

# Grade 7 & 8

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# Be Faithful

Be faithful, God is your example  
as before, on earth He lived

Have true faith, firm as a tree  
even strong winds cannot lift

I live the sacraments, my church teachings  
and I praise God in all I do

Self controlling, thoughts eternal  
I live by God's word, yes I do

Be faithful, God is your example



# Faithful All The Time



***“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Revelations 2:8-11)***

This is an advice and a commandment that the Lord said to the angel of the church of Smyrna, its bishop. Smyrna is located in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Smyrna is now the city of Izmir. It was under the supervision of a blessed bishop, **St. Polycarp, the Bishop of Izmir**. The word “Polycarp” means the fruitful, because he was a blessed man and an energetic bishop; he was an excellent Shepherd.

## Saint Polycarp

At the age of 86, the emperor wanted to kill him; so his children carried him against his will to a far place to protect him from the wrath of the emperor. During his sleep, he felt that his pillow was on fire; so he realized that the Lord is calling him for martyrdom. Indeed, the soldiers found his place and took him to the governor.

**Governor:** How old are you?

**Saint Polycarp:** 86 years old.

**Governor:** Deny your Christ and raise incense to the idols!

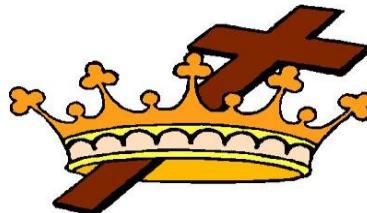
**Saint Polycarp:** I have lived 86 years with Christ; I lived them in joy with my loving God and my faithful redeemer. How do you expect me to forsake Him now?

**Governor (talking to his soldiers):** Burn him alive!

The soldiers took him and laid him on dry wood and started a fire. He asked to pray and kneeled to thank the Lord. They burned him while kneeling to pray. A great light shone on his face and he had a great smile and departed to Paradise in great happiness.

Indeed, the saint entered Paradise and his soul is enjoying the presence of Christ and His angels and saints. Upon our Lord's second coming, he will rise again in an enlightened, spiritual, heavenly, and glorified body.

- ❖ **Enlightened:** Made of light.
- ❖ **Spiritual:** Carries a spiritual character.
- ❖ **Heavenly:** Flies up as thunder with Christ to heaven on His second coming.
- ❖ **Glorified:** Wears eternal crowns. Some of them are:
  1. **Crown of Holiness:** Where the enlightened body lives in heaven and does not thirst, hunger, or sin forever.
  2. **Crown of Joy:** Where he would hear the heavenly voice saying “Enter into the joy of your Lord.”
  3. **Crown of Unity:** Where he would praise the Lord with the angels and saints.
  4. **Crown of Eternity:** Where he would live an everlasting life without death, a joyful and eternal life with God.



## Faithfulness Is the Road to Crowns

The faithfulness of this saint was the reason he received all these crowns. We, also, should live with faithfulness. Hence the theme for this year's Festival, "Faithful All The Time" and it has 5 major topics:

1. **Be Faithful in Your Spirituality:** This means that everyone must be faithful in his spiritual life with God. One must participate in the means of salvation regularly: read the bible, pray, partake of the Holy Communion, attend spiritual meetings, read spiritual books.
2. **Be Faithful in Your Church:** One must participate in church activities: learning our Coptic language and beautiful hymns. One must also practice daily Agpeya prayers, learn the lives of saints, participate in liturgies, fasts, and different church events such as Pascha week and the month of Kiahk, etc.
3. **Be Faithful in Your Talents:** Your time, school, and work. Also, different gifts like arts, poetry, music, and sports... And above all, serving others: friends and family, the elderly and the sick, etc.
4. **Be Faithful with Your Family:** In your relationships with your parents and brethren, whether older or younger, and your relatives. Be helpful in the family, and care for the needs of the family.
5. **Be Faithful in Your Relationships:** Your social life at school or work. A Christian should be a light to the world and salt of the earth.

# Be Faithful in Your Spirituality

## The Story of the Last Judge: First Samuel 1-4

### The Book of Samuel

1. First and Second Samuel were originally one book in the original Hebrew version, it was called "Samuel". It was then divided into two books in the Septuagint, where the writing was on a paper tray called cabbage. There was a need to split it into two books, each book in one cabbage, and the Hebrew Bible used this division later.
2. Samuel means "God heard". For God heard his mother's prayers and gave her a son.
3. Samuel the prophet died before he finished writing the second book, but Gad and Nathan completed the book after his departure.
4. God was the King of the people; He chose them leaders and prophets such as Moses the Prophet, and judges such as Gideon, Samson, and Samuel. However, the people wanted to choose a king for them like others. The Lord did not leave His people, but continued to care about their affairs and solve their problems.
5. This book is the connection between the era of Judges which ended with Eli the priest and Samuel the Prophet, and the era of Kings. The first King was Saul followed by King David.
6. Prayer is the virtue emphasized most in this book. This book also shows dignity for the house of God, its holiness, and how people went there and what they did, as well as the punishment for despising the house of God at that time.

### Biblical Names and their Meanings

Name	Meaning	Notes
Samuel	God Heard	The Last Judge and the writer of the book. The first to anoint kings of Israel.
Elkanah	God Created	Father of Samuel and he is from the tribe of Levi.
Hannah	Grace/Tenderness	Mother of Samuel, God gave her five children other than Samuel.
Peninnah	Pearl	Wife of Elkanah.
Belial	Useless/Evil	Anyone who does not fear God and is not afraid of man was called Belial.
Eli	High	A priest and one of the judges of Israel. He erred by letting his children break the commandment

## The Most Important Places

Places	Notes
<b>Ramah</b>	Birth place of Samuel the Prophet
<b>Shiloh</b>	The location of the Tabernacle and the Ark of Covenant

**1 Samuel Ch. 1, 2: Two Women from Ramah:** Hannah, the wife of Elkanah couldn't bear children. Peninnah, the other wife of Elkanah had children and constantly provoked Hannah for not being able to bear children. Elkanah loved his wife Hannah so much; each year during the time of offering in the house of God in Shiloh, he gave Hannah a double portion. The loving husband did not have more than consoling words, "*Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?*" (1 Samuel 1:8). This did not remove the bitterness of Hannah, who wished for a child to give to the Lord to serve Him all the days of his life. She wished for the chance in the blessing of the coming of the Messiah the Savior from her bloodline. She was in bitterness of soul, but had a strong spirit, so she stood strongly in the temple of the Lord and wept in anguish, praying before God. She spoke from her heart with an ardent prayer with tears. She vowed that if God gave her a child, she will offer him to God to serve Him all the days of his life.



Eli the priest noticed that Hannah's lips were moving but no voice was heard; so he thought she was drunk. He rebuked her for this, how dare she be drunk and stand in the house of the Lord? But the modest Hannah, despite her bitterness, did not complain of Eli the priest's accusation, but replied calmly: "*I am a woman of sorrowful spirit, I have not drunk wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.*" When the priest Eli heard her reply, he blessed her and told her that the Lord will grant her heart's desire. Hannah, then, returned with the rest of the family to their home in Ramah, and had left all her worries and bitterness in the loving hands of God.

***“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And  
He shall give you the desires of your heart” (Psalms 37:4).***



- ❖ After reading 1 Samuel 1:1-19, how do you describe the personality of Hannah, and provide your reference from the Holy Bible? (Weak, strong faith, bitter, broken, modest, oppressed, dependable on God).
- ❖ Eli the priest mistakenly accused Hannah of being drunk. Do you agree with this statement, and why?
- ❖ Hannah strongly wanted to have a son, why? Provide a Biblical reference to support your answer.

**Joy and Praise:** The prophecy of Eli the priest came true, and Hannah did conceive and bore a son and named him Samuel, she said: "*Because I asked for him from the LORD*" (1 Samuel 1:20). When it was time for the annual sacrifice to the Lord, Hannah told her husband Elkanah that she would not go up, until her child Samuel is weaned. Elkanah told her to do what she thought was right. Hannah weaned the boy and took him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh to offer sacrifices and offerings where Samuel would live forever. She, then, took him to Eli the priest, and just like she promised, she offered her son to serve in the house of the Lord all the days of his life. She praised and thanked God for the gift. She entered into a deep spiritual prayer and expressed the spirit of prophecy about Christ's work of salvation. The praise of Hannah was similar to the praise of the Virgin Mary for Hannah praised for the symbol, and the Virgin Mary praised for Messiah (Christ) Himself. Hannah started her praise by announcing her joy, not only for the birth of Samuel, but for the joy in the Lord Himself. This joy was her source of strength not only to respond to her enemies who provoked her, but for God's miraculous work. The Lord did not only reward her with Samuel but also gave her, by the Holy Spirit, to be the first woman to pronounce the words "*Christ the Lord*" in the Old Testament.

- ❖ After reading the story in (1 Samuel 1:20 – 2:10) what is the meaning of the name Samuel?
- ❖ Find, in the praises of Hannah the mother of Samuel, three verses that are similar to the praises of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Luke 1:46-55).
- ❖ What are the sacrifices and offerings that Hannah gave in Shiloh?

**1 Samuel Ch. 2: The Sons of The Priest and The Son of Prayer:** What a difference between Samuel, the son of Hannah, and Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli the priest! Samuel grew up fearing God; so he became a blessing for himself, his family, and his people. The others, on the other hand, took advantage of their father's position for their personal interest. The Bible called them: "Sons of Belial" or sons of evil because of what they did. They were both priests, but they did not know the Lord, did not go by the doctrine, and did not live the life of purity. When a person becomes corrupted, he trivializes everything. In this corrupted atmosphere, Samuel the boy began his service to the Lord, wearing a linen ephod, which is the clothing of Leviticus. He wore it like a wide belt around the mid-region of his body. And his mother Hannah made him a little robe, and brought it to him each year; they are the clothing of kings and honest prophets. The robe is made of wool, woven with no stitching, and hanging at the feet. This annual robe represents a continuing family relationship filled with love. The meeting of Hannah with her son Samuel every year encouraged him not to become like the sons of Eli.

In contrast, there was Eli the priest, who was not firm in raising his sons! Despite his knowledge of their wrong doings and inequities, he did not discipline them or rebuke them. One day, the Lord sent a prophet (a man of God) to Eli the priest to remind him of the honor that God gave his family since the days of Aaron, by making them priests to serve the holy altar. God also announced the discipline for him and his descendants and gave him a sign of this divine discipline; which is the death of his two sons on one day. This was a warning given to Eli the priest and a new opportunity, and thus he did not have any excuse for negligence with his two sons.

- ❖ In 1 Samuel 2:11-36, what was the divine discipline that God announced to Eli the priest?
- ❖ In this section, we see the boy Samuel referring to Jesus Christ, to whom is all glory, once as a priest, and king and prophet in another time. In which verses can you find this?
- ❖ From the readings, how do we honor the Lord our God?

