



ENGLISH EDITION GRADE 5-6

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Matt 24:44



H.H. Pope Tawadros II

Pope of Alexandria &
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark



H.G. Bishop Mina

Bishop of Mississauga,
Vancouver and Western Canada

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INTRODUCTION

MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA 2018

As we celebrated the conclusion of last year's Mahragan with the distribution of the trophies for the first, second and third place winners, we were grateful for God's blessings for a successful 2017 Mahragan. His Holiness Pope Tawadros II said during the Awards Ceremony in Egypt, "I am happy to see the activities of the Youth Bishopic, I am glad that our beautiful Church that is 2000 years old is full of young youth and I am proud to see the creative work and achievements of the youth."

Last year, in addition to the usual participation from Egypt and Sudan, we had a great worldwide participation from 192 Churches representing more than 20 countries and 8 languages.

The theme for Mahragan 2018 is ""Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (Matt 24:44). This year, God is asking each one of us to grow in Christ. To do this we will learn about the following topics:

1. Be Ready
2. Work Hard
3. Reject Foreign Thoughts
4. Serve Everyone
5. Happy To Be Ready

We hope that all of you will participate in the Mahragan activities this year, and encourage everyone you know to join us in one of the greatest annual events, presented by our mother, the Coptic Orthodox Church.

May God bless Mahragan Alkeraza this year and the efforts of all the participants and coordinators, through the prayers of our beloved father Pope Tawadros II.

✠
My best wishes for a happy
Festival
✠
Bishop Mousa

Be Ready

Abraham The Man Of Faith (Genesis 11 – 22)

1-By Faith Abraham Was Ready To Obey (Genesis 11:27-32 & 12:1-9)

Abram (Abraham) was born in Ur of the Chaldeans. This was a very rich city, well known for trading and very famous. Abram lived there with his father Terah and his brothers. He was married to Sarai. Although the people in Ur of the Chaldeans worshiped idols, Abram and Sarai his wife devoted their hearts to God.

God wanted to have people dedicated to Him because He wanted:

- a. To have people who believe in God among the pagan people to spread God's commandment.
- b. To prepare this dedicated group of people, so that the Lord Jesus Christ will come from them to save the whole world. That is why God chose Abram and called him twice to leave his country and go live in the place that God will show him.

By faith Abram obeyed God and answered His call although he did not know where he was going.

The First Calling

God asked Abram to leave Ur of the



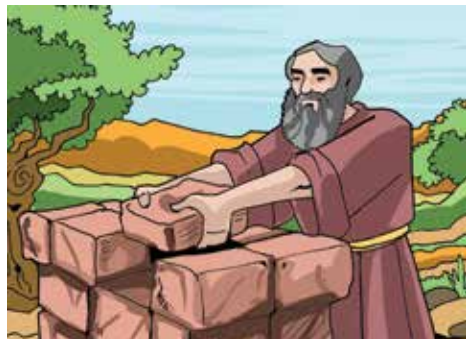
Chaldeans and told him: “Get out of your country, leave your family and your father’s house, and go to a land that I will show you”. So Abram departed from Ur of the Chaldeans with his wife Sarai, Terah his father and Lot his nephew. He went and dwelt in the land of Haran. He stayed in Haran for 15 years until the death of his father (Acts 7:2).

The Second Calling

God called Abram to leave the land of Haran and go to the land He will show him. God promised him that he will be a great nation and that He will bless him and bless his descendants. And Abram moved to the land of Canaan (currently Palestine and part of Jordan) with Sarai and Lot. By that time Abram was 75 years old. Although he was old and needed to settle, Abram was ready by faith to obey God all the time.



In Canaan God appeared to Abram and said to him that He will give this land to his descendants. There Abram built an altar to the Lord to thank Him. Abram used to build an altar to the Lord everywhere he went. Then Abram moved to Bethel, there he pitched his tent and built an altar to the Lord.



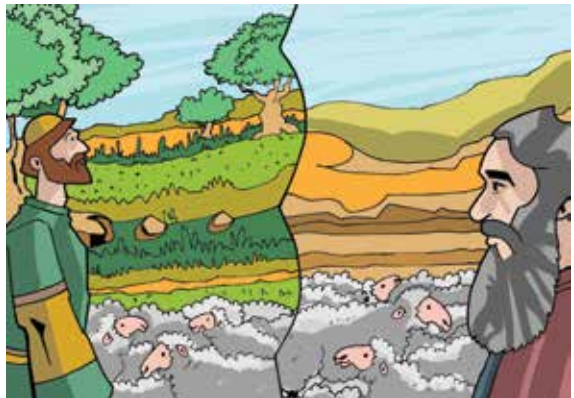
This is the first station in Abram’s life and it shows how by faith he was ready to obey God’s word as the Bible says about him:

MEMORY VERSE:

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Hebrews 11:8

2-By Faith Abraham Was Ready To Offer Love (Genesis 13: 1-18, 14:1-24)

There was a famine in the land, so Abram left Canaan and went to Egypt. After a while he went back to live in Canaan (Bethel). He lived there with Lot (Genesis 12:10-20). Abram was very rich and owned a lot of livestock, silver and gold. One day there was a fight between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock.



