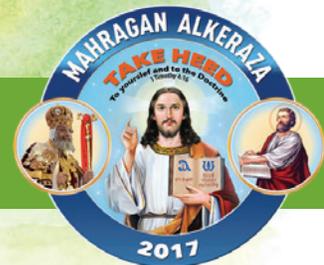


MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA 2017



ENGLISH EDITION | GR 3-4



"Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you." 1 Timothy 4:16



Under the Guidance of H.H. Pope Tawadros II

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



WELCOME TO COOL

NAME: _____

GRADE: _____

GROUP: _____

PHONE: _____



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INTRODUCTION

MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA 2017

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 2016 Mahragan. His Holiness Pope Tawadros II said during the Awards Ceremony in Egypt, "I am happy to see the activities of the Youth Bishopric, 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 2017 is "Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:16). This year, God is asking each one of us to grow in Christ. To do this we will learn about the following topics:

1. Watch Yourself
2. Keep God's Teachings
3. Abide in God, Always
4. Heaven.. So Much More Than We Can Imagine
5. Bring Your Friends To God



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

Watch Yourself

Planet Vlato was like no other. The entire planet relied on sound to operate. Whether man or machine... everything and everyone had a different sound that set them apart. Sadly, one morning, everything changed. It was as if it was a dream. Silence. Absolute silence. But where did all the sound go?

The Governor called all the leaders and scientists for an urgent meeting in an isolated emergency room so they can talk and hear each other.

Governor: What are we going to do? We can't go on like this.

Albert: You're right Governor. Rest assured, I will not rest until I find a solution to this problem. Allow me to gather a committee and begin my investigation.

Governor: Thank you Albert. You're the most qualified scientist I know. If you can't get to the bottom of this, then no one can.

Albert: I will make you proud Governor.

Albert gathered his team of research students, Doe and Ray. He gave them devices so they can hear each other. They were ready to get to work.





Albert: Guys, our planet is in danger and I don't even know where to start. I wish my Professor was here. He was brilliant. He could solve any problem that came his way.

Ray: Really? Tell us more about him.

Albert: Ah, Professor Stan... I learned so much from him.

Doe: Well I have an idea. Why don't we go see him? He can help us.

Albert: I wish! Professor Stan left our planet around twenty years ago, because he invented a device that can transmit sound from one place to another.

Ray: Oh! That device would have solved our problem. Why did he leave?

Albert: He had to test it on a different planet. He decided to leave everything and move out. He left many valuable things behind in order to achieve his goal.

Ray: Wow! That must have been hard. It's not easy for someone to leave everything behind!

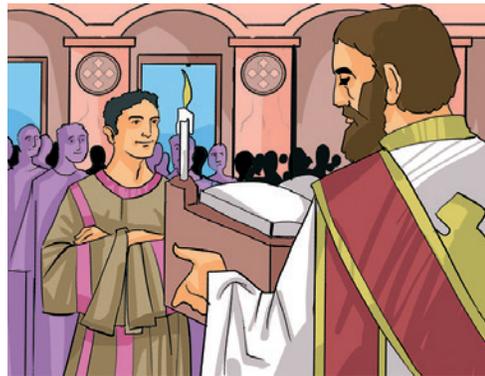
Albert: You're right; I was surprised too. When I asked him, he told me that he had a goal to accomplish. He learned this from a story of one of the heroes of faith from Planet Earth.

Ray: And who is this hero?

Albert: The Great St. Anthony. Maybe I can tell you his story before we get to work.

THE GREAT ST. ANTHONY—THE FATHER OF MONASTICISM (SYNAXARIUM 22nd OF TOBAH)

St. Anthony is one of the heroes of our Orthodox Church. He gave up many things that people would consider very important in order to achieve his goal, which was to spend all his life with God. St. Anthony was always paying attention to everything that happened in his life and was always looking for messages that God wanted to send him.



St. Anthony was born in the year 251 AD in Beni Suef in Lower Egypt to wealthy parents. They raised him in the love of God. When he was about 18 years old, his parents died and left lots of money for him and his sister. St. Anthony considered the death of his parent a message from God to be ready all the time. The second message he felt was from God was when he went to the church and heard the scripture. That day, the Gospel reading was about the time our Lord Jesus told the rich young man:



MEMORY VERSE

***“If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”
Matthew 19:21***

He felt that these words applied directly to him. He was worried about what he would do with his sister but he heard another verse saying, "Do not worry," so he took this as another message from God to him.

Ray: What did he do?

