free From Any Authority?

"Pantheism" means that if every one is a god, then by necessity we should not accept, need nor follow any divine inspiration or divine books. Even Christ Himself is no longer needed, as each of us is a Christ in his/her own right.

Moral Relativism, The Third New Age Principal

Gen 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL."

Knowledge of good and evil was the worst choice taken by man. Man as a finite creature should have left God in charge of decisions relating to good and evil. Man's desire to assume control of this decision making process robbed him from God's overall protection and wide infinite view.

Since then every person in the world is being encouraged to pursue his/her own morality depending on one's own feelings and/or circumstances.

Dangers Of Moral Relativism

Moral Relativism Destroys God's Commandments.

"Moral Relativism" has made it possible for people to deny the power of God's Word and the authority of the Church. Each writing his/her own commandments

Moral Relativism Corrupts The World

"Moral Relativism" led the world in the state of sin and corruption reached today.

"Moral Relativism" leads to ignoring God's Justice

"Moral Relativism" leads to false teaching about a non-judgmental God, who will accept any standards regardless of the biblical teachings.

"Moral Relativism" Confuses between the godly and the ungodly.

"Moral Relativism" encouraged many, including Christians, to accept false teachings and religions regardless of their wrong sources and wrong content.

"Moral Relativism" facilitated the road for perverted practices to be morally and socially acceptable. For example homosexual relationship, is being peddled as an acceptable sexual alternative, legalized by law. This is in spite of what God revealed about it.

"Moral Relativism" by necessity is the first step in anarchy and misrule.

"Moral Relativism" kills The Conscience

"Moral Relativism" is a soft pillow craftily provided by the devil for people to rest their weary and troubled conscience on.

Esotericism, The Fourth New Age Principal

Gen 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make [one] wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

In this fourth spiritual flaw, the devil uses his spiritual influence to make people attracted to his ways regardless of God's instruction.

The Dangers Of Esotericism

The Devil Craves To Receive Worship

The devil is a fallen archangel who was ousted from God's presence as a result of his rebellious attitude towards God. The devil required to receive the same worship as God. This desire have never left the devil. It is his ultimate desire. His crave for it makes him offer any thing to the people to give him this worship.

If It Feels Good, Do It?!

We notice that Eve "Felt" in her heart that the tree was good. Her feelings overcame God's influence on her. She applied the warped well known principal " If It Feels Good, Do IT".

False Enlightenment, And The False Light

"Esotericism" is a dangerous principal, as it teaches people to reach enlightenment, using the spirit of the devil, under the guise of meditation.

Many People claim that "They Have Seen The Light". While many others claim to experience a "burning in the bosom" after worshipping and kneeling before the satanic book of the Mormon religion.

Christ said that He is the light of the world. Now the devil is being preached as the light.

Dabbling With The Occult & Breaking The Commandment.

"Esotericism" is a dangerous principal as it makes people break the First Commandment. The first commandment prohibits any worship to any other gods or spirits

Exo 20:2-3 "I [am] the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Worship no other god but Me.

Esotericism, Leads To Direct Encounter With Evil Spirits

"Esotericism" is a dangerous practice, as it leads people to direct contact with the evil spirits. Such contact is harmful, not only in eternity, but also on this world. Many people who walk this path end a nervous and psychological wreck.

Esoteric Experiences

Some New Agers claim breaking new spiritual grounds, by walking on fire, astro travel and having encounters with UFO's.

All these experiences are direct result of the presence of the spirit of the devil and are direct results of his interference.

Seeing the light, divining, astrology and many of these occult practices are very strongly condemned by the Word of God.

Such hunger to these esoteric encounters is a result of many churches failing to satisfy the spiritual hunger of their followers.

Our Church history and tradition informs us about the deceit of the spirit of the devil.

- "Esotericism" is a dangerous practice, as people who practice such things are joined to the army of the Anti-Christ. These people end up in hell with the devil and his evil forces.
- Following ones own feelings and intuition in matters of spirituality and morality is very dangerous and damaging. We all seen the result of our mother "Eve" believing her feelings, regarding the fruit of the tree.

Paradigm Shift

The devil uses trickery to lure people to follow the New Age. He used the same trickery used with Eve at the beginning:

Gen 3:1-2 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "HAS GOD INDEED SAID, 'YOU SHALL NOT EAT OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN'?" {2} And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

The devil employs any methods to reach his goal.

One of his Methods Is Sowing The Seed Of Doubt.

The devil prepared the world for this latest deception, by spreading the seed of doubt in God's word and authority.

Evolution, Philosophy & Psychology

Under the guise of science, philosophy and Psychology the devil succeeded to create the impression that God's Word is wrong, leading people to Atheism or Agnosticism.

For years the devil kept planting the seed of doubt in the minds of people about the Bible and the Church. He dried many people's lives and souls, making them excessively hungry for spirituality.

With the spiritual hunger following the rejection of God and the Church, the devil is eagerly standing by to quench peoples spiritual thirst.

His Other Method is to Package Satanic Practices As Means Of Help

At present the devil is peddling his recycled New Age religion in many deceiving ways:

1) He Is Selling His Principals As A Method For Success

Many people attended seminars and courses, which ends up to be a camouflage for "Transcendental Meditation", "Spiritualism" and the like.

2) He Is Selling His Principals As Health

Many health conventions and seminars now a day are mixing spirituality with acupuncture and herbal medicine. We hear about many health farms where people are lured under the guise of losing weight or treating anxiety, to find themselves involved in spiritual rituals.

3) He Is Selling His Principal As Science

Computerized Astrology

Many astrologers now a days, are recycling their satanic product through the use of computers. They dress the occult as science.

Psychology & Philosophy

Astrology is not the only occult facet peddled as science. For example many Psychological principals, being peddled as science, are basically anti God teachings.

While Christ calls people for repentance and improvement, some psychologists teach that people should accept themselves as they are, and not to attempt any change or improvement. Some other psychologists preach total freedoms for the lustful desires, under the assumption that man is driven by desire, and should fulfill his/her desire without limitation, or guilt.

(4) He Sells His Principals As Entertainment

Many satanic principals are sold to the youth in the form of "Fantasy Novels". Films like "Star Wars" peddled Hindu principals, while films like "ET" encouraged paganism.

Rock Music

Many people are now swinging with "Rock Music", which is actually a revival of the satanic "Voodoo" music used for centuries to worship the devil in many parts of the world.

Television. & Computer Games

Many TV games and computer games sell Satanism to the children and the adults.

Friendly Ghosts

Evil spirits are sold as friendly aliens who are here to help us. Many spooky movies and games are being peddled in the electronic media to prepare children and adults to accept the spiritual world.

(5) He Sells His Principal As Religion

Many spiritual religions are being introduced to the people, in many means and forms.

Eastern Religions

Indian Gurus "living gods", have been moving in a steady stream to the Christian countries, spreading the man's deity, Reincarnation, Esotericism and moral relativism in a way which was never encountered before.

Healing Services

Many Pseudo-Christian meetings and denominations are practicing healing in the name of the spirit, some times they use the name "holy spirit", in order to deceive people.

Adulterated Forms Of Christianity

Many TV evangelists are on TV today selling New Age ideas under the guise of Christianity. Many of them are teaching an experiential type of Christianity based on their own perception.

Many of them sell the principal of the unlimited power and potential of man. Making Christ a puppet figure, who is at the whim and disposal of man's mental power.

Many of them claim seeing visions of angels and Christ Himself, but unfortunately the messages communicated to them during these visions are mainly anti Christian and some times satanic.

This new type of belief is known as "The Faith Movement".

In Conclusion

In conclusion, we are very quickly approaching a critical time in the history of religion. The battle is between two gods. A cruel and merciless god who is the devil, and the Almighty and the true God.

We are confident and know that Christ will win, and the devil will be cast in hell fire.

We trust that our Christ is stronger. We as Orthodox are well nourished in the Church, with a strong and effective spiritual food.

We believe in humble prayers, canonical fasting and the communion of the saints.

Our partaking from the Eucharist is the pinnacle of spiritual fulfillment.

Our heritage is full of examples and teachings which could protect us from falling as victims to this dangerous new religion.

SUMMARY

Original Lie	Classical Name	Resulting Belief	Some Contemporary Expressions
<i>"You will be like God"</i> Pride "I am God"	<i>Pantheism</i>	God is a force God is all that exists Matter is illusionary	Animal rights Environmentalism Human potential Confidence in the deity of man.
<i>You surely shall not die"</i> Pride " I determine my destiny"	<i>Reincarnation</i>	Time is cyclical We keep going around Evil is explained by Karma Evolution	Studies in death and dying Belief that there is no judgment Channeling No fear of suicide.
<i>You will know good and evil"</i> Pride "I determine my own Morals"	<i>Moral Relativism</i>	There is no absolutes Morality depends on the situation Whatever feels good is right Evil is illusionary	Immorality Values clarification Confusion as God is good and evil Rock Music and the like
<i>"Your eyes will be opened"</i> Pride " I have all the knowledge I need"	<i>Esotericism</i>	You can achieve enlightenment You can consult inner guides You are the light	Horoscope Drugs Contact with the occult powers Transcendental Meditation

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CHAPTER # 5

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST-TRUE MAN AND TRUE GOD

The devil is savagely fighting the teaching of the incarnation of God. His objective is to rob humanity of the most precious gift of the atonement of Christ.

The devil wants to lure people not to believe in Christ as full God and full Man.

Through the generations many heresies were fueled by the devil, e.g. the Aryanic heresy, Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses.....etc.

We believe that God incarnated in a full man (body, soul and spirit). He took this full man from our blessed mother Virgin Mary. We believe that His Divinity and Humanity became one without mingling nor alteration..

We **DO NOT** believe that Jesus Christ was a human being elevated to the state of a god or God.

THE CREED

And In One God Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light out of Light, true God out of true God, begotten not made. Of one essence with the Father."

THE CREED'S BIBLICAL BASIS

(Philippians 2:5-8 NKJ)(5) Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, (7) but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, {and} coming in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to {the point of} death, even the death of the cross. (JOH 17:5)- "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (NKJ)

(COL 1:19)- For it pleased {the Father that} in Him all the fullness should dwell, (NKJ)

(COL 2:9)- For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; (NKJ)

Before the world began or any creature existed Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had the form and the nature of God and possessed the same divine glory as His Father (Consubstantial With The Father). He is equal with the Father from eternity.

(JOH 5:18) Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. (NKJ)

The incarnation of the Son of God was a fulfillment of the Covenant of Redemption, between the Father and the Son.

The Lord Jesus did not think His equality with the God was to be eagerly clung to, although it was not robbery for Him to claim such equality.

When He took the form or the nature of a human being, he emptied Himself, that is, He did not always make full use of His divine power, knowledge, and other qualities. Yet His divine nature never changed. He has always been God.

As part of the covenant of Redemption, the Lord Jesus was to place himself as a slave and as an obedient sacrifice. He did not need that, but our salvation demanded such a sacrifice. The details of the covenant of Redemption are discussed in a separate chapter.

The Lord Jesus , as part of His Covenant with the Father, took flesh and placed Himself in the stead of Adam and Adam's generations.

First Adam	The Lord Jesus
Followed His feelings and instincts	Followed the commands of God the Father
Defied death and believed the Serpent	Died for our Sin and accepted death.
Wanted to Be independent From God	Always Fulfilled the Will of the Father
Wanted to Be Like God	Gave God Full Glory

EXPLANATION FOR HIS WEAKNESS AND MEAKNESS

Many people are puzzled by the meekness and sometimes the weakness of the Lord Jesus. The Lord as a full man did behave and feel like a man. The heretics like Jehovah's Witnesses are finding this fact, very difficult to believe or absorb. The idea of humility cannot be acceptable to the Devil nor his followers.

Such method of thinking and reasoning is not strange, as the heresy propagated by them, is actually the devil's own message.

The devil being a proud creature find it very difficult to imagine that God has humbled himself for our salvation.

The Scriptures and the Liturgy are full of specific proofs to the divinity of Christ.

BIBLICAL EXPOSE' OF JESUS THE FULL GOD AND THE FULL MAN

The Lord Jesus The True Man	The Lord Jesus The God
<p><u>Did not Know the Day of Final Judgment</u> Mark 13:32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.</p>	<p><u>He knows Every Thing</u> John 21:17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.</p>
<p><u>Prayed</u> Luke 22:41-42 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."</p>	<p><u>Answers Our Prayers</u> John 14:13-14 "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.</p>
<p><u>Was Weary</u> John 4:6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.</p>	<p><u>He Grants Rest</u> Mat 11:28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.</p>
<p><u>He was Troubled</u> John 13:21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."</p>	<p><u>Believe in Him Removes Trouble</u> John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.</p>
<p><u>The Father is Greater Than Him</u> John 14:28 "You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.</p>	<p><u>Declared Himself Equal to The Father</u> John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.</p>
<p><u>Died</u> John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.</p>	<p><u>Raised Himself and Raises others From Death</u> John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.</p>
<p><u>Was Hungry</u> Luke 4:2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.</p>	<p><u>Fed the Multitudes</u> Refer to John 6</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Said "I Thirst"</u> John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"</p>	<p><u>The Source of Living Water</u> John 7:37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.</p>

BIBLICAL STUDY IN THE DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS.

The following is a closer examination of some of the Biblical references to the deity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(JOH 1:1)- *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (NKJ)*

Important Comment On The Method Of Biblical Translation Used By Jehovah's Witnesses

The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1970) used and produced by the Jehovah's Witnesses, wrongly translates the last portion of John 1:1,

"The Word was a god". (wrong translation)

This translation ,called grossly misleading by Greek scholars, is wrong for these reasons.

1. The Watch Tower Translation Is False

If the Watchtower translators had been consistent with the reasons they gave for translating "a god" in verse 1, they would have had to translate

Correct Translation

John 1:18 "No one has ever seen **God**" and
John 1:12 "To all who received Him. He gave
power to become children of **God**,"

The False Translation

John 1:18 "No one has ever seen" **a god**" and
John 1:12 "To all who received Him. He gave
power to become children of" **a god**

2. The Translation "a god" Conflicts With the First and Foremost Commandment,

(EXO 20:3)- *"You shall have no other gods before Me. (NKJ),*

By teaching the the LORD Jesus is a "god" the Jehovah Witnesses are teaching Idolatry.

3. The LORD Jesus Is the Incarnated JEHOVA

The Scriptures repeatedly describes Jesus as God, equal with His Father, by attributing to Him the same names and titles, the same honour, the same qualities, and the same acts as the Father. We will cover this in detail in another lecture.

JESUS ACCEPTED TO BE CALLED AND TREATED AS GOD**JEHOVAH GOD DECLARES**

(ISA 44:6)- "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: `I {am} the First and I {am} the Last; besides Me {there is} no God. (NKJ)

**THE LORD JESUS ACCEPTS
WORSHIP**

(JOH 20:28)- And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" (NKJ).

1-The Lord Jesus is Not Less Honourable Than His Followers

If Jesus is not God, He should have rebuked Thomas sharply, especially that Jesus' disciples were very critical and weary not to be called God.

(Acts 10:25-26 NKJ)(25) As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped {him}. (26) But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."

(Acts 14:11-18 NKJ)(11) Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian {language}, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" (12) And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. (13) Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes. (14) But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out (15) and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, (16) "who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. (17) "Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (18) And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

(REV 19:10)- And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See {that you do} not {do that}! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (NKJ)

(Revelation 22:8-9 NKJ)(8) Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. (9) Then he said to me, "See {that you do} not {do that}. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

2-The Deity of Christ Clearly Illustrated

Please refer to Heb.1 & Heb 2, Also Revelation 1 & Revelation 4 & Revelation 5.

(HEB 1:10)- And: "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands; (NKJ)

Who is the creator of all things? God! Yet in Heb 1:10 the Father Himself calls His Son the Creator of the heaven and the earth.

(JOH 1:3)- All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (NKJ)

The inspired writer makes a distinction between the one who made and all the things that were made. Jesus Christ is not one of the created things. He is the Creator, God. He is before-that is, He existed before- all things

(COL 1:17)- And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (NKJ)

(MAR 4:41)- And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" (NKJ)

3- Jesus The LORD of Nature

The awe-struck people asked this question after Jesus had calmed the storm on the sea of Galilee. The answer is GOD.

(PSA 89:9)- You rule the raging of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them. (NKJ), In the preceding verse the Psalmist clearly explains that he is calling GOD,

(PSA 89:8)- O Lord God of hosts, Who {is} mighty like You, O Lord? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. (NKJ)

(MAR 2:7)- "Why does this {Man} speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (NKJ)

4 The Language Used By Jesus Revealed His Claim For Deity to the Jews

Christ's enemies called Him a blasphemer when He forgave the sins of the paralytic

(Mark 2:5). Yet Jesus claimed the authority only God has,

(ISA 43:25)- "I, {even} I, {am} He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins. (NKJ)

But He continued and insisted about His equality with the Father

(MAR 2:9)- "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, '{Your} sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?" (NKJ)

The Scripture clearly teach that while Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is true man, He is also true God.

- He Claimed to Be God.
- He does the work of God.
- He has the qualities of God.
- He is Called God.

Actually The Marvel Is Not So Much That Jesus Is God But That The Eternal Creator Took The Form Of A Servant That He Might Be Our All sufficient Saviour.

CHAPTER # 6

THE LORD JEHOVAH COMPARED WITH OUR LORD JESUS
CHRIST

The Creed states very clearly that the Son is of the same essence of the Father. This statement is actually a summary of the following Biblical comparison between the Lord Jesus and The Lord Jehovah. The Lord Jehovah & The Lord Jesus Have The Same Names & Titles.