Abram tried to make peace so he said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren” (Genesis 13:8). Even though Abram was older, he asked Lot to choose the land he wants to dwell in and Abram would leave it for him and depart to another land.



Lot chose for himself the land that seemed best. He chose all the plain of Jordan, and he journeyed East. He moved his tents to the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Abram dwelt in Canaan.

Abram's love for Lot did not change. When he heard that there was a war against Sodom and Gomorrah and that they captured Lot and took all his possessions and livestock, Abram gathered 318 men from his servants and went to rescue Lot. He was successful and he brought back all the goods, and also brought back Lot and his family.



After the war God reassured Abram and said to him: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward" (Genesis 15:1). Afterward God promised Abram that his descendants will be as many as the stars in heaven (Genesis 15: 1-6). Abram believed God's promise as the Bible says: "And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6).

3-By Faith Abraham Accepted To Offer His Son As A Sacrifice (Genesis 17-22)

When Abram was 99 years old God appeared to him and made a covenant with him. God changed his name from Abram to Abraham (meaning father of many) and changed Sarai's name to Sarah (meaning princess). God promised Abraham that he will give him a son from Sarah his wife. He told him to call his name Isaac. God said to him that He will establish His covenant with Isaac.

One day Abraham hosted three men, The Lord and two angels. He said to Abraham: "I will certainly return to you according to the time appointed by God, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son". And the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called him Isaac (meaning son of laughter). At this time Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old (Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-8).



Isaac was also called the son of promise because God's promise to Abraham was fulfilled.

One day God tested Abraham and asked him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on one of the mountains in the land of Moriah.

God allowed this test to show the faith of Abraham to the whole world. He knew that Abraham was ready to testify with his faith at all times and that he trusted our Lord. Abraham was confident in God's promise that his offsprings will be like the stars of heaven and that the Lord loves him so much. That is why he was prepared to offer Isaac as a sacrifice trusting that God is able to raise him up from the dead.



"By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac... concluding that God

was able to raise him up, even from the dead” (Hebrews 11:17-19).

So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and went to the place which God had told him about. When they reached the place, Abraham asked the young men to wait for him. He took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son to carry it. Isaac asked his father about the lamb for the offering. And Abraham said: My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.”

Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”

So he said, “Here I am.” And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” (Genesis 22:12).

Then Abraham looked, and saw a ram caught in a bush by its horns. So he went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of Isaac his son.

Then the Angel of the Lord called out

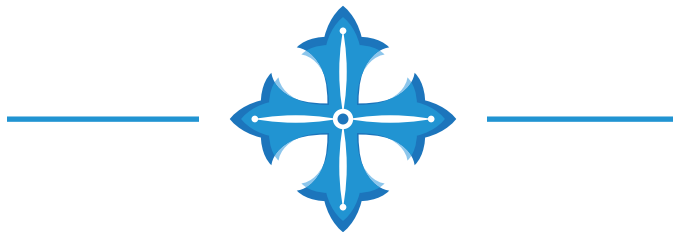


Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." (Genesis 22:16-18).

"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" because our Lord Jesus Christ will come from Abraham's offspring and in Him all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Then Abraham returned with Isaac to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba, and Abraham stayed there.

Because of his great faith Abraham was also called the "Father of Faith".



Abraham Obeys God



**THE
Promised
Land**

Start ▶



- * Help Abraham travel to the promised land.
- * Use the symbols along the way to find from the list below what else Abraham was promised.
- * Then using those promises find the answer to this question:

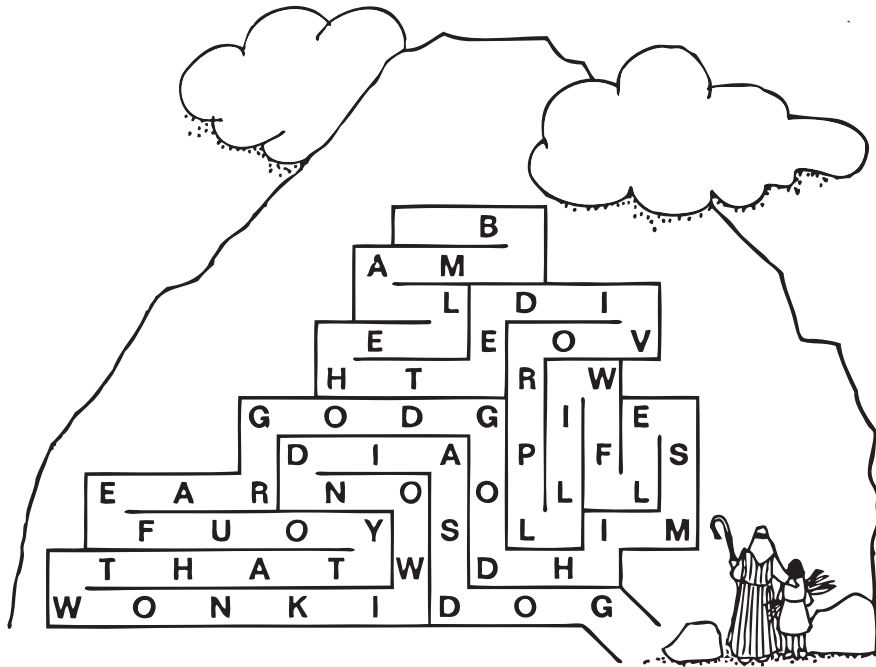
What was the name of the promised land?