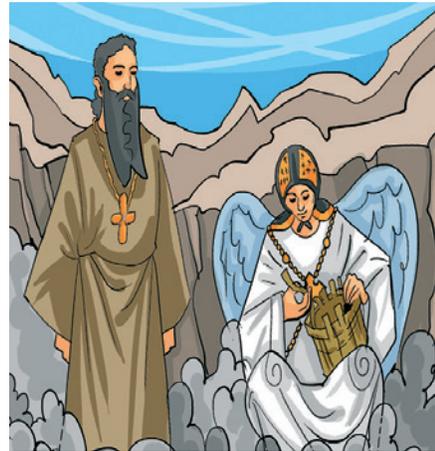
Albert: He sold his possessions and gave away his money to the poor, keeping some for his sister. He then left to live an ascetic life, placing his sister with a group of Christian virgins in a convent. He first lived in a small hut beside the bank of the Nile River near the outskirts of the town to pray and worship.

Doe: He really did give up everything in his life to achieve his goal. What happened after that?

Albert: One day, a woman went in the Nile to bathe. When St. Anthony rebuked her, she told him, "If you were a monk, you would go and live in the inner desert—this is not a place for monks." St. Anthony considered this to be a message from God to go to the inner desert where he lived in fasting and prayer.



The devil fought him in numerous ways but he overcame the snares of the devil through prayer, fasting, the Word of God and the sign of the Cross. The devil fought him with boredom. One day, he cried to God to help him and he heard a voice telling him, "Go out and see." He went out and saw an angel who wore a girdle with a cross, resembling the holy Eskiem (a leather belt adorned with crosses), and on his head was a head cover (Kolonsowa). The angel would sit to braid palm leaves, then he would stand up to pray, then again he would sit down to weave, and so on.



A voice came to him saying, "Do this and you will have rest." St. Anthony started to wear the tunic that he saw, and began to weave palm leaves, which helped him not get bored. The tunic he saw became the monk's clothing and the hand work became essential in the life of the monks.



With time, his place became known and people visited him to take his blessing. Because he liked the life of solitude, God guided him to go far away to the Eastern desert. He found a spring of water and some palm trees and he settled there. He lived there for many years. Afterwards, many monks came to him to learn from him. He was their guide and their spiritual father in the life of monasticism.

St. Anthony went to Alexandria twice. The first time was during the reign of Emperor Maximianus, who persecuted the Christians. St. Anthony wanted to be around the

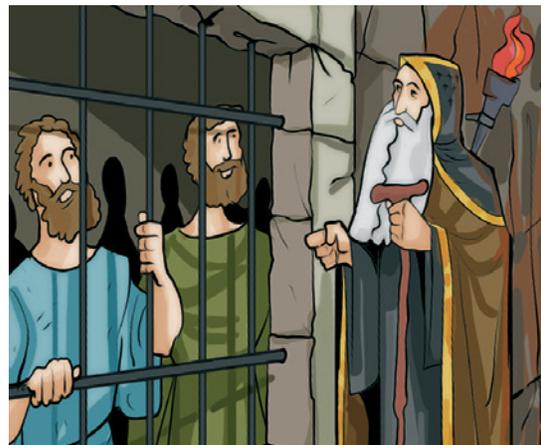
people who were persecuted, so he went to Alexandria visiting the people who were in prison and encouraged and comforted them. He longed to be a martyr but God preserved him for his service. He then returned back to his cell.

Ray: When was the second time?

Albert: The second time was when a man named Arius tried to change the true faith of the Church. Arius was saying that our Lord Jesus is not God and was trying to spread wrong teachings. St. Anthony had to come out from his solitude to stand beside Father Athanasius who was the patriarch at that time and who was also one of the disciples of St. Anthony. He defended the Orthodox faith and afterwards returned back to his cell.

One day, St. Anthony thought that he was the first one to live in the wilderness. God sent him an angel who told him, "There is a man who lives in the inner wilderness and the world is not worthy of his footsteps. By his prayers, the Lord brings rain and dew to fall on the earth, and brings the flood of the Nile in its due season."

When St. Anthony heard this, he went to



the inner wilderness, about a day's walk. God guided him to the cave of St. Paul. He entered and met with him and learned from his life and his humility.

St. Anthony lived all his life learning from God's messages to him. He spent more than 80 years in the monastic life. He instituted the first rules of monasticism in the whole world. He had many disciples which is why we call him the "Father of all Monks." He died at the age of 105 in the year 356 AD.



Ray: What a beautiful story. No wonder Professor Stan learned from it. The life of St. Anthony shows us how much he loved God and how he left everything to achieve his goal.

Doe: Right! I have an idea, what if we try to look for Professor Stan and maybe he can help us?