**1 Samuel Ch. 3: The Divine Call:** In the middle of the night, there was a kind of darkness, a spiritual darkness, hunger and thirst for the consoling word of God. The boy Samuel was sleeping in one of the buildings in the temple, as well as Eli the priest. It was said that Samuel was asleep in the temple because his vision was inspecting the tabernacle, and his heart was awakened from the love of God. On the other hand, Eli's eyes were weak due to his old age. Eli was weak in his spirituality, which affected his insight with spiritual blindness.

Before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle, the boy heard a voice calling him while he was lying in his bed, so he ran to Eli the priest and said to him: "Here I am!" He was trained to obey and serve others with joy. Eli the priest replied and said that he had not called him. Three times he heard the voice calling him, and three times he ran to the priest. The last time, Eli the priest said to the boy: "Go and lie down, and if you hear the voice again, say: "*Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears*". God called Samuel by his name; however, he would not have recognized Him without the guidance of Eli the priest.

The boy obeyed the words of the priest; he heard God's voice speaking to him, saying: "*Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.*" The Lord told him that He will fulfill His words which were spoken by the prophet before, and that He will destroy the house of Eli the priest. In the morning Samuel opened the temple doors, but was afraid to tell the vision to Eli the priest. However, Eli asked him to tell him what the Lord said to him in the vision. Samuel told him all that God had said, so Eli the priest said: "*It is the LORD. Let Him do what seems good to Him*" (1 Samuel 3:18).

The days and years passed, and Samuel grew up in the house of the Lord as a servant to Him. The Lord gave him grace in the eyes of the people. The Lord started appearing again in Shiloh to interrupt the dark times, where the word of God was precious and there was no open vision.

- ❖ In 1 Samuel Ch. 3, what two situations indicate the honesty of Samuel? Make sure to include the reference.
- ❖ It is inappropriate for us to trivialize the priest, who is a father and guide, who leads us to have a personal meeting with God. Prove this meaning from the readings, and explain. Make sure to mention the reference.
- ❖ When did the Lord start to appear again in Shiloh? What spiritual meaning does this have?

**1 Samuel Ch. 4: A Sad End:** Samuel grew and served the people, and Eli the priest was the thirteenth judge in the enumeration of judges who judged the people of Israel. It so happened that Israel went out to fight the Palestinians in an area called Ebenezer without consulting the Lord; so Israel was defeated by the Palestinians who killed about 4000 men. After the defeat, they returned to Shiloh and did not consult the Lord again but took the Ark of Covenant up to the place of war; and Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli the priest, were with them. The Palestinians fought them and killed thirty thousand men from Israel. They took the Ark of Covenant and killed the sons of Eli the priest at war.

Then a messenger came from the battle line of the war to Shiloh, and Eli the priest was sitting on a seat by the wayside watching, for his heart trembled for the Ark of God. When the man announced of stealing the Ark of Covenant, the whole city cried. Eli the priest heard the screams so he asked about what happened. The man told Eli the priest that the army was defeated, that the Palestinians took the ark of Covenant, and that his two sons Hophni and Phinehas died. When the man mentioned the Ark of Covenant, Eli the priest fell backward off the seat by the side of the gate and broke his neck and died. He judged Israel for forty years. The wife of Phinehas was pregnant and due to be delivered. When she heard of the death of her husband at war, labor pains came upon her; she fell to the ground and gave birth, then died. She named the child Ichabod, saying, “*The glory has departed from Israel, for the Ark of God has been captured*”.

From that time on, Samuel became the judge of Israel, the fourteenth and the last judge of the people of Israel.

- ❖ In 1 Samuel Ch. 4, what does it mean that the people of Israel brought the Ark of Covenant to the war? It means that people of Israel returned to God with all of their hearts- they relied on the modalities of formal worship- believing in the blessing of the Ark.
- ❖ Mention another manifestation of the formal worship in the previous readings? (Mention the reference)
- ❖ Meaning of Ichabod (The deportation of glory – the son of glory – the highest glory).
- ❖ Which one is true: “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured” or “The ark of God has been captured, for the glory has departed from Israel.” Explain

## Summary

### Chapter 1

- We should not favor some people over others. Elkanah favored his wife Hannah over Peninnah, which lead Peninnah to bear grudges against Hannah.
- Prayer is the solution to every problem.
- When we defend ourselves and we want to show the truth, it should be done by gentleness and goodness of heart as Hannah did with Eli the priest.
- Celebrating holidays is not by drinking wine, as some families celebrate.
- Patience brings good results, for Hannah deserved to be a mother for a son, who became the greatest prophet in the Old Testament.

- Proudly offer what we have to God, such as gifts and valuable things like Hannah who offered her only son, Samuel.

## Chapter 2

- Do not forget to thank the Lord for His gifts as Hannah did.
- It is good for a person to grow in the knowledge of the Lord day after day, as did Samuel: “**And the child Samuel grew in stature and in favor both with the LORD and men**” (**1 Samuel 2:26**).
- Do not be upset if your parents are strict with you, sometimes it is their duty, otherwise they will be considered negligent before the Lord, as with Eli the priest who was negligent in raising his two sons Hophni and Phinehas.

## Chapter 3

- If we live in the house of God as did Samuel, we will be far away from corruption and misguidance that is present in the world. God will protect us just like He protected Samuel because Samuel lived in the house of God and served Him.
- Be obedient and serve others; when Samuel thought that Eli the priest was calling him, he ran to him to see what he wanted, even though it was late at night.
- Ask for advice and accept it from elders, as Samuel did with Eli the priest.

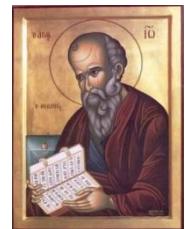
## Chapter 4

- True worship is not a worship of formality, but is the worship from the heart. He who prays to the Lord and insists on doing sins and evils without repentance is only worshipping God formally.
- Remove sin from your heart first for God to help you and be on your side.

# Be Faithful in Your Church

## Faithful Servants: Third Epistle of St. John

*St. John the beloved wrote this epistle in Ephesus and sent it to Gaius, one of the servants he assigned. It is composed of one chapter.*



St. John the beloved was an excellent role model in faithfulness of service. Church history tells us a story about how he led a young man to faith and repentance, and delivered him to the bishop to be taken care of. However, this young man went back to his previous way of life and became a criminal. When St. John met with the bishop, he asked about the young man and was told the truth about what happened to him. Although he was an elder, St. John rode an animal and started toward the mountain to find the young man. On the way, he was taken by a group of criminals to their leader who turned out to be the young man himself. He escaped when he recognized St. John, but the saint followed him running and calling out: “Stop, my son, have mercy on my old age.” The young man then stopped and listened to the saint and repented.

## Occasion of the Epistle

At the time of the Apostles, the church sent preachers of the Gospel to different places. Since those servants did not have enough money, people from the towns would host the preachers and provide them with food and shelter, for the purpose of spreading the word of the Gospel in the name of Jesus Christ.

Gaius was a faithful servant whom St. John loved for this faithfulness. He used to receive those preachers, host them and help them with love. St. John sent him this message to thank him and encourage him to continue his service; he also wished him success in everything.

*Are we, as sons and daughters of Christ, successful in everything? Are we faithful in our school work and excelling at it? Are we faithful in our spiritual life participating with the church in all means of salvation like fasting and prayers, and partaking of the Communion regularly? Are we faithful in our relationships with our families, serving all members actively and with love?*

St. John advised Gaius to imitate what is good not what is evil.

*What about us? We have good examples, and bad examples. Which of them do we choose to follow?*

*Do we follow the example of the saints and righteous or the example of personalities of the world?*

**A faithful person is loved by all that surround him. Are you counted among these people?**



Diotrephes was assigned to the same service as Gaius but he was unfaithful in it. He did not welcome the preachers, but was arrogant speaking malicious words and using lame excuses.

Demetrius was faithful like Gaius and had a good testimony from all. St. John himself testified for him.



***Thus he who lives in faithfulness loving others will also be loved  
by people who will praise his faithfulness and love.***



## Interview with St. Paul

**Acts 16:19-34**

**Broadcaster:** From the city of Philippi, we meet with our beloved St. Paul the Apostle. St. Paul, why have you been put in jail now?

**St. Paul:** Silas and I are here because of the alleged accusations by the masters of the slave girl that was possessed with the spirit of divination; the one I commanded to come out of her in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the masters saw that the source of their income, fortune-telling and the works of magic performed by this girl, was gone by the name of the Lord Jesus; and stirred the whole city against us claiming that we are troubling the people and teaching unlawful customs that they will not receive or observe. Then the rulers ordered that we would be beaten with rods and be placed in prison.

**Broadcaster:** Some of the other prisoners saw you two praising and praying all night long. Didn't all these wounds, your tied feet or just being in this awful place bring you anger?

**St. Paul:** Yes, the body was wounded and tied with heavy chains but: "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written for Your sake we are killed all day long.*" (Romans 8:35-36) In fact, we were happy because we were suffering for Christ; praise was how we could express our joy.

**Broadcaster:** Let me ask you about the earthquake. The foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. Why didn't you and Silas escape at that time? Wouldn't you consider what happened to be a sign from God for you to escape and save your lives?

**St. Paul:** This idea did not even cross our minds, for faithfulness requires us to obey the law and the authorities, even if we are humiliated. Also, if we escaped, the prison guard would have been killed since, in the Roman tradition, the guard who fails to do his job would just kill himself by his own hands. It was our duty to preserve the life of this man.

**Broadcaster:** Then how do you explain the fact that the other prisoners stayed too?

**St. Paul:** It was God who prevented them from escaping and being the reason for the death of the guard. God cared for the pagan guard just as He cared for Paul and Silas and every other human being He created. Maybe the prisoners were enjoying the atmosphere of praise and didn't want to leave it!

**Broadcaster:** Did you expect the guard to believe in Christ?

**St. Paul:** I am used to praying for everyone I meet, whether a master or a slave, a guard or a prisoner, and I ask that they know Christ as I did, and love Him as I do; and that all would know the truth that will set them free. I prayed a lot for the guard, and I thank God who answered my prayers and opened his eyes to know and believe. He didn't just believe but became a kind person.

**Broadcaster:** What was the guard's reaction when he found out that all the prisoners were still there?

**St. Paul:** He felt that he owed his life to our Lord Jesus who saved him from death. He immediately asked about the way to salvation. He turned into a kind person who took us both to his house and he got baptized with his family when they believed in the Lord Jesus.

**Broadcaster:** What about you and Silas?

**St. Paul:** We are still here in prison waiting for the rulers to decide what to do with us. I will make sure to tell them that I am a Roman citizen and should not be tortured like slaves. I will request my civil rights as a Roman citizen.

**Broadcaster:** Isn't that considered an escape from sharing in Christ's sufferings?

**St. Paul:** Asking for my civil rights is very important at this point for it will help us in the evangelism and service in Achaia and Laodicea without hindrance. The governors will not dare break the Roman laws and put us in jail without trial again.