SAME NAMES

Names	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
Lord	<i>Exo 6:2 (NKJV) And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD.</i>	<i>Heb 1:5 (NKJV) For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"? Heb 1:10 (NKJV) And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.</i>
God	<i>Isa 45:22 (NKJV) "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.</i>	<i>John 20:28 (NKJV) And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"</i>
The "I AM"	<i>Exo 3:14 (NKJV) And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"</i>	<i>John 8:58 (NKJV) Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."</i>
The Mighty God	<i>Isa 10:21 (NKJV) The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, To the Mighty God.</i>	<i>Isa 9:6 (NKJV) For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.</i>
King of Kings and Lord of Lords	<i>1 Tim 6:15 (NKJV) which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,</i>	<i>Rev 19:13-16 (NKJV) He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.</i>
The only Saviour	<i>Isa 43:11 (NKJV) I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior.</i>	<i>John 4:42 (NKJV) Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of</i>

Names	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
		<i>what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."</i>
My Salvation	<i>Isa 12:2 (NKJV) Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.'"</i>	<i>Acts 4:12 (NKJV) "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."</i>
The Shepherd	<i>Psa 23:1 (NKJV) The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.</i>	<i>John 10:11 (NKJV) "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.</i>
The Rock	<i>Psa 18:31 (NKJV) For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?</i>	<i>1 Cor 10:4 (NKJV) and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.</i>
The First & The last	<i>Isa 44:6 (NKJV) "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.</i>	<i>Rev 1:17-18 (NKJV) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.</i>
The Alpha & The Omega	<i>Rev 21:6-7 (NKJV) And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.</i>	<i>Rev 22:13 (NKJV) "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."</i>

WORTHY OF THE SAME HONOUR

Honour	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
The Angels Worship Him	<i>Neh 9:6 (NKJV) You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.</i>	<i>Heb 1:6 (NKJV) But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."</i>
Every Knee Shall bow	<i>Isa 45:22-23 (NKJV) "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.</i>	<i>Phil 2:9-10 (NKJV) Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,</i>
The Praised and	<i>Rev 19:1 (NKJV) After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and</i>	<i>Rev 1:5-6 (NKJV) and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To</i>

Honour	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
Glorified Saviour	<i>honor and power belong to the Lord our God!</i>	<i>Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.</i>
Worthy of Honour and Power	<i>Rev 4:11 (NKJV) "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."</i>	<i>Rev 5:12 (NKJV) saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"</i>
We are His Witnesses	<i>Isa 43:10 (NKJV) "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.</i>	<i>Acts 1:8 (NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."</i>
We are His Servants	<i>Josh 24:24 (NKJV) And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"</i>	<i>Col 3:24 (NKJV) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.</i>

SAME QUALITIES

Qualities	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
Everlasting	<i>Psa 93:2 (NKJV) Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.</i>	<i>Micah 5:2 (NKJV) "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."</i>
Unchangeable	<i>Mal 3:6 (NKJV) "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.</i>	<i>Eph 3:9 (NKJV) and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;</i>
Unsearchable	<i>Rom 11:33 (NKJV) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!</i>	<i>Eph 3:8 (NKJV) To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,</i>
The Holy One	<i>Hosea 11:9 (NKJV) I will not execute the fierceness of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, The Holy One in your midst; And I will not come with terror.</i>	<i>Acts 3:14 (NKJV) "But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,</i>
Faithful & True Witness	<i>Jer 42:5 (NKJV) So they said to Jeremiah, "Let the LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not do according to</i>	<i>Rev 3:14 (NKJV) "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True</i>

Qualities	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
	<i>everything which the LORD your God sends us by you.</i>	<i>Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:</i>
Righteous	<i>Psa 116:5 (NKJV) Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is merciful.</i>	<i>1 John 2:1 (NKJV) My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.</i>
Our Strength	<i>Psa 46:1 (NKJV) God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Psa 71:5 (NKJV) For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; You are my trust from my youth.</i>	<i>1 Tim 1:1 (NKJV) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,</i>
Giver of Living Water	<i>Rev 21:6 (NKJV) And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.</i>	<i>John 7:37 (NKJV) On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.</i>
Fountain Of The Living Water	<i>Jer 17:13 (NKJV) O LORD, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You shall be ashamed. "Those who depart from Me Shall be written in the earth, Because they have forsaken the LORD, The fountain of living waters."</i>	<i>John 4:14 (NKJV) "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."</i>

SAME ACTS

ACTS	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
Creator	<i>Gen 1:1 (NKJV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.</i>	<i>Heb 1:10 (NKJV) And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.</i>
Redeemer	<i>Psa 130:7 (NKJV) O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is mercy, And with Him is abundant redemption.</i>	<i>Titus 2:13-14 (NKJV) looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.</i>
With us Fore Ever	<i>Isa 41:10 (NKJV) Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'</i>	<i>Mat 28:20 (NKJV) "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.</i>
Knows the Depth of Man's Heart	<i>1 Ki 8:39 (NKJV) "then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men),</i>	<i>John 2:25 (NKJV) and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. Rev 2:23 (NKJV) "I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.</i>
Knows	<i>1 John 3:20 (NKJV) For if our heart</i>	<i>John 21:17 (NKJV) He said to him the third</i>

ACTS	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
All Things	<i>condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.</i>	<i>time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.</i>
Gives Commandments	<i>Deu 4:40 (NKJV) "You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time."</i>	<i>John 15:17 (NKJV) "These things I command you, that you love one another.</i>
Searches the heart	<i>Jer 17:10 (NKJV) I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.</i>	<i>Rev 2:23 (NKJV) "I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.</i>
Rebukes & Chastens	<i>Prov 3:12 (NKJV) For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.</i>	<i>Rev 3:19 (NKJV) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.</i>
We are in His hand	<i>John 10:29 (NKJV) "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.</i>	<i>John 10:28 (NKJV) "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.</i>
To be Followed	<i>1 Sam 12:14 (NKJV) "If you fear the LORD and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the LORD your God.</i>	<i>John 8:12 (NKJV) Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."</i>

Taking Vengeance On The Wicked	<i>Isa 35:4 (NKJV) Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."</i>	<i>2 Th 1:7-8 (NKJV) and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.</i>
The Eternal judge	<i>Psa 96:13 (NKJV) For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.</i>	<i>John 5:22 (NKJV) "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,</i>
Forgive Sin	<i>Jer 31:34 (NKJV) "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will</i>	<i>Luke 5:20 (NKJV) When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."</i>

ACTS	Jehovah	The Lord Jesus
	<i>remember no more."</i>	
Hears Prayers	<i>Psa 65:2 (NKJV) O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come.</i>	<i>John 14:14 (NKJV) "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.</i>
Controls nature	<i>Psa 107:29 (NKJV) He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.</i>	<i>Luke 8:24 (NKJV) And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.</i>
Counsel or	<i>Isa 28:29 (NKJV) This also comes from the LORD of hosts, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance.</i>	<i>Isa 9:6 (NKJV) For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.</i>
Dwells in Us	<i>2 Cor 6:16 (NKJV) And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."</i>	

Though the Son is a distinctive Hypostasis from the Father, Jesus Christ is true God. Therefore we are to worship and honour, love and obey God the Son as well as God the Father who sent Him.

John 5:23 "that all should honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent Him.

Heb 1:6 But when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him.

" QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) Is Christ equal to Jehovah?
- (2) Show the main areas of equality between Jehovah & Christ. For each area highlight 3 (Three) Biblical proofs.
- (3) State from the Creed the equality between Jehovah and Christ.
- (4) Some other religions misunderstand the concept of the "Son of God". They think that God had a relationship with a woman. How to answer such claims?
- (5) From the Coptic Liturgies, show three examples from each Liturgy, emphasizing the deity of Christ.
- (6) The Trinity Is a belief beyond human comprehension, why should we insist on upholding such belief?

CHAPTER # 07

THE STATES OF CHRIST

In this session we are going to examine the Creed's statement about our Lord Jesus Christ.

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontious Pilate. He suffered and was buried, arose from the dead on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is sitting at the right Hand of His Father, He shall come "back" in His Glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose there will not be an end."

THE INCARNATION

"He descended from heaven for us and for our salvation, and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary, and became man."

(A) THE STATE OF HUMILIATION

The state of humiliation consists in this that Christ laid aside the divine majesty which was His as a sovereign Ruler and Creator of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; that He, the supreme Lawgiver, became subject to the demands of the law.

Mat 3:15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit [it to be so] now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"),

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Phil 2:6-8 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, {7} but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, [and] coming in the likeness of men. {8} And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to [the point of] death, even the death of the cross.

This state is reflected in the corresponding condition, in which we usually distinguish several stages.

A.1 The Incarnation and virginal birth of Christ

*"I believe and confess unto my last breath, that this is the Life-Giving Body which your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, took of our Lady and queen of us all, the Mother of God, the Pure St Mary. He made one with His divinity without mingling nor interchanging, nor alteration."
[Coptic Liturgy of St Basil]*

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 John 4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

He really became one of the human race by being born of the Holy Spirit AND of the virgin Mary. This would have not been true, if He had brought His humanity from heaven, as some heretics claim.

A.1.1 The Bible teaches us very clearly about the virginal birth:

Isa 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Mat 1:20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

Ezek 44:2 And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

This wonderful virginal birth was due to the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, who also kept the human nature of Christ free of the pollution of sin from its very inception,

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, ["The] Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

A.2 The Suffering of Christ

We sometimes speak of it as if the sufferings of Christ were limited to His final agonies, but this is not correct. His whole life was a life of suffering. It was the servant life of the Lord of Hosts, the life of the sinless One in a sin-cursed world. Satan assaulted Him, His people rejected Him, and His enemies persecuted Him. The suffering of the soul was even more intense than those of the body. He was tempted by the devil, was oppressed by the world of iniquity around Him, and staggered by the burden of sin resting upon Him .

Suffering also extended to people mistreating Him, treating him as an imposter. Also suffering included walking, as a non sinner, among sinners...etc.

Isa 53:3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

A.3 The Death of Christ

When we speak about the Death of Christ, we naturally have in mind His physical death. He did not die as a result of an accident, nor by the hand of an assassin, but under a judicial sentence, and was thus counted with the transgressors.

Isa 53:12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

By suffering the Jewish verdict of being a blasphemer, and by suffering the Roman punishment of crucifixion He died an accursed death, bearing the curse for us.

Deu 21:23 "his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you [as] an inheritance; for he who is hanged [is] accursed of God.

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"),

"And declared the proper confession before Pontious Pilate. And gave it up willingly on the Holy Cross, on our behalf. I believe that His divinity never departed His humanity not even a single instant nor a twinkling of an eye." "Coptic Liturgy of St Basil"

A.4 The Burial of Christ.

It might seem that the death of Christ was the last stage of His sufferings. Did He not cry out on the cross, "It is finished?" But these words probably refer to His active suffering. His burial certainly was part of His humiliation, of which He as the Son of God was also conscious. Man's returning to the dust is a punishment for sin,

Gen 3:19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you [are], And to dust you shall return." The saviour's abode in the grave was a humiliation, is evident from.

Psa 16:10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 2:27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 2:31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Acts 13:34-35 "And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus: 'I will give you the sure mercies of David.' {35} "Therefore He also says in another [Psalm]: 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

A.5 The Descent into Hades.

The Creed:

"He descended into hades",

The Liturgy

"He descended into hades through the cross"

The Lord Christ went down to hades where the Old Testament saints were confined, to release them. He also went down to hades to preach and to celebrate His victory over the powers of darkness.

Psa 68:18 You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even [from] the rebellious, That the LORD God might dwell [there].

1 Pet 3:18-19 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, {19} by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

Zec 9:11-12 "As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. {12} Return to the stronghold, You prisoners of hope. Even today I declare [That] I will restore double to you.

Psa 16:8-10 I have set the LORD always before me; Because [He is] at my right hand I shall not be moved. {9} Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. {10} For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Eph 4:9 (Now this, "He ascended"; what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

(B) THE STATE OF EXALTATION

In this stage Christ passed, carrying us with Him, from under the law as a covenant obligation, having paid the penalty of sin and merited righteousness and eternal life for us the sinners. Moreover, He was crowned with a corresponding honour and glory.

Four stages must be distinguished here.

B.1 The Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ did not consist of mere re-union of body and soul, but especially in this that His human nature, both body and soul, was restored to its original beauty and strength, and even raised to a higher level. In distinction from all those who had been raised up before Him (e.g. Lazaros) He arose with a spiritual body,

1 Cor 15:44-45 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. {45} And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit.

B.1.1 "The First Fruits Of Them That Slept,"

1 Cor 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, [and] has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

B.1.2 The First Born Of the Dead."

Col 1:18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.

Rev 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

B.1.3 The resurrection of Christ has a threefold significance

B.1.3.1 It was a declaration of the Father that Christ met all the requirement of the law

Phil 2:9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

B.1.3.2 It symbolised the justification, regeneration (new birth) , and final resurrection of the believers.

Rom 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be [in the likeness] of [His] resurrection,

Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

1 Cor 6:14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

1 Cor 15:20-22 But now Christ is risen from the dead, [and] has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. {21} For since by man [came] death, by Man also [came] the resurrection of the dead. {22} For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

B.1.3.2 The Resurrection Has Heralded to Us our own Resurrection and the Type of Our Glorified Body

Please refer to 1 Cor 15

B.1.3.3 It was the cause of our justification, regeneration(new Birth) and resurrection.

Rom 4:25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Rom 5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Eph 1:20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated [Him] at His right hand in the heavenly [places],

Phil 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

B.2 The ascension

The ascension was in a sense the necessary completion of the resurrection, but it also had independent significance. We have a double account of it, namely,

B.2.1 The Account Of The Gospels

Luke 24:50-53 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

{51} Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. {52} And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, {53} and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

Acts 1:6-11 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" {7} And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. {8} "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." {9} Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. {10} And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, {11} who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This [same] Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

B.2.2 The Account Of The Epistles

Eph 1:20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated [Him] at His right hand in the heavenly [places],

Eph 4:8-10 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." {9} (Now this, "He ascended"; what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? {10} He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

1 Tim 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

B.2.3 The Epistle To The Hebrews Stresses It's Significance

Heb 1:3 who being the brightness of [His] glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] confession.

Heb 6:20 where the forerunner has entered for us, [even] Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, [which are] copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

It was a visible ascent of the Mediator, according to His human nature, from earth to heaven, a going from one place to another. It included a further glorification of the human nature of Christ.

B.2.4 Christ After Ascension Is Our Sacrificial Intercessor

Christ as a great high priests enters the inner sanctuary to present His sacrifice to the Father and begin His work as the SACRIFICIAL intercessor at the throne,

(Rev 5) {5} But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." {6} And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Rom 8:34 Who [is] he who condemns? [It is] Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] confession.

Heb 6:20 where the forerunner has entered for us, [even] Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, [which are] copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

B.2.5 He ascended to prepare a place for us,

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. {2} "In My Father's house are many mansions; if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. {3} "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, [there] you may be also. With Him we are already set in Heavenly places, and in His ascension we have the assurance of a place in heaven,

Eph 2:6 and raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in the heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus,

John 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

B.3 The session at God's right hand

After His ascension Christ is seated at the right hand of God,

Eph 1:20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated [Him] at His right hand in the heavenly [places],

Heb 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

1 Pet 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Naturally the expression "right hand of God" cannot be taken literally, but should be understood as a figurative indication of the place of power and glory. During His session at God's right hand Christ rules and protect His Church, governs the universe, and intercedes for His people on the basis of His completed sacrifice.

B.4 The physical return

The exaltation of Christ reaches its climax, when He returns to Judge the living and the dead. Evidently His return will be bodily and visible,

Acts 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This [same] Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

Rev 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

He will come as judge is evident from the following passages:

John 5:22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,

John 5:27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

Acts 10:42 "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God [to be] Judge of the living and the dead.

Rom 2:16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Tim 4:1 I charge [you] therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

The time of His second coming is not known to us . He will come for judging the world and perfecting the salvation of His people. This will mark the complete victory of His redemptive work.

1 Cor 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

Phil 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Col 3:4 When Christ [who is] our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

1 Th 4:13-17 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. {15} For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive [and] remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Rev 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is meant by the states of the Mediator?
2. How would you define the states of humiliation and exaltation?
3. What took place at the incarnation?
4. How did Christ receive His human nature?
5. What prove have we for the virgin birth?
6. How was the Holy Spirit connected with the birth of Christ?
7. Were the sufferings of Christ limited to the end of His life?
8. Did it make any difference how Christ died?
9. What is the descent into hades?
10. What was the nature of Christ's resurrection? What change did he undergo?
11. What was the significance of the resurrection?
12. How would you prove that the ascension was going from place to place?
13. What is the significance of the ascension?
14. What is meant by the session at God's right hand? What does Christ do there?
15. How will Christ return, and what is the purpose of His coming?

CHAPTER #08

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST

The Bible , the Liturgy and the Creed ascribes threefold office to Christ, speaking of Him as Prophet, Priest, and King.

(A) THE PROPHETIC OFFICE

The Old Testament predicted the coming of Christ as a prophet.

Deu 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Acts 3:23 'And it shall be [that] every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

A.1 He speaks of Himself as a prophet.

Luke 13:33 "Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the [day] following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

A.2 Claims to bring a message from the Father.

John 8:26-28 "I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him." {27} They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. {28} Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am [He], and [that] I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

John 12:49-50 "For I have not spoken on My own [authority]; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. {50} "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

John 14:10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own [authority]; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

John 14:24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

A.3 Foretells future things:

See Matthew 24 (The whole chapter)

Luke 19:41-44 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, {42} saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things [that make] for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. {43} "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, {44} "and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

A.4 He speaks with singular authority

Mat 7:29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

It is no wonder that people recognised Him as a prophet.

Mat 21:11 So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

Luke 7:16 Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."

Luke 24:19 And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

John 7:40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet."

John 9:17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

A prophet is one who receives divine revelations, and passes them onto people

Exo 7:1 So the LORD said to Moses: "See, I have made you [as] God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.

Deu 18:18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

Num 12:6-8 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, [I], the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. {7} Not so with My servant Moses; He [is] faithful in all My house. {8} I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

Jer 1:4-10 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: {5} "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." {6} Then said I: "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I [am] a youth." {7} But the LORD said to me: "Do not say, 'I [am] a youth,' For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. {8} Do not be afraid of their faces, For I [am] with you to deliver you," says the LORD. {9} Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. {10} See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant."

Ezek 3:1-4 Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." {2} So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. {3} And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you." So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness. {4} Then He said to me: "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

Ezek 3:17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me:

One of the important tasks of a prophet was to interpret the moral and the spiritual aspects of the law for the people.

A.5 Christ already functioned as a prophet in the Old Testament:

1 Pet 1:11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

1 Pet 3:18-20 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, {19} by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, {20} who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine long-suffering waited in the days of Noah, while [the] ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

He did it while He was on earth, and continued it by the operation of the Holy Spirit and through the apostles after the ascension:

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 16:12-14 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear [them] now. {13} "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own [authority], but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. {14} "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare [it] to you.

Acts 1:1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

Even today His prophetic ministry continues through the ministry and service of the Church, through the sacraments and His word, illuminating and preserving the believers.

(B) THE PRIESTLY OFFICE

B.1 Biblical Proof

B.1.1 The Prophecy About His Priesthood

The Old Testament also predicted and prefigured the priesthood of the coming redeemer:

Psa 110:4 The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You [are] a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

Zec 6:13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

Isaia 53 (3-5) {3} He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. {4} Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. {5} But He [was] wounded for our transgressions, [He was] bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

B.1.2 In the New Testament The book of Hebrews has repeatedly called Him a priest:

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] confession.

Heb 5:5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, [but it] was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You."

Heb 6:20 where the forerunner has entered for us, [even] Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

Heb 8:1 Now [this is] the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

B.1.3 However other books refer to His priestly work

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Rom 3:24-25 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, {25} whom God set forth [as] a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

1 John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

1 Pet 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Pet 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

While a prophet represented God among the people, a priest represented the people before God. Both were teachers, but while the prophet taught the moral, the priest taught the ceremonial law. moreover, the priests had the special privilege to approach to God, and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people:

Heb 5:1-3 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things [pertaining] to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. {2} He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. {3} Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer [sacrifices] for sins.

He also makes sacrificial intercession of the people.

B.2 The Sacrifice

The priestly work of Christ was, first and for all, to bring a sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament sacrifices were TYPES pointing forward to the great sacrifice of Christ:

Heb 9:23-24 Therefore [it was] necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. {24} For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, [which are] copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

Heb 10:1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

Heb 13:11-12 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. {12} Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

B.2.1 Hence Christ is also called “the Lamb of God,”

(Revelation 5: 5 & 6&6) {5} But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” {6} And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

B.2.2 Also Christ is called our “Passover,”

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

B.3 Biblical References To Christ As A Sacrifice

The New Testament speaks very clearly of the priestly work of Christ in numerous passages:

Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Rom 3:24-25 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, {25} whom God set forth [as] a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Rom 5:6-8 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. {7} For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. {8} But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

1 Cor 15:3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

Gal 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

1 Pet 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Pet 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

1 John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins.

Rev 5:12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honour and glory and blessing!”

Also refer to The Epistle to the Hebrews

5:1-10; 7:1-28, 9:11-15; 9:24-28; 10:11-14, 10:19-22; 12:24; 13:12

Heb 10:11-14 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. {12} But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, {13} from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. {14} For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Heb 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, {20} by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, {21} and [having] a High Priest over the house of God, {22} let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 12:24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than [that of] Abel.

Heb 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

B.3 The Sacrificial Intercession of Christ

Besides bringing the great sacrifice for sins, Christ as priest also **makes intercession for His people. He is called our PARAKLETOS by implication**

John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever;

And explicitly in 1 John 2:2

1 John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

"propitiation" means one who is called in to help, an advocate, one who pleads the cause of another." The New Testament refers to Christ as our intercessor in Rom 8:34

Rom 8:34 Who [is] he who condemns? [It is] Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Heb 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, [which are] copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

His intercessory work is based on His sacrifice, and is not, as sometimes thought by our brethren the Protestants, to intercessory prayer. He presents His sacrifice to God, and on the ground of it He claims all spiritual blessings of His people, defends them against the charges of the accuser "Satan", the law, and conscience, secures forgiveness, based on their repentance, for every thing charged against them, and sanctifies their service and worship through the Holy Spirit. This intercessory work is limited in character. It has reference to the repentant .

John 17:9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

John 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

(C) THE KINGLY OFFICE

As a Son of God He naturally shares in the universal dominion of God. In distinction from this we speak of a kingship that was conferred on Him as mediator.

This kingship is twofold, namely, His spiritual kingship over the Church, and His kingship over the universe.

C.1 His Spiritual Kingship

The Bible speaks about His spiritual kingship in many places

Psa 2:6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."

Psa 132:11 The LORD has sworn [in] truth to David; He will not turn from it: "I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.

Isa 9:6-7 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. {7} Of the increase of [His] government and peace [There will be] no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, [Though] you are little among the thousands of Judah, [Yet] out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth [are] from of old, From everlasting."