Ray: That seems hard, Doe. How are we going to do that? We would have to leave our planet.

Doe: Well if it's the only way to save our planet, then we have to. Don't worry we will come back. I learned that if we set a goal, we have to do whatever it takes to achieve it.

Ray: But how? There are no sounds to help us!

Albert: You're right Doe! Don't worry Ray, I can help you with that.

Saint Anthony The Great

ACTIVITY



Keep God's Teachings

Albert took Doe and Ray to where Professor Stan used to live and showed them a spaceship that Professor Stan had made.

Ray: This spaceship looks old.

Albert: You bet. It was built 20 years ago.

Doe: How are we gonna make this spaceship work? Is there a way to charge it without sound?

Albert: I think it has a charging device, let's look for it.

Ray: I found it, but it has a password... Keyword "Remember the Star"

Doe: Oh! It is like a puzzle.

Albert: Yeah, that was Professor Stan's way. He used to put a password on everything. I have an idea that can help us solve this!

Ray: What is it?

Albert: Professor Stan learned a lot from Planet Earth. He loves that planet so much.

Doe: Are there stars around Earth?





Albert: Yes, Planet Earth rotates around the Sun.

Ray: So the password could be “Sun”? Let me try it...Ugh! It didn't work.

Doe: Why?

Ray: Because the buttons don't have any letters. They just have numbers and math symbols.

Doe: Let's look in Professor's Stan library for a book that talks about the sun. Maybe that'll lead us to a clue that can help us.

They found a book on which was written “Analogies and Symbols.” On the book, the sun and a triangle were drawn, so they started to look in the book...

Albert: The book talks about the sun being used as a symbol to simplify an important Christian topic: “The Doctrine of the Trinity”.

Ray: Sounds interesting, let's read more.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

Doe: (Reading) This is the doctrine of the Trinity. Christians believe in one God as three distinct Persons. The Father is God, our Lord Jesus Christ the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. They're not three but One God.

Ray: How can three, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be one?

Doe: There is an analogy in here to explain that... Let's keep reading.

God is three Persons or Hypostases of one essence:

The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

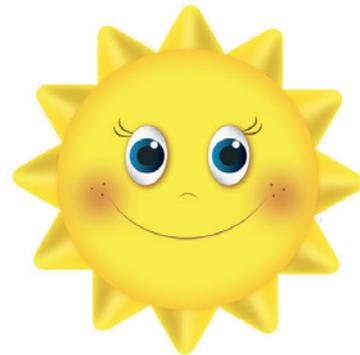
For example, the sun is

1. **A Star in its form** - that is a hot ball of glowing gases.
2. **Light** - that brightens our day.
3. **Heat**- that warms up our day.

So the three: the star, the light and the heat are all one thing that we call the sun. This is just an example to help us understand.

So in the doctrine of the Trinity:

The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God. The three are all One God.



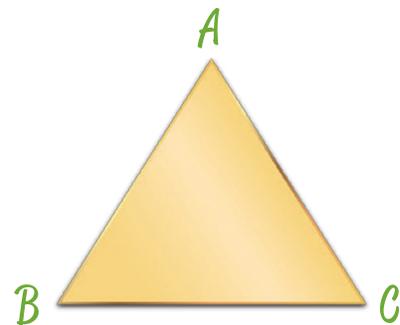
Albert: Oh! Here's another example:

The triangle that we see is equilateral which means that $AB = BC = CA$

The triangle has three angles A, B and C

1. The three angles are equal ($A = B = C$)
2. The three angles are different. A is not B and is not C
3. The three angles are connected, not separated
4. Because the triangle is equilateral, we can call the triangle by any of its angles (triangle A, triangle B or triangle C)

They are equal but not the same; and they are not separated.



Likewise, the Trinity is:

1. **Equal** - The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are equal.
2. **Different** - The Father is different from the Son, and the Son is different from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is different from the Father.
3. **Not separated** - No Person of the Trinity is separated from the Others.
4. **One God** - The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God.
5. Each is distinct from the other, but all are of one essence.

Ray: Look here on the next page. There's evidence to confirm the doctrine of the Trinity:

1. **The sign of the cross:** We say, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit one God, Amen." We say "name" not "names" and at the end we say "one God, Amen."
2. **The Creed:** We recite the Creed in the church prayers saying, "We believe in one God..."
3. **The sacrament of Baptism:** When the priest baptizes a child, he immerses him three times in the water. The first time in the name of the Father, the second time in the name of the Son and the third time in the name of the Holy Spirit. But it is all one baptism in the name of One God.
4. **The Holy Bible:** During the baptism of our Lord Jesus, the scripture says, "**When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."** Matthew 3:16-17.