**Broadcaster:** Thank you very much, St. Paul, for taking the time to talk to us.

## The Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon

**Broadcaster:** We meet again with St. Paul for a personal interview. This time, it is around the year 62-63, about 30 years after the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our guest expressed real faithfulness in preaching the name of the Lord Christ and wrote 14 epistles in the Holy Bible. Today we are talking to him about his epistle to Philemon. We are so glad to have you with us again, St. Paul. What brings you to prison this time?

**St. Paul:** As a matter of fact, this is the first time for me to get imprisoned in Rome. I am here because of preaching the Gospel of Christ. I requested my case to be brought in front of Caesar since I am a Roman Citizen. I wrote 4 epistles while in here; the ones to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and to Philemon.

**Broadcaster:** What was the reason for writing your epistle to Philemon, and what was it about?

**St. Paul:** The epistle was concerning the beloved son Onesimus, the slave who stole and ran away from the house of his master, Philemon. Philemon lived with his wife Apphia and his son Archippus in Colosse. But I met Onesimus in Rome after his escape from Colosse. Onesimus repented after I told him about Christ, therefore, I wrote this message to Philemon. It is a personal message requesting him to receive Onesimus and forgive him. I asked him to apply the Christian principles of forgiveness and love for one another.

**Broadcaster:** You wrote your message in gentleness and humbleness. Did you doubt the acceptance of Philemon to your request?

**St. Paul:** Remember that I was talking about a slave who stole and escaped from his master. I wasn't just asking Philemon to forgive him, but also to receive him and keep him to help in the service...

**Broadcaster:** Is this why Onesimus himself was to deliver the message?

**St. Paul:** Philemon owned Onesimus as a slave. Therefore, he was the only one who had the right to decide how to deal with him. Because I am a faithful person, I had to give Philemon his “property” back and obey the law. On the other hand, I wanted to grant Philemon an opportunity to decide the fate of his slave Onesimus according to his will without my interference. So by sending Onesimus to him, I was simply telling him: “It’s up to you.” I also wanted to relay the message that the master and slave are brothers in Christ Jesus who saved both of them. There is one more reason for sending the message with Onesimus; in order for his repentance to be fulfilled, Onesimus had to confront his master, apologize to him personally and ask for his forgiveness.

**Broadcaster:** In your epistle you wrote: *“Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.”* (Philemon 21) Why were you so confident?

**St. Paul:** Philemon is a beloved brother who is active in service, him and his family. His home is nothing but a small church. His great love to the church and all the believers is witnessed for by all including Onesimus himself. All of these reasons gave me confidence that Philemon will forgive Onesimus.

**Broadcaster:** You also wrote: *“Because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.”* (Philemon 7) What did you mean?

**St. Paul:** The saints were deeply filled with peace due to the great love and service shown by Philemon. I also used the same expression when I talked about my son Onesimus: *“I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.”* (Philemon 12) to show him how great is my love to Onesimus.

**Broadcaster:** Was this an encouragement for Philemon to forgive Onesimus?

**St. Paul:** Of course, since Onesimus is my heart and my son in Christ. I asked Philemon to: *“Refresh my heart in the Lord.”* (Philemon 20) After all, we are all one church, one body, and one heart.

**Broadcaster:** If Christianity did not encourage slavery, why did you insist on returning Onesimus as a slave? Why didn’t you ask his master to grant him his freedom?

**St. Paul:** The epistle in its content relays a Christian principle that does not support slavery. I was addressing the master Philemon and the slave Onesimus as equal in Christ who freed both of them from the slavery of sin. I talk about Onesimus as a son, and of Philemon I say: *“Receive him as you would me”*. (Philemon 17) But you have to remember that Christianity is not a religion of rebellion but brotherly love.

**Broadcaster:** You used 4 qualities to describe Onesimus: My son, My heart, A beloved brother, As me. Why specifically these qualities in this order?

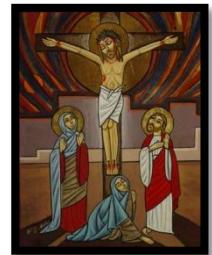
**St. Paul:** My son because I preached him. My heart because I love him as a son and because he became an active member in the church. A beloved brother because we are all in Christ. As me because we are all sons of Jesus Christ. As for the order, it was to explain the steps of becoming a new person.

**Broadcaster:** You wrote: *“you owe me even your own self besides.”* after you said *“I will repay.”* (Philemon 19) What did he owe you?

**St. Paul:** It was not a material debt. He owed me his knowledge of Christ, just like Onesimus, and just like I owe Christ who forgave us all on the cross.

**Broadcaster:** We thank our beloved St. Paul for allowing us another chance to talk to him.

It remains to say that this was a personal message from St. Paul to Philemon, and was not intended to be read in the church. However, Onesimus insisted on it to declare his honest repentance, and to witness for the love of Philemon and the great St. Paul who led him to Christ.



## The Story of Salvation

*It was the end of the day and all the students were getting ready to leave. Eddy noticed a picture in one of Peter's books.*

**Eddy:** Do you really think this is God on the cross?

**Peter:** Yes, I do. We believe that Jesus Christ is God, who was incarnate and crucified for us.

**Eddy:** I want to know about Christ, is He God? Incarnated? And was crucified? Why even take flesh and leave His throne and His kingdom in Heaven?

**Peter** (smiling): Do you attend the Liturgies and Sunday school every week? I think if you were attending these every week you would not doubt and ask these questions. It's a long story; but I'll tell you.

**Eddy:** Go ahead, I really want to know.

*The two friends went on their way; Peter began to talk, saying:*

**Peter:** You know that God created heaven and earth and filled it with plants and trees, and all kinds of birds and animals. Then, on the sixth day, when everything was ready, 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.*** (Genesis 1:26)

**Eddy:** We know that God is a spirit, how can we say: He created man in His image?

**Peter:** God did not create man in His image in form and figure, but He distinguished him from the rest of the other creations with potential and special abilities ...

**Mind:** to know God and believe in Him.

**Heart and Feelings:** to love God and to love his brothers in the whole of humanity.

**Eternal Spirit:** to share with God an eternal life.

**Will:** in order to choose his path in life.

Then, the image of God means man should love for **God is love**, should have knowledge for **God is omniscient**, and should be pure because **God is Holy**. All of this should be according to the will of man. Here, God gave man the greatest gift, the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil.

**Eddy:** Strange! How could this tree be the greatest gift if it was the reason for Adam to sin?

**Peter:** The gift here is freedom and will. God asked Adam not to eat from the tree, but did not force him to do so; He gave him the absolute freedom: to obey God and have eternal life with Him; or disobey God, and willingly eat from the tree, and receive the divine punishment: ***"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."*** (Genesis 2:17).

Unfortunately, man abused his freedom, and fell by the envy of the serpent (The devil). The Lord loved Adam and Eve so much, and He wanted them to Love Him through obedience, and that this obedience would be according to their free will.

**Eddy:** Punishment of death is so severe! Why didn't God just kick them out of Paradise?

**Peter:** First, the original sin is "separation from God" because God is perfect in His Holiness, He has no sin ever. God is also the fountain of life, if one is separated from God by sinning, the result is death. Death here has several meanings:

- **Spiritual death:** the separation from God and the unity with Him.
- **Ethical death:** the loss of the divine image and the corruption of human nature.
- **Physical death:** the end of man's life, and his return to dust of which he was made (Genesis 2:19).
- **Eternal death:** eternal damnation.

This sin was directed to the Holiness of God who is infinite; therefore the punishment of sin is infinite. Offense to a simple person is not like an offense to a great person. Imagine if the offense was directed to God personally.

**Eddy:** Didn't you say that "*God is love*", why doesn't He forgive man?

**Peter:** God is perfect in His love and mercy and He is just, God's justice here requires that a sinful man must die "*For the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). Also, if God forgives the man, it does not solve the problem of human corruption which was started by Adam. Just like the father who commanded his son not to drink from a certain bottle because it has a deadly poison, but this son disobeyed him and drank from it. While he is on his deathbed, he asked for forgiveness from his father. The father had already forgiven him but this did not prevent the poison from taking effect on the body of the son, and the father must save him from damnation.

**Eddy:** Why didn't God let Adam die and create another person?

**Peter:** First: Because this contradicts God's love and mercy. Even though Adam ate from the tree willingly, but Satan was the one who seduced him. Second: The fatality of Adam contradicts the dignity of God, how He could permit Satan to triumph on Adam's mistake, and let him die! This means that the devil triumphed over God, and this will be the fate of every human being created by God later! But God forbade this from happening.

**Eddy:** Okay, well if Adam made a mistake and had to die, why was his children punished for what he did?

**Peter:** Like I said before; the result of Adam's sin is the corruption of human nature that we all inherit since we are from Adam. Humans fell into a series of sins because of this corrupted nature: "*They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one*" (Romans 3:12). As we say in the Divine Liturgy: "No one is without sin, even if his life was one day on earth", sin and the devil began to have power over man.

**Eddy:** I understand what you are saying, that the results of sins are:

1. A death sentence that was carried out on all mankind
2. And the corruption of human nature by sin.

But God does not want man to die because He loves him, so what is the solution of this dilemma??

**Peter:** The solution is simply to redeem the human being, by dying – one according to his own will – instead of man. The Bible says: "*and without shedding of blood there is no remission.*" (Hebrews 9:22).

**Eddy:** Simple, a person offers a sacrifice to God for his sin, as they did in the Old Testament, and thus ends the problem. **Peter (laughing):** It is not that simple. You are right when you said that, in the Old Testament the Jews offered sacrifices for they have received this tradition from God Himself who made tunics of skin to cloth Adam and Eve to cover their shame (Genesis 3). From that point on, the human cannot conceal (atone) for his sin before God except with the blood of sacrifice. The sinner brings the sacrifice to the door of the temple, and he puts his hand over the head and confesses his sin. Then the sacrifice dies instead of the owner. But, of course, the sacrifice was not enough, and not all the sacrifices on Earth can atone for the sin of human, for this was addressed to God who is infinite. The sacrifice did not have the conditions required that the redeemer, who will take the sin for all mankind, must have.

**Eddy:** What are these conditions?

**Peter:** The redeemer must:

- **Be Human:** Since man is the one who sinned, it cannot be an animal or an angel.
- **Die:** The wages of sin is death as we have said.
- **Be without sin:** If he was sinful, then he would need someone to be sacrificed for him. A sinful man cannot redeem another who is sinful, for both will be punished by death.
- **Infinite:** Adam's sin was directed to God who is infinite, and the punishment is also infinite. The one who will be sacrificed must be sacrificed for all the human beings, starting from Adam to the last ages.
- **Creator:** So He can renew the human nature again, and return it to the first image before the sin of Adam.

**Eddy:** I wonder who can provide these difficult conditions.

**Peter:** The last three conditions only apply to God alone, for He is the Creator and the Holy one (without sin) and is infinite. The first two conditions should also apply to Him. Therefore, He had to incarnate to become

human who is capable of death, God then accepts death in His human body and dies for the salvation of the whole world, and invalidates the power of sin, renewing the human nature again and showing His amazing love to all mankind.