- * have many descendants (C)
- ☼ live in a castle (O)
- * be blessed (A)
- * have great peace (U)
- * be famous (N)
- * be a king (H)
- * have total happiness (I)
- ☼ be a blessing (A)
- * be wealthy (D)
- + have many cattle (K)
- ☉ be protected (N)

God said:
**“Leave your country
 your family and
 your father’s house
 for a land which I will show you.”**

Abraham & Isaac Worship On The Mountain

God told Abraham to go to a mountain and offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham obeyed, but God stopped him from hurting Isaac. Follow the maze up the mountain to find out why Isaac wasn't sacrificed.



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Work Hard

The Parable Of The Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)

Parables are simple stories told by our Lord Jesus in the Gospel to teach the people spiritual lessons in a simple way.

This parable was told by our Lord Jesus to His disciples on His last day in the temple. He entered the temple (the Tuesday of His last week on earth before His crucifixion). When He came out of the temple, His disciples started to ask Him about the kingdom of Heaven and His Second Coming.

Because of His great love to mankind our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate, crucified and resurrected to redeem mankind and to renew his nature. He ascended to heaven to prepare a place for man to stay with Him as He promised. "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2).

At the time of His ascension the angels confirmed to the disciples that He will come again when they said: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).



In His Second Coming, our Lord Jesus Christ will take all those who are ready to live with Him in eternal joy in heaven, this is what our teacher St. Paul talked about in his epistle:

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1Corinthians 2:9).

Exercise:

Fill in the blanks below and check your answers in Matthew 25:1-13.

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their _____ and went out to meet _____. Now _____ of them were _____, and five were _____. Those who were _____ took their _____ and took no _____ with them, but the _____ took _____ in their vessels with their _____. But while _____ was delayed, they all slumbered and _____. “And at _____ a _____ was heard: ‘Behold, _____ is coming, go out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their _____. And the _____ said to the _____, ‘Give us some of your _____, for our _____ are going out.’ But the _____ answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy, _____ came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’” _____ therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the _____ is coming.”

This parable is relevant to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus and teaches us how to prepare for Him. The Church reads this parable every day in the midnight

prayer so that every person who prays will remember to prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus like the wise virgins.

Our Lord Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like 10 virgins (5 wise and 5 foolish) who went out to meet the bridegroom.

The bridegroom is our Lord Jesus because the parable talks about the Second Coming.

The virgins who took their lamps are all the believers who received the Sacraments of Baptism and Myron.



The number “five” refers to the five senses. The senses are like doors that we have to watch and use in the right way.

How To Be Ready To Enter The Kingdom Of Heaven

Through the Sacrament of Baptism we become children of God and through the Sacrament of Myron (when we get anointed with Myron oil) we become a temple of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit enlightens us and sanctifies us and consecrates us for the Lord. The word consecrate means that we are the Lord's and we should live our life in purity. For example, the vessels of the altar are anointed with the Holy Myron and are consecrated for the altar, we cannot use them for anything else.

The First Step In The Preparation

We should be consecrated to God (born again through Baptism and anointed with the Holy Myron) and live our lives as God's children.

The wise are all who live a life of readiness and have one goal which is to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The foolish are all who do not live the life of readiness and do not have the kingdom of heaven as a goal in their lives.

The parable differentiates between the wise and the foolish virgins with the amount of oil in their lamps. The wise had oil in their lamps, they also had extra oil in their vessels while the foolish did not have enough oil in their lamps and did not have any extra oil.

The oil is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of everyone which allows us to bear fruit.

After a person is born again through the Sacrament of Baptism and becomes the temple of God through the Sacrament of Myron, he can

1. Strive and make every effort in his life to be filled with the Spirit and fulfill God's commandment that says, "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18), and be like the wise virgins.
2. Or be careless about his life and not struggle and by doing this disrupt the work of the Holy Spirit in him and not fulfill the commandment that says, "Do not quench the Spirit" (1Thessalonians 5:19), and be like the foolish virgins.



How to be like the wise virgins?

To be like the wise virgins we need to struggle and be watchful all the days of

our lives. We do this through prayers, fasting, almsgiving, partaking in the Holy Communion, reading the Bible and doing other good deeds that strengthen our relationship with God.



The second step in the preparation

We need to struggle to grow in our spiritual life to strengthen our relationship with God. The parable tells us that both the wise and the foolish virgins were waiting for the bridegroom (the Lord Jesus) but when he was delayed they both slept.