Here we see the manifestation of the Trinity; The Son in the Jordan, the Father in heaven and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. The Church celebrates this event during the feast of Epiphany, also called "Theophany," meaning the manifestation of God.

St. John confirmed the doctrine of the Trinity when he said:

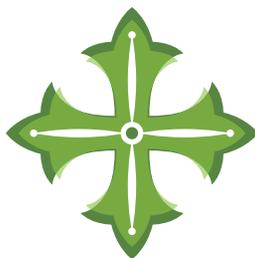


MEMORY VERSE

"For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." 1John 5:7

Albert: Oh wait! I got the password! Doe, write $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$

Doe: Wow! It worked!



Abide In God, Always!

The spaceship worked! The three of them headed off.

Doe: Wow! Professor Stan seems so smart!

Albert: Yes, he is! If we find him, he can definitely help us.

Doe: Uh oh! What are all those red lights for? Is that an alarm?

Albert: Probably because the sound generated is not enough! Let me try to fix it.

Albert went to the control room.

Ray: I'm worried. We should not have taken the spaceship before making sure it works properly. We rushed ourselves. We should go back.

Doe: Don't worry! Albert is our teacher; we have to trust him. He knows what he's doing and I'm sure he'll fix the problem.

Ray: But he might not be able to!

Doe: We have to trust that Albert will never do anything to put us in danger. Just trust him.

Ray: But even now?



Doe: Yes, we have to trust him all the time. Did you forget the first rule we learned from him?

Ray: Remind me, I forgot.

Doe: The rule of discipleship. I remember that he told us that the most important rule was to trust the teacher and follow his instructions. He gave us books with lots of stories about people who learned from great teachers, and how they obeyed and trusted them at all times. Didn't you read those books?

Ray: No, not yet.

Doe: Well, there's a story that I really liked. It taught me how a disciple should stay with his teacher and learn from his life.

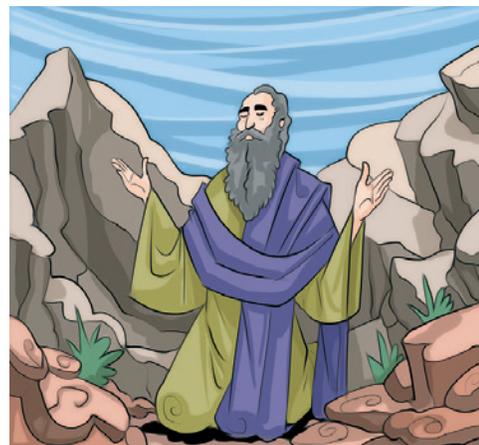
Ray: Well then, tell me the story.

ELISHA AND THE LIFE OF DISCIPLESHIP - 1 KINGS 19 & 2 KINGS DEPARTURE OF THE PROPHET ELISHA—SYNAXARIUM 20 BAOUNAH

Doe: This story tells us about a disciple who learned from his master. Life with his master had such a great impact on him which is why he became just like him. His name was Elisha the prophet, the disciple of Elijah the prophet. Elisha's name means "God is salvation."

Let me start from the beginning.

There was a prophet in the Northern Kingdom called Elijah who loved God and followed His



commandments. A prophet is a man who delivers the messages that come from God to the people.

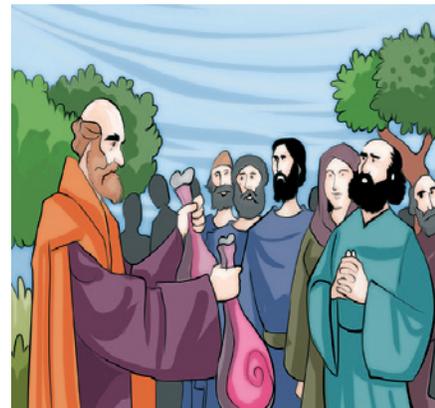
One day, God said to Elijah while he was praying in the mountain of Horeb to go to Elisha in the city of Abel Meholah and anoint him as prophet in his place, to teach the people after him. Elijah went as God told him, and found Elisha plowing with twelve yokes of oxen before him. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.



Ray: Why did he do that?

Doe: That was a well know sign back then. It was an invitation to serve God with him. Elisha understood the message and agreed to serve God and be Elijah's disciple.

So, Elisha took a yoke of oxen, slaughtered them, gave it to the people, and they ate. He then arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.



Elisha stayed with Elijah and never departed from his side and it became known that Elisha was the disciple of Elijah.