**Eddy:** Here is what I do not understand, how God, the Holy and Great, is pleased to take a weak human body?

**Peter:** First: you must know that the incarnation of God is not contradicting His dignity, because man is the crown of God's creatures, created in His image and likeness, after God created him, He said: “*Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good*” (Genesis 1:31). And the Incarnation is also not incompatible with the Holiness of God, because if the sun shines on a pile of garbage, it will not get contaminated or affected. In the same manner, God's incarnation cleanses our sins without detracting from His Holiness, for His Holiness is not final and absolute.

Second: The Incarnation is a proof of God's love for man. God wanted to dwell within us and unite us to teach us the path of eternal life, and protect us from the enemy. It is possible for God to come to us, and it is impossible for us to rise to Him.

**“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 3:16)**

The Bible also says: “**great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh**” (1 Timothy 3:16).

**Eddy:** How did this Incarnation happen?

**Peter:** God (the Divinity which came upon in the womb of the Virgin) took flesh (Humanity) from her blood but it was a body without sin. He became a human being like us, with a human soul and human flesh, all this but without sin. As we say in the Liturgy: “Like us in everything except sin alone”.

**Eddy:** This is about the incarnation, what about the redemption, tell me about that?

**Peter:** Redemption and salvation happened for all mankind, when Christ died for us on the wood of the Cross, and then was buried and rose again three days later.

**Eddy:** Died?! Did God die?

**Peter:** Of course not, but remember that Divinity was united with humanity. It is the Humanity (the body) that died on the cross, for the spirit was separated from the body, which was buried in the grave, as we say in the ninth hour “O, Who tasted death in the flesh”.

*Eddy stayed quiet for a moment speculating on what his friend Peter was saying.*

**Eddy:** Thank you very much Peter, there are many things that became clear to me that I did not understand before. Going to Sunday School is important, it teaches me a lot about Christianity and doctrine. I will attend Sunday School from now on, starting next week, God willing.

## Midnight Praises

Marina is in middle school; she is excellent in her school work and she goes to church every Sunday to attend the liturgy and Sunday school. One day, she heard her friends Miriam and Monica talking about a night they spent at church and they felt as if they were in heaven. She heard from them words that she's never heard before such as Praise, Canticle, Kiahk... So she joined the conversation and started to ask them what they were talking about and at the end she asked if she could come with them one time and that they explain everything to her. So Miriam and Monica started to talk to her about praises.

The word **praise** refers to a group of prayers and praises that precedes the Raising of incense of Vespers and Matins, to prepare for the Liturgy.

## **First: The Importance of Praise:**

1. Praising is the work of the angels and saints all the time around the throne of God in Heaven, "*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.*" (Psalm 19:1). Also, we (the struggling church on earth) join them (The victorious church in heaven) in this work because, we are all one body in Christ.
2. Praising has a miraculous ability to change the evil habits and sanctify the thoughts and the senses.
3. Praising is the way to transfer the Christian dogma throughout generations.
4. Praising is the way to fight the evil spirit and triumph over him.

## **Second: Praising in the Old Testament:**

1. The praise of Moses the Prophet and the people after crossing the Red Sea.
2. Psalms of David the Prophet.
3. The praise of the three young youth.
4. Praises of the Prophets and Kings (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Elijah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Daniel, Jonah, Menasha, and Azariah). We know about those in detail during the prayers of the eve of the joyous Saturday before Matins.

## **Third: Praising in the New Testament:**

1. The Lord Jesus Christ praised with the disciples during the eve of the last supper,  
*"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."* (Matt 26:30).
2. The pure disciples gathered after the ascension of our lord Jesus Christ to praise and break the bread in the house of St. Mark, *"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."* (Acts 2:46-47).
3. The praises of St. Paul and St. Silas in the prison in Philippi *"But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them."* (Acts 16:25).

## **Fourth: The different tunes used in the praises:**

1. **The Kiahk tune:** Used during the month of Kiahk until the Paramon of the Feast of Nativity.
2. **The Joyous tune:** All the major feasts except Covenant Thursday.
  - From the Feast of Nayrouz (1 Tout) until the Feast of the Cross (16 Tout).
  - From the Feast of Nativity (29 Kiahk) until the Feast of Circumcision (6 Touba).
  - From the Feast of Epiphany (11 Touba) until the Feast of the Wedding of Cana of Galilee (13 Touba).
  - The monthly commemoration of the feasts of Annunciation, Nativity and Resurrection (29<sup>th</sup> day of every Coptic month) except the months of Touba and Amsheer.
3. **The Fast's tunes:**
  - The Great Lent
  - Nineveh's Fast
4. **Palm Sunday tune:**
  - The Feast of Palm Sunday
  - The Feasts of the Cross (17, 18, 19 Tout and 10 Baramhat).
  - The glorifications of the Saints, martyrs and angels.
5. **The Paschal tune:**
  - Passion Week
  - Funeral prayers
6. **The annual tune:** It is used at times different from what is mentioned above.

## **Fifth: Expressions of Praises:**

1. **Batos:** A Coptic word meaning “bush” and it is a tune used on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.
2. **Adam:** A Coptic word meaning “Adam”. It is a tune used on Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays.
3. **Canticle:** In Coptic “*Hos*” meaning “Praise”; and in the Midnight praises there are 4 Canticles. The Canticle is always a biblical script.
4. **Lobsh:** A Coptic word meaning “Explanation” and it is said after the first and second Canticles.
5. **Doxology:** A Greek word meaning “a blessed glorification.” And it is a group of glorifications to the saints and it is said after the commemoration of the Saints.
6. **Epsalia:** A Greek word meaning “hymn” and it is said before the Doxology. For each day there is a specific Epsalia, for example Thursday’s Epsalia and Friday’s Epsalia, in addition to the Epsalias used in the feasts and the memorials of the Saints. It is said using the tunes of Batos and Adam depending on the day.
7. **Theotokia:** A glorification to St. Mary the mother of God. This word stems out of the Greek word “Theotokos” and it means the mother of God. For each day there is a special Theotokia and it is sung either using the Batos or the Adam tunes depending on the day.

## **Sixth: The Books used in the church during Midnight Praises:**

1. **The Psalmody:** Includes the prayers of the praises and there are two versions:
  - The annual Psalmody
  - The Kiahk Psalmody and it includes the praises during the month of Kiahk.
2. **The annual Epsalias:** This book includes the Epsalias of the major and minor feasts and the feasts of the saints.
3. **The Espalias of the feasts and the fasts** for all the Coptic occasions.
4. **The Defnar:** it includes the biographies of the saints and glorifications for them with the tune.
5. **The Agpeya:** we use it to pray the Psalms that precede the praises.

## **Seventh: The elements of the Midnight Praises and their order:**

Now we will learn about the elements of praises and their order so we could do as commanded in the Holy Bible, “*I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding.*” (1 Corinthians 14:15). Then we would enjoy the unity with the heavenly hosts to praise our Lord Jesus Christ.

- **The Passage “Ten Thino”:** With it we start the Midnight praises and it is sung using a beautiful tune that starts quietly then it increases in the joyous pitch and it means “Arise O’ children of light, let us praise the Lord of Hosts.” It is an invitation extended to us from the church to leave the laziness and sleep and arise to praise our Savior for granting us life.
- **The passage “Ten Nav”:** It is a glorification of the resurrection. We pray this passage as the church just advised us to arise from the sleep placing the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ who resurrected from the dead and the slumber of the grave to enlighten us too, those who lay on the bed of sleep. We also will rise from this grave to praise the Lord at all times in heaven. This passage is said on the days of Pentecost and the Sundays including the last Sunday in the month of Hatour.
- **The First Canticle:** It is the praise of Moses the prophet and his sister Miriam and the children of Israel (Exodus 15) after their salvation from the slavery of Pharaoh by crossing the Red Sea. It is the praise of triumph and defeat and the church placed it as the first praise because pharaoh and his soldiers who enslaved the Israelites represent the devil and his soldiers. As Moses saved the children of Israel and crossed the Red Sea with them, the



Lord Jesus Christ saved us through His cross as we cross with Him from death to life in baptism which is the first sacrament and the key to heaven.

- **The Second Canticle (Psalm 135):** The reply of each paragraph is (Ge Pefnai shop sha eneh - His mercy endures forever) 28 times, representing the 28 generations from David (the writer of the Psalms) to the Lord Jesus Christ and mentioned in the book of St. Matthew. As if David is asking each generation to ask for the mercy of God until the coming of the Savior the redeemer. The Joy of salvation changes the praises from praising to thanksgiving for the new life and the grace of the freedom and being called children of God. Therefore, the word “Thank the Lord” in this psalm is used so that the church would praise and thank her Good savior for His mercy that endures forever.
- **The Third Canticle (Continuation of Daniel 3):** After the defeat of the devil by the cross, he does not stop fighting the children of God, and as he wanted to burn the three young youth alive in the pit of fire, he also wants to burn us in the fire of his temptations. As the lord saved the three young youth from the pit of fire, He will also save us from the devil’s temptations and give us victory and triumph. He appears in front of us as He did in the pit of fire with the three young youth. Therefore, we praise with them and invite all the creations to praise Him.
- **The Epsalia of the three young youth: (Arepsaleen):** “O sing unto Him who was crucified, buried and resurrected for us.” This glorification is arranged according to the Greek alphabet, in it we remember the work of the Lord with the three young youth in the pit of fire, and it is sung directly after the third canticle.
- **The glorification of the three young youth (Ten oweeh Enthok):** This is said directly after the previous Epsalias and it is a part of the prayer of Azariah, one of the three young youth, he prayed it alone in the pit of fire as mentioned in the continuation of Daniel 3:24-45 after the third Canticle and before the commemoration of the saints.
- **The commemoration of the Saints:** Those who triumphed over the lusts of the world and Satan and his temptation through the power of God and became saints and role models; so we ask for their intercession and prayer as they joined the angels in the life of heaven to help us complete our struggle and be transferred to the victorious church in heaven.
- **Doxologies:** In it we glorify St. Mary, the angels, and the multitudes of saints so that the Lord would answer their prayers on our behalf and we give them the respect and blessing so they may have sympathy with us and aid us with their prayers on our behalf. The doxologies are sung during the Raising of incense of Vespers and Matins. The doxology for the feasts and fasts is sung before St. Mary’s doxology and then followed by the other doxologies in order.
- **The fourth Canticle:** (Psalms 148, 149, 150): In Psalm 148 we invite the nature including all the creations to praise its Great Creator. In the Psalms 149 and 150 we invite all humanity to glorify and praise the Lord. That way, the entire universe would participate in praising and glorifying our Holy God. The creation that has a mind such as the angels and humans, and the creations that does not have a mind such as the planets and the stars.
- **Epsalia:** The praise of my Lord Jesus Christ. In it we mention the name of the Lord who is a great refuge against all the temptations of the enemy. Every time you say the name of our Lord Jesus it is like carrying a sword to attack the enemy. Often the order of the Epsalia is according to the Coptic alphabet. As for the Epsalias of the feasts and the fast, it is said before the Epsalia of the day and its tune differs according to the occasion as explained before in the rites of the praises (The annual rites, the fasts rites, etc)
- **Theotokia:** Comes directly after the Epsalia to glorify St. Mary and the mystery of incarnation that came through her and we remember the prophecies that talked about Incarnation and the symbols of St. Mary the mother of God. There are 7 Theotokias in the Psalmody book and they are sung using the Batos or Adam tune according to the day.