Zec 6:13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

Luke 1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Luke 19:38 saying: " 'Blessed [is] the King who comes in the name of the LORD!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

John 18:36-37 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." {37} Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say [rightly] that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Acts 2:20-36 (NKJV) The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.' 22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know; 23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. 25 "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' 29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God

had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

The Kingship of Christ is His royal rule over His people . It is called spiritual as it relates to the Spiritual realm, is established in the Hearts and lives of believers, has a spiritual end in view, the salvation of sinners and the eternal life, and is administered spiritually and sacramentally. It is exercised in the gathering, the government, the protection, and the perfection of the Church. This kingship is in the realm over which it extends is called in the New Testament "The Kingdom of God" or the "Kingdom of Heaven" In the strict sense of the word only believers, members of the invisible Church , are citizens of the Kingdom. But the term "Kingdom of God" is sometimes used in the broader sense, as including all who are striving to live a life of repentance and purity, under the proclamation of the gospel. All who have a place in the visible Church

Mat 13:24-30 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; {25} "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. {26} "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. {27} "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' {28} "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' {29} "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. {30} 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' "

Mat 13:47-50 "Again , the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, {48} "which , when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. {49} "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, {50} "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

This Kingdom of God is on the one hand a present, spiritual reality in the hearts and lives of men and the Church is the Kingdom of God.

:

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Luke 17:21 "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed [us] into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

But on the other hand a future hope, which will not be realised until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ for the final judgment:

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Luke 22:29 "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed [one] upon Me,

1 Cor 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruptible.

2 Tim 4:18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve [me] for His heavenly kingdom. To Him [be] glory forever and ever. Amen!

2 Pet 1:11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The future Kingdom will essentially be the same as present, namely, the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of man. It will differ, however, in that it will be clearly visible and perfect.

C.2 His Everlasting None Ending Kingdom

The Creed stipulate very clearly that the Kingdom of Christ shall have no end.

Psa 45:6 Your throne, O God, [is] forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness [is] the scepter of Your kingdom.

Psa 72:17 His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And [men] shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed.

Psa 89:36-37 His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me; {37} It shall be established forever like the moon, Even [like] the faithful witness in the sky." Selah

Isa 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Dan 2:44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

2 Sam 7:13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

2 Sam 7:16 "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." ' ' "

Luke 1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

2 Pet 1:11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

C.3 His Universal Kingship

After the resurrection Christ said to His disciples

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

The same truth is clearly seen in the following verses:

1 Cor 15:27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under [Him]," [it is] evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.

Eph 1:20-22 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated [Him] at His right hand in the heavenly [places], {21} far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. {22} And He put all [things] under His feet, and gave Him [to be] head over all [things] to the church,

This Kingship should not be confused with the eternal and original Kingship of Christ as the Son of God, though it pertains the same realm. It is the Kingship of the universe entrusted to

Christ as Mediator in behalf of His Church. As Mediator He now guides the destiny of the individuals and nations, controls the life of the world and makes it subservient to His redemptive purpose, and protects His Church against the dangers to which it is exposed in the world. This kingship will last until the victory over the enemies of the Kingdom of God is complete. When the end is accomplished, it will be returned to the father.

1 Cor 15:24-28 Then [comes] the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. {25} For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. {26} The last enemy [that] will be destroyed [is] death. {27} For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under [Him]," [it is] evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. {28} Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) What threefold office has Christ?
- (2) What is a prophet, and what proof is there that Christ is a prophet?
- (3) How did Christ function as a prophet in various periods of history?
- (4) What is a priest in distinction from a prophet? How did their teaching differ?
- (5) What scriptural proof is there of the priestly office of Christ?
- (6) What are the Characteristics of a priest?
- (7) What was the nature of Christ's sacrificial work? How was it foreshadowed in the Old testament?
- (8) In what does the work of Christ as intercessor consist?
- (9) For whom does Christ intercede?
- (10) What is the spiritual Kingship of Christ, and over what realm does it extend?
- (11) How is the present Kingdom of Christ related to His future Kingdom?
- (12) How long will His spiritual Kingship last?
- (13) What is the nature and purpose of His universal Kingdom?
- (14) How long will this last

CHAPTER # 09

THE DOCTRINE OF DEATH

" He shall also come in His glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose there will not be an end."²

At present all people suffer the "First Death". After the Day of Judgment the non repentant sinners will suffer a permanent state of torment and agony which is called the "Second Death".

Before Christ people who died went to a waiting place away from God called Hades. The righteous ones were protected from the state of torment, which was inflicted on the non-righteous by the devil that was free.

After the death of Christ and His descent to Hades, through the Cross, the righteous ones were transferred to a waiting place called "Paradise". The non righteous are still segregated and are at a waiting place. Both camps are awaiting the Day of Judgment. the non righteous are awaiting the Day of Judgment in fear and trembling, but the righteous are in a state of bliss.

This lecture, although touching on both types of death, will mainly concentrate on the first death and the state of the dead.

(A) PHYSICAL DEATH

A.1 What Is Death

Physical death is clearly presented in the Scripture. It is spoken of as the death of the body, as distinguished from that of the soul:

A.1.1 The Death of the Body

Mat 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Luke 12:4 "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

A.1.2 Termination or Loss of Physical Life

Luke 6:9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?"

John 12:25 "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

A.2.3 Separation of Body and Soul

Eccl 12:7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

² The Nicene Creed.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Death is never described as an annihilation, but may be described as a termination of physical life by separation of body and soul.

Man Was Not Created To Die

Man was not created to die, but Man's own sin introduced death into the world.³

Death Is the Result of Sin

The Scriptures teach us that death resulted from sin and is a punishment for sin.

Gen 2:17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Gen 3:19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you [are], And to dust you shall return."

Rom 1:32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

A.3 Death is not something natural,**A.3.1 It is actually an expression of the Divine anger:**

Psa 90:7 For we have been consumed by Your anger, And by Your wrath we are terrified.

Psa 90:11 Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, [so is] Your wrath.

A.3.2 Also Death Is a Judgment:

Rom 1:32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

A.3.3 Also Death Is a Condemnation

Rom 5:16 And the gift [is] not like [that which came] through the one who sinned. For the judgment [which came] from one [offence resulted] in condemnation, but the free gift [which came] from many offences [resulted] in justification.

A.3.4 Death is a Curse

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"),

A.3.5 Death is also a Deterrent, Putting the Fear of God in Man's Heart

³ The Liturgy of Saint Basil

A4 Death of The Baptized Believers

While the believers are saved through the Blood of Christ, but they suffer death. Their death is attributed to the fact that they still carry the fallen nature within themselves.

While Baptism endows the believer the "New Man In Christ", they all still under the weakness of the "Old Man".

The process of death is now a chance for the baptized to rest awaiting the final resurrection.

Rev 6:11 (NKJV) Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

Death for the believers cannot be a punishment .But is regarded as an important element in the process of sanctification. It is the consummation of their dying to sin.

(B) THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

B.1 Christ Opened The Paradise

The Orthodox Church believes that the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross opened a new waiting place, called the "Paradise".

Luke 23:42-43 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." {43} And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly , I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

B.2 Christ Went to Hades & Freed the Captives Taking Them To Paradise

Isa 11:4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

This verse shows that Christ striking the Devil with His words on the Cross "My Lord! My Lord! why have You forsaken Me?", The Lord Slay the Devil by His Death.

Psa 68:18 You have ascended⁴ on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even [from] the rebellious, That the LORD God might dwell [there].

1 Peter 3:18-20 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in

⁴ "Ascended", refers to the ascension of Christ on the Cross. The gifts are the heavenly salvation and the Paradise.

the days of Noah, while the Ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water

B.3 Before Christ All Went Away From God

From the following parable we could glean that before Christ all went away from God to a waiting place of torment called Hades. But the righteous were insulated from the state of torment due to their works of the Law.

<p>The righteous are carried by the angels</p> <p>The wicked are not treated the same at their death.</p> <p>The wicked were tormented</p> <p>They are able to recognize one another</p> <p>Abraham knew what happened on earth</p> <p>There is separation between the righteous and the sinners in Hades</p> <p>The dead retain their memory and knowledge</p> <p>Abraham knew about the books of Moses and the prophets.</p> <p>The departed did not lose their faculties</p> <p>If one does not believe in the Old Testament, His faith in Christ is suspect</p>	<p><i>Luke 16:19-31 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. {20} "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, {21} "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.</i></p> <p><i>{22} "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom.</i></p> <p><i>The rich man also died and was buried.</i></p> <p><i>{23} "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.</i></p> <p><i>{24} "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'</i></p> <p><i>{25} "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.</i></p> <p><i>{26} 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'</i></p> <p><i>{27} "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, {28} 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'</i></p> <p><i>{29} "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'</i></p> <p><i>{30} "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'</i></p> <p><i>{31} "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "</i></p>
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Note that both the pious and the wicked descended into an intermediate place, which the Old Testament calls Shoel. The place was obviously segregated, to distinguish the people of God from the people of the Devil.

B.4 The wicked were warned about their fate in several places

Psa 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, [And] all the nations that forget God.

Prov 5:5 Her feet go down to death, Her steps lay hold of hell.

Prov 7:27 Her house [is] the way to hell, Descending to the chambers of death.

Prov 9:11 For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

Prov 15:24 The way of life [winds] upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell below.

Prov 23:14 You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

Deu 32:22 For a fire is kindled by my anger, And shall burn to the lowest hell; It shall consume the earth with her increase, And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

Isa 47:14 (NKJV) Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, Nor a fire to sit before!

Sometimes the words Shoel & Hades are used to denote the grave

Gen 42:38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the [Hell] grave."

(C) THE STATE OF DEATH AS EXPRESSED IN THE BIBLE

C.1 Sometimes The State or Condition of Death, represented as a place

1 Sam 2:6 "The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up.

Psa 89:48 What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave? Selah

C.2 Sometimes Shoel Or Hades is Used To Denote The Place Of eternal Punishment

Deu 32:22 For a fire is kindled by my anger, And shall burn to the lowest hell; It shall consume the earth with her increase, And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

Psa 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, [And] all the nations that forget God.

Prov 9:18 But he does not know that the dead [are] there, [That] her guests [are] in the depths of hell.

(D) SOULS ARE NEITHER ASLEEP NOR UNCONSCIOUS

Souls have been shown to be awake and aware.

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

2 Cor 5:8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Phil 1:23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, [which is] far better.

Rev 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

From the above references we could see that the souls in Heaven are alert and aware and not asleep, nor drowsy.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST

Christ as a full man died as any other man where His human spirit left His Body. **But His divinity never departed from His human spirit, neither from His Body.** The divinity preserved the body from decay⁵ (the fresh blood pouring out of His wound, even after His death). Also the Divinity made it possible for the human spirit not to dwell in Hades.

Psa 16:10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

The Syrian Orthodox Fractional prayer gives the best explanation,⁶

*"It is indeed true that the LOGOS suffered in the flesh, He was slain and humiliated (Subdued) through the Cross.
His (Human) Spirit was separated from His Body, but His Divinity was NEVER separated from His Body nor from His (Human) Spirit.
After He was stabbed by the spear in His side, water and blood rushed out dousing His Body, and granting forgiveness to the whole world.
His (Human) Spirit came back and was reunited with His body.
So the Son died in the place of the sin which surrounded the world, transferring us from the Left care to the Right."*

Also Psalm 22 is an excellent prophecy about the death of Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How is physical Death represented in the Scripture?
2. How can you prove that death is not something natural?
3. What is the connection between sin and death?
4. Is death a punishment for the baptized believers? What purpose does it serve?
5. What is Shoel-Hades?
6. What do the terms Hades-Shoel denote in the Scripture?
7. Why does the Church pray for the dead?
8. Does the Devil have any control on the dead, as he had before Christ? Explain.
9. Did the divinity of Christ leave Him on the Cross, explain especially when He said "My God My God, why have You forsaken me"?

⁵ Corruption.

⁶ The Liturgy of Saint Basil

CHAPTER # 10

THE RESURRECTION, THE FINAL JUDGMENT AND THE FINAL STATE

THE RESURRECTION

The General Resurrection is A Biblical Fact

The Scriptures, the Creed, the Liturgy and other Church rites teach us that at the Second Coming of Christ the dead will be raised up. The Old Testament clearly speaks of this essential and principal fact.

Isa 26:19 Your dead shall live; [Together with] my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew [is like] the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Dan 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.

The New Testament contains more abundant proof of the resurrection and the Second Coming

John 5:25-29 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. {26} "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, {27} "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. {28} "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice {29} "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

John 6:39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 6:40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Saint Paul Expounds the Fact of the Second Coming and the General Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15

The teaching of the Common Resurrection is a basic teaching of the Gospel of Christ

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, {2} by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you; unless you believed in vain.

Christ is Risen Indeed

{3} For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, {4} and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, {5} and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. {6} After that He was seen by over five hundred

	<p><i>brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. {7} After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. {8} Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. {9} For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. {10} But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God [which was] with me. {11} Therefore, whether [it was] I or they, so we preach and so you believed.</i></p>
<p>The General Resurrection is a sign of the Resurrection of Christ. No General Resurrection = No Resurrection of Christ = Futile Religion</p>	<p><i>{12} Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? {13} But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. {14} And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching [is] empty and your faith [is] also empty. {15} Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up; if in fact the dead do not rise. {16} For if [the] dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. {17} And if Christ is not risen, your faith [is] futile; you are still in your sins! {18} Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. {19} If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.</i></p>
<p>Christ is the First and the Model of our resurrection</p>	<p><i>{20} But now Christ is risen from the dead, [and] has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. {21} For since by man [came] death, by Man also [came] the resurrection of the dead. {22} For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. {23} But each one in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward those [who are] Christ's at His coming.</i></p>
<p>Humanity, represented by Christ presents homage to God the Father</p>	<p><i>{24} Then [comes] the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. {25} For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. {26} The last enemy [that] will be destroyed [is] death. {27} For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under [Him]," [it is] evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. {28} Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. {29}</i></p>
<p>Christian Struggle is valuable if there is a General Resurrection.</p>	<p><i>Otherwise, what will they do who are baptised for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptised for the dead? {30} And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour? {31} I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. {32} If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage [is it] to me? If [the] dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"</i></p>
<p>The teaching of "No Resurrection" is corrupt and deceitful.</p>	<p><i>{33} Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." {34} Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak [this] to your shame.</i></p>
<p>There is a new type of body prepared for the resurrected, namely the spiritual body.</p>	<p><i>{35} But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" {36} Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. {37} And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain; perhaps wheat or some other [grain]. {38} But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. {39} All flesh [is] not the same flesh, but [there is] one [kind of] flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, [and] another of birds. {40} [There are] also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial [is] one, and the [glory] of the terrestrial [is] another. {41} [There is] one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for</i></p>

	<i>[one] star differs from [another] star in glory. {42} So also [is] the resurrection of the dead. [The body] is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. {43} It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. {44} It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.</i>
The "First Adam" and Christ the "Second Adam"	<i>{45} And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit. {46} However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. {47} The first man [was] of the earth, [made] of dust; the second Man [is] the Lord from heaven. {48} As [was] the [man] of dust, so also [are] those [who are made] of dust; and as [is] the heavenly [Man], so also [are] those [who are] heavenly. {49} And as we have borne the image of the [man] of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [Man]. {50} Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption</i>
The Transformation	<i>{51} Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; {52} in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.}</i>
The Corruptible Body will not exist after the Common Resurrection.	<i>{53} For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality. {54} So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." {55} "O Death, where [is] your sting? O Hades, where [is] your victory?" {56} The sting of death [is] sin, and the strength of sin [is] the law. {57} But thanks [be] to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. {58} Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.</i>

1 Th 4:13-17 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. {15} For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive [and] remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

The Character of The Resurrection

Bodily Resurrection, But With A New Type of Body

Scriptures teaches us to look forward to a bodily resurrection (but with a new type of body), similar to the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection in Christ will resurrect both the spirit and the body.

Rom 8:23 Not only [that], but we also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

1 Cor 6:13-20 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body [is] not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. {14} And God

both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. {15} Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make [them] members of a harlot? Certainly not! {16} Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body [with her]? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." {17} But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit [with Him]. {18} Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. {19} Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit [who is] in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? {20} For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Will Happen to All

It will include both the righteous and the wicked, but will be an act of deliverance and glorification only for the former. For the latter the re-union of body and soul will issue in the extreme penalty of eternal death.

The Time of the Resurrection.

According to the Scripture the general resurrection will coincide with the return of Christ and the end of the world, and will immediately precede the final judgment:

John 5:27-29 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. {28} "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice {29} "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

John 6:39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 6:40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Phil 3:20-21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, {21} who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Rev 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is [the Book] of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Wrong Pre-Millenarians Teaching

The Orthodox Churches Are Post Millenarians

The Orthodox Church believes that Christ started the Millennium on His Cross at Gologotha. He freed the Baptised faithful and purchased the Church with His blood.

John 12:31-32 (NKJV) "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

Now Christ rules over the Church and the hearts of the baptised faithful. His Second Coming will be after the present days of the Millennium are completed.

Majority of the Evangelical Churches are Pre-Millenarians

The Pre-millenarians "whom we disagree with", teach a double "General Resurrection": one of the just at the return of Christ, and another of the unjust a thousand years later, at the end of the world.

But the Bible and the Church speaks of the resurrection of both in a single breath:

Dan 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.

John 5:28-29 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice {29} "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Acts 24:15 "I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of [the] dead, both of [the] just and [the] unjust.

The Scriptures connects the judgment of the wicked with the coming of Christ:

2 Th 1:7-10 and to [give] you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, {8} in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. {9} These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, {10} when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

The Scriptures places the resurrections of the just at the last day

John 6:39-40 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. {40} "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

THE LAST JUDGMENT

Will Immediately Follow The General Resurrection

The doctrine of the resurrection leads right on to that of the last judgment. The Bible, the Creed and the Church speaks of a final judgment in no uncertain terms.

Psa 96:13 For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.

Psa 98:9 For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity.

Eccl 3:17 I said in my heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, For [there is] a time there for every purpose and for every work."

Eccl 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Mat 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. {32} "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides [his] sheep from the goats. {33} "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. {34} "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: {35} 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; {36} 'I [was] naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' {37} "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed [You], or thirsty and give [You] drink? {38} 'When did we see You a stranger and take [You] in, or naked and clothe [You]? {39} 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' {40} "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did [it] to one of the least of these My brethren, you did [it] to Me.' {41} "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: {42} 'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; {43} 'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' {44} "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' {45} "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do [it] to one of the least of these, you did not do [it] to Me.' {46} "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Rom 2:5-10 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, {6} who "will render to each one according to his deeds": {7} eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality; {8} but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, {9} tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; {10} but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Tim 4:1 I charge [you] therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

1 Pet 4:5 *They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*

Also refer to the above in Revelation 20:11-14.

The Judge and His Assistants

Christ as the Mediator will be the judge:

Mat 25:31-32 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. {32} "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides [his] sheep from the goats.

John 5:27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

Acts 10:42 "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God [to be] Judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 17:31 "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Phil 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

Christ the anointed redeemer, is the judge as a natural result of His redeeming act, and atoning work.

His Assistants Are the Angels

Mat 13:41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

Mat 13:42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Mat 24:31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Mat 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Also the Saints Will Have Some Share In His Judicial Work

1 Cor 6:2-3 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? {3} Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then [I saw] the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received [his] mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The Parties to Be Judged

It is perfectly evident from the Scriptures, the Liturgy and the Creed that every individual of the human race will have to appear before the judgment seat.

Eccl 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Mat 12:36-37 "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. {37} "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Mat 25:32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides [his] sheep from the goats.

Rom 14:10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is [the Book] of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Some think that the righteous will be exempted but this is contrary to the Scriptures and the Liturgy

Mat 13:30 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.

Mat 13:40-43 "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. {41} "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, {42} "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. {43} "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Mat 13:49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,

Mat 25:31-36 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. {32} "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides [his] sheep from the goats. {33} "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. {34} "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: {35} 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; {36} 'I [was] naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Clearly that the devil and his demons will be judged

Mat 8:29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

1 Cor 6:3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

2 Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast [them] down to hell and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

The Time of the Judgment

The final judgment will naturally be at the end of the world, and will follow immediately the resurrection of the dead.

John 5:28-29 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice {29} "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Rev 20:12-13 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is [the Book] of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

The duration of the judgment cannot be determined. The Bible speaks of the "day of Judgment", but does not necessarily mean that it will be a day of twenty-four hours.

Neither is there any grounds to assert with the pre-millenarians that it will be a day of a thousand years. This sort of argument is only philosophical, and not fruitful, as the time will no longer exist.

The Standard of Judgment

The standard of by which saints and sinners will be judged evidently be the revealed will of God, through the Church and the Scriptures. Gentiles who did not receive the Scriptures will be judged by the special revelations granted to them by God, of which we do not know, but God the Almighty knows.

The Jews who lived before Christ will be judged by the Old Testament revelation.

Rom 2:12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law

THE FINAL STATE

The final judgment serves the purpose of setting forth clearly what the final state of each person will be.