Elijah had many disciples. When the Lord was about to take up Elijah into heaven, God sent him to outreach his disciples in the other cities.



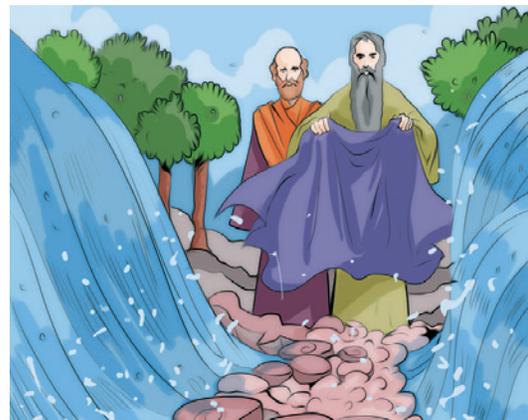
Ray: What did Elisha do?

Doe: Elisha did not want to leave his master and he told him, **“As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you” 2 Kings 2:2**

This happened in three different occasions and every time, Elisha said to Elijah that he would not leave him.

Ray: He truly loved his master. What happened after that?

Doe: The third time, Elisha followed Elijah to the Jordan River. Elijah did a miracle that everyone witnessed. He took his mantle, rolled it up, struck the water, and it was divided in two, so that Elijah and Elisha crossed over on dry ground. Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha had a very strange request.



Ray: What did he ask for?

Doe: He said to Elijah: “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.” This meant he wanted double the power of Elijah to help him in his service.

This is because Elisha felt the huge responsibility that would be on him after





Elijah leaves. Elijah said to Elisha, “if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you.” Then suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha saw it and he cried out, **“My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” 2 Kings 2:12** Elisha was so sad that Elijah left, but when Elijah was taken to heaven, his mantle fell.

Ray: The one he used to split the Jordan?

Doe: Yes exactly. Elisha took it and struck the water of the Jordan, and said, “Where is the Lord, God of Elijah?” The water again was divided and Elisha crossed over. This was the first miracle that God performed by the hands of Elisha. When Elijah’s disciples saw this miracle, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” They understood that God chose Elisha for the service after Elijah.

Elisha became the prophet of the Northern Kingdom after Elijah. With the power of God, Elisha performed many miracles, even more than Elijah, because God granted him his wish and gave him double the spiritual power of Elijah.

These are some of the miracles that Elisha did (*read together in the Bible*):

1-The widow’s oil (2 Kings 4: 1-7)

The widow miraculously filled all the vessels that she borrowed from her neighbours with the small amount of oil she had as Elisha instructed her and was able to pay all her debts.



2-Raising of the Shunammite's son (2 Kings 4: 8-37)

God gave the Shunammite woman a son through Elisha's prayers. When her son died, Elisha raised him with the power of God.



3-Healing of Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings 5:1-15)

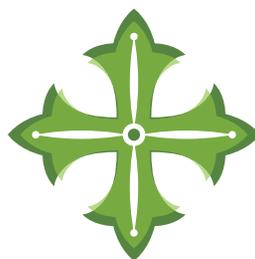
Naaman the Syrian was healed from his leprosy through Elisha's prayers, when he washed in the Jordan 7 times as Elisha told him to.

So you see, Elisha is a good example of the faithful disciple who learned the service from his master.

Ray: Beautiful story! You made me want to read all the stories that Professor Albert left for us. Woah look! The alarm stopped. Professor Albert must have stopped it.

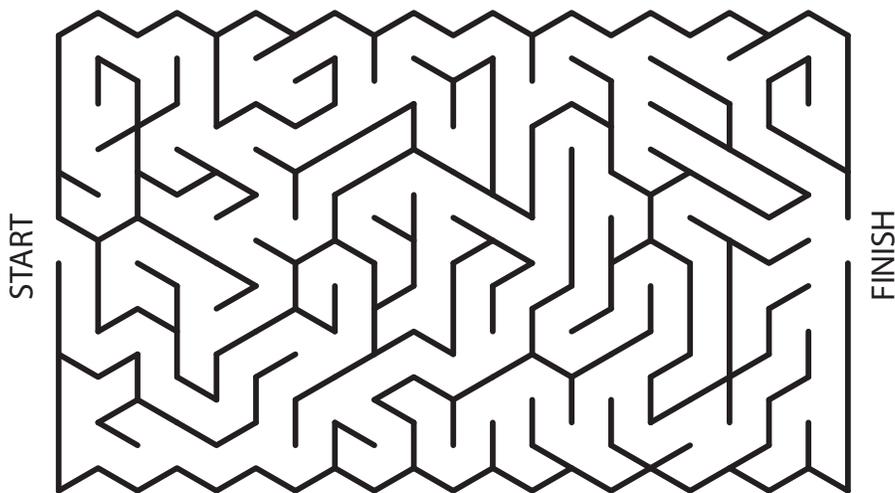


Doe: See! I told you to trust him.