- **The conclusion of the Theotokias:** It creates in us the feeling of repentance, confession and trust in the mercy of God (Adam), and also in the (Batos) the waiting for the second coming of the Lord and our eagerness to the eternal life and the end of the life on earth.
- Then we say the conclusion of the praises (Ephnoti Nai nan) seeking the mercies of God and the prayer of Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy) 41 times.

## The Beginning of the Christian Denominations

*Mina, John and Daniel, three friends with different faith backgrounds, met at the playground of the school during recess. Like every day, they sat down and talked together; John asked his friends this question:*



**John:** Why are we called different; you, Mina, are Orthodox, and you, Daniel, are Evangelical, and I am Catholic. Aren't we all Christians? Aren't we all one?

**Daniel:** Of course John, we are all Christians. We are all one and there is no difference between us except in some of the formalities of the prayer and worship, I think. The Orthodox calls it the "doctrine", right, Mina?

**Mina:** That is right, Daniel. We are all Christians, and we believe that Christ our God came for our salvation. But there are clear differences between us in the doctrines; not only in the formalities of the prayers and worship, but also in the creed. I have heard my parents say that there are several differences between us in the doctrines."

**John:** Differences in the doctrines! Where do these differences come from? How did these denominations start? When did they appear? What are these differences?

**Mina:** Let's go talk to Mr. Samuel, our teacher of religious education, about the beginning of these denominations?

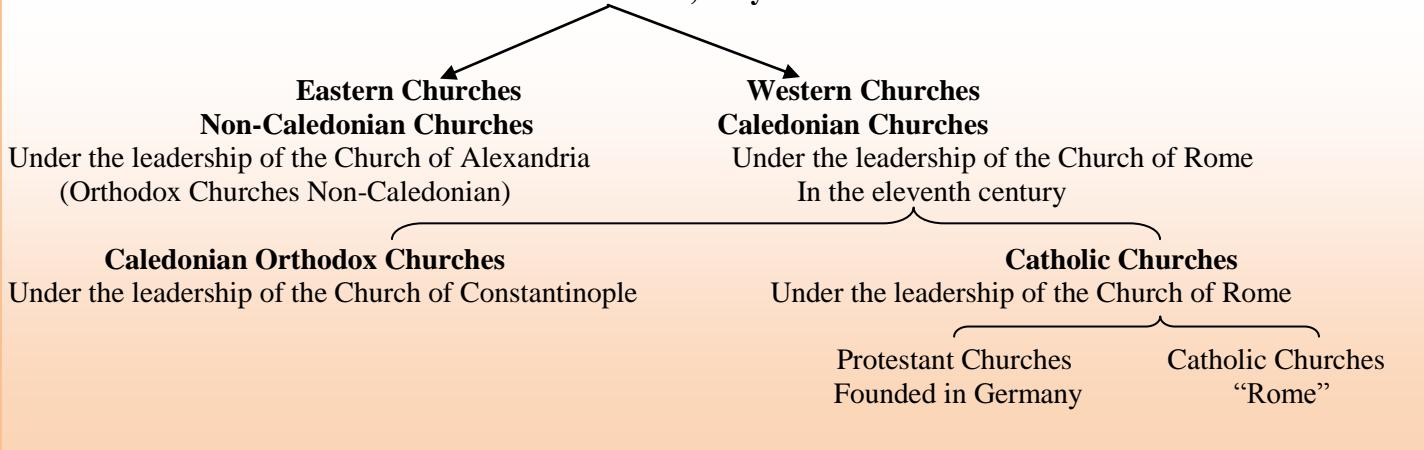
**John and Daniel:** That is a good idea, let's go. (*The three boys went to him, and he started explaining to them...*)

**Samuel:** The Church of the New Testament was one Church, with one belief, one body composed of believers as members. Its head was the Lord Jesus Christ; The Church remained one in the faith until the year 451 A.D., when a group of Bishops and Patriarchs met at the council of Caledon, they were divided into two groups. Some said that Christ has one nature since His divine nature was united with His human nature; this was the belief of the Eastern Churches led by our Coptic Church. The Western Churches led by the Roman Church agreed with the decision of the Council of Caledon that Christ has two natures.

This is how the Churches were divided into Caledonian and non-Caledonian churches. Caledonian churches (i.e. believes in the Council of Caledon), led by the Church of Rome. Non-Caledonian churches (i.e. who do not believe in the Council of Caledon), led by the Coptic Church of Alexandria.

In the eleventh century, the churches of the West were divided into Catholic Churches following the Church of Rome, and Roman Orthodox Churches following Constantinople. In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther led a rebellion against the Catholic Church, called the "Protestant Reformation," that launched in Germany. He objected to some of the teachings; his followers were called "Protestant". Within the Protestant Church, there are many divisions and branches that are coming out of it until this day.

**The First Church** → **The Council of Caledon, the year of 451 AD**



**Orthodoxy:** from the Greek word meaning “right opinion” or “straight opinion.” This nomenclature started in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, the church maintained its faith, which was received from the Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples. As we receive this valuable inheritance, we have to preserve it faithfully so we can hand it over to the next generations that come after us, until Jesus Christ comes in the second coming and retrieves His church, which He bought with His own blood.

**Catholicism:** from the Greek word meaning “general or global or universal” because it brought all the Western churches together, and this nomenclature has come about and emerged in the eleventh century.

**Protestantism:** means protest or opposition

**Mina:** From my understanding of this history, my Coptic Orthodox Church is the Church with the glorious ancient history, maintaining a good faith, which was started by Saint Mark. This church never had any divisions like what happened to the Catholic and Protestant churches.

**Samuel:** Yes, Mina, you may wonder how the Catholic and Protestant churches came to Egypt if the Coptic Orthodox Church is the Church of Egyptian ancient times.

**These denominations came to Egypt from abroad:** Catholicism entered Egypt during the period of Crusades (called the false movement), led by Louis IX in 1219 A.D. and was formally established only two hundred years ago with the French Movement in Egypt. Protestantism has known its way to Egypt and was formally established in April 1860 in Cairo. It is clear that Protestantism entered Egypt no more than 150 years ago.

## Some of the doctrinal differences between the three denominations:

Doctrine	Orthodoxy	Catholicism	Protestantism
1. Baptism	A Sacrament in which a person receives the grace of the new birth, it is the door of all sacraments done by the submersion of a child or adult in water.	It is a Holy Sacrament but it is done by spraying or pouring water.	It is not a sacrament, but it is a sign exercised by spraying or submersion. They believe in baptism of the Holy Spirit without water.
<i>“Repent and be baptized, every one of you the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, ... of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 38:2)</i>			
2. Confirmation	It is a sacrament to obtain the Holy Spirit using Holy Oil. The baptized person is anointed 36 times throughout the body.	Similar to Orthodox, however; the sacrament is performed when a person is between 7-12 years old, and is called “Fixation”.	Don't believe it is a church sacrament, but they perform it by the laying of the hands to accept the development of specific talents according to their faith.
<i>“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who is also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)</i>			
3. Confession	A sacrament for the faithful to obtain the absolution from their sins if they repent and confess them.	There are instruments of forgiveness given for the past and present sins; this sacrament is exercised behind the curtain.	No confessing except to God and to those who we trespassed against or in front of the whole church in some denominations.
<i>“Receive the Holy Spirit, If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:23)</i>			
4. Communion	True Body and Blood of Christ after the bread and wine are transformed by the Holy Spirit; unleavened bread may not be used, but leavened bread. May not be used on the altar more than one time. Fasting is required for 9 hours before Communion.	Believe in the transformation of the Body and Blood of Christ. Since the 11 <sup>th</sup> century, they began to use the unleavened bread and prevented people from drinking blood. Bread may be used in more than one liturgy. No fasting required before communion.	Do not believe in the transformation of the bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Christ. Just recognition from the Bible.

*"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life,  
and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:54)*

<b>5. Intercession</b>	Believe in the intercession of Christ atoning us to the Father and in the intercession of the saints who intercede for us to our Lord Jesus Christ. We also honor them through the icons and save their bodies and recognize them.	Same as the Orthodox but they honor the saints by statues in addition to the icons; statues are not desirable in the Orthodox.	Believe in the intercession of Christ's vicarious only and deny the intercession of the saints.
<b>6. Holy Spirit</b>	Proceeds from the Father.	Proceeds from the Father and the Son.	Proceeds from the Father and the Son.
<b>7. Sacred Tradition</b>	Believe in the Holy Apostolic tradition.	Believe in it, but add the laws attributed to the Apostles and the Fathers of the Western Church and local councils.	Do not believe in sacred traditions at all.
<b>8. Second Coming</b>	Second coming at the end of the world on judgment day for the world to see	Same as the Orthodox	The second coming is in batches including the coming of Christ on Earth for 1000 years, and then judgment.
<b>9. Judgment Day</b>	Eternal condemnation of evil and non-repentant sinners	Believe in purgatory where the faithful one suffers from his sins in order to purify oneself and then enters the kingdom of heaven.	Like the Orthodox, they do not believe in the purgatory process.
<b>10. Virgin Mary</b>	Inherited the original sin like all the other human beings and needs the salvation of Christ. But she is His virgin mother and her dignity is above all the angels. Believe in her virginity after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.	Born without the original sin and does not need the salvation of Christ and exaggerate in honoring her, which is unacceptable to Orthodox, highly worshipping her. Believe in her virginity as well.	Deny the title Mother of God, deny her intercession, and deny her virginity. They do not honor her as well.

**There are other doctrinal differences, but do not forget the commandment of the Bible:**

***"Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown." (Revelation 3:11)***

# Be Faithful in Your Talents

## Your Talents, Your Treasure!



*While Bishoy was walking home from school, he thought about something he learned at school that day.*

Helen Keller was blind, deaf, and mute; she wondered what her purpose in life was. She did not enjoy her life and became a heavy burden to those who served her. She believed that her life was in the hands of the Lord, and that her body deprived of vision, hearing, and speech must be a message from God. Her care-giver had a strong faith and believed that she had a strong will; so with strong will and strong faith, the girl became one of the greatest writers and taught many students with her books and stories. She learned with her senses of smell and touch, for the rest of her senses was disabled. He, then, remembered the parable of the talents that was told by the Lord Jesus. The one who received five talents won five talents, and the other who received two talents won two talents; but the lazy one who hid his talents did not receive anything (Matthew 25:14-30). He had more questions, he was confused, and so he went to his Sunday School Servant.

**Bishoy:** I feel I cannot do anything. I am a person with no talents or gifts.

**Servant:** That is not true, for our God gave us many gifts and abilities inherent in us. You have talents and gifts but you have not found them yet.