The Final State of the Wicked

The wicked are consigned to the place of punishment called "hell". Some deny that hell is a place and regard it merely as a condition, but the Bible uses local terms right along.

The Bible Speaks of the Furnace of Fire

Mat 13:42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The Bible Speaks of the Lake of Fire

Rev 20:14-15 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Bible Speaks of the Prison

1 Pet 3:19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, All of which are local terms. In this place they will be totally deprived of the divine favour, will experience an endless disturbance of life, will suffer positive pains in the body and soul, and will be subject to pangs of conscience, anguish and despair:

Mat 8:12-13 "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." {13} Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, [so] let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Mark 9:47-48 "And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire; {48} "where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'

Luke 16:23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Luke 16:28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

Rev 14:10 "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Rev 21:8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

There will be degrees in their punishment

Mat 11:22-24 "But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. {23} "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. {24} "But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

Luke 12:47-48 "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare [himself] or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many [stripes]. {48} "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Luke 20:47 "who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

The Punishment Is Eternal

It is also evident that their punishment will be eternal. Some deny this, because the word "eternal" and "everlasting" may simply denote a long period of time. Yet this is not the usual meaning of the words, and there is no reason to think that they have that meaning when applied to the future punishment of the wicked. Moreover, other terms are used, which point to endless punishment:

Mark 9:43 "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched;

Mark 9:48 "where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'

Luke 16:26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

The Final State of The Righteous

The final state of believers will be preceded by the passing of the present world and the establishment of a new body. This will not be an entirely new created, but rather a renewal of the present creation

Psa 102:26-27 They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. {27} But You [are] the same, And Your years will have no end.

Heb 12:26-28 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." {27} Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. {28} Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Heaven will be the eternal abode of the believers.

Some think of heaven merely as a condition, but the Bible clearly represents it as a place

John 14:2 "In My Father's house are many mansions; if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Mat 22:12-13 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. {13} "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast [him] into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Mat 25:10-12 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. {11} "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' {12} "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

The Righteous Will Inherit Heaven.

Rev 21:1-3 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. {2} Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. {3} And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God.

Their Life Is Eternal

The reward of the righteous is described as eternal life, that is not merely endless life, but life in all its fullness, without any of the imperfections and disturbances of the present. The fullness of life is enjoyed in communion with God, which is really the essence of eternal life.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God.

There Will Be Degrees In Their Rewards

While all will enjoy perfect bliss, there will be degrees also in the enjoyment of heaven:

Dan 12:3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

2 Cor 9:6 But this [I say]: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How can we prove the resurrection of the body from the new Testament?
2. What Bible proof is there for the resurrection of the wicked?
3. How does their resurrection differ from that of the righteous?
4. What does the Bible teach respecting the time of the resurrection?
5. How would you disprove the doctrine of a double resurrection?
6. What a Scripture proof is there for a last judgment?
7. Who will be the Judge, and who will assist Him?
8. What parties will be judged?
9. When will the last judgment be, and how long will it last?
10. By what standard will men be judged?
11. What will the punishment of the wicked consist?
12. How can you prove that it will be unending?
13. Will the new creation be an entirely new creation?
14. What will be the reward of the righteous?

CHAPTER # 11

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

CHRIST WILL COME BACK

The New Testament, the Liturgy, the Church and the Creed teach us that the first coming of Christ will be followed by a second. The Lord Jesus referred to His return more than once.

Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

The sign of the Son of Man is the Holy Cross.

Mat 25:19 "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them."

Mat 26:64 Jesus said to him, ["It is as] you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

John 14:3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, [there] you may be also."

Angels called attention to it at the ascension

Acts 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This [same] Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

The Epistles spoke of it repeatedly

Phil 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Th 4:15-16 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive [and] remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

2 Th 1:7 and to [give] you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

2 Th 1:10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Heb 9:28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

EVENTS PRECEDING THE SECOND COMING

According to the Scripture several important events must precede the return of Christ.

The Calling of The Gentiles

The Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached to all nations before the coming of Christ.

Mat 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Mark 13:10 "And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

Rom 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

This means that the whole nations as a whole must be so thoroughly evangelized that the gospel becomes a power in the life of people, a sign that calls for decision.

The Conversion of The Full Number of Israel.

Rom 11:25-29 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. {26} And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion⁷, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; {27} For this [is] My covenant with them, When I take away their sins." {28} Concerning the gospel [they are] enemies for your sake, but concerning the election [they are] beloved for the sake of the fathers. {29} For the gifts and the calling of God [are] irrevocable.

2 Cor 3:15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

Both of the above references refer to the conversion of Israel, and the passage in Romans seems to connect this with the end of time. Some take these passages to teach that Israel as a whole, Israel as a nation, will finally turn to the Lord. It is more likely, however, that the expression "all Israel" in Rom 11:26 simply refers to the full number of the elect, through the pre-knowledge of God, out of the ancient covenant people.

The whole passage does seem to imply that in the end large numbers of Israel will turn to the Lord.

The Great Apostasy and the Great Tribulation

The Bible teaches repeatedly that towards the end of time there will be a great falling away. Iniquity will increase, and the love of many will wax cold.

Mat 24:12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

2 Th 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for [that Day will not come] unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

2 Tim 3:1-7 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: {2} For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, {3} unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, {4} traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, {5} having a form of godliness but

⁷ Zion here represents the Church, i.e. Christ will not come back to call the Jews

denying its power. And from such people turn away! {6} For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, {7} always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Tim 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, [because] they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; {4} and they will turn [their] ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

Wickedness crying to high heaven will result in a terrible tribulation.

Mat 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

The Coming of the Antichrist

The spirit of the Antichrist was already in evidence in the apostolic age.

The Antichrist is a real person who will occupy a leading position in the world. His seat may be in any of the apostate Churches (and we see many of them today), or he may be seated at the Jerusalem Temple.

The rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple is only a slim possibility, as the Lord Himself declared that no stone in it will be left unturned.

There are some people who say that the Jews may rebuild the Jerusalem Temple, however this is only speculation at this stage.

1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

The Bible leads us to expect that at the end of the age a single individual will stand out as the incarnation of all wickedness, "the man of sin".

2 Th 2:3-4 Let no one deceive you by any means; for [that Day will not come] unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, {4} who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

1 John 2:18-22 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. {19} They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but [they went out] that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. {20} But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. {21} I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. {22} Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

It is very easy for the Christians to discern that NO one who comes to this earth and govern it could be the true Christ. When the true Christ will come this earth and all material will burn and dissolve.

2 Pet 3:10-13 (NKJV) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Signs and Wonders

The Bible also refers to striking signs as marking the beginning of travail, to be followed by the rebirth of the universe; and also fearful portents in heaven, when the powers of the heavens will be shaken

Mat 24:29-30 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. {30} "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Mark 13:24-25 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; {25} "the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Luke 21:25-26 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; {26} "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.

THE SECOND COMING ITSELF

After these signs the Son of Man will be seen on the clouds of heaven.

The Time of His Coming.

Some believe that the coming of Christ is imminent, that is, may now occur at any time. But the Bible teaches us that the events and signs mentioned in the forgoing must precede the return. From God's point of view the coming is always near.

Heb 10:25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as [is] the manner of some, but exhorting [one another], and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

James 5:9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

1 Pet 4:5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

But no one can determine the exact time, not even the angels nor the Son of Man

Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

"This verse is stated here, to refute some of the people who are claiming that Christ has appeared to them in visions and have given them the time of His second coming"

The Manner of His Coming

The Person of Christ Will Return.

His coming is true and not only spiritual, as the Holy Spirit has dwelt and lived with the Church since the Day of Pentecost.

Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Mat 26:64 Jesus said to him, ["It is as] you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Acts 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This [same] Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Rev 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

His Second Coming Will Be A Surprise

Mat 24:37-44 "But as the days of Noah [were], so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. {38} "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, {39} "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. {40} "Then two [men] will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. {41} "Two [women will be] grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. {42} "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. {43} "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. {44} "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Mat 25:1-12 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. {2} "Now five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish. {3} "Those who [were] foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, {4} "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. {5} "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. {6} "And at midnight a cry was [heard]: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' {7} "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. {8} "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us [some] of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' {9} "But the wise answered, saying, ['No], lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' {10} "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. {11} "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' {12} "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

1 Th 5:2-3 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. {3} For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

Rev 3:3 "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

The Second Coming Will Be Triumphant and Glorious

The Clouds of Heaven Will Be His Chariot

Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

The Angels Will Be His Body Guard

2 Th 1:7 and to [give] you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

The archangels are His heralds

1 Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

The Saints of God His Glorious Entourage "Retinue"

1 Th 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

2 Th 1:10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING

Christ will return to introduce the future age, the eternal state of things, and will do this by two mighty events, the resurrection and the final judgment

John 5:25-29 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. {26} "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, {27} "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. {28} "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice {29} "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Acts 17:31 "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Rom 2:3-16 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? {4} Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? {5} But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, {6} who "will render to each one according to his deeds": {7} eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality; {8} but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, {9} tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; {10} but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. {11} For there is no partiality with God. {12} For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law {13} (for not the hearers of the law [are] just in the sight of God, but the doers of the

law will be justified; {14} for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, {15} who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves [their] thoughts accusing or else excusing [them]) {16} in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Phil 3:20-21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, {21} who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

1 Th 4:13-17 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. {15} For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive [and] remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

2 Pet 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. {11} Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, {12} looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? {13} Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Rev 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is [the Book] of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward [is] with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

THE QUESTION OF THE MILLENNIUM

Some believe that the second coming of Christ will either be preceded or followed by a millennium.

Post-Millennialism

Post-Millennialism teaches that the second coming of Christ will follow the millennium. The millennium is occurring during the gospel dispensation, in which we are now living, and at the end which Christ will appear.

The Orthodox Faith

Christ has started the millennium age, on the CROSS. It is obvious from the selected prophecies selected for "Good Friday", that Christ on the Cross was actually starting the Kingdom of God. And that the Cross was the throne of Christ, refer to "The Rite of Passion Week, According to The Coptic Orthodox Church".

The Church as the Kingdom of God on earth. The Church has made the gospel an effective reality. The Church provide it's people and the world the righteousness and peace, as well as the rich spiritual blessings

Pre-Millennialism.

THIS VIEW IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES

According to Pre-Millennialism Christ at His return will re-establish the kingdom of David on earth, and will reign in Jerusalem for a thousand years. This theory is based on a literalistic interpretation of the prophets and of Rev 20:1-6.

Rev 20:1-6 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. {2} He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is [the] Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; {3} and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. {4} And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then [I saw] the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received [his] mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. {5} But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This [is] the first resurrection. {6} Blessed and holy [is] he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

It makes the kingdom of God an earthly and national kingdom, while the New Testament represent it as spiritual and universal, a kingdom that is even now in existence.

Mat 11:12 "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

Mat 12:28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Luke 17:21 "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

John 18:36-37 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." {37} Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say [rightly] that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed [us] into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

The New Testament knows nothing of such an earthly and temporal kingdom of Christ, but does speak of His heavenly and eternal kingdom.

2 Tim 4:18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve [me] for His heavenly kingdom. To Him [be] glory forever and ever. Amen!

2 Pet 1:11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This theory seeks its main support in one passage (Rev 20:1-6), which represents a scene in heaven, and makes no mention of the Jews, of an earthly and national kingdom, nor of the land of Palestine, as the place where Jesus will rule.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What great events will precede the second coming of Christ? 3. How must we understand the predicted conversion of Israel? 5. What does the Bible mean when it speaks about the anti-Christ? 7. What signs will precede the second coming? 9. Can we regard the second coming as a past event? if not, why not? 11. How can it be sudden, when it will preceded by signs? 13. Where do you stand from people who claim they know the time of the Second Coming? 15. What is the difference between post- and pre-millennialism? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In what sense must the nations be evangelized? 4. What is the great apostasy and the great tribulation? 6. In what sense are there antichrists even now? 8. In what sense can it be regarded as near? 10. Can we prove that it will be physical and visible? 12. What will be the purpose of Christ's return? 14. From Rev 18, explain one of the phases of the great apostasy. 16 Will Christ come back to preach the Jews? |
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CHAPTER #12

THE UNSEEN SPIRITUAL CREATION

“CREATOR OF SEEN AND UNSEEN”⁸

The unseen creation is the spiritual creation, i.e. the angels.

The Orthodox Church in general and the Coptic Church in particular are fully aware with the spiritual world, and are enjoying the services and the blessings of the heavenly angles. They are also empowered by the Holy Spirit to trample over the devil, being a fallen angel.

During all the services angels are sharing with us in the worship. For example there is a special angel assigned to each Liturgy, and this angel remains in the church until the end of the Liturgical service.

Prior baptising any person the Church rebukes the devil and his evil forces. The person being born from the water and the Spirit is firstly purged from any evil presence of any demons which may entered his life during his unbelieving days.

The liturgy and the Church services refer continually to the angels, we know them by their names. We believe that angels receive the souls of the departed Christians who are proceeding towards heaven.

THE EXISTENCE OF THE ANGELS

The Scriptures are very clear in this regard. The following references are samples to prove that angels exist:

2 Sam 14:20 "To bring about this change of affairs your servant Joab has done this thing; but my lord [is] wise, according to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that [is] in the earth."

Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

Rev 14:10 "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb."

THE ANGELS ARE SPIRITUAL BODIES

The angels are spiritual bodies, and are not "airy bodies" as imagined by some. They some times assume human appearance for our sake, as our present terrestrial bodies are unable to see spiritual bodies or discern them, without help from God.

⁸ The Nicene Creed.

The human conceptual abilities are limited to matters, which could be sensed by one of the five senses. The Spiritual bodies are not detectable by the human senses.

So when angels appear to humans they must communicate their presence through signs understood by humans. For example the manner of speech must be in the language of the person spoken to.

Angels seen with wings communicates their lofty and high nature. When angels appear with a body full of eyes, this means that angels are full of wisdom and knowledge.

Some may ask what happens to food consumed by spiritual bodies who eat with humans, e.g the Lord Jesus with the disciples after the resurrection, God and abraham and Archangel Rafael with Tobit.

Dealing with food

We digest food because it is needed in its simplest form/s to nourish our fleshly bodies. While a nuclear reactor transforms food to its simplest atoms. Not because the nuclear reactor requires food, but because it has an ability to do this.

So with spiritual beings. They don't need food, but they are able in some manner to deal with materials in general. As humans, material is needed, but spiritual beings do have ways and dealings above our understanding.

Their spiritual nature is explained by the scriptures

*Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?
Luke 24:39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*

Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

THE TYPES OF ANGELS

Angels are two types. Namely holy and elect, and fallen and evil.

The Holy & The Elect Angels

Mark 8:38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Luke 9:26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His [own] glory, and [in His] Father's, and of the holy angels.

1 Tim 5:21 I charge [you] before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.

The Fallen & Evil Angels

*Isa 14:9-18 (NKJV) "Hell from beneath is excited about you, To meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations. 10 They all shall speak and say to you: 'Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? 11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.' 12 **How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!** 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. 16 "Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, 17 Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?' 18 "All the kings of the nations, All of them, sleep in glory, Everyone in his own house;*

John 8:44 "You are of [your] father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and [does not] stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own [resources], for he is a liar and the father of it.

2 Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast [them] down to hell and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

THE CLASSES OF ANGELS

The Angels Are Segregated In Classes

We also know that the angels are classified in nine different classifications, two of the classifications are repeatedly mentioned in the Bible, namely the Cherubim & the Seraphim.

The Cherubim

Gen 3:24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Psa 18:10 And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind.

Psa 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who dwell [between] the cherubim, shine forth!

Psa 99:1 The LORD reigns; Let the peoples tremble! He dwells [between] the cherubim; Let the earth be moved!

Isa 37:16 "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, [the One] who dwells [between] the cherubim, You [are] God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

The Cherubim reveals the power, majesty, and glory of God, and guard His Holiness as in the garden of Eden, in the tabernacle and the temple and at the descent of God onto the earth.

The Seraphim

Isa 6:2-3 Above it stood Seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. {3} And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy [is] the LORD of hosts; The whole earth [is] full of His glory!"

Isa 6:6 Then one of the Seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal [which] he had taken with the tongs from the altar.

Another four are mentioned also in the Bible, and in the Liturgy.

Another Classes of Angels

The Principalities, The Powers, The Thrones & The Dominions

Eph 1:21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Eph 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly [places],

Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

Col 2:10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

1 Pet 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

The Archangels

Some Archangels

We know from the "Tasbeha" that the Archangels are seven in number, two of them are mentioned several times in the Scriptures, namely Archangel Michael & Archangel Gabriel.

Archangel Michael

Dan 10:21 "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

Dan 10:13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

Jude 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Rev 12:7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

Michael is the valiant warrior of God, fighting the battles of Jehovah god against the enemies and the evil powers.

Archangel Gabriel

Dan 8:16 And I heard a man's voice between [the banks of] the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this [man] understand the vision."

Rev 9:21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Luke 1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

WORK OF THE ANGELS

The Angels Praise God Continuously

Psa 103:2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:

Isa 6:1-3 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His [robe] filled the temple. {2} Above it stood Seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. {3} And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy [is] the LORD of hosts; The whole earth [is] full of His glory!"

Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

The Angels Serve those Who Inherited Salvation

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

The Angels Rejoice At The Repentance Of Sinners

Luke 15:10 "Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

The Angels Watch Over The Believers

Psa 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

Psa 91:11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

The Angels Protect The Little Ones

Mat 18:10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

The Angels Are Present At The Church

1 Cor 11:10 For this reason the woman ought to have [a symbol of] authority on [her] head, because of the angels.

The Angels Convey the Believers To The Bosom Of Abraham

Luke 16:22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

The Angels Bear Special Revelation from God

Dan 9:21-23 yes, while I [was] speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. {22} And he informed [me], and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. {23} "At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell [you], for you [are] greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: *Zec 1:12-14* Then the Angel of the LORD answered and said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?" {13} And the LORD answered the angel who talked to me, [with] good [and] comforting words. {14} So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem And for Zion with great zeal.

The Angels Communicate Blessings To People

Psa 91:11-12 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. {12} In [their] hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.
Isa 63:9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.
Dan 6:22 "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."
Acts 5:19-20 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, {20} "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

The Angels Execute Judgments On His Enemies

Gen 19:1 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw [them], he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.
Gen 19:13 "For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it."
2 Ki 19:35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when [people] arose early in the morning, there were the corpses; all dead.
Mat 13:41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

THE EVIL ANGELS (THE DEVIL & HIS EVIL FORCES)

Besides the good angels, there are also evil angels. The Orthodox Tradition teaches us that the these evil angels were the tenth class of angels. They were created good, but did not retain their position or original state.

Biblical references to support this belief are as follows:

2 Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast [them] down to hell and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

What Was Their Sin?

Their fall is clearly revealed in the Scriptures, the Church Tradition and the sayings of the Church fathers.

They Rebelled Against God

Isa 14:12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [How] you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

Isa 14:13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

2 Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2 Th 2:9 The coming of the [lawless one] is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

The Chief of The Fallen Angels Was An Archangel

Mat 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Mat 21:41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease [his] vineyard to other vine dressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

Mat 9:34 But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."

Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Mat 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Chapter 28 of the Book of Ekekiel is another reference to show the fall of the Devil

Ezek 28 (NKJV) (11-19) 11 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. 16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever." "

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) Are All angels are good ones?
- (2) Should we trust and believe all the spirits?
- (3) Why was the fallen angels, deposed by God's Command?
- (4) Did the Lord Jesus see the falling out of the devil? Please use biblical proof.
- (5) Are the angels made of gases?
- (6) What is the type of the angels bodies?
- (7) Where do you find the names of Archangel Rafail?
- (8) What are the classes of angels?
- (9) What are the main functions of the good angels?
- (10) Explain the following verses
Isa 14:12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [How] you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!
Isa 14:13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;
- (11) From The Church Vespers, Name the Seven Archangels.
- (12) Which archangel is assigned the duty of protecting the crops?
- (13) Which archangel is assigned the duty of conveying the good news?
- (14) Which archangel will announce the "General Resurrection" ?
- (15) Which archangel lead the fight against the devil ?
- (16) Who was the archangel accompanying Tobit? Explain the meaning of his name?
- (17) Prove that the angels take the spirits of the righteous to the bosom of Abraham?

CHAPTER # 13

THE CHURCH

"I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church".

VARIOUS MEANING OF THE WORD "CHURCH"

A.1. General Description of The Church

The principal Old Testament word for Church is derived from a verb meaning "To Call" and the principal New Testament word, from a verb meaning "To Call Out". Both denote the Church as an assembly called by God.