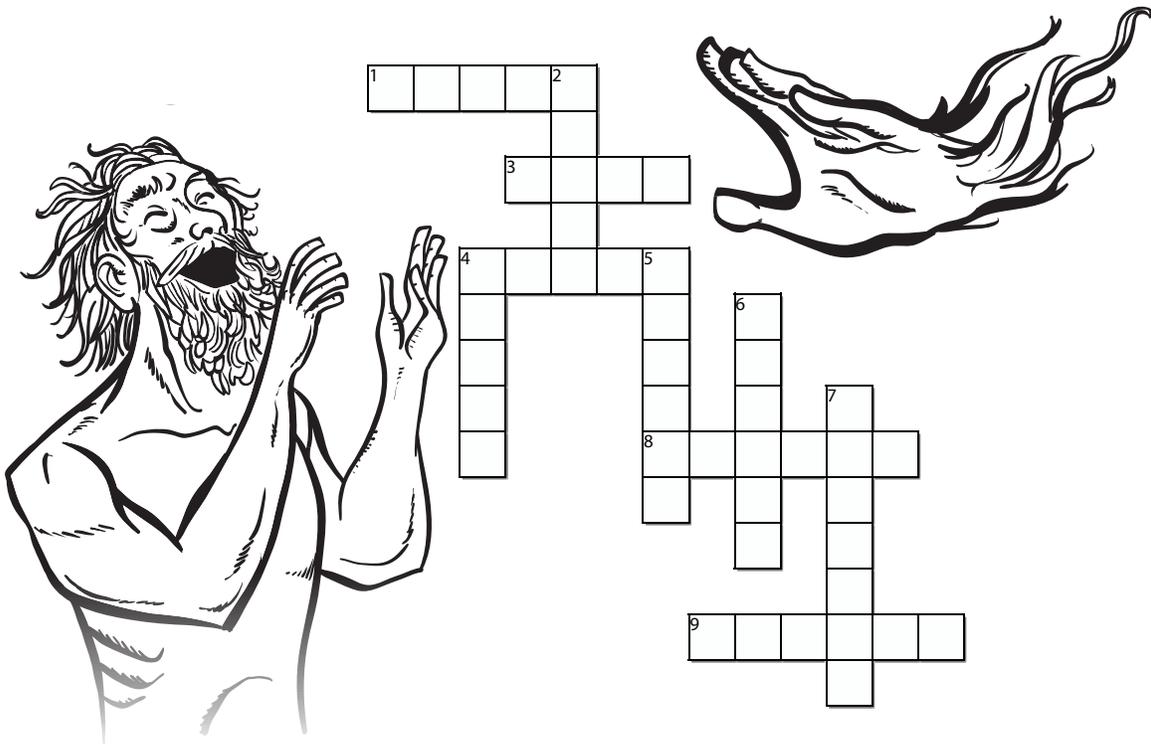
Naaman Is Healed

Help Naaman follow Elisha's instructions to be healed in the Jordan River.



Naaman The Leper

2 Kings 5



Across

1. Elisha refused to accept what from Naaman?
3. Naaman was the leader of the _____.
4. The little girl who told Naaman about the prophet in Israel was a _____.
8. Because of his faith, Naaman was _____.
9. Elisha _____ one of his servants with leprosy, who had lied.

Down

2. Naaman lived in the land of _____.
4. How many times did Naaman have to wash in the river?
5. The name of the prophet Naaman saw was?
6. Naaman declared to Elisha that there was no other God than the God of _____.
7. What disease did Naaman have?

Heaven...So Much More Than We Can Imagine

Albert returned from the control room...

Doe: What happened? The alarm stopped!

Albert: Yeah, I had to reduce the amount of power we're using, because the power we have is limited. We won't be able to fly for a long time.



Ray: Well, do you know where Professor Stan is?

Albert: Actually that's the best part! This spaceship is programmed to locate Professor Stan so we don't have to worry about that.

As the spaceship directed them to his location, Ray noticed that the power level was getting lower and lower.

Ray: We don't have much power left. The spaceship will stop very soon.

Doe: We're almost there, don't worry.

Albert: Yes, we're so close. I will begin the emergency landing.