**Bishoy:** How do I find them?

**Servant:** Start by helping others, such as your parents, teachers, relatives or friends. Join your brothers or other servants in a variety of activities, and you will discover that you like one of them. Even if you failed, do not be afraid of failing, try again after going through the reasons of failing the first time, many do not succeed from the first time. Many of the reasons of their failure are the same reasons that led them to success.

**Bishoy:** Isn't this difficult to accomplish?

**Servant:** Try first and do not underestimate yourself for there are gifts of God for all people. The role of the person is to find it and use it to accomplish great things under God.

**Bishoy:** Like what?

**Servant:** Your body, isn't that a gift from God? You should protect it and not abuse it by using drugs, smoking and alcohol, and even staying up all night. We must not abuse our body so we can use it for good and for the service of others. Girls should also protect their bodies as well, maintaining a good appearance and wearing decent clothes. This will give them a beautiful image of chastity, holiness, and purity. People will like them through their modest, beautiful clothes: "**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?**" (1 Corinthians 6:19).

**Bishoy:** Isn't time also is a gift from God?

**Servant:** Yes Bishoy, all people have this gift from God, and the wise are the ones who do not waste their time without making good use of it. For those who sit in front of the Internet for hours with their friends on Facebook, playing games and joking, or playing all the time with their cell phone, or watching TV for hours, are not using their time wisely!!!

**Bishoy:** I know a friend who sits in front of the computer all day, he even eats and drinks in front of it; he began to complain about his poor vision and pain in his back.

**Servant:** He became a slave to technologies just like drug addicts, the Bible says: "**All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**" (1 Corinthians 6:12). Time of prayer is lost when he spends his night on the computer, then he cannot participate in the prayers of the Liturgy. He wastes his time and he ends up not serving his parents' needs and he does not visit his relatives. He also does not exercise his hobbies and talents. He becomes isolated in his prison which is made of computer, cellular phones, TV, etc.

**Bishoy:** One of the servants once told me that studying is a gift from God.

**Servant:** That is true. When you strive, study, and understand each topic that you do not know until you do, then you will become a prominent scientific person, using it to serve and benefit others. For the teacher who teaches you strived and studied until he reached this position. The doctor who treats the people also studied and spent a great effort to become a doctor and so on.

**Bishoy:** You remind me of Beethoven; he studied music and excelled in it to the extent that he wrote one of his symphonies after he lost his hearing. When he presented it to the people, the people stood up for him and clapped for a long time. There were tears in his eye for he longed to hear the symphony, which people applauded him for because of its splendor and beauty.

**Servant:** Every talent and gift can benefit others, for it is a treasure that should not be hidden in the ground but should be stored in heaven: “**where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal**” (Matthew 6:20).

**Bishoy:** Truly there are many gifts and talents that we need to use to benefit others. I remember, how His Holiness Pope Shenouda was used to reading poetry to learn from them, and was able to compose poems that are deeply spiritual and beautiful. People learn the virtues of Christianity from these poems.

**Servant:** You can also help in serving the poor. For it is a great gift to help in the service of the poor:

“**Blessed is he who considers the poor; The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble**” (Psalms 41:1)

**Bishoy:** Sometimes I feel that my friends are more talented than me.

**Servant:** It is not important to have a large number of talents, it is important to invest your talents no matter how small. You must study and increase in knowledge and development. Pray to God to help you excel in it, so you can benefit yourself and others: “**As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God**” (1 Peter 4:10). Knowing that all talents are gifts from God, you should work to develop it with God’s help without pride.

**Bishoy:** I now understand that each person has many talents and gifts: for my body is a gift, helping the needy is a gift, and time is a gift; also studying, music and painting are all talents! It is not important to have a large number of talents, but how to use it and invest in it to serve others.

### Discover your talents:

1. Ask yourself, your father, your parents and siblings, your servant, your teacher, and friends
2. Read and Research
3. Finally try and do not give up from the first time

### These talents can be in:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  Speech         |  Feeling of others    |  Managing time   |
|  Calmness       |  Meditation in nature |  Drawing and Art |
|  Administration |  Sports               |  Music           |
|  Planning       |  Reading              |   |

**Worksheet:** What are your talents? How do you use them to benefit others?



# Be Faithful in Your Family

## Servant or Idle

A husband and wife made an agreement, the husband will do the work that is required outside the home, and the wife will be responsible for the house chores. One day, the wife went to run some errands and the husband went to work, when the husband came home there was a fire in one of the rooms of the house. George thought a bit and said to himself: I am only responsible for the outside chores, so when my wife comes back, it is her job to extinguish the fire!

What do you think about the behavior of the husband?

### **My home, my family is my small church- my parents and siblings-my small church is part of my big church.**

In my big church, we are all members of one body, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every member completes the other members, and every member serves the other members to their conveniences...My small church is like the body of one person, made of many organs...every organ has a role... what happens if one organ of the body does not do his role...if the legs are lazy then the body will not move, play, run, and go to church or school...the body will tire because of the laziness of the legs.

If the eye does not want to see nature and its beauty, the whole body will not reflect on God's works. Therefore, if the rest of the organs are lazy and do not perform their roles, the whole body will not function properly... The body faces many problems, if the legs of one person take him to inappropriate places full of sins. The body will also tire if the ears hear inappropriate conversations.

My friend, each of you is part of the body of your family and has a role, so are you a peaceful or tiring organ in your family?! Are you a positive organ or a lazy organ harming the rest of the members of your family?! Our Father Jacob sent his son Joseph to Shechem, to check on his brothers. Joseph went but he did not find his brothers in Shechem, did he stop looking?...No, he did not, he went looking for them in Dothan (Genesis 37:12-17). Joseph did all he could to carry out his father's orders...And you my friend, how many times were you exposed to such a situation? Your father asks you to bring something from a store but you did not find it, do you return without it or you look elsewhere? Or your mother asks you for help in the house but you don't do it.

My friends, if you are lazy in your home then you are the one losing. Don't you know that if every organ in your body does not perform its role then it will become a useless organ? When a child is learning to walk he will fall the first few times but he will keep trying. If you do not use your legs, you will become like a child who is learning to walk.

Every organ in your body depends on the others, no matter how small or weak that organ is. If you are climbing to a high place, you need to use your hands as well as your legs. If you are looking for a book in your library, you need your eyes to see and your hand to pick the book up...And as members of the family, you need to help each other. **Therefore, all organs of the body have to cooperate in order for the body to function well.**

**Ask yourself in the light of your family: one body, but different members.**

Is my relationship with my parents a selfish one? Is it just to take from them all the time, or is it to give as well?

Is it a relationship to just receive gifts, love, and tenderness from my parents, or is it to exchange gifts, tenderness, and love?

How do we see our parents, do we see them as old-fashioned or less civilized people? What is the nature of our relationship with them? Do we ignore their advices or do we accept them with confidence that they love us?

## The relationship between each member is based upon:

**1. Respect and honor:** We see a good example of respecting parents in the life of King Solomon; when his mother walked in, the Bible says: “*the king rose up to meet her and kissed her tenderly. He then sat down on his throne, and a throne was placed for the king’s mother; and she was seated at his right hand*” (1 Kings 2:19) What are the characteristics of honor? Is it the way of speaking? Is it by using kind words? Is it using a low voice? Or is it remembering their special occasions such as birthday, Mother’s Day, etc.

**2. Obedience and submission in the Lord:** Obedience does not only exist during parents’ presence but also during their absence. Remember that if you disobey your parents, you also disobey God’s commandment. We have to obey our parents. Our obedience to them is a blessing to us. But woe to those who do not obey their parents, the Bible says: “*the eye that mocks his father and dishonors the old age of his mother, let the ravens of the valleys pick it out, and the young eagles devour it*” (Proverbs 30:17)

**3. Generous Love:** Children get used to always taking from their parents, whether material or moral, but there comes a time when the parents need their children, especially when they reach an old age; they need words of love, compassion, assistance, and service.

**4. Brotherly Love:** You are required to love everyone, you have to love your enemy, and you have to love your neighbor as yourself, how about your love to your brothers? You have to love your brother more than yourself, for the brotherly love does not know selfishness, jealousy, or hatred.

## Problems between parents and their children:

**1. Insurgency:** Many children rebel against their parents, rejecting their advices and complaining about the reality they live in.

**2. Lack of appreciation of responsibility:** The apathy and the lack of appreciation of things – children not helping in household chores, not doing things that are asked of them.

**3. Spiritual Deviation:** Some children are far away from God, and do not go to church.

**4. Excessive financial demands:** Every family has its own level of social class, and the children also live in that same level, but sometimes children ask for more than what the parents can afford; therefore this puts pressure on the parents.

**5. Lack of Attention and Care:** The role of the children toward their parents in their old age and sickness.

**6. Strike and “Distress”:** Sometime children pressure their parents in meeting their demands by, for example, striking from eating or talking with them. Parents will end up granting their wishes, which often causes distress for the parents.

Loyalty and honesty towards parents is a commandment in the Bible:

*“A gift hath grace in the sight of all the living,  
and restrain not grace from the dead” (Sirach 7:36)*

If you remember the favors of people you owe them, then the parents are the first people to remember. Loyalty to your parents is not only by words but by also deeds.

- 1. Listen to them and do not object:** Always listen to them and do not argue, for they will not tell you something harmful: "*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children*" (*Matthew 7:11*)
- 2. Fear and Respect:** Parents need to be respected and feared.
- 3. Keeping their commandments:** A sign of pure love.
- 4. Do what you can to please your parents.** Here are some ideas:

- A. **Holiness:** when a father sees his son on the holy path, he rejoices and thanks God.
- B. **Excel in your studies:** the parents always want their children to be better than them.
- C. **Wisdom:** a wise action always makes the parents proud... "A wise son makes his father glad"

**Examine yourself:** For if you realize that you are not faithful in your relationship with your parents and family, try to change your behavior. Become an active member, so that your small church would be strong and the Lord Jesus Christ would bless it and bless its members.



# Be Faithful in Your Relationships



Goal!

Live on location, at the finals of the Middle School Soccer Tournament. We interview the captain of the winning team and the player with the highest number of goals in the tournament.

**Broadcaster:** Captain, Please tell us what is the reason for your success and your choice as captain of the team?

**Captain:** I try to be faithful in my spiritual and social life and in my relationship with society as a whole. For I know my duties toward God, people and the society in which I live. The Holy Bible tells us about the love of the Lord toward the faithful, and that He will bring them closer to Him to dwell with Him, "*My eyes were on the faithful of the earth, so they might dwell with me*" (*Psalms 101:6*). Faithfulness gives comfort and self-confidence, forcing the person to succeed and excel. However, cheating and lying causes a person to lose many things, like respect of others toward them and success in their life. For example, if a player scores because of touching the ball with his hand without being seen; I don't think that will make him happy. He might feel guilty and apologize about it; but it will remain a scar in the life of this talented player.