A.2 The Church Was Established From the Apostolic Era

A.2.1 Various Branches

Most generally it denotes a local church, whether assembled for worship or not:

Acts 5:11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Acts 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Rom 16:4 who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

1 Cor 11:18 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

1 Cor 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

A.2.2 A The Church in Your House

The Apostles coined the phrase "the Church in your house". Until to day the groom in a Coptic wedding is clothed with the priestly robe, to denote that he is the priest of his own home.

Rom 16:5 Likewise [greet] the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

Rom 16:23 Gaius, my host and [the host] of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother.

1 Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Col 4:15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that [is] in his house.

A.2.3 The Body of Christ

In it's most comprehensive sense it is a description of the whole body of believers, whether in heaven or on earth:

Eph 1:22 And He put all [things] under His feet, and gave Him [to be] head over all [things] to the church,

Eph 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly [places],

Eph 3:21 to Him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body.

Col 1:18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

(B) THE ESSENCE OF THE CHURCH

The Church is essentially based in the invisible and spiritual communion of the saints. The Church in its essential nature includes the baptized of all ages, and no one else. It is the spiritual body of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which there is no place for the un-baptized.

We note that God entered into the Covenant of Grace with the whole Nation as well as the unborn generations.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body.

B.1 The Church is the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven:

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent , for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Isa 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days [That] the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

Isa 54:1 "Sing, O barren, You [who] have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You [who] have not laboured with child! For more [are] the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman," says the LORD.

Dan 2:44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

B.2 The Ark of Salvation

Furthermore, according to the fathers, the Church is also the Ark of Salvation, prefigured by Noah's Ark.

(C) DISTINCTIONS APPLIED TO THE CHURCH

In speaking of the Church in general several distinctions come into consideration.

C.1 The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant

The Church as she now exist on earth is a militant Church, that is called unto and is actually engaged in a holy war. The Church in heaven on the other hand is the triumphant Church, in which the sword is exchanged for the palm of victory.

C.2 The Visible and the Invisible Church

This distinction applies to the Church as it exists on earth, which is invisible as far as her spiritual nature is concerned, so that it is impossible to determine precisely who do and who do not belong to her, but becomes visible in the profession and conduct and conduct of it's members, in the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, and in her external organization and government.

C.3 The Church as an organism and as an institution

This distinction applies only to the visible Church. As an organism it is visible in the communal life of believers, and in their opposition to the world, and as an organization, in the offices of the clergy, the administration of the Word and the Sacraments, and in the temporal form of the Church government.

(D) THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH

There are especially four attributes of the Church, and also three marks of external characteristics.

One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church".

D.1 Its Unity.

According to the Orthodox Church, the unity is a unity in faith and Sacraments, but not necessarily a unity of administration. It is the unity of the spiritual body of Christ.

This unity does not include heretics, the apostle characterizes the heretics as perverted and dangerous to the faith:

Titus 3:10-11 Reject a divisive "heretic" man after the first and second admonition, {11} knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

D.2 Its Holiness

The Church is holy for the following reasons:

1. Because her founder and leader is the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Because of its spiritual birth on the day of Pentecost
3. Because of her apostolic succession and the cloud of witnesses and saints..
4. Because she is the source of the Holy Spirit Whom she administers through the Sacraments.
5. Because of its Holy teachings, based on the Scriptures and the tradition.
6. Because the Holy Spirit Calls her so:

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, {26} that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, {27} that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

D.3 Its Catholicity

Catholicity of the Church means its universality.

After His resurrection the Lord sent forth His disciples to preach, He told them :

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

From these words and this injunction of our Lord to the disciples we can see that "CATHOLIC" means "Universal".

D.4 It Is Apostolic

Apostolic means it is based on the Apostles, as the first bishops ordained by Christ, to ordain others.

John 20:20-23 When He had said this, He showed them [His] hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. {21} So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." {22} And when He had said this, He breathed on [them], and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. {23} "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the [sins] of any, they are retained."

By Breathing on them and giving them the Holy Spirit, Christ ordained them Bishops. This ordination was accompanied by likening their mission to His (verse 21) AS THE FATHER SENT ME, I ALSO SEND YOU!!!!?

D.5 Christ Is Her High Priest

The Lord Jesus was sent to this world as the new and eternal High Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek!!

Heb 7:20-24 And inasmuch as [He was] not [made priest] without an oath {21} (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You [are] a priest forever According to the order of Melkizedek' "), {22} by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. {23} Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. {24} But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

D.5.1 The Present Priesthood Is Derived From Christ

Their priesthood is to the order of His priesthood, they do not offer any blood sacrifices, but rather they are administering his perpetual sacrifice to His people, i.e. His Body and His Blood. As well as having the authority to impart the other sacramental gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church members.

D.5.2 Christ Ordained The First Bishops for The Church And Granted Them Wide Authorities

John 20 Verse 23, is very clear authority to administer the forgiveness of sin!!!

John 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the [sins] of any, they are retained."

Christ obviously wanted His Church to administer forgiveness. As we believe that Christ has always meant what He said. An we have seen the Apostles using this right extensively.

D.5.3 They Were Ordained For A Commission

These bishops were ordained to administer Baptism, Confession, Absolution, Communion of others... etc. All these sacraments are directly related to the forgiveness of sin.

D.5.4 The Apostolic Succession

The First Bishops Were Given Commission By Christ To Ordain Successive Bishops And Priests

Mat 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, {20} "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age." Amen.

Christ was the direct mentor of saint Paul. We observe that St Paul ordained Timothy as a bishop as well as Titus. St John ordained Ignatious and Policarpus.

So ordination of bishops is an institution of Christ Himself, and has been an apostolic tradition
1 Tim 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

2 Tim 1:6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

St Paul written to St Timothy stipulating the qualifications of the Bishop and the Deacon as well as encouraging hard working priests and recommending them to be doubly rewarded.

Also St Paul spoken to the priests of the Church of Ephesus prior to his departure

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Priests are Perpetually Needed by the Church

St James calls on the sick to call the priests to take the patient's confession anointing him with oil:

James 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

This shows us that the apostles were aware that priesthood is a perpetual part of the life of the Church. The word "Presbyters" should be translated **priest** and not just an elder.

D.5.5 The Doctrine Of The Laying Of Hands

The doctrine of laying of the hands is counted so important for the faith, and is equaled with the belief in the second coming and the baptism:

Heb 6:1-2 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary [principles] of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, {2} of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

It is obvious that St Paul is not trivializing any of these teachings and beliefs of the early Church, but is rather referring to them as a foundation.

(E) THE MARKS OR THE EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH

The marks of the visible Church are three in number.

E.1 The True and Correct preaching of the Word of God. This is a very important mark of the Church

1 John 4:1-3 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. {2} By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, {3} and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the [spirit] of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

2 John 1:9 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

It means that all preaching must be true to the fundamentals of the Christian religion and to the Church tradition.

E.2 The Right Administration of the Sacraments

The Administration of the Sacraments is another important mark of the Church. The Sacraments could not be divorced from the word. The true Church must administer the Sacraments as established by Christ Himself and as practiced by the Church through the generations. The Seven Sacraments of the Church are an absolute necessity for salvation.

E.2.1 Baptism

For The Remission of Sin

Acts 2:38 (NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. {16} "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

For Salvation

1 Pet 3:21 (NKJV) There is also an antitype which now saves us; baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Mark 16:16 (NKJV) "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Purificatio and Santification

Eph 5:25-26 (NKJV) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

An Edict of Our Lord Jesus Christ

We note that Nicodimos went confessing his faith in the Lord Jesus, to The Lord. It is obvious that in spite of this confession of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ insisted on the necessity of baptism of both the water and the Spirit. Christ also defined baptism as a mystery when he equated its mystical part with the wind.

**Nicodimus
Declares His Faith**

John 3:1-2 (NKJV) There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

**Jesus States that
Entry to the
Kingdom of God
is conditional on
being born again
Nicodimos asks
how to be born
again**

John 3:3 (NKJV) Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

**Jesus States that
Baptism with
water and the
Spirit is the New
Birth**

John 3:4 (NKJV) Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

John 3:5-7 (NKJV) Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

**Jesus Declares
Baptism a
Mystery**

John 3:8 (NKJV) "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

**Nicodimos Still
Puzzled**

John 3:9 (NKJV) Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

**Jesus Declares
Baptism as a**

John 3:10-13 (NKJV) Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? 11 "Most assuredly, I say to you, We

heavenly mystery	<i> speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. 12 "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.</i>
Jesus Links the Cross to Baptism	<i> John 3:14-15 (NKJV) 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.</i>
Jesus Links the Love of The Father to Baptism (the famous John 3:16)	<i> John 3:16 (NKJV) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.</i>

Baptism of Infants

(1) Christ Orders their Baptism

Christ's Edict #1

From the dialog between Lord Jesus and Nicodimos we note that Baptism is an essential condition to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christ's Edict #2

Christ also made it imperative to baptize the children as He instructed the disciples to "suffer little children unto Him as for them is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Hence It Is Imperative to Baptise Infants

So if one cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven without baptism, and children are to be admitted to the Kingdom of heaven, then children must be baptized.

(2) Deciples Baptise Full Families Inclusive of Children

Acts 10:48 (NKJV) And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 16:14-15 (NKJV) Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

Acts 16:33 (NKJV) And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

1 Cor 1:16 (NKJV) Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

God Enters in Covenants with unborn Children

Jer 1:5 (NKJV) "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

Luke 1:15 (NKJV) "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

Gen 17:11 (NKJV) "and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.

Gen 17:14 (NKJV) "And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

E.2.2 Chrism or Holy Myrrhon:

Acts 8:17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

2 Cor 1:21-22 *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us [is] God, {22} who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

E.2.3 The Eucharist

Without eating the Body of Christ, and drinking His Blood, one is considered dead.

John 6 (27-69)

Christ implores the people to seek the heavenly bread

"Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

The people ask Christ about the bread He gives

{28} Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" {29} Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." {30} Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? {31} "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' "

Jesus declares that His Body is the heavenly gift

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. {33} "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." {34} Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

Jesus declares that He is the Bread of Life

{35} And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. {36} "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. {37} "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. {38} "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. {39} "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. {40} "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." {41} The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." {42} And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?" {43} Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. {44} "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. {45} "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. {46} "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. {47} "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

Jesus declares that He is the Bread of Life

48} "I am the bread of life. {49} "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. {50} "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. {51} "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

The Jews murmur against this

{52} The Jews therefore quarrelled among themselves, saying, "How can this [Man] give us [His] flesh to eat?"

Jesus Declares the His Body is a

{53} Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. {

true one (not a Symbol)

Jesus declares that His Body and Blood grants eternal life

Jesus Challenges the remaining disciples to leave if they do not believe

54} "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. {55} "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. {56} "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. {57} "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. {58} "This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." {59} These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

{60} Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard [this], said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" {61} When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? {62} "[What] then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? {63} "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and [they] are life. {64} "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. {65} And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." {66} From that [time] many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. {67} Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" {68} But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. {69} "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Saint Paul clearly sees Communion as the Body and Blood of Christ.

1 Cor 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the [same] night in which He was betrayed took bread; {24} and when He had given thanks, He broke [it] and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." {25} In the same manner [He] also [took] the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink [it], in remembrance of Me." {26} For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

It is significant to observe that St John did not record the establishment of the Sacrament of Communion on Maundy Thursday as he adequately covered the subject in John 6

E.2.4 Repentance and Confession:

John 20:20-23 When He had said this, He showed them [His] hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. {21} So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." {22} And when He had said this, He breathed on [them], and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. {23} "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the [sins] of any, they are retained."

Prov 28:13 (NKJV) He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

Lev 5:5-6 (NKJV) 'And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing; 6 'and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

Mat 3:5-6 (NKJV) Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

James 5:16 (NKJV) Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Josh 7:19 (NKJV) Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me."

E.2.5 Priesthood:

As discussed above.

E.2.6 Marriage

Mat 19:4-6 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made [them] at the beginning 'made them male and female,' {5} "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? {6} "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Mat 5:32 "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery."

E.2.7 Holy Unction

James 5:14-15 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. {15} And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

E.3 The Exercising of Discipline by The Church

This is necessary to maintain the purity of the doctrine and safe guarding the holiness of the Sacraments.

Mat 18:18 "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth

1 Cor 5:1-5 It is actually reported [that there is] sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles; that a man has his father's wife! {2} And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. {3} For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. {4} In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, {5} deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

1 Cor 14:33 For God is not [the author] of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Cor 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Rev 2:14 "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Rev 2:15 "Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Rev 2:20 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the meaning of the word "CHURCH" in Scriptures according to its derivation?
2. What different meaning has the word in the New Testament?
3. What are the seven Sacraments?
4. What is the difference between the militant and the triumphant Church?
5. To what Church does the distinction "visible" and "invisible" belong?
6. In what sense the Church is called invisible?
7. How does the Church as an organism and as an institution differ?
8. How can we define the invisible Church, and how the visible Church?
9. Which are the attributes of the Church?
10. Which are the marks of the Church? and what purpose do they serve?
11. Do they belong to the invisible or to the visible Church?
12. How must we conceive the true preaching of the Word?
13. What belongs to the right administration of the Sacraments?
14. Why is discipline necessary?

CHAPTER # 14

THE GOVERNMENT AND POWER OF THE CHURCH

(A) CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH AND THE SOURCE OF ALL ITS AUTHORITY:

John 13:13 "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for [so] I am.

1 Cor 12:5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

Eph 1:20-23 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated [Him] at His right hand in the heavenly [places], {21} far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. {22} And He put all [things] under His feet, and gave Him [to be] head over all [things] to the church, {23} which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Eph 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

Eph 5:23-24 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body. {24} Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything.

He rules the Church, not by force, but by His Word and Spirit. All ordained clergy in the Church are clothed with the authority of Christ and must submit to the control of His Word and Teachings.

(B) THE OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

B.1 The Early Church

The Episcopal Offices In The Early Church

B.1.1 The Apostles

The most important of these were the apostles. In the strictest sense this name applies only to the twelve chosen by the Lord and St Paul, bar Juda Iscariot who was replaced. But this office have been given to some apostolic men:

Acts 14:4 But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

Acts 14:14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out

1 Cor 9:5-6 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as [do] also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? {6} Or [is it] only Barnabas and I [who] have no right to refrain from working?

2 Cor 8:23 If [anyone inquires] about Titus, [he is] my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren [are inquired about], [they are] messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

Gal 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

The apostles had special privileges.

(1) They were directly called by the Lord Jesus:

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),

(2) They saw Christ after the resurrection:

1 Cor 9:1 *Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?*

(3) Were given special inspiration:

1 Cor 2:13 *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

(4) Performed an abundance of Miracles:

2 Cor 12:12 *Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.*

(5) They were richly blessed in their labours.

1 Cor 9:1 *Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?*

The New Testament also speaks of prophets, men specially gifted to speak for the edification of the Church and at times predicting future things:

Acts 11:28 *Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.*

Acts 13:1-2 *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. {2} As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."*

Acts 15:32 *Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.*

Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

(6) They Were The First Bishops Of The Church, Who Were Ordained By Christ

John 20:20-23 *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

B.1.2 Other Offices In The Early Apostolic Church

Also their were evangelists who helped spreading the Word;
Beside the bishops and priests and deacons, there were other offices, of prophecy, evangelisemetc.

Acts 21:8 *On the next [day] we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was [one] of the seven, and stayed with him.*

Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

2 Tim 4:5 *But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

B.2 The Offices Of The Present Day Orthodox church

The present day Orthodox Church enjoys the privilege of "The Apostolic Succession". The Bible and early patrological writings explains very clearly the place of the apostolic succession in the Church of God.

Many apostles and apostolic persons proceeded to the whole world. The established Churches, ordaining clergy for these Churches, as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ.

B.2.1 Bishops & Priests & Deacons:

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Tim 3:1 This [is] a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

1 Tim 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine.

1 Tim 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.

Titus 1:5-7 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you; {6} if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. {7} For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

1 Pet 5:1-2 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: {2} Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

Acts 11:30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 15:2-6 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. {3} So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. {4} And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. {5} But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command [them] to keep the law of Moses." {6} Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

Acts 15:22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, [namely], Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Acts 21:18 On the following [day] Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

The Traditional Churches, receiving their tradition directly from Christ via the apostles have no problem differentiating between the office of the bishop and the priest.

The office of the priest and the office of the bishop are clearly differentiated in the Book of Acts, in the early Patrological writings and early Church history.

The Reformist Churches (e.g. Wesley) find this very difficult to accept.

The Office Of Deacon

The office of the deacon is also spoken about in the New Testament

Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

1 Tim 3:8-12 Likewise deacons [must be] reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, {9} holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. {10} But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being [found] blameless. {11} Likewise [their] wives [must be] reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. {12} Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling [their] children and their own houses well.

Acts 6:1-6 Now in those days, when [the number of] the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. {2} Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. {3} "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of [good] reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; {4} "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." {5} And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, {6} whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

(C) The Universal Councils

The Church modeled its universal councils, on the first council in Jerusalem, refer to "Acts 15". Examples of such universal councils, the "Council of Nicea", the "Council of Ephesus" and the "Council of Constantinopolis". These Councils have supreme authority over Church teaching and moralities. They derive their power from the commission of Christ in John 20:20-23.

(D) THE POWER OF THE CHURCH

The Coptic Orthodox Church derives its spiritual authority to function from the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church. Such authority cannot be changed, altered, modified or revoked. His Holiness the Pope of Alexandria is the head of the said Synod.

D.1 The Teaching Power.

The Church is commissioned to guard the truth, to hand it from generation to generation, and to defend it against all forces of unbelief:

1 Tim 1:3-4 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia: remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, {4} nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

2 Tim 1:13 Hold fast the pattern of sound words (tradition) which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:9-11 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. {10} For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, {11} whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

D.1.1 The Church must preach the Word unceasingly among all the nations of the world

Isa 3:10-11 "Say to the righteous that [it shall be] well [with them], For they shall eat the fruit of their doings. {11} Woe to the wicked! [It shall be] ill [with him], For the reward of his hands shall be given him.

2 Cor 5:20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore [you] on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

1 Tim 4:13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Titus 2:1-10 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: {2} that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; {3} the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; {4} that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, {5} to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. {6} Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, {7} in all things showing yourself [to be] a pattern of good works; in doctrine [showing] integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, {8} sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. {9} [Exhort] bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all [things], not answering back, {10} not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

The Church must also draw up creeds and confessions, and must provide for the preparation and ordinations of more clergy

2 Tim 2:2 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.

D.1.2 The Sacramental Power of the Church

The Church is the home of the Holy Spirit with the people.

The most manifest expression of the presence of the Holy Spirit, is the sacramental life of the Church.

We have discussed in the section concerning the "Church" the seven sacraments.

D.2 The Governing Power of the Church

God is a God of order, who desires that all things in the Church be done decently and in order:

1 Cor 14:33 For God is not [the author] of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Cor 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

For that reason He made provision for the proper regulation of the affairs of the Church, and gave the Church power to carry the canons of Christ into effect.

John 21:15-17 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, [son] of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." {16} He said to him again a second time, "Simon, [son] of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." {17} He said to

him the third time, "Simon , [son] of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

D.2.1. This also included the power of discipline:

Mat 16:19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Mat 18:18 "Assuredly , I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

John 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the [sins] of any, they are retained."

1 Cor 5:2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

1 Cor 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

2 Th 3:14 And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

2 Th 3:15 Yet do not count [him] as an enemy, but admonish [him] as a brother.

1 Tim 1:20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Titus 3:10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,

In disciplining the Church applies the rule stipulated in Matthew 18:15-18.

Mat 18:15-18 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. {16} "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' {17} "And if he refuses to hear them, tell [it] to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. {18} "Assuredly , I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

CHAPTER # 15

VENERATION OF THE SAINTS

"As commanded by Your Only Begotten Son to partake in the commemoration of Your Saints...." St. Basil's Coptic Liturgy

PART 1 GENERAL

(A) THE CHURCH IS COMMANDED TO VENERATE THE SAINTS

The Lord Jesus Commands the Disciples to Commemorate the woman who Anointed His Body

Mat 26:13 (NKJV) "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

(B) THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS ARE PRESENTED TO GOD

Rev 5:8 (NKJV) Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

(C) THE LORD CONSIDERS THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

C.1 Examples of Saints Interceding For others

C.1.1 Abraham Intercedes For Sodom

Gen 18:17 (NKJV) And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, Gen 18:26-32 (NKJV) So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." 27 Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: 28 "Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?" So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it." 29 And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty." 30 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." 31 And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty." 32 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."