“Sleeping” refers to death. “Midnight” means that the time is not known, it is not a definite time but it refers to the Second Coming. “A cry” is the sound of the angels announcing the arrival of the bridegroom. “The Oil” is the good deeds coming from spiritual struggle.



At that time the foolish virgins’ lamps were going out because they did not have enough oil. They asked the wise virgins to give them some of their oil “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out”, but the wise virgins refused!

They refused because the request was wrong in the first place. No one can give his spiritual struggle to someone else. For Example you cannot ask your friend to give you some of his marks in a test because you will fail! You cannot ask someone to give you some of his prayers because you do not pray!



That is why the wise virgins said; “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves”.

When the foolish went to try to buy oil (after it was too late) the bridegroom came and the wise went with him to enjoy eternal joy and live with Him forever in the kingdom of heaven. Then the door was closed. When the foolish came back and found the door closed, they called out for someone to open the door (meaning they wanted another chance) but the Lord said to them “I do not know you” these words are the result of the life they lived away from God which made them not ready to meet Him.

At the end of the parable our Lord Jesus gave us a commandment which will show us the third step in the preparation.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” Matthew 25:13

The Third Step In The Preparation

We should be ready at all time because they do not know the times because we do not know the time when our Lord Jesus will come. Our chance on earth to live a life worthy to enter the Kingdom of Heaven ends when our life ends.

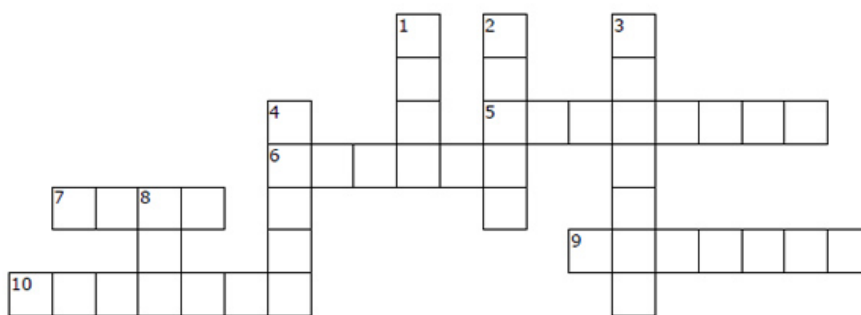
“Watch” in Coptic means Rowees. Our Lord is asking us to be careful throughout our lives and to be ready for His coming because:

1. The devil is always trying to draw people away from God
2. The body is weak and sometimes we are lazy to pray or to do any spiritual deeds. That is why it is very important for us to train our bodies and develop self control and discipline.
3. No one knows the time of our Lord Second Coming.

Give Me Oil In My Lamp

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. Matthew 25:13 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 25:1-13 (NIV)



ACROSS

5. 12 o'clock at night
6. Not awake
7. A swinging or sliding cover over the place where someone usually enters a room
9. Ceremony in which a man and a woman are married.
10. Someone who does not use good judgment is _____.

DOWN

1. Someone who has good judgment and makes good decisions is _____.
2. Devices used to produce light
3. A feast or meal held in recognition of some person or occasion
4. To observe or look at something
8. A liquid that is often used to make fuel.

MIDNIGHT	LAMPS	WATCH	OIL	FOOLISH
ASLEEP	DOOR	BANQUET	WISE	WEDDING

Reject Foreign Thoughts

Pope Cyril I The Pillar Of Faith - The 24th Patriarch Synexarium 3 Abib

Pope Cyril I was born from pious parents. His uncle (mother's brother) was Pope Theophilus the 23rd Patriarch. He took care of him and sent him to the Theological School of Alexandria (it was a very famous center of education at that time) to study the Greek, Hebrew and Syrian languages, as well as Christian Theology.



Pope Theophilus also sent him to the Monastery of St. Makarios in the wilderness of Sheheet to become the disciple of St. Sarabamon who was the disciple of St. Anthony. Pope Theophilus asked St. Sarabamon to educate him in all the Church teachings. He spent 5 years there learning the teachings of the Church Fathers and the Holy Bible. God gave him grace and understanding and he was able to memorize any book after reading it once.

After he spent sometime in the monastery, Pope Theophilus called him back and ordained him a deacon. He then ordained him a priest. Pope Theophilus appointed him as preacher and everyone (both clergy and congregation) admired his sermons because he was able to explain the Bible in an easy and simple way.



After the departure of Pope Theophilus, everyone agreed to choose him to be the 24th patriarch of the See of St. Mark. Pope Cyril took good care of his people. He was ready to defend the Orthodox faith that he received from the Church Fathers against anyone who wanted to introduce wrong teachings or change the faith. He wrote many books in theology. He stood against the heresy of Nestorius.



Nestorius claimed that:

1. The Divinity of Christ is separated from His humanity. Meaning that when Jesus was doing miracles He was God. But when He was hungry and thirsty and when He suffered and died He was human. He denied the single nature of Christ.
2. He denied St. Mary the title of "Mother of God". Nestorius started to spread his false teachings among the people in Constantinople, but the people rejected his teachings and refused to change their faith.