**Broadcaster:** Are there any other reasons for your success?

**Captain:** Setting a goal! The main goal in our life is the Kingdom of Heaven, while the sub-goals are academic excellence and continuous training, and to follow the coach's instructions. A person who wants to live a spiritual life with the Lord Jesus Christ must train in spiritual practices, through his spiritual notepad and father of confession and spiritual leader. This training strengthens us through the Lord.

**"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (*Philippians 4:13*)**

**Broadcaster:** Since you are an offense player and you need a friend or a player who is understanding and is able to help you succeed, what do you look for in that friend?

**Captain:** He has to be honest, and cannot be selfish. If he finds me closer to the goal, he should help me score. I should also cooperate not only with my friend in the team but with all the team members to achieve our goal. Just like in the spiritual life, man cannot reach the Kingdom of Heaven if he is away from church but in cooperation and companionship with other believers. We are all members of one body; if one part of the body does not perform its role, then the whole body will not function well, just like the soccer team.

A faithful person who cares about himself will also care for others, caring for their salvation just like he cares for his salvation. He must not harm anyone, but devote his efforts to do good to everyone and to be like a candle

that lights up to everyone and like a tree that shades over those that need protection. He must be a peacemaker with everyone.

**Broadcaster:** What advice do you have for your friends that are watching us now about dealing with the opposite sex?

**Captain:** Make sure that all your relationships with everyone are the relations of brothers and sisters with respect and appreciation. All of my relations with girls are in groups and not individual. Inappropriate behaviors are the attitude of those with a weak personality, who are trying to get attention from others by their misbehaviors. This behavior is not acceptable by Christians. Young males should treat girls as their sisters; also girls should deal with young males with dignity. Therefore, the young male sees this girl as a precious jewel and respects her. The faithful person is the one who keeps people's secrets. He should not expose the weaknesses of anyone. He should help anyone who needs assistance; and he should do so in complete secrecy so he would not embarrass that person in front of others. He should be firm to those who are not firm, and a light for those who walk in the darkness.

**Broadcaster:** I know there are 5 things for each person to know when dealing with the opposite sex.

**Captain:** Yes! How, why, where, when, what...ask yourself these questions and answer them honestly.

You will know whether your relationships are correct or not.

1. *How* did you meet?... On the phone? In a chat room? In person (relatives or family friends)?
2. *Why* do you meet?...for good reasons such as asking help in homework or you just find an excuse to see that person? Can you find someone from the same sex that can help you in whatever you need?
3. *Where* do you meet? With a group of people or individually? In a place out of sight or in front of everyone? Do your parents know that person or not?
4. *When* do you speak with her? In times where you are by yourself, late night, or anytime?
5. *What* do you talk about? Admiration words... spiritual discussion...academics...current events...?

There is no need for a relationship with the opposite sex that is taking place in secret. Its conversations are not beneficial and are a waste of time, and it does not please the Lord, but causes harm to the person and leads to many problems.

**Broadcaster:** We now meet another one of the outstanding players on the team. Congratulations for winning, what happens during the breaks between the games?

**Player:** We receive instructions and guidance from the coach about the game. Just like we receive advice from our fathers of confession for they know about the spiritual and life experiences.

**Broadcaster:** We saw some of the players protesting against the referee with inappropriate behavior.

**Player:** This is wrong, they should politely protest in a respectful way, for Jesus Christ Himself gave us an example when they slapped Him on the face, He objected in a polite manner: "**If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?**" (John 18:23) Otherwise they get a red card and this could lead to the loss of their team, because the one who hurts people is the one with the biggest loss.

The faithful person shares in the joy and grief of others. He visits the sick and helps the needy. He also has to provide advice to those who need sincere advice and participate in solving problems of those who have problems, as long as it is in his ability. He should have a loving heart to all, and respect youngsters and elders. And he should not despise the failure but help him rise up.

**Broadcaster:** Thank you for talking with us. May God bless you!

# Memorization

## From the Agpeya Prayers

Level 1	Level 2
<b>The prayer of the 12<sup>th</sup> hour (Compline):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Psalms 129, 133, 147</li><li>• Gospel Luke 2:25-32</li><li>• 3 Prayers after the Gospel</li><li>• Absolution and Conclusion</li></ul>	<b>Third Watch of the Midnight prayer:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gospel Luke 12:32-64</li><li>• 6 Prayers after the Gospel</li><li>• Absolution</li></ul>

## Coptic Language

### Grade 7 and 8

**Part 1:** Coptic Alphabet

**Part 2:** Definite and indefinite articles

**Part 3:** Paragraph for rule application and memorization (Our Father)

**Part 4:** The pronoun “of”

**Part 5:** Verb to be

**Part 6:** Demonstrative pronouns for near objects

**Part 7:** A paragraph for rule application and memorization: allhloui`a vai pe pi`e\ou

#### **Part 1: Coptic Alphabet**

##### **Notes:**

- The Coptic Language consists of 32 letter: 24 consonants, 7 vowels (a o w i u e h), and 1 letter only used as a number (,)
- The mark written ( ` ) is called a jenkem. If used with a consonant, it is pronounced like a short e, and if used with a vowel, the vowel is pronounced separately.

## COPTIC Alphabet A - O

Letter	Name	Pronunciation	Word	Meaning
A a	Alpha	Short a, as in the word “and”	΄ Abot	Month
B b	Veta	v, if followed by a vowel	Bw\em	Response
		b, if not followed by a vowel	Noub	Gold
G g	Ghamma	g, as in God, if followed by (e-h-i-u)	Genneoc	Brave
		n, if followed by (g-k-x-[ ])	΄ Aggeli`a	News
		gh, otherwise	Gravh	Book
D d	Delta	d, if used in a proper name	Danihl	Daniel
		th, as in the word “this”, otherwise	Diakwn	Deacon
E e	Ei	Short e, as in the word “get”	Ek`klhci`a	Church
<,	Soo	Only used for the number 6	<? `njwm	6 books
Z z	Zita	z	Zwon	Animal
H h	Ita	Long e, as in the word “need”	Hrp	Wine
Q q	Theta	t, if it follows c or ]	΄ Cqoinoufi	Incense
		th, as in the word “thank”, otherwise	Qebio	Humbleness
I i	Iota	Short i	Iaro	River
K k	Kappa	k	Kemkem	Cymbal
L l	Lavla	l	Laoc	People
M m	Mi	m	Mwit	Path
N n	Ni	n	Nhctia	Fasting
{ [	Ksi	ks (k+s)	{ecthc	Pitcher
O o	O	Long o, as in the word “Rome”	Omi	Dirt

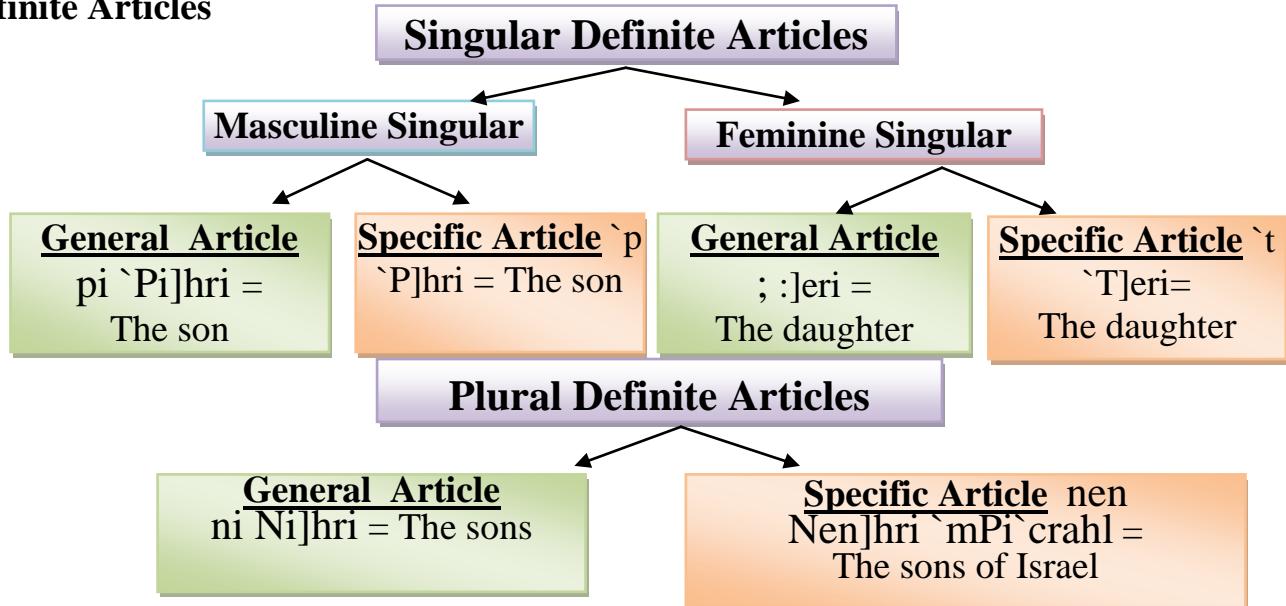
## COPTIC Alphabet P - ;

P p	Pi	p	Pictoc	Faith
R r	Ro	r	Raji	Joy
C c	Cima	s	΄ Cnof	Blood

T t	Tav	t	Totc	Chair
<b>U u</b>	Epsilon	v, if it follows a or e	Euxh	Prayer
		oo, as in the word “food” if it follows o	Ouhb	Priest
		i, otherwise	Pulh	Door
<b>V v</b>	Phei	f	Varoc	Hole
<b>X x</b>	Kei	k, in Coptic words	χ Xlom	Crown
		sh, in Greek words, if followed by e-h-i-u	Xiwn	Snow/Ice
		kh, otherwise	χ Xrictoc	Christ
<b>Y y</b>	Psi	ps (p+s)	Yalthc	Psalmist
<b>W w</b>	Oo	Long O, as in the word “oil”	Wn'	Life
{ ]	Shai	sh	}bwt	Rod
<b>F f</b>	Fai	f	Fwte	Towel
" "	Khai	kh	"hibi	Shadow
\	Hori	h	or]	Heavy
<b>J j</b>	Ganga	j, if followed by e-h-i-u	Jebc	Coal
		g, as in the word “God”, otherwise	Jwbi	Paper
<b>S s</b>	Tchima	ch, as in the word “check”	χ Slil	Sacrifice
;	Ti	ti (t+i)	χ Vnou;	God

## Part 2: Definite and Indefinite Articles

### 1. Definite Articles



- **Notes:**

The specific articles are different in words beginning with b.i.l.m.n.o.r

'		'
p	→	v
't	→	q

'pcon	The brother	'viwt	The father
'tcwni	The sister	'qmau	The mother

### 2. Indefinite Articles: ou for singular nouns, and \an for plural nouns

Example: Ourwmi = a man      |anrwmi = men

Sample words:							
ou]eri	A daughter	oumau	A mother	ou]hri	A son	oulaoc	A people
\an ]eri	daughters	\anmau	mothers	\an]hri	sons	\anlaoc	peoples
;]eri 't]eri	The daughter	;mau 'qmau	The mother	pi]hri 'p]hri	The son	pilaoc 'vlaoc	The people
ni]eri	The daughters	nimau	The mothers	ni]hri	The sons	nilaoc	The peoples

### Part 3: A paragraph for memorization and rule application:

Our Father

Ariten `nem`p]a `njoc 'en ou]ep`\mot je	Make us worthy to say thankfully
peniwt et'en nivhou`i	Our Father who art in Heaven
mareftoubo `nje pekran	Hallowed be Thy name
marec`i `nje tekmetouro	Thy kingdom come
pete]nak maref]wpi	Thy will be done
`m`vrh; 'en `tve nem \ijen pika i	On Earth as it is in Heaven
penwik `nte rac; mhif nan `mvoou	Give us this day our daily bread
ouo]xa nhet`eron nan `ebol `m`vrh; \wn `ntenxw `ebol `nnh`ete ouon `ntan `erwou	And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us
ouo]\mperenten `e'oun `epiracmoc alla na\men `ebol]a pipet]wou	And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil
'en Pi`xrictoc Ihcoul Pensoic	In Christ Jesus our Lord
je qwk te ;metouro nem ;jom nem pi]wou ]a `ene] `amhn.	For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever amen.