As the spaceship landed on the planet, all the power went off.

Ray: The power is all out. Now we won't be able to return to our planet or find Professor Stan.

Doe: Let's go look for him.

Ray: How? We don't even know where we are.

Albert: We can use a distress signal to get help.

Ray: How?

Albert: Let's make a fire and when the people here see the smoke, they will find us.

Doe: That's a good idea. Let's do it.

Ray: I didn't know you can use smoke as a signal to get help.

Albert: Yeah! People on earth use something similar in their churches.

Ray: Really?

Albert: Yeah, it's called incense.

Ray: What's incense?



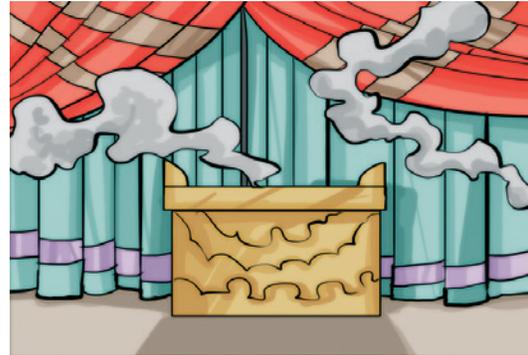
Incense in the Church

Albert: Incense is an aromatic material which releases fragrant smoke when burned. It is used in many of our Church prayers as God commanded in the Old and New Testaments.



The Old Testament

1. God instructed Moses how to make the incense. He told him both the ingredients and the quantities. God commanded that incense should be used only by the priests.
2. God commanded Moses to build the golden altar of incense and place it in the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is the place where people used to pray. The golden altar was used for burning incense offered by the priest. Offering of incense was a holy sacrifice in the Old Testament.



The New Testament

3. The gifts of the Wise Men to Jesus at His birth included frankincense as a symbol of Jesus' priesthood.
4. There's a prophecy in Malachi that shows that the use of incense will never cease, **"For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; in every place incense shall be offered to My name and a pure offering"** Malachi 1:11. This was a prophecy about the use of incense in churches today.
5. There will be incense in heaven too. St. John explained in the Book of



Revelation that he saw the 24 priests offering incense. He said, **“Each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” Revelation 5:8.**

Ray: So what does incense represent?

Albert: It represents many things. First, it represents the presence of God in the church. When we see incense in the church it tells us that God is among us. Secondly, incense represents the prayers of the saints, as explained in the Book of Revelation 5:8.

That’s why when the priest raises Vespers and Matins incense, the congregation sings the Verses of the Cymbals and the Doxologies, which are praises of the saints. Also, before the Litany of the Gospel, the congregation sings “Agnus” which means “Holy.” That’s the praise of the angels.

Thirdly, incense represents prayer. We ask God that our prayers ascend to Him as incense. As the verse says,

MEMORY VERSE

“Let my prayer be set before You as incense.” Psalm 141:2

Finally, incense represents purification from sin and repentance. In the Old Testament, when the people complained against Moses and Aaron, God sent a plague to consume them. So Moses said



to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them." So he used incense and made atonement for the people and the plague stopped.

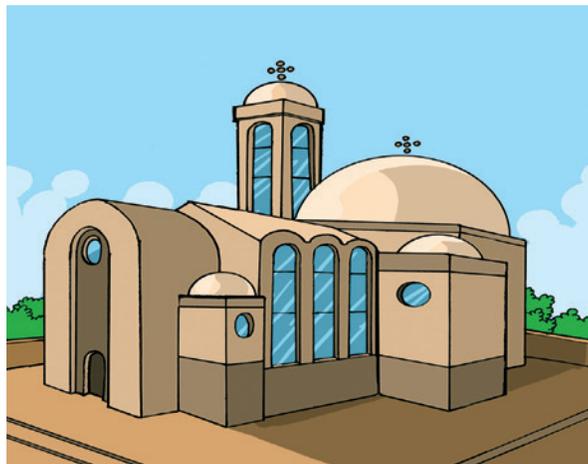
That's why when the priest goes around the church offering incense, the congregation stands up and everyone bows their heads and ask God for forgiveness. The priest takes the petitions and confessions of the people and presents them on the altar.

Rites of offering incense in the Coptic Church:

1. First, the priest offers incense in front of the altar, then around it and finally at the door of the altar. This is a proof of the sanctification of the place and the presence of God in it.
2. The priest then offers incense in front of the Gospel which is on the stand. This shows how we honor the Word of God.
3. Next, the priest offers incense in front of the icons in the Iconostasis. This shows our reverence to the saints and how we join them in prayer and ask for their prayers on our behalf, but we do not worship them.
4. In the presence of a bishop, the priest offers incense in front of him, as a sign of reverence.