C.1.2 Moses Intercedes for His People

Exo 32:11-14 (NKJV). " 11 Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 "Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from

Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. 13 "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" 14 So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

C.2 God Respects the Intercessions of Departed Saints

C.2.1 Departed Saints Intercede to The LORD

Jer 15:1 (NKJV) Then the LORD said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth.

This tells us that Moses & Samuel were alive and in prayers before the Lord, even after years of departure from this earth.

C.2.2 Solomon is Spared for the Sake of David

1 Ki 11:12-13 (NKJV) "Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 "However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen." Psa 132:10 (NKJV) For Your servant David's sake, Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.

The above are only limited examples. Please refer to other references for more, e.g. "Comparative Theology" by HH Pope Shenouda III.

C.3 We are Implored to Pray for One Another

James 5:16 (NKJV) Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

C.4 The Saints and Angels In Heaven are Alert & Aware

C.4.1 Abraham, Lazarus and the Rich Man

Saints in heaven are aware of what happens to us and to God's people. We note that Abraham told the "Rich Man" that people on earth had the books of Moses and the Prophets. While all these books were not even written at Abraham's time.

Luke 16:29 (NKJV) "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

C.4.2 The Angels are Aware of the Repentant

Luke 15:7 (NKJV) "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

C.4.3 The Angels Know Your Prayer Because They Carry it to God

Rev 8:3-4 (NKJV) Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which

was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.

C4.4 At Heaven People's Knowledge is Increased

1 Cor 13:12 (NKJV) For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

C4.5 The Amazing Biblical Record About Prophet Elijah

Prophet Elijah sent the king in Juda a letter, not during Elija's life, but 15 years after he (Elijah) departed.

2 Chr 21:12-14 (NKJV) And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus says the LORD God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, 13 but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot like the harlotry of the house of Ahab, and also have killed your brothers, those of your father's household, who were better than yourself, 14 behold, the LORD will strike your people with a serious affliction; your children, your wives, and all your possessions;

C4.6 Saints Who Departed are Still Living

The Lord Jesus declared this fact in His discourse with the Saducees.

Mat 22:31-32 (NKJV) "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

C5 Even Saint's Bodies and Relics are a Blessing

C5.1 The bones of Elisha the prophet were capable of resurrecting a dead person.

2 Ki 13:21 (NKJV) So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.

C5.2 Clothing Items of St. Paul Healed the Sick

Acts 19:12 (NKJV) so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

(D) THE SAINTS ARE FAVOURED BY THE LORD

It is biblically clear that the saints have a special place in the Kingdom of God and that they enjoy special favour by Him.

D.1 God Associate His Name With Theirs

Exo 3:6 (NKJV) Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

D.2 Many Saints Used to Remind God With This Association

Moses called for mercy on his people and used the names of the saints.

Exo 32:13 (NKJV) "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

D3 God Selected His Saints and Favoured Them.

God rebuked Aaron and Miriam for criticizing Moses. It is clear that some people are favoured more than others.

Num 12:6-8 (NKJV) Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

E THE VALUE OF THE INTERCESSIONS OF THE SAINTS

- Asking the prayers of the saints, implies belief in the life to come.
- Intercession is a fellowship of love between the Church on earth and the one in heaven.
John 17:21 (NKJV) "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.
John 17:23 (NKJV) "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.
- Intercessions of the saints are beneficial. Cutting oneself from them makes one the loser.
- Intercession entails meekness in heart. The person who intercedes with the saints, admits his weakness before God.
- Intercession is a living reality, refer to the apparitions of angels, Virgin Mary at Zaitoun Egypt, etc.....One could not ignore nor cancel reality.

PART 2

THE VENERATION OF VIRGIN MARY

The veneration of Saint Mary is a Biblical teaching

Luke 1:48 (NKJV) For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

The Holy Spirit spoken on St. Mary's tongue. Also Archangel Gabrielle called her "the Full of Grace" or the highly favoured.

Luke 1:28 (NKJV) And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

Also the Holy Spirit spoke on the tongue of Elizabeth declaring that St. Mary is the Mother of God

Luke 1:43-44 (NKJV) "But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

Prophecies About St. Mary

The Queen

Psa 45:9 (NKJV) Kings' daughters are among Your honorable women; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.

As a queen the icons of Virgin Mary must have her wearing a crown, also she is placed at the right hand of her Son the Lord Jesus.

The Desire of All Generations

*Gen 3:15 (NKJV) And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, **And between your seed⁹ and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.**"*

The Mother of Light

John 1:9 (NKJV) That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

⁹ The Lord Jesus Christ

John 8:12 (NKJV) Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

So if she is the Mother of Christ, it is appropriate to call her the Mother of Light.

The Mother of The Holy

Luke 1:35 (NKJV) And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

The Mother of the Saviour

Luke 2:11 (NKJV) "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

The Mother of God

If Jesus is God then she is the Mother of God.

The Gate of Life and the Gate of Salvation

If the Lord Jesus is our life and our Salvation, then she is our gate to Him. Ezekiel 44: 2 shows our beloved mother as the gate of the Lord.

Ezek 44:2 (NKJV) And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut."

Is it Correct to Address Prayers To the Virgin Saint Mary

We do not pray to Virgin Mary, but as we address her, like addressing all other creation in our prayers.

We Address the Angels in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary

Psa 103:20-21 (NKJV) Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. 21 Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.

Psa 148:1-2 (NKJV) Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!

We Address Nature in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary

Psa 148:3-9 (NKJV) Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created. 6 He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away. 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths; 8 Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; 9 Mountains and all hills; Fruitful trees and all cedars;

We Address the Holy City of God in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary

*Psa 147:12-13 (NKJV) Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! 13 For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you.
Psa 87:3 (NKJV) Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah*

We Address People in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary

*Psa 47:1 (NKJV) Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
Psa 46:8 (NKJV) Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth.
Psa 146:3 (NKJV) Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help.
Psa 113:1 (NKJV) Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD!*

We Address the Evil Spirit in Our Prayers, So Why Not Saint Mary

Psa 6:8-10 (NKJV) Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping. 9 The LORD has heard my supplication; The LORD will receive my prayer. 10 Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.

We do not pray to angels nor men nor cities, but we address them in our prayers.

The Perpetual Virginity of Saint Mary

(1) Virgin Mary Was A Betrothed Wife But Was Not To Consummate the Marriage

In the Middle East a man and a woman are first betrothed, which is entering in a legally binding contract of marriage, but they both remain at their parent homes until such time another ceremony takes place where both are brought together and blessed and are admitted to live under the same roof and may assume the normal bodily relationship.

If any party to the betrothal dies, even the other party would inherit him/her. Both families used to relinquish some of their belongings to the young couples.

The Jews were no exception. Until to day the Coptic Church have a 2 part ceremony, the first is called " UKD EL EMLAK", means the contract of property. The second part is called the "EKLEEL" means the crowning.

The Moslems carry out the same practice, where the first part is called "KATB EL KETAB" means the inscription of the contract, while the other part is called "DOKHLA" means "The Entry".

Virgin Mary Was A Nazerite

Virgin Mary was a Nazerite, i.e. like Samuel the prophet. She was granted to the Temple as promised by her parents.

When God gave Anna & Joacim (Virgin Mary's parents) a second girl, this girl was named Mary as well to replace the Nazarite one. This sister is clearly mentioned in John Chapter 19.

John 19:25 (NKJV) Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Virgin Mary Refuses To Break Her Vow

Virgin Mary was to leave the temple at the age of 12. She had no parents to go back to as both were dead. She was betrothed to an old man (Joseph) who took her to his house.

Virgin Mary refused the notion of breaking her vow of chastity and celibacy. This is obvious from the way she answered the Archangel, who told her that she will bear the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Luke 1:34 (NKJV) Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

Any betrothed or an engaged girl would be elated to know that she could mother the King of kings and the Lord of lords. But our Lady who was honest to in keeping her promise was so clear and firm with the archangel, whom she thought was inviting her to break the promise.

How about Jesus' Brothers

It is obvious that the cousins are considered brothers. Please refer to the relationship between Lot & Abraham and Sarah and Abraham.

And if Virgin Mary had other brothers, why did He hand His Mother to John the Beloved?

John 19:26-27 (NKJV) When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

Other Prophecies About Virgin Mary

The Staff of Aaron

Num 17:1-5 (NKJV) And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses; twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. 3 "And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of each father's house. 4 "Then you shall place them in the tabernacle of meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you. 5 "And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they make against you."

The Ark of Covenant

Exo 25:10-22 (NKJV) "And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. 11 "And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around. 12 "You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side. 13 "And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 "You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. 15 "The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. 16 "And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. 17 "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width. 18 "And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 "Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. 20 "And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. 21 "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. 22 "And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."

The Ladder of Heaven

Gen 28:12 (NKJV) Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

The Burning Bush

Exo 3:1-7 (NKJV) Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. 3 Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." 4 So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5 Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." 6 Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father; the God of Abraham, the God of

Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. 7 And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.

CHAPTER # 16

TRADITION

This is a summary of what is written by His Holiness Pope Shenouda, in His Holiness' book "Comparative Theology"

OUTLINE

- (A) Tradition is older than the Holy Bible. It goes back to the time of our father Adam.
- (B) The Holy Bible does not mention every thing.
- (C) What were the Lord's words about the Kingdom of God.
- (D) Tradition is taken from the teachings of the Apostles
- (E) The Apostles laid down disciplines for the Church.
- (F) The Apostles recorded in their teaching things they received from Tradition.
- (G) Benefits of Tradition.
- (H) Valid and invalid tradition.
- (I) Church authority in teaching and legislation.
- (J) Conditions of sound tradition.
- (K) The Apostles commanded that the tradition be preserved.

TRADITION IS THE OLDEST.

Tradition is the oldest. it goes back to the time of Adam.

The Law was only written about 1400 BC, while all the generations from Adam lived by the Tradition.

Examples

Abel's Faith

(GEN 4:4)- Abel also brought of the first-born of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, (NKJ)

(HEB 11:4)- By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. (NKJ)

Noah, Abraham offered Sacrifices! how did they know?

(Genesis 8:20-21 NKJ)(20) Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. (21) And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart {is} evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

Clean Animals? Altar? The Tithe?? How did they know.

(GEN 14:18)- Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he {was} the priest of God Most High. (NKJ)

(Hebrews 7:6-7 NKJ) (6) but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. (7) Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.

(GEN 14:20)- *And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all. (NKJ)*

(GEN 28:22)- *"And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You." (NKJ)*

Consecration With Oil, Jacob, Where did He Know About the Oil of Consecration?.

(EXO 13:14)- *"So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, `What {is} this?' that you shall say to him, `By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (NKJ)*

Here, The Lord Is Asking The Parents To Pass On The Tradition.

(2TI 3:8)- *Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; (NKJ)*

Where did Paul get these names from?

(MAR 16:15)- *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. (NKJ)*

(MAR 1:15)- *and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (NKJ)*

What gospel?? There was no written gospel at the time?

(B) THE BIBLE DOES NOT MENTION EVERY THING.

(JOH 21:25)- *And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen. (NKJ)*

(John 20:30-31 NKJ)(30) *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

Luke 4:28 (NKJV) *So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,*

Luke 4:31 *Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. 32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.*

(C) THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

WHAT WERE THE LORD'S WORDS ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD?.

(MAT 4:23)- *Now Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. (NKJ)*

(LUK 24:27)- *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (NKJ)*

(ACT 1:3)- *to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (NKJ)*

(MAT 28:20)- *"teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, {even} to the end of the age." Amen. (NKJ)*

(JOH 6:63)- *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and {they} are life. (NKJ)*

(JOH 14:26)- *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring **to your remembrance** all things that I said to you. (NKJ)*

D) SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

It is interesting to observe that many apostles did not leave any written record.

(Acts 28:30-31 NKJ)(30) Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, (31) preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

1. Was all St James' contribution to Christianity a book of 5 chapters, and St Jude's!! one book of one chapter???
2. Where are the rest of the Apostle's???
3. Did St Paul spend 2 years teaching in a house, to write 14 epistles???

(E) THE APOSTOLIC DISCIPLINES FOR THE CHURCH.

It is obvious that the apostles laid down many Church disciplines. Many of these disciplines were not written.

(2JO 1:12)- Having many things to write to you, I did not wish {to do so} with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. (NKJ)

(3John 1:13-14 NKJ)(13) I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; (14) but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

(1CO 11:34)- But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come. (NKJ)

(TIT 1:5)- For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you - (NKJ)

(2TI 2:2)- 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. (NKJ)

Obviously majority of the instructions were given verbally, other wise!

1. How Would Titus or Timothy Managed Their Congregations As Bishops? Ordinations, Communion, Matrimonial....etc.
2. Where Did We & Our Brethren The Protestants Get The Instruction To Consecrate Sunday As The Day Of The Lord?

(EXO 20:8)- "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (NKJ)

(DEU 5:12)- "Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. (NKJ)

The Teaching Of How To Conduct The Eucharist Was Handed Down From The Lord Himself

(1Corinthians 11:23-24 NKJ)

(23) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the {same} night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke {it} and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

St Paul spent three years at the Arabian desert, being coached by the Lord, he was not taught by others?

Where are his records about these three valuable years?

The epistles were letters written to resolve doctrinal and disciplinary crisis, but the day running of the Church was handed down verbally.

F) TRADITIONAL BASIS OF THE APOSTOLIC WRITINGS.

The apostles recorded in their teachings things they received from tradition.

(JUD 1:9)- Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (NKJ)

(HEB 12:21)- And so terrifying was the sight {that} Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling." (NKJ)

Balam

(REV 2:14)- "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. (NKJ)

(2PETER 2:15)- They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the {son} of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; (NKJ)

The Old Testament never mentioned that Balaam taught the children of Israel any of the thing mentioned by St Jude & St Peter??

(NUM 24:25)- Then Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way. (NKJ)

ENOCH

(Jude 1:14-15 NKJ)(14) Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, (15) "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

This sort of information was never written in the Old Testament, it was handed down by Tradition.

CIRCUMCISION

It was given to Abraham and was observed by his descendants well before the Torah of Moses was written?

(G) BENEFITS OF TRADITION.

1. The authenticity of the Bible is derived from the Tradition.
2. Church heritage came through Tradition.
3. Preservation of the SOUND FAITH, without tradition the Church would of fallen in many wrong heresies.
4. Tradition taught and kept for us many principals e.g. Monogamy, Consecration of Sunday, making of the Sign of the Cross.
5. St Mark handed down his Liturgy before writing his Gospel.

(H) VALID AND INVALID TRADITION.

(MAT 15:3)- But He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? (NKJ)

Some times our brethren the Protestants use this verse to attack Tradition. To see this verse in the right prospective we ought to read the succeeding verses.

(Matthew 15:4-6 NKJ)(4) "For God commanded, saying, 'Honour your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' (5) "But you say, 'Whoever says to {his} father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me has been dedicated {to the temple}" - (6) '{is released from} honouring his father or mother.'

(COL 2:8)- Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. (NKJ)

Again the above verse speaks about the "tradition of men", while the Apostles and the Church fathers are not "any men", otherwise why did the Lord entrust them and ordain them??

(I) CONDITIONS OF SOUND TRADITION

Sound tradition must conform with the following conditions

(1) The teachings of the Lord, reaching us through tradition e.g. Monogamy, Sunday, Administration of the Eucharist,.....

(GAL 1:8)- But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. (NKJ)

(2) The Apostolic teachings entrusted to the Church, reaching us from generation to generation.

(3) The Ecclesiastical tradition handed down by the holy ecumenical councils, regarding church canons and disciplines.

(J) CHURCH AUTHORITY

The Bible is clear regarding the Church's authority in teaching and legislation

(MAT 18:18)- "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. (NKJ)

(Acts 15:28-29 NKJ)

(28) For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: (29) that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

(The Council Of Jerusalem 45 AD)

(John 20:20-23 NKJ)

(20) Now when He had said this, He showed them {His} hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. (21) Then Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." (22) And when He had said this, He breathed on {them}, and said to them,

"Receive the Holy Spirit. (23) "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the {sins} of any, they are retained."

The Church Councils Are A Good Example Of a Sound Source Of Tradition.

K) THE APOSTLES COMMANDED THAT THE TRADITION BE PRESERVED.

(2TH 2:15)- Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. (NKJ)

(2TH 3:6)- But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. (NKJ)

FURTHER ARGUMENTS

The following Arguments about "The Holy Tradition", are adapted from Greek Orthodox Sources.

THE UNWRITTEN WORD OF GOD

The second source from which we draw the teachings of our faith that is of equal validity and importance as the Holy Bible is the Holy Tradition. Holy Tradition completes and interprets the Bible and contains truths that are consonant with its spirit. The abundant and divine life of the church which is always guided by the Holy Spirit, could not be contained completely in Holy Scripture. Nor are the sermons of Christ and the Apostles contained in the New Testament. *(John 20:30-31, John 21:25). This is what promoted St Paul to write to the Thessalonians (II Thess. 2:15).*

John 20:30-31 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; {31} but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 21:25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

The Holy Bible is the Written Word of God. We can see the pages and the words: therefore it seems very real. But do we mean by an Unwritten Word of God? An unwritten word can only mean something that is said but not written. How can we know that God has spoken if we do not have the words written down?

Not everything that Christ taught His Holy Apostles was in the form of words. When He asked St John the Baptist to baptize Him He was showing them what to do by doing it Himself. When He gathered His Apostles around Him for the Last Supper, He was again showing them by His own acts what to do and how to carry on the tradition.

We also know from the Bible that when Christ showed the Apostles how to perform acts like baptizing, or breaking bread (Holy Communion) or choosing new Apostles to on the tradition,

He accompanied His acts with words. This is because the acts, which He taught them, were special Acts which had special meaning. These Acts were not to be confused with everyday acts that can be done any old way that happens to suit us at the moment. No, these were to be Holy Acts that could be done only in a certain way and very carefully.

It was necessary for the person performing the Acts to be specially prepared. He had to have the special blessing of the Holy Spirit, and he had to believe in what he was doing and understand the meaning of the Acts.

2 Tim 2:2 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.

The special acts, which Christ taught His Holy Apostles, have been passed down to us under the name of Holy Sacraments or Holy Mysteries. The Orthodox Church believes that the Holy Sacraments are the most important part of the Holy Tradition. That is why they are always performed with great care according to the way that has been passed down by Tradition. Our Tradition tells us that the Sacraments are not intended to be just outward forms, they are not just acts we perform as a remembrance of what Christ did. They are acts in which something really happens. They represent the special occasions when Christ's promise to send the Holy Spirit is truly fulfilled.

There were all passed on by word of mouth for some time before they were entrusted to writing. Even then it continued to be necessary to teach each new generation each new disciple by showing him how.

In the beginning of Christianity, the truths concerning the new religion were spread orally by the Apostles and their co-workers. Later, the books of the New Testament were written. They were written at different times between the year 50-90 AD. and the collection of these writings into one book the Canon of the New Testament was accomplished much later.

When the New Testament did not exist as such, the Christian Churches throughout the world were established solely upon the oral teachings of the Apostles. The books of the New Testament were written for those who already believed and had been baptized. In many sections, they presuppose the oral teaching of the Apostles to the faithful. St Paul says: (II Thess 2:15). Also (1 Cor 11:2).

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

1 Cor 11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

Not all the writings of the early church are included in the New Testament. It was only by experience that the church learned which writings expressed the tradition most truly and were most useful. It was by knowing the Holy Tradition that the Fathers of the Church were able to decide which books should be included in the Holy Bible. The Bible exists as a part of Holy Tradition. It is necessary to know the Holy Tradition in order to understand what the Bible is saying.

Holy Tradition therefore, is part and continuation of the preaching of the Lord and the Apostles. It is a complement of Holy Scripture and a product as is Holy Scripture of the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Church together with other evidence used Holy Tradition to determine which books should be contained in the Canon of the New Testament. She rejected other writings as false and not consonant with the genuine teaching of the Church.

Through Holy Tradition many of the forms of worship and the Sacraments were preserved. It is from Holy Tradition that some Sacraments of the Church derive their validity. Also we rely greatly on Holy Tradition which has been preserved through the Church Councils and the writing of the Fathers for the correct interpretation and understanding of the Bible.

For this reason in our study of the Catechism of our Church we make liberal use of the written monuments which contains the Holy Tradition of our church. They are namely.

- a) The Nicene Creed (Nicaea 325 AD - Constantinople 381 AD). This is the official Creed of our Orthodox Church. Also the Apostles Creed and the Athanasian Creed.
- b) The Decisions of the Three Ecumenical Councils in which the common mind of the Church is expressed on matters of faith.
- c) The Writings of the Holy Fathers of the Church which also express their agreement on matters of faith.

WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF GENUINE HOLY TRADITION

There is the need for some criterion to distinguish the genuine Holy Tradition from the false traditions of men. This criterion is the three marks or characteristics of Holy Tradition, namely,

- 1. Antiquity
- 2. Catholicity
- 3. Agreement (Symphonic).

The mark of Antiquity lies in the fact that true Tradition must be traceable to the time of the Apostles to whom the Word of God was revealed.

The mark of Catholicity lies in the fact that true tradition must be known to the entire church to all local churches.

The mark of Agreement lies in the fact that tradition must be found in the teaching of the most eminent fathers. This is not to be taken numerically to imply that all of them have written on each matter of Holy Tradition. It does mean however that the most important Fathers of the church have expressed their acceptance of a certain teaching or have not expressed contrary views.

St Vincent of Lorens defines the necessary marks of Holy Tradition as follows "Holy Tradition is whatever was believed everywhere, always and by all".

We have the Holy Scriptures which give us Christ's words and the words of the Apostles. We also have the words of the Church Fathers who wrote and taught from the time of the Apostles. When we read their accounts of what they understood the Bible to mean, we know that we still understand the same thing. When we read what they say about the Sacraments, we know that what they talk about is the same as we still do.

ST BASIL ON TRADITION

Here is an example from the writings of St Basil the Great. St Basil was born the same year that Constantinople became capital of the empire, and later he became Bishop of the city of Caesarea in the middle of the country which is now Turkey. If we simplify his language a little he says:

Among the teachings of the Church we have some from written instructions but others we have received from Apostolic tradition passed on in private. Both of these are of equal importance.

No one will contradict this who has the smallest knowledge of the teachings of the Church. If we dared to reject the unwritten customs as if they had no importance, we could unconsciously distort the Gospel in the most important points, or the teaching of Apostles would become just an empty name.

"For instance let us mention the first and most common act of Christians that those who trust in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ sign themselves with the sign of the Cross.

Who has taught them this in writing? To turn to the east in prayer what Scripture have we for this?

The words of invocation in the change of the Eucharistic Bread and the Cup of Blessing: by which of the Saints have they been left in writing? For we are not content with those words which the Apostle or the Gospel records, but we pronounce others also, both before and after which we believe are of great importance for the sacrament even though we have received them by unwritten teaching.

By what Scripture is it that we bless the water of Baptism, the oil of Unction and the person himself who is baptized? Is it not by a silent and secret tradition? What else? The practice itself of anointing with oil what written word do we have for it? From where comes the rule of triune immersion and the rest of the ceremonies at Baptism: the renunciation of Satan and his angels? From what Scriptures are they taken?

Are they not all from this unpublished and private teaching which our fathers kept safe from the curious non-Christian people who might like to argue about them because they were taught as first principle to guard with silence the sanctity of the Holy Mysteries? How could it be fit to publish in writing the teaching of those things on which the un-baptised may not so much as look?

(Note In early times un-baptised persons, catechumens were dismissed after exchanging the holy kiss).

OTHER CHURCHES AND THE HOLY TRADITION

The Roman Catholic Church considers Holy Tradition as a depository of the faith from which she has the right to formulate new dogmas and elevate teachings that have already been rejected by the universal church true articles of faith. (Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, The supremacy of the Pope, the Infallibility of the Pope, the purgatory).

The Protestant Church in opposition to the RC Church completely rejects Holy Tradition by saying that the Bible is self sufficient and nothing else is needed for our faith.

The answer to this question is to be found in the Bible itself.

2 Pet 1:15-16 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. {16} For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

Also the Bible urges us to keep the traditions

1 Cor 11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

The Bible itself was founded on the oral Tradition of the Church and received its authority from it.

Holy Tradition then is the part of our Holy Coptic Orthodox Church and Her teachings which are not found in written form in the Holy Bible but which are genuine and have equal authority and truth. In order to be part of the Holy Tradition, a teaching must come from God and belong to the teachings of Christ and the Holy Apostles, it must have been continuously taught and practiced and kept alive by the Church, confirmed by the Ecumenical Councils and still exist today.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Prove that the Holy Tradition Is Older Than The Bible
2. Prove that people applied the Word of God long time before it was ever written.
3. Quote some examples where the Apostles resorted to Tradition.
4. How Biblical Is the Creed.
5. Quote some samples of "New Testament" valid traditions.
6. Quote some samples of unacceptable and invalid traditions.
7. What are the conditions of a sound tradition.
8. "The Bible's authenticity, is dependent on tradition"; discuss

CHAPTER # 17

THE HOLY BIBLE

The sources from which Christianity draws its truths are two, Holy Tradition and Holy Scripture. Holy Tradition and Holy Scripture contain God's Divine Revelation to man both written and oral i.e. the entire God through inspired men the through His Son and our Lord revealed to men for their salvation.

THE HOLY BIBLE

(A) THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD

The word Bible is a Greek word. It means Book. The Bible is a very special book. It has a very special message for us God's message. It is the Written Word of God. This does not mean that God took pen in hand and wrote down the words but it does mean that God and the Holy Spirit inspired the men who took pen in hand and wrote down the words.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TELL US

The Bible is a record in which we can see how the world was made, how sin came into the world and how many generations of prophets tried to lead the people back to God. We can see how all these attempts failed and how God eventually sent His own Son into the world to redeem man from sin.

The Bible is therefore a record of man's battle against evil, and of God's willingness to grant him salvation. The most important choice that we make in our whole lives in whether or not we will choose to accept God's offer of salvation. This choice will not have meaning for us unless we understand what the choice is all about. The Bible tells us this by telling us:

1. What has happened to other people before us (history)
2. What we ourselves ought to do (instruction)
3. What will happen if we make a good or a bad choice (prophecy)

Different people wrote the books of the Bible over a long period of time. Some were written for one purpose, and some for other. Therefore we divide them into three groups, depending upon which purpose the writer had in mind: historical, instructive and prophetic. In order to see the reason for this we will use an The Bible is divided into two main sections the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The word "Testament" means a covenant or agreement. During the time recorded in the old Testament, God spoke to certain people at various times and in various ways. He spoke to Adam and Eve directly: This we call the Oral Covenant. He spoke to Moses and gave him a written code of laws - the Ten Commandments: this we call the Written Covenant. God also spoke to His people through His Prophets. The Prophets were men especially inspired by God

to interpret His will and to try to hold the Jewish people to their Covenant. Certain of these Prophets predicted that the old order of the Law the old Covenant would be replaced by a New Covenant, which would be proclaimed by the Messiah and would include all men. This New Covenant is the Covenant of Jesus Christ, the New Testament.

A.2.1 The Old Testament

The Old Testament contains the history of the creation of the world and man by God and the history of the Jewish people. In this history we see God's plan in preparing the way for people of Israel. The books of the Old Testament were written at different times in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek language.

A.2.2 The New Testament

The New Testament is made up of 27 books, which contain the life and teaching of Christ and the Apostles. The New Testament is referred to as the Holy Gospel (Ieron Evangelion) because it contains the good news of the salvation of a sinful mankind through the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. For our salvation and out of love for man Jesus came down from Heaven, Himself became man, lived and taught here on earth, suffered death upon the Cross and was raised from the dead.

A.3 The Source Of The Bible

The Holy Bible according to the belief of our Church us is **Divinely Inspired** i.e. the holy authors of the Bible write while inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit.

2 Pet 1:21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

A.3.1 Is Inspiration Literal & Mechanical?

No! This inspiration naturally does not refer to the letters or individual words of the Bible but only to the meaning and the entire content. That the Bible is divinely inspired is apparent from the following:

A.3.2 Why Do We Believe That The Bible Is Divine?

- a) It contains sublime and clear truths regarding God regarding man and regarding the present life and the life to come which could not have been written by men who were mostly illiterate shepherds, fishermen and common people.
- b) These truths despite many persecutions and great opposition were spread to all the nations of the world and this was accomplished not by force and material means but through preaching and catechism.

c) These same truths undoubtedly helped change many inhuman customs, converted many barbarous people into civilized human beings and elevated the worth of the individual.

Even today many unbelieving intellectuals admit that no human teaching ever surpassed or shall supersede in perfection these Christian truths. The Christian teaching contained in the Bible is the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Just as the material world cannot exist without sun, thus the human souls will always have needs of the truths of the Bible because without them they will fall into corruption and depression.

The truths of the Holy Bible are indispensable for all men without exception, regardless of their age sex or the historical period in which they live, All the prophecies of the Bible regarding Christ and His church were fulfilled. This would not have happened if the authors of the Bible had not been inspired by the Holy Spirit to foresee future events.

d) Because Christ used many scriptures denoting them to be the Word of God. For all these reasons we accept the fact that the Holy Bible is a divinely inspired book and that the truths it contains are divine and eternal so that regardless of how much mankind progresses it will be unable to add anything better. Instead it will eternally study and strive for a more profound understanding of Scripture so that it can draw strength and divine life from therein, gradually realizing the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. The truths of the Holy Bible are power. They are a lighthouse that shows us the way on the sea of life till we reach the harbour of perfection as individuals and as a society.

(B) THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE HOLY BIBLE

B.1 THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Orthodox church recognises as official text of the Old testament, the Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament, a translation from the original Hebrew into Greek by 70 Hellenistic-Jewish Scholars who met (250 B.C.) at Alexandria. This is the text of the Old Testament which the authors of the New Testament refer to. The word Septuagint is a Latin for 70. The full name of the Greek old Testament is (the Old Testament Interpretation of the Seventy Elders).

According to tradition there were 70 scholars who worked on the translation. The Latin name for this translation of the Old Testament is "Septuagint" which means seventy. This Greek version is the oldest text of the Old Testament in existence and is still used by the Orthodox church. It differs from the English Protestant Bible both in the order and number of the books. The Septuagint Bible some books not found in the English edition of the Bible. There are called the Second Canonical Books. The Christian churches accepted them until the time of the reformation.

It should be perhaps noted that until the recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls the Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament was the oldest copy of the Old testament available since all the original Hebrew versions had become extinct shortly after they had been written.

It is important to remember that the Old Testament Books were written and collected over many hundreds of years. Most of them were not written down until long after the events happened. They were written on scrolls, which had to be rolled up, and therefore not much could be written in a single scroll. It was not possible to collect the books of the Bible into one volume until after the beginning of the Christian era when the Canon of the books of the Holy Bible was formulated.

As we indicated in our study of the Christian tradition, we will see that people follow tradition for a long time before they write it down. They write down only those things that are important enough to last. This is one way we know that these books are authentic and that what they tell us is truly the Word of God.

B.2 THE NEW TESTAMENT

The second large division of the Bible is the New Testament. The New Testament contains 27 books, all of which were written between AD 50 and 90. The New Testament is so called because it tells about God's New Covenant with man. The New Covenant is the one which Christ made when He came into the world to save us from our sins.

Like the Old Testament, the New Testament was not written down right after the events which it describes. The events told in the New Testament are: the coming of Christ, His ministry and teachings, His Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. and the work of His Holy Apostles in spreading and explaining the faith which He had commissioned them to teach.

The books of the New Testament fall into the same three divisions as the books of the Old Testament Historical, Didactic and prophetic. The New Testament contains a larger proportion of instructive books and only one prophetic book.

The official New Testament of the Orthodox Church is the original Greek text, which is made up of 27 books.

B.3 AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE IS DETERMINED BY THE CHURCH

The Ecumenical Councils made the final decision regarding what books should be included in the Bible. Actually what these Councils did was to ratify and accept the Canon of the Books of the Bible, as we know them today. Unlike the Protestant denominations, the Orthodox Church has been and still is the custodian of the true Scriptures. The Protestants are trusting the Book, because of our witness to its authenticity.

(C) SUMMARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The historical books of the New Testament are the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The word Gospel is an old English word that means good tidings. This has the same meaning as the Greek word Evangelion (Gospel) and from it is derived the word Evangelist. The

Evangelists are those men who proclaimed the good tidings that is the message of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

C.1 The Four Gospels

All four Gospels tell of the same events which occurred within a space of a little more than thirty three years. These are the years that our Lord Jesus Christ lived on earth. Although all four Gospels tell about the same events, they tell them in different ways. They each reflect the personal view of the man who wrote it and supplement one another.

C.2 The Book of Acts

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles tells us how the Holy Apostles carried on Christ's teaching by spreading the good tidings and by founding cultural centres of the world at that time. These Christian communities became Christian churches, and they became groups of believers with organization and leadership according to the plan which Christ delivered to His Apostles.

The most active figure in the books of Acts is the Apostle St Paul. Although St Paul was a Jew converted to Christianity, he declared that Christ's teaching was not intended for Jews alone, but for all men. He preached Christ's message of Salvation to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and founded Christian Churches in many cities of the Roman Empire. This is why he is called the Apostle of the nations.

The Coptic Church ordains bishops and patriarchs after reading the "Acts", to declare that these bishops are a continuation of the early apostle ship under Christ.

C.3 The Epistles

The word epistle means a letter. It was not possible for St Paul and the other Apostles or any Bishop of the church to be everywhere at once, yet Christianity was new and the people had many questions that puzzled them. They wanted answers. Therefore, St Paul and other Apostles wrote letters explaining the points that were in doubt giving information and instruction of great spiritual value and encouraging the new Christian communities to be steadfast in their faith.

During every Liturgy the Coptic Church reads one portion of the "Pauline" epistles as well as one portion of the "catholic" epistles.

C.4 Revelations

Revelation means truth that is revealed. There is only one book of prophecy in the New Testament because Christ's teaching made prophecy unnecessary. Instead of Prophets, the Christian church has Saints. The Saints are persons who have showed us by their example that it is possible to follow the difficult path which Christ laid out for us if we try hard enough.

St John, the theologian, wrote who was also the author of the Fourth Gospel Revelation the last book of the Holy Bible the Theologian who was also the author of the Fourth Gospel. He wrote the book of Revelation toward the end of his life while he was in exile on the little island of

Patmos off the coast of Asia Minor. The revelation, which he describes, was given to him in the form of a vision. It was very much like a series of pictures projected on a screen. He could see and hear things as if he were looking at the whole history of creation in a few minutes of time. It was like a summary of everything that had happened and was to happen. He could see what God's purpose is and how it is to be fulfilled.

(D) METHODS OF GOD'S REVELATION

God reveals Himself to people in many ways

Heb 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, {2} has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

D.1 General Revelation (Tradition)

General revelation does not come to man in a verbal form, but rather is a way to reveal God through our surroundings, our own mind and other historical events;

Psa 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Rom 1:19-20 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown to them.

{20} For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Rom 2:14-15 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, {15} who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)

D.1.1 Insufficiency of General Revelation

As a result of sin, man has been distorting every thing. So General Revelation was no longer enough. The examples are many and varying. Man worshipped the sun and moon, instead of worshipping their maker.

General revelation is like a neatly written page, which was splattered with water. Many of the words and/or letters were removed and or defaced, so the page is no longer communicable to any one.

D.2 Special Revelation

This is the Scriptures and the holy tradition. The written word of God give substance to "Natural Revelation". While "Natural Revelation" is in turn supporting the "Special Revelation"

D.2.1 Necessity of Special Revelation

It was necessary for God to guide man and tell him what is right and what is wrong. otherwise people of God would of tended to behave and worship the same way as the pagans.

D.2.2 The Means of Special Revelation

D.2.2.1 Theophanies Or Visible Manifestation

God speaks from the fire and the smoking clouds:

Exo 3:2 And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.

Exo 33:9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and he Lord talked with Moses.

Psa 78:14 In the daytime also He led them with the cloud, And all the night with a light of fire.

Psa 99:7 He spoke to them in the cloudy pillar; They kept His testimonies and the ordinance He gave them.

D.2.2.2 God Speaks From The Wind

Job 38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

Psa 18:10-16 And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind. {11} He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters And thick clouds of the skies. {12} From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire. {13} The LORD thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire. {14} He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them. {15} Then the channels of the sea were seen, The foundations of the world were uncovered At Your rebuke, O LORD, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils. {16} He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters.

D.2.2.3 God Speaks In A Small And Quite Voice

1 Ki 19:12 and after the earthquake a fire, the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

D.2.2.4 Sometimes The Second Hypostasis Of The Trinity Appeared Directly.

Gen 16:13 Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"

Gen 31:11 "Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.'

Exo 23:20-23 "Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. {21} "Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. {22} "But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. {23} "For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.

Mal 3:1 "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

Please note that the the second person were sometimes called "The Angel of Jehovah". Please also note that none of these apparitions were in a flesh or a body as manifested in the LORD JESUS, i.e. there was no incarnation of the Word prior to Christ.

D.2.2.5 Direct Communication

Sometimes He spoke with direct and audible voice

Deu 5:4 "The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire.

D.2.2.6 The Internal Operation Of The Holy Spirit Suggests.

1 Pet 1:11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

D.2.2.7 Dreams And Visions, Also The Urim And The Thummim

Num 12:6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.

Num 27:21 "He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him; all the congregation."

Or as He spoke directly to us through His incarnated Son

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

1 Cor 2:12-13 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. {13} These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1 Th 2:12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

D.2.2.8 Miracles

Miracles are means of revealing God. The best and greatest miracle was and still is the incarnation of the only begotten Son.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Appearances of the Angel of Jehovah. Can He have been a mere angel?

Gen 16:13 *Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"*

Gen 31:11 *"Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.'*

Gen 31:13 *'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me.*

Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.' "

Gen 32:28 *And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

Exo 23:20-23 *"Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. {21} "Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. {22} "But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. {23} "For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.*

SOME EXAMPLES OF DREAMS

Gen 28:10-17 *Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. {11} So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. {12} Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. {13} And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. {14} "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. {15} "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." {16} Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know . . ." {17} And he was afraid and said, "How awesome this place! This none other than the house of God, and this the gate of heaven!"*

Gen 31:24 *But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."*

Gen 41:2-7 *Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. {3} Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the her cows on the bank of the river. {4} And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke. {5} He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. {6} Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. {7} And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream.*

Judg 7:13 *And when Gideon had come, there was a man telling a dream to his companion. He said, "I have had a dream: to my surprise, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to a tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent collapsed."*

1 Ki 3:5-9 *At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" {6} And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as is this day. {7} "Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a*

little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. {8} "And Your servant in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. {9} "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

Dan 2:1-3 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled that his sleep left him. {2} Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. {3} And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

Mat 2:13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

Mat 2:19-20 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, {20} saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead."

SOME EXAMPLES OF VISIONS

Dan 2:19 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Also Daniel 7:1-14 ,Also Isaia 6,Also Ezekiel 1-3,Also Zeck 2-6

SOME EXAMPLES OF MIRACLES

Exo 10:1-2 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, {2} "and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the LORD."

Deu 8:3 "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

John 2:1-11 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. {2} Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. {3} And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." {4} Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." {5} His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do ." {6} Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. {7} Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. {8} And He said to them, "Draw out now, and take to the master of the feast." And they took {9} When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. {10} And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" {11} This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Also see:

John 6 (1-14), John 6 (25-35), John 9 (1-7), John 11 (17-44).

CHAPTER # 18

PROVIDENCE

Since God not only created the world but also upholds it, we naturally pass from the doctrine of creation to that of divine providence.

This may be defined as the work of God in which He preserves all His creatures is active in all that happens in the world and directs all things to their appointed end. It includes three elements of which the first pertains primarily to the being the second to the activity and the third to the purpose of all things.

THE ELEMENTS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

We distinguish three elements

(A) DIVINE PRESERVATION

This is that continuous work of God by which He upholds all things. While the world has a distinct existence and is not a part of God it nevertheless has the ground of its continued existence in God and not in itself. It endures through a continued exercise of divine power by which all things are maintained in being and action. This doctrine is taught in the following passages

Psa 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His mercy [endures] forever.

Psa 145:15 The eyes of all look expectantly to You, And You give them their food in due season.

Neh 9:6 You alone [are] the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

Acts 17:28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

Col 1:17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Heb 1:3 who being the brightness of [His] glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

(B) DIVINE CONCURRENCE

This may be defined as that work of God by which He co-operates with all His creatures and causes them to act precisely as they do. It implies that there are real secondary causes in the world such as the powers of nature and the will of man and asserts that these do not work independently of God.

God works in every act of His creatures, not only in their good but also in their evil acts. He stimulates them to action, accompanies their action at every moment and makes this action

effective. However we should never think of God and man as equal causes the former is the primary and the latter only a secondary cause. Neither should conceive of them as each is doing a part of the work like a team of horses. The same deed is in its entirety both a deed of God and a deed of man. Moreover, we should guard against the idea that this co-operation makes God responsible for man's sinful deeds. This doctrine is based on Scripture,

Deu 8:18 "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for [it is] He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as [it is] this day.