#### Part 4: The pronoun “of”:

It can be separate or attached to the word.

Separate: `nte	
Pijwm `nte Came\	The book of Sameh (Sameh's book)
` Pjwm `nte Came\	The book of Sameh (Sameh's book)

Attached: `n / `m	
` Pjwm `nCame\	The book of Sameh (Sameh's book)

#### Notes:

- When using a general definite article (pi, ;, or ni), the separate pronoun nte must be used. However, when using a specific article, `p-`v (masculine) `t-`q (feminine) or nen (plural); the separate or attached pronoun can be used.

Nenjwm `mMarkoc	The books of Marcus (Marcus' books)
Nenjwm `nte Markoc	The books of Marcus (Marcus' books)
Nijwm `nte Markoc	The books of Marcus (Marcus' books)

- `m is used instead of `n when used with words beginning with the following letters:  
b. m. p. v. y

` Pjwm `mMarkoc	The book of Marcus (Marcus' book)
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#### Part 5: Verb to be:

Singular Masculine: pe= is

Singular Feminine: te= is

Plural: ne= are

## Part 6: Demonstrative pronouns for near objects: (always separate)

**Singular Masculine:** vai = this    **Singular Feminine:** qai = this    **Plural:** nai = these

Example: vai pe pijwm = this is the book

### Notes:

- When the word is defined with an article, verb to be is used before it.

Example:

Vai pe pirwmi	This is the man
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However, when it is an indefinite word, verb to be is used after it.

Example:

Vai ourwmi pe	This is a man
---------------	---------------

## Part 7: A paragraph for memorization and rule application:

allhloui`a vai pe pi`e\ouo	
Allhloui`a vai pe pi`e\ouo `eta `` P soic qamiof	Alleluia, this is the day which the Lord has made
Marenqelhl `ntenounof `mmon `n'htf	Let us rejoice and be glad in it
`w `` Psoic ek`ena\men `w ` Psoic ek`ecouten nenmwit	O Lord, save us O Lord, straighten our ways
`F`cmarwout `nje vheqnhou 'en `vran 'm` Psoic. Allhloui`a	Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Alleluia



Level 1	Level 2
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The annual response to the Praxis xere ne mari`a.(with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> <li>2. The verses of the cymbals (annual tune) (with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> <li>3. First Adam Aspasmos for the Feast of Nativity Je aumici (with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> <li>4. First doxology for the Feast of Epiphany.</li> <li>5. A Pensoic for the Feast of Nativity (complete) (with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The hymn of blessing Tenouwjt (without the Perlex).</li> <li>2. Taijourh (annual tune) (with use of cymbals and triangle).</li> </ol>
<b>Optional</b>	
Chose two of the following:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Psalm 150 using the joyous tune + the response for the Feast of Nativity (with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> <li>2. The Greek verse for nativity (^H Parqenoc)</li> <li>3. Batos Aspasmos Au`ini`paf for the Feast of Nativity (with use of cymbals and triangle)</li> </ol>	

# Rituals

1. **The annual response to the Praxis xere ne mari`a:** It is sung after the reading of the Catholic Epistle. In this hymn, we give hail to St. Mary who gave birth to Christ our savior. The tune of this hymn is the same all year long but another passage is added to it on special occasions, except during lent and Nineveh's fast that have a different tune from the rest of the year.
2. **Verses of the cymbals:** Those verses are sung using the cymbals after the thanksgiving prayer in raising of incense of Vespers and Matins. We pray two introductions for it one Adam (on Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays) and the other is Batos the remaining days of the week (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) and then it is followed with the parts for St. Mary, the Angels, the martyrs, the saints, on Adam and Batos days; and those verses are greetings to the Saints.
3. **The first Adam Aspasmos for the Feast of Nativity Je aumici:** This hymn is sung during the liturgy of the Feast of Nativity, after the response to the gospel using the same tune as the hymn (Rejoice O Mary). The word Aspasmos is a Greek word that means "a greeting or a holy kiss." The word Adam means the first man (Adam) or the second man (Our Lord Jesus) the incarnated Logos. It is the first word in Monday's Theotokia in the midnight praises and it is used as an expression to refer to special groups of tunes and hymns such as the Matins Adam doxology or the doxologies to glorify the saints and the martyrs or Adam Aspasmos of the liturgy or the tune of the Epsalia and Theotokia of the praises of (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday) of every week. The word Batos is a Coptic word that means a bush and it is the first word in Thursday's Theotokia of the midnight praises. This word is used to refer to a group of special tunes and hymns such as the Doxology that we sing during the raising of incense of Vespers and Matins. (The Batos doxology or the Batos Aspasmos), in the holy liturgy, and the Epsalias and Theotokias in the praises Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays of each week.
  - This hymn explains to us the Nativity of the Son who was born and His kinghood is on His knees, meaning that the King was incarnated and took the form of a servant to complete the dogma of redemption.
  - This hymn stresses the dogma of incarnation and fulfills also the prophecy of Isaiah "*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*" (Isaiah 9:6)
4. **The first doxology of the Feast of Epiphany:** The doxologies, including this one, are prayed before the Creed in the raising of incense of Vespers and Matins, after the Trisagion.
  - The word doxology comes from the Greek word Do[*a*, which means glory and its complete meaning is a blessed glorification. These passages are a rhymed poem to glorify and praise the Lord Jesus in the Major and Minor feasts of Christ or to glorify and give hail to St. Mary, the heavenly hosts, John the Baptist, the apostles, the martyrs, the saints on their feasts.
  - The doxologies in the Coptic Church are either Adam or Batos and each of those two types could be prayed at any day of the week without having to follow the rule to have either tune on their specified days.
  - This hymn stresses the dogma of incarnation because "the Lord came and was baptized for our sins."
  - In this hymn we declare "now our mouths are filled with joy and our tongues with rejoicing because our Lord Jesus Christ was baptized from John for our sins and saved us and redeemed us with His great tender mercies.

## 5. A Pensoic for the Feast of Nativity (complete):

The Mohayer is a phrase that refers to verses that are mixed in their tune between the long and the fast and therefore it is called El Mohayer and it always starts with the phrase **A Pensoic** (our Lord) or **Pasoic** (my Lord). For each occasion there are special verses that stress the happenings of the occasion as lived by the Lord Jesus Christ; in this the church is applying the Bible verse: "*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.*" (*Colossians 2:6*). This hymn is sometimes called Aspasmos Migalo and it is sung after the Trisagion whenever the phrase "who was born of the virgin have mercy on us" is sung.

This hymn means “My Lord Jesus Christ who was born of the virgin in Bethlehem of Judah as prophesized and the thrones and the hosts proclaim saying “glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will towards men.” This clarifies the dogma of incarnation.

## 6. The hymn of blessing Tenouwjt:

- This hymn is called the tune of the Holy Trinity and it is sung after raising of incense of Matins. And before the Agpeya prayers in the liturgy of the catechumens. In it we present the submission and kneeling to the Holy Trinity the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- The hymn of Apinau Jwpi can be sung after it or can replace it.
- It can be read after reading the book of Revelations during *Apocalypse night*.

## 7. The annual Taijourh:

- A hymn for St. Mary that is prayed during the liturgy after the absolution of the servants during the days of feasts and the joyous days. As for the days of fast, except for Lent and Wednesdays and Fridays, it is replaced with nqo te ; jourh. This same hymn has a longer version that is used during the sixth hour of Good Friday.
- The meaning of the hymn: This censer of pure gold, bearing the aroma is in the hands of Aaron the priest offering up incense on the altar.

## 9. The Joyous Psalm 150 + the response of the Feast of Nativity.

This hymn is sung at the end of the liturgy during distribution of the Holy Sacraments on the Feast of Nativity and the response that accompanies it is “Jesus Christ the Son of God was born in Bethlehem”

- The word response is what the people say during the Liturgy prayer either replying to the priest or after the proclamation of the deacon.
- The responses are participation of the people meaning that it is sung by the people in the church. The most well known responses in the church are the Psalm response and the Gospel’s response.
- Psalm 150 was written by David the prophet; it stresses the importance of praising the Lord in His saints, His mighty power, and for everything that has a breath to praise the Lord.
- This Psalm contains only 5 verses and despite its short length, the word praise is repeated 10 times. In this Psalm, we let our souls go in great eagerness for praise like the Levites and the singers in the Old Testament were advising the people to praise God and using the different musical instruments but in the New Testament (the covenant of grace) we sing praises for the one who loved us and gave Himself for our sake.

## 10. The hymn of the Greek Verse for the Feast of Nativity H Parqenoc

- It is a Roman (Greek) passage that is prayed before Agioc and after reading the praxis on the Feast of Nativity.
- This passage has a great depth in explaining the divinity of the Lord.
- This hymn talks about the birth of Christ from our lady the virgin and the visit of the shepherds and the Wise men to them. Pope Cyril the fourth added 12 additional verses from our sister Greek Orthodox Church.

## 11. Batos Aspasmos Au`ini`naf for the Feast of Nativity:

- It is prayed in the liturgy of the Feast of Nativity before the prayer of sanctification Agioc which is prayed using the same tune as (O Lord God of hosts) the words of the Aspasmos change according to the occasion.
- The Batos Aspasmos ends with the word Alleluia (3x) then (verse related to the occasion) then Holy, Holy, Holy. This praise is taken from (Isaiah 6:4) Some of those maybe repeated as the Seraphim call each other (greet each other with praises). There are many Aspasmoses corresponding to the different feasts and occasions.
- The Aspasmos represents the visit of the Wise men to Baby Jesus and their presentation of their gifts: gold to signify His kingdom; incense to signify His priesthood; Myrrh to signify His passions. As they praised with the others and worshiped the one who was born of the virgin in Bethlehem of Judah and to confirm the dogma of nativity.