When the news of this heresy and the revolution of the people in Constantinople reached Pope Cyril he was very sad. He decided to stand against Nestorius and defend the true faith of the Church. At the time of the feast of resurrection he used to write a papal letter to the whole world. He wrote his letter and explained to the whole world Nestorius' wrong teachings.

He also sent multiple letters to Nestorius to show him his mistakes:

1. Through verses from the Bible like:

MEMORY VERSES:

"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh." 1 Timothy 3:16

***“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated God with us.”
Matthew 1:23***

2. Through the teachings of the Fathers of the Church: The word “Theotokos” (Mother of God) was used by St. Athanasius and Pope Theophilus and all the Fathers of the Church when they talked about St. Mary which proves that this title is correct.
3. Our Lord Jesus Christ’s Divinity and humanity are united without mingling or confusion or alteration. He gave the example of the union of the iron and fire, when the ignited iron is hammered, the strikes fall on the iron not on the fire. Although the fire is united with the iron, the iron retains its iron properties and the fire retains its fire properties. Pope Cyril declared to Nestorius the true faith of the Coptic Orthodox Church which is the single nature of the Word incarnate. Meaning that at the time of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus from St. Mary there was a complete union between the divine and the human nature in the person of our Lord Jesus, without mingling or confusion or alteration. So our Lord Jesus has all the divine characteristics and all the human characteristics. Hence the single nature of God the Word incarnate.

Another example: If a student graduates from a medical school and becomes a doctor, then he joins the army and becomes an officer it does not mean that he is not a doctor anymore. He can still practice as a doctor and fight in the army, and he is still the same person.

Our Lord Jesus was performing miracles through His divinity because He is God. When He was eating and sleeping, this was through His humanity because He took



the form of man and became like us in everything except sin.

Nestorius was very stubborn and rejected all Pope Cyril's letters. But Pope Cyril was very patient and tried with him multiple times with love. He sent him letters to try to meet with him and discuss his teachings, but Nestorius refused.

When all the attempts with Nestorius failed, and because the matter was very critical since many bishops from the East started to follow Nestorius and his teachings, Pope Cyril asked Emperor Theodosius the Second to call for an Ecumenical Council. An Ecumenical Council was held in Ephesus in the year 431 AD. Two hundred bishops attended and Pope Cyril was the head of the council. The council's decisions included:

1. Excommunication of Nestorius and his followers.
2. Creation of the introduction of the Creed "we magnify you O Mother of the true Light"

Pope Cyril worked hard to keep the true faith, he wrote many theological articles including:

1. A book to explain some of the books of the Bible.
2. A letter against Nestorius' heresy.
3. The Divine Liturgy (The liturgy of St. Cyril).

The Church gave him many titles but he is most know as "The Pillar of Faith".

He departed in peace on the 3rd day of the month of Abib after a life full of struggle and hard work to keep the right orthodox faith.



Serve Everyone

Ezra The Distinguished Servant

Book Of Ezra

In the beginning, the people of Israel were one kingdom and were ruled by one king. But for some time the kingdom was divided into two kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom.

The Northern kingdom was the kingdom of Israel and it's capital was Samaria. They were taken captive by the Assyrians. The Southern kingdom was the kingdom of Judah and their capital was Jerusalem. And they were taken captive by the Babylonians.



Captivity means that a king would come from a different country with his army and attacks another country and takes all the goods and all the people who can be useful to him (strong men, youth and talented workkrs) to his own country. God allowed captivity to happen because the people turned away from God, did not follow His commandments and lived in sin. So both kingdoms were taken captive.

Sometime after the Babylonians ruled the world, another kingdom arose. The Persian kingdom became stronger than the Babylonian kingdom. Their king Cyrus the Great allowed the Israelites to return to Jerusalem and they returned after 70 years of captivity. They returned in 3 groups.

The first group, after 70 years of captivity, under the leadership of Zerubbabel. The second group, after 80 years from the return of the first group, under the

leadership of Ezra.

The third group, after 13 years of the return of the 2nd group, under the leadership of Nehemiah.

Ezra was a priest, a writer and a distinguished servant. Ezra was born during captivity. His name means “God is my helper”. He was ready to serve and help everyone.



We call him priest because he was from the tribe of Levi from the descendents of Aaron. He was not able to practice priesthood because he was in captivity and it was impossible to build a temple outside of Jerusalem according to the Law of Moses.

We call him writer because:

1. He paid attention to studying the Word of God and was very skilled in it. The Bible said about him “he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses” (Ezra 7:6). This means he was not just reading it but understanding and studying it.
2. He transcribed the holy books because there was no photocopier at that time. He is considered the first transcriber of the Law of Moses. The commandments of God were always on his mind and he also explained them to the people. The Bible said about him, “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10).
3. He collected the books of the Old Testament with great accuracy.



4. He wrote the Book of Ezra and told us the story of the return from captivity; the first group (Ezra 1:6) and the second group (Ezra 7:10).