Psa 104:20 You make darkness, and it is night, In which all the beasts of the forest creep about.

Psa 104:18 The high hills [are] for the wild goats; The cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.

Psa 104:20-21 You make darkness, and it is night, In which all the beasts of the forest creep about. {21} The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God.

Psa 104:30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth.

Amos 3:6 If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done [it]?

Mat 5:45 "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Mat 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.

Acts 14:17 "Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for [His] good pleasure.

(C) DIVINE GOVERNMENT

This is the continued activity of God whereby He rules all things so that they answer to the purpose of their existence. God is represented as King of the universe both in the Old and in the New Testament. He adapts His rule to the nature of the creatures which He governs, His government of the physical world differs from that of the spiritual world.

It is universal

Psa 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.

Dan 4:34-35 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honoured Him who lives forever: For His dominion [is] an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom [is] from generation to generation. {35} All the inhabitants of the earth [are] reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And [among] the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

Includes the most significant things,

Prov 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision [is] from the LORD.

And that which is seemingly accidental,

Mat 10:29-31 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. {30} "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. {31} "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Bears on both the good and the evil deeds of man

Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for [His] good pleasure.

Gen 50:20 "But as for you, you meant evil against me; [but] God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as [it is] this day, to save many people alive.

Acts 14:16 "who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

In the doctrine of providence we should guard against two misconceptions

(A) The Deistic conception

This is to the effect that God's concern with the world is of the most general nature. He created the world established its laws set it in motion and then withdrew from it. He wound it up like a clock, and now lets it run off. It is only when something goes wrong that He interferes with its regular operation. God is only a God afar off.

(B) The Pantheistic conception

Pantheism does not recognize the distinction between God and the world. It identifies the two and therefore leaves no room for providence in the proper sense of the word. There are, strictly speaking, direct author of all that transpires in the world. Even the acts, which we ascribe to man, are really acts of God. God is only a God that is near and not a God afar off.

EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE OR MIRACLES

We distinguish between general and special providence and among the latter the miracles occupy an important place. A miracle is a supernatural work of God that is a work which is accomplished without the mediation of secondary causes. If God sometimes apparently uses secondary causes in the production of miracles, He employs them in an unusual way, so that the work is after all supernatural. Some regard miracles as impossible because they involve a violation of the laws of nature. But this is a mistake. The so-called laws of nature merely represent God's usual method of working. And the fact that God generally works according to a definite order does not mean that He cannot depart from this order, and cannot without violating or disturbing it bring about unusual results. Even man can lift up his hand and throw a ball into the air in spite of the law of gravitation and without in any way disturbing its operation. Surely, this is not impossible for the omnipotent God. The miracles of the Bible are means of revelation.

Num 16:28 And Moses said: "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for [I have] not [done them] of my own will.

Jer 32:20 'You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, to this day, and in Israel and among [other] men; and You have made Yourself a name, as it is this day.

John 2:11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

John 5:36 "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish; the very works that I do; bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) How is the doctrine of providence related to that of creation?
- (2) What is divine providence?
- (3) What is the difference between general and special providence?
- (4) What are the objects of divine providence?
- (5) What are the elements of providence, and how do they differ?
- (6) How must we conceive the divine concurrence?
- (7) How far does the divine government extend?
- (8) What is a miracle? and what purpose do the scriptural miracles serve?
- (9) Why do some consider miracles impossible?

CHAPTER # 19

THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

What is God like? What is His essence and attributes or characteristics?

Because God is an infinite Being and we are small and finite creatures, our knowledge of God's essence is imperfect. Even the knowledge of God that we have through the revelation of Jesus Christ is limited. that is why St Paul observes that in this present life we are only able to know God in part, but in the life to come we shall have a more perfect knowledge of His nature,

1 Cor 13:12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

THE ESSENCE OF GOD

The Holy Bible tells us that God is a perfect spirit

John 4:24 "God [is] Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

In this way it guards us against any material or anthropomorphic image and worship of God similar to that of the ancient idolaters.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD'S

Despite the fact that God in essence is inexpressible and inconceivable we are able according to the Fathers of the Church to know something regarding God i.e. His qualities as they are made manifest in His relation to the world. therefore by examining God's creatures and their attributes we are able to form some idea about the nature and attributes of the Creator. The attributes of God are distinguished into three groups: the physical, the logical and the ethical attributes.

Physical Attributes	Logical Attributes	Ethical Attributes
His Omnipresence	Omniscience	His Holiness
Omnipotence (unlimited power)	The Infinite Wisdom	His Righteousness
Eternity (No Beginning & No End)		His Love
		He Is Our Father (Abba).

THE PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

His omni-presence (presence everywhere)

We infer the physical attributes of God from His creatures, if we divest Him of the imperfections observable in the physical beings. These are subject to the limitations of time space and the law of casualty i.e. to say everything in the world has a definite time and a reason or cause for its existence dependent on some other being or phenomenon. God is not subject to these limitations. He is an absolute being and as such is present everywhere and almighty.

When we say that God is present everywhere, we mean that He exists in all the finite beings, which according to the Apostle Paul

Acts 17:28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

But He is not restricted or contained in them. Instead He is everywhere present. God is not limited to a definite space as the other beings but is present everywhere and fills the universe.

Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition proclaim the omni-presence of God. This truth is manifested in the following verses

Psa 139:7-10 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? {8} If I ascend into heaven, You [are] there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You [are there]. {9} [If] I take the wings of the morning, [And] dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, {10} Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.

God Is In Heaven

The Holy Scripture says that God dwells in Heaven

*Mat 6:9 "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.
1 Tim 6:16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom [be] honour and everlasting power. Amen.*

Does this mean that God is confined to heaven?

These poetic expressions are used to manifest His glory and to show how much greater He is than us earthly beings

IMPORTANT WARNING

God's presence in any creature does not mean that this creature is a part of God, or one of God's operating centres. This is a heretic view propagated by Hendoism and the "New Age" movement, where they claim that " God is All, and All is God". This wrong theory is called

"Pantheism". Pantheism is based on Satan's lie to Adam & Eve, " You will like a God" "Gen Ch 3".

Omnipotence (unlimited power)

The omnipotence of God is manifested in many ways especially through the creation of this magnificent world with the order and harmony He has imposed upon it, and finally with His energies through which He governs the course of human history and the life of every man. In all this, we see that God created whatever He willed and that there is nothing that is impossible with God. This is why God is characterised in Holy Scripture as Lord and king of all and as almighty ...

*Job 42:2 I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose [of Yours] can be withheld from You. Says Job in praising the omnipotence of God. Luke also expresses it as follows
Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing will be impossible.*

Eternity (No Beginning & No End)

When we say that God is eternal we mean that God is not subject to the limitations of time being without beginning or end and changeless. God is without beginning. He is unchangeable and has eternal life.

*Rev 1:8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, [the] Beginning and [the] End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."
James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

The eternity of God is expressed poetically by the psalmist

Psa 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You [are] God.

THE LOGICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Omniscience

God is not only an absolute eternal and all-mighty spirit that is everywhere present but He is also a personal being. As a person God has a will and is conscious of Himself. He works freely and reveals Himself as the all-wise and all-knowing Being/Mind but always in accord with His will which is holy, righteous and good.

God's omniscience is numbered together with the other logical qualities He possesses. God being omniscient knows all things from all angles and phases even their nature and relationship between them. He knows the invisible and the future as well as the hidden thoughts of men

Psa 139:1-2 O LORD, You have searched me and known [me]. {2} You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.

The foreknowledge that God has regarding future events does not destroy man's free will for God merely knows what man is going to do using his free will. Naturally the events take place exactly as God foresees them but they are not dependent upon His Divine foreknowledge, just as the diagnosis and prognosis of a physician regarding an ailment is not the cause of the ailment.

The Infinite Wisdom of God

The infinite wisdom of God is specially expressed in the order the purposiveness the grandeur of the cosmos the firmness of natural laws in the governing of the course of events of the world and in the life of each man.

The detailed research and the great progress in the various branches of science always reveal to us amazing things about the wonderful make-up and functioning God's Creation in nature. And in all these revelations we see the infinite wisdom of the Creator. The Psalmist is full of marvel as he faces the wonder of nature and exclaims:

Psa 104:24 O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions;

The poet Shiller once wrote that the universe is the thought of God and all the sciences verify this truth. Holy men and great scientists have stood ecstatic and have reverently bowed their heads before the wisdom of God which is expressed through the wonders of this world.

The deeper one studies nature and it's mysteries the more he recognises the perfection and the wisdom with which everything has been created, even to the most minute details. Indeed all the great artists, philosopher and the most eminent scientists have believed and do believe in the Infinite Wisdom of God. In all their research they discern the Wisdom, which is the first cause of the universe. The grandeur of nature, it's incomparable beauty and the eternal and indestructible laws of nature speak eloquently about the existence the wisdom and the providence of the Creator. Only the foolish those who are spiritually blind and have a callus conscience are unable to acknowledge the existence of God and refuse to recognise His marvelous works.

THE ETHICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

His Holiness

God is absolutely holy. He has no relation whatsoever with evil. He is absolutely good. His Will is always identified with goodness so that He cannot even desire anything else other than that which is good. "Be ye holy", God tells man .

Lev 19:2 "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God [am] holy.

1 Pet 1:16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." Even the angels according to the Prophet Isaiah, proclaim the holiness of God glorifying Him thus.

Isa 6:3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy [is] the LORD of hosts; The whole earth [is] full of His glory!"

His Righteousness

God is not only holy but also righteous. He demands the observance of the moral law and the keeping of the moral order in the world. He judges impartially and punishes the transgressors of the moral law. For this reason in Holy Scripture God is characterised as follows

John 1:9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

John 17:25 "O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

2 Tim 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Also in the book of Revelation we read:

Rev 16:7 And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous [are] Your judgments."

This righteousness of God is expressed in this present life through the protection of virtuous men and the punishment of the wicked. But the real time when it will be expressed to the fullest degree is the other life where final judgment and retribution according to the works of everyone will take place.

His Love

We see this attribute of God in His giving of His goodness and blessedness to His creatures and specially to man. Because God is all love, He always transmits His goodness and His happiness to the other beings so that they too can be happy. The Christian religion above all the divine attributes especially emphasises the love of God teaching that God is love

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

The redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ is based on the love of God toward a sinful man

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Moved by love God forgives the repentant sinners. He is most compassionate toward all. He postpones the punishment of the evil and provides for all His creatures. God so loves and provides for His creations that not even one sparrow is lost without His will.

He Is Our Father "Abba"

Mat 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.

The Creed tells us first all that He is our Father and that He is Almighty (that His power is unlimited).

Note what the Bible says:

1.2 Cor 6:18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

2. Prov 3:12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son [in whom] he delights.

3.1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Psa 86:15 But You, O Lord, [are] a God full of compassion, and gracious, Long-suffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

Psa 103:13 As a father pities [his] children, [So] the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Rom 11:22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in [His] goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Isa 40:28-31 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. {29} He gives power to the weak, And to [those who have] no might He increases strength. {30} Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, {31} But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew [their] strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Psa 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the LORD our God [is] holy.

Psa 135:3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD [is] good; Sing praises to His name, for [it is] pleasant.

Psa 145:9 The LORD [is] good to all, And His tender mercies [are] over all His works.

Psa 145:17 The LORD [is] righteous in all His ways, Gracious in all His works.

Psa 145:13 Your kingdom [is] an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion [endures] throughout all generations.

Psa 145:18 The LORD [is] near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.

Rev 1:18 "I [am] He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

HOW TO LEARN & EXPERIENCE GODS COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

To realise God's Fatherhood in our lives, we must take the Church as our mother. The Bible is an important part of our knowledge about God, but it is only a part of the Holy Tradition that the Church has preserved for us. The Divine Liturgy is another important source of our Christian belief. Many of the prayers in the Divine Liturgy are addressed to Christ and we can observe these in the Gregorian Liturgy.

God the Father is addressed in the Liturgy of St Basil.

If you look over these passages that describe God and make a list of God's attributes, you will see another reason why we cannot use science to learn about Him. Goodness, mercy,

kindness, holiness, justice are all things we cannot see and cannot measure. We cannot perform tests to tell whether someone is good or bad, or whether he is doing right or wrong.

This does not mean that right and wrong have no existence or that good and bad are imaginary. It simply means that we have to learn about them in a different way. They are what we call values. Values are the yard-sticks for measuring spiritual perfection.

For every good value there is an opposite that is not good and between the opposites are various degrees. We can think of an imaginary ladder with good at the top and evil at the bottom. Good represents God and we are somewhere near the bottom of the ladder. If we start to climb up the ladder, we get nearer to God with each step and the nearer we get to God the farther away we are from evil.

Only God is perfect and possesses all good qualities in the highest degree. We possess certain amounts of these qualities and other amounts of bad qualities. The only way in which we can increase our good qualities is to try to be like God. That is why we have to know Him and understand what He wants us to do.

WHAT IS FAITH?

First Of All Faith Is An Act

It is the act of accepting a spiritual truth on the basis of authority. An authority is someone whose word we can accept as true. We have two authorities that tell us the truth about God

1. The Holy Tradition of the church
2. The Bible.

If we accept the authority of church and the Bible, we have declared our Faith. This is different from accepting the truth of a scientific experiment. When we believe scientific truth we do so because proof has removed our doubts. When we believe the truths about God which the church teaches, we do so from choice.

Faith Is An Act Of Choice

We can choose to accept God's word as it is transmitted to us through the Church and the Bible, or we can choose to reject it. The decision we make will depend on whether we want to acquire God's values or whether we want the values that men put in place of God: such as wealth, social position, fame, power.

Faith Is An Act Of Free Will

Free will is our freedom to make our own decisions. When we decide to accept God or to reject Him, we ourselves are responsible for the decision - not God or our parents or our environment

although all of these factors can help us in making our decision. If we do not make good use of this freedom of choice which God has given us no other freedom will be of use.

Faith Is A Commitment To A Way Of Life

In all of its aspects Faith is activity. It is not simply saying "Yes of course I think all this is true".

If you really accept God and His values you are required to act accordingly. You cannot believe that church is a pathway to God and never come near it. As soon as you have chosen to accept God, you have accepted the responsibility of trying to be like Him, of trying to love what is good, of trying to love others, of trying to follow the path of life He has laid out for us. The church teaches us what this pathway is, and the church exists to keep us in contact with God and to keep us always in mind of our obligations. Our best example is Christ Himself who showed us the way.

Also Faith Is A Gift Of God

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- (1) What is the essence of God?
- (2) What are the three categories of God's own Attributes?
- (3) Name 3 Ethical attributes of God.
- (4) Name 3 Logical attributes of God.
- (5) Name 3 Physical attributes of God.
- (6) Some of God's own attributes are shared with man, name these attributes.
- (7) Some of God's own attributes are exclusive to Him, name these attributes.
- (8) What is faith?

CHAPTER 20

THE NICENE CREED

The word Creed comes from the Latin word "credo" which means I believe and is to be found at the beginning of the Apostles and Nicene Creed. In short it is any formula or confession of religious faith.

In Greek it is called the symbol of faith (To Symvolon tis pisteos) and is a summary of what our Church believes and what each member of the Church must believe in order to be in good standing. Before a person is admitted into the fellowship of the faith, he must first profess that he believes the principal articles of our faith by saying the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. It is well known that in the Sacraments of Holy Baptism, the reciting of the Creed (today by the sponsor) is an essential part of Baptism.

The first Christian confession or creed is that of Peter when Christ asked the Apostles "who say ye that I am?" and Peter in the name of all the rest exclaimed as by divine inspiration

Mat 16:16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Thomas confession after he witnessed the marks of Jesus passion:

"my Lord and my God";

Is similar and of the same importance . This naturally became the substance of the baptismal confession since Christ is the chief object of the Christian faith. Jesus was the Son of God. In conformity with the baptismal confession or formula however it soon took a Trinitarian shape probably in some much simple form as I believe in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

THE VALUE AND USE OF THE CREED

1. Creeds are summaries of the doctrines of the Bible and are aids to its sound understanding.
2. Creeds unite the faithful, and provide them with guards against false doctrine and practices.
3. In the form of Catechisms they are of special use in the instruction of both children and adults and offer a solid and substantial religious education.
4. The first object of creeds was to distinguish the Church from the world from Jews and heathen. Afterwards orthodoxy from heresy and finally denomination from denomination. In all these respects they are still valuable and indispensable in the present day and age. Every well-regulated society secular or religious needs an organisation and constitution and cannot prosper without discipline.
5. The Creed is called a Symbol of Faith. Because it is that thing which specially distinguishes the Orthodox from the followers of other religions.

THE HISTORY OF THE CREED

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed which used in our Church today was formulated by two ecumenical Councils the first Council of NICEA (323 AD) and the second Council of Constantinople (381).

We noted before that not everything in the Church's faith was written down from the very beginning, but much of it was retained by Holy Tradition.

Some Holy Tradition was later written however, and this was done when the Church felt that it was necessary to officially expound its beliefs and truths.

THE COUNCIL OF NICEA

For example during the early part of the 4th century a grave problem arose in the Church concerning the person of Christ and threatened to disrupt the entire Church and cast it into chaos and confusion.

Arius a Libyan priest in North Africa taught that Jesus Christ the second Person of the Holy Trinity, was a creature and did not exist eternally with the Father but was later created and born of God the Father.

The consequence of such teaching was the denial of the divinity of Christ. It was as if to say the Christ was not of the same substance as God the Father.

This heresy is a false teaching that does not agree with the teaching of the Church, (**to-day Jehovah Witnesses hold the same Arianic teaching**) , threatened to destroy the Church if something were not done about it quickly. Factions had already formed within the Church and the need was felt to call a General or Ecumenical Council where this problem could be discussed and settled and harmony be brought back to the Church.

The Emperor Constantine realised that there would soon be no Church at all if it were allowed to be split up into little groups in which all believed something different. Since the traditional Orthodox way of deciding doubtful points is by joint decision of the bishops of the Church he invited representatives from all over the empire to come to NICEA and make a clear statement defining Christian belief. The Council of NICEA was called (325 A.D..) and the problem of the false teaching of Arius was discussed and settled.

It was decreed and put into writing that Christ was the Son of God and at the same time God Himself. He was of the same Substance as God. So that such a problem would not arise again the 318 fathers of the Church that had gathered in NICEA formulated a Creed that would prevent any further heresy and misunderstanding concerning what the followers of Christ should believe.

THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPOLIS

A few years later however a Greek priest by the name of Macedonious taught that the Holy Spirit also was not part of the essence of God but a creation of God. In other words he taught the same thing about the Holy Spirit that Arius had taught about Christ the Son of God.

Once again the holy fathers of the Church found it important to call the second Ecumenical Council (381 A.D..) at Constantinopolis in order to settle this grave problem.

At this second Ecumenical Council a few clauses were added to the original Creed of NICEA to explain the position of the Holy Spirit in our faith. The Creed which we use today in our Church is therefore called Nicean-Constantinopolitan or simply the Nicene Creed and is the work of these first two Ecumenical Councils at which all the various parts of the Church were represented and it was therefore called Ecumenical or worldwide.

THE VALUE OF THE CREED

It is exciting to consider that when we hear the Creed recited today, we are hearing the very words that were debated and written down more than 1600 years ago! If it were not for these Articles of Faith carefully thought out and worded by the great Christian minds of that time and preserved throughout the centuries by the Church we might be tempted to substitute our own ideas.

THE CREED IS THE OUTLINE OF THIS COURSE

Today we are living in a society that is largely non-Orthodox a society that is questioning the truth and the value of Christianity. In this society everything must pass the test of these two questions: Is it meaningful? Is it relevant?

Our Creed is very old. Many things have happened and we have learned many things in the meantime. It is only reasonable that we should examine it and study it to determine whether it is out-of-date and whether it has lost its meaning for use because of our great progress in scientific and technical knowledge.

THE CREED

GOD THE FATHER AND CREATOR

1. I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God begotten not made of one essence with the Father through Whom all things were made.

THE INCARNATION

3. Who for us all and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary and became man.

CRUCIFIXION & DEATH OF CHRIST

4. Crucified for our salvation under Pontius Pilate, He suffered and was buried

THE RESURRECTION

5. And on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures

THE ASCENSION

6. And ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father

THE SECOND COMING

7. And He shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

8. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the Giver of Life Who proceeds from the Father Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets

THE CHURCH

9. I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church

THE ONE BAPTISM

10. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins

THE GENERAL RESURRECTION

11. I await the resurrection of the dead

THE ETERNITY

12. And the life of the age to come. Amen.

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