Ezra was ready to serve his people at all times. During captivity, during the return from captivity and after the return from captivity.



1. During captivity Ezra was an employee and an advisor of King Artaxerxes the Persian. Ezra used his knowledge and talents to transcribe the commandments and the teachings of God (the Law). He kept God's commandments in his heart and started to teach it to the people. Because of his honesty God gave him grace in the eyes of King Artaxerxes who loved him and trusted him. The king appointed him leader over the people who wanted to return to Jerusalem.



The king gave Ezra silver, gold, vessels, donations and all what he needed to complete the needs of the temple so the worship and prayers in the temple would not stop.

The king told Ezra to use his discretion to see how he wants to use the money he was given and if he needed more it would be paid to him from the king's treasury. He also gave him the authority to hire governors and judges to help him in solving the people's problems according to the wisdom given to him by God. Ezra attributed this success to God and started to pray and praise God (Ezra 7: 27-38).

2. Ezra also served his people during the return from captivity. The trip back to Jerusalem was not an easy task and it was dangerous, but Ezra was ready to face any problems to help his people.

He sat for 3 days observing and thinking how to get ready for the trip back to Jerusalem. He noticed that there was no one from the tribe of Levi, the tribe responsible for the service in the temple. He sent messengers to call them and God gave him favor and they listened to him.



He knew that the trip back could be dangerous because of thieves and bandits so he proclaimed a fast so that they might humble themselves before God to seek from Him protection for themselves and their possessions. He did not want to request an escort from the king, because he spoke to the king saying: "The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him." So, they fasted and prayed and God answered their prayers.



MEMORY VERSE:

“So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer.” Ezra 8:23

Ezra was very faithful in leading the people for 4 months in the desert until they reached Jerusalem and God protected them. As Ezra started his trip with prayers and fasting, when they reached Jerusalem, he and all the people offered sacrifices of thanksgiving for 3 days. They also offered burnt offerings and sin offerings to ask for God’s mercy and forgiveness.



And Ezra delivered the king’s orders to the king’s governors in the region beyond the River. So, they gave support to the people and the house of God.

3. Finally, Ezra served his people after the return from captivity to settle in Jerusalem. Months after they settled in Jerusalem the leaders came to Ezra and told him that the people of Israel intermarried with the pagans, which is against God’s commandments. When Ezra heard this thing, he fasted and prayed to God saying: “O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.” Ezra 9:6

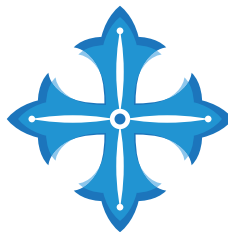


As he was fasting, the people gathered around him. He asked them to repent and to leave the pagan women, they listened to him and said: “Yes! As you have said, so we must do” Ezra 10:12.

Ezra's fasting and prayers, his faithfulness and his trust in God led the people to repentance. Ezra remained in Jerusalem and was collecting the books of the Old Testament, until Nehemiah arrived with the 3rd group and started to build the walls of Jerusalem. The walls of Jerusalem were built in 52 days.



Then the people gathered and they told Ezra to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel to follow. Ezra brought the book and stood on a platform of wood which they had made for this purpose and he read it to them.



Ezra The Prophet

1. Who told the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild God's house? [Jeremiah, Cyrus, Ezra]
 2. What bad news did Ezra get? [People were marrying non-believers, his donkey died, they lost the money during the trip to Jerusalem]
 3. What did Ezra read to the people? [the weather report, a grocery list, the law of Moses]
- TQ. Why do good people have problems that keep them poor?

Decode the letter Ezra got from King Artaxerxes:

+ - A	- + + + B	- + + + C	- + + D	+ E	+ + + + F	
- + + G	+ + + + H	+ + I	+ - - - J	- + - K	+ + + + L	
- - M	- + N	- - - O	+ + + + P	- - - - Q	+ + R	
+ + + S	- T	+ + - U	+ + + - V	+ - - W	- - - - Y	- + + Z

+ - - + + + + + + - - + + + + - + + - +

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- - - - - + + - - - - + + - - - + + -

+ - - + + - + + + + - - + + + + - + - + - + + +



Ezra Reads The Law Word Search

Find the words on the list that are hidden in the puzzle. The words can be left to right, up and down, or diagonally.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | I | S | I | T | N | S | L | L | A | F | A | C | I | D |
| U | J | T | A | L | I | C | U | A | T | F | R | E | P | S |
| L | O | O | E | R | S | R | C | T | E | J | I | T | F | O |
| N | U | L | Y | A | M | I | O | N | S | E | U | G | I | S |
| N | O | N | D | S | E | B | I | E | Z | R | A | A | A | N |
| D | R | E | V | E | L | E | X | E | I | U | I | G | U | R |
| L | A | B | A | B | Y | L | O | N | S | S | J | K | E | R |
| S | U | M | I | N | E | N | D | R | T | A | T | K | V | E |
| I | T | W | A | L | L | S | H | E | I | L | M | O | H | D |
| T | I | O | O | S | E | E | S | T | R | E | N | G | T | H |
| L | A | I | Q | R | A | T | N | O | S | M | C | G | T | E |
| A | U | E | D | O | S | O | R | E | D | E | L | I | Q | U |
| W | R | I | T | E | U | H | E | U | G | A | I | T | V | U |
| L | A | O | R | E | M | O | I | S | R | A | E | L | E | R |
| S | U | M | I | N | E | N | D | P | E | T | A | T | V | E |

BABYLON
EZRA

ISRAEL
JERUSALEM

JOY
LAW

SCRIBE
STRENGTH

WALLS
WORSHIP

Happy To Be Ready

Eve Of Saturday Of Light

(Apocalypse)

Also called the Saturday of Joy because the spirits of the saints and the righteous rejoiced when our Lord Jesus shown His light on them while they were waiting in hades and took them with Him to paradise.

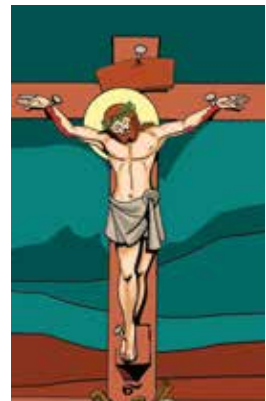
Before the Cross and the Redemption, hades was the place of waiting for all spirits (righteous and wicked) because of the sin that all mankind inherited from Adam and Eve.

When Adam and Eve listened to the serpent and ate from the forbidden tree and disobeyed God's commandments. They fell in sin and all mankind with them, because we are all Adam's descendants. Mankind inherited sin and the corrupted nature because of the fall of Adam and Eve.



Mankind needed a Redeemer to die on their behalf and take away the sentence of death that they inherited and to renew their nature, which was corrupted by sin. Therefore, our Lord Jesus was incarnate, crucified and died for all mankind and after three days, He rose from the dead.

With the Lord's incarnation, death and resurrection, He redeemed mankind and took away the sentence of death and most importantly He renewed the human nature.



To be worthy of this redemption we must believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, be baptized, confess our sins, repent and partake of the Holy Mysteries.

After this great redemption, paradise became the waiting place for the spirits of the righteous, until the Second Coming. Then our Lord Jesus will take them to the Kingdom of Heaven. Hades became the waiting place for the spirits of the wicked.

The Church spends this night beside the Savior's tomb to offer Him praises and to thank Him for His great redemption, and share with the saints their joy in entering paradise.



The Church uses the icon of the burial to symbolize the tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ and places it on the altar. At the end of the prayer of the 12th hour on Good Friday, the Church puts spices and perfumes on the icon of the burial and wraps it with white linen and puts it on the altar to symbolize the anointing of the body of our Lord Jesus and its burial. The congregation prays the Psalms up to Psalm 3 "I lie down and sleep". They are then dismissed and the deacons continue reading the Book of Psalm until Psalm 150.

The night of Apocalypse is ordered as follows:

Praises And Prayers Of The Prophets

1. Psalm 151

"I am small among my brothers". This is a



short Psalm found in the Septuagint copy of the Bible. The priest holds the Book of Psalms wrapped in white silk cloth (silk symbolizes royalty and white symbolizes purity). He stands in front of the altar and reads Psalm 151. We start with the Psalms because they contain praise, and this night is a night of praise and joy because of the redemption and salvation that was completed on the cross.

2. First Procession

The priest and the deacons go around the altar and around the Church with candles while saying the hymns, "Let us give thanks, to Christ our God" and "Maren-oo-onh evol" to thank God for His salvation and the victory over Satan.

3. Selected Praises And Prayers

The Church sings praises of thanksgiving and joy and some prayers that were said by the Prophets and the Fathers:

1. First Hoss and its Lobsh: The praise of Moses the Prophet and the people of Israel
2. Deuteronomy 32:1-43: The second praise of Moses
3. 1Samuel 2:1-10: The prayer of Hannah the mother of Samuel the Prophet
4. Habakkuk 3:2-19: The prayer of Habakkuk
5. Jonah 2: 2-10: The prayer of Jonah
6. Isaiah 37: 15-20: The prayer of Hezekiah
7. The prayer of Manasseh
8. Isaiah 25:1-12: The first praise of Isaiah
9. Isaiah 26:1-9: The second praise of Isaiah
10. Isaiah 26:10-20: The third praise of Isaiah
11. Lamentations 5:16-22: The prayer of Jeremiah
12. Baruch 3:11-16: The prayer of Baruch
13. 1Kings 18: 36-39: The prayer of Elijah the prophet
14. 1Chronicles 29:1-13: The prayer of David the prophet
15. 1Kings 8:22-30: The praise of King Solomon

16. Daniel 9:4-19: The prayer of Daniel
17. Daniel 3:1-23: The story of Daniel and the three youth
18. Daniel additions: Prayer of Azariah
19. The Praises of the three youths
20. The 3rd Hoss
21. Arysalin
22. The Hymn of Teneen and the rest of the story
23. Luke 1:46-55: The song of St. Mary
24. Luke 1:68-79: The prayer of Zachariah
25. Luke 2:29- 32: The prayer of Simon the elder
26. Daniel 13:1-64: The story of Susanna



From the prayers, praises and stories of the prophets, we see how God made them cross over from death to life and gave them the joy of salvation.



Examples:

- The praises of Moses and the people of Israel. (the first Hoss and its Lobsh): Tells the story of how God saved His People from Pharaoh's hand who enslaved them.
- Jonah's prayer: Shows his repentance, and the hope that filled his heart with joy. And God answered his prayers and took him out of the belly of the fish.
- The Song of the three youth: Whom God delivered from the fiery furnace.
- The story of Susanna: God turned her death sentence on her to a new life and revealed her chastity and piety.



- St. Mary’s Song: She praises God for His salvation, and how He remembers His promises that He gave to His people.
- Zachariah’s prayer: That he said after God fulfilled His promise and sent John to prepare the way before Jesus
- The prayer of Simon the elder: He praised God after he had seen His salvation – when the Lord Jesus entered the temple when He was 40 days old.



4. The Second Procession

After the completion of the praises, and the prayers and the readings of the stories about the fathers and the prophets, the second procession starts.

The priest and the deacons go around the Church with candles and cymbals while singing the hymn of “ten oweh ensok” which means “we follow you with all our hearts” (from the prayers of Azariah).

The Prayers Of The Prime Raising Of Incense

The Third Procession

After the prayers of raising of incense and the Creed, the priest says, “Efnoti Nai Nan”. The deacons answer “Kyrielyson” with the long tune and cymbals while going around the altar and the Church 3 times with candles and crosses.



The Prayers Of The Third And The Six Hours

Prayed as usual but we do not say the gospels and the litanies but instead we read prophecies and gospels from the Passion Week book.

The Book Of Revelation

Before the reading of the Book of revelation we light seven lamps with oil in the shape of a cross. The book is read in the first chorus in front of the altar with the white altar curtains open.

The entire Book of Revelation is read. In Greek it is called Apocalypse meaning "disclosure of knowledge" or "revelation". That is why the night is called "The Night of Apocalypse"

It tells the story of reconciliation between the Church on earth to the Church on heaven, and how God will fulfill His promise to the Church and take her from death to life through His resurrection as He promised us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" Revelation 21:7

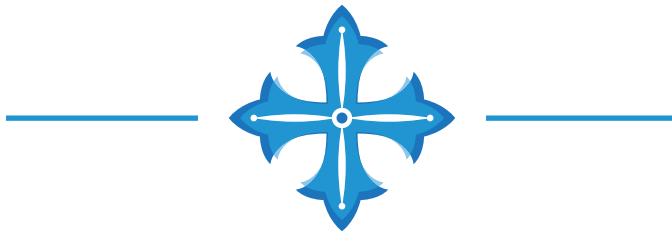
At the end, the priest anoints the congregation with the Apocalypse oil for blessing.

The Prayers Of The Ninth Hour

We pray the psalms of the ninth hour without reading the gospel and the litanies.

The Saturday Of The Light Liturgy

The prayers of the divine liturgy begin and all the readings of the liturgy are focused on the blessings of the resurrection for those who live the life of repentance. It shows how the Church rejoices, waiting with the hope of the resurrection.



BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Books of the Law

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

Historical Books

6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth
9. 1 Samuel
10. 2 Samuel
11. 1 Kings
12. 2 Kings
13. 1 Chronicles

14. 2 Chronicles

15. Ezra

16. Nehemiah

17. Esther

Poetic Books

18. Job

19. Psalm

20. Proverbs

21. Ecclesiastes

22. Song of Solomon

Major Prophets

23. Isaiah

24. Jeremiah

25. Lamentations

26. Ezekiel

27. Daniel

Minor Prophets

28. Hosea

29. Joel

30. Amos

31. Obadiah

32. Jonah

33. Micah

34. Nahum

35. Habakkuk

36. Zephaniah

37. Haggai

38. Zechariah

39. Malachi

THE GLORIA (PRAISE OF THE ANGELS)

Let us sing with the angels saying: “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, goodwill towards men.” We praise You; we bless You; we serve You; we worship You; we confess to You; we glorify You. We give thanks to You for Your great glory. O Lord, King of Heaven, God the Father, the Pantocrator; O Lord, the Only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; O Lord, God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takes away the sins of the world, receive our prayers. O You, Who sits at the right hand of His Father, have mercy on us. You alone are Holy; for You alone are the most High, my Lord, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Glory be to God the Father. Amen.

Every day I will bless You, and praise Your Holy Name forever and unto the age of all ages. Amen.

From the night, my spirit seeks You early, O my God, for Your commandments are light unto the earth. I continually pursue Your ways, for You have become a helper unto me. Early, my Lord, You shall hear my voice; in the morning I shall stand before You, and You shall look upon me.





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