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5. In the presence of other priests, the priest kisses their hands and offers incense in front of them. This is so that all the priests participate in the offering of the incense.
 6. Then the priest offers incense around the church among the congregation. He does this to bless the congregation and to take their prayers to present them on the Altar. This is done during the Vespers and Matins Raising of Incense, and during the reading of the Pauline Epistle in the Liturgy of the Word. The priest censens around the whole church during the Pauline Epistle because Paul preached to the whole world. And he censens from the left side of the church to the right side to indicate that through the preaching of St. Paul, we were taken from darkness to light.
 7. The priest doesn't do a round of incense during the Catholic Epistle, but stays in the Sanctuary according to our Lord's command to His Disciples that they should not depart Jerusalem before the coming of the Holy Spirit.
 8. The priest also offers incense during the reading of the Praxis (Acts) in the Liturgy of the Word. Here, he does not offer incense around the entire church—only around the Chorus of the Deacons. The priest does not go around the whole church as in the round of the Pauline, which signifies the fact that the Apostles limited their preaching to Judea and the cities of Judah, whereas St. Paul preached Christianity to the whole world.



Bring Your Friends To God

Just as Professor Albert finished explaining to Doe and Ray, one of the residents of the planet came to their rescue because they saw the smoke. Luckily, he knew Professor Stan and promised to take them to him.

When they finally reached Professor Stan, they couldn't be happier to see him. They explained to him the problem that they had.

Stan: You know what? I actually know what caused the problem on your planet.

All: No way! What is it?

Stan: A while ago, I invented a device that could transmit sound from one place to another. I think that's what caused the problem.



Doe: I don't understand! How did that device cause the sounds to disappear from our planet.

Stan: As I was doing my research, I tried to take a sample of the sound from your planet. But the device took way more sound than it could handle and it stopped working.

Ray: So your device took all the sound from our planet?

Stan: Yeah, it seems like that's what happened. The only way is to take my device back to our planet and release the sound there.



Doe: That's great! Let's go!

Ray: Doe, did you forget? We have a huge problem! Our spaceship lost all its power and it needs to be charged.

Stan: That's okay, the residents of this planet here will help us. In fact, they can come with us and stay on our planet. They can definitely help me with all the research I'm conducting.

Doe and Ray: No we can't do that!

Albert: Why not?

Ray: Because they're so... so... different.

Doe: Yeah! They can't help us.

Stan: No guys, don't say that. Let me tell you a story that I told Albert a long time ago... It's a story I tell to all my students.

Ray: What story?

Stan: I'll tell you on our way to the spaceship. Let's go!

THE FAITH OF CORNELIUS – ACTS 10

Stan: At Caesarea, there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.

Doe: What does Centurion mean?

Stan: It means a Roman officer in command of a hundred men. This man was a gentile, not a Jew, but he did not worship idols. Him and his whole family were devout and God-fearing. They prayed to God regularly and gave generously to those in need.

One day as he was fasting and praying, he had a vision. An angel of God came to him and called him by his name.



Cornelius was afraid and said, "What is it, lord?" The angel answered him and said, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God." This meant that God saw his works and was happy with him. "Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."



Ray: Did Cornelius listen to the angel?

Stan: Yes, Cornelius wanted to know the will of God. He did exactly as the angel told him and sent two of his servants and one of the soldiers to Joppa to the house of Simon the tanner to look for Peter.

The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. He became very hungry and wanted to eat;

but while they were preparing the food, he fell into a trance and saw something really strange.

All: What did he see?

Stan: He saw heaven open and a big sheet bound at the four corners, descending down to earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. A voice came to him saying, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat" But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

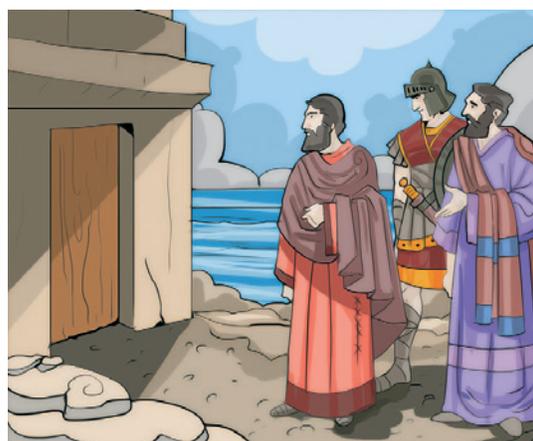


Ray: I don't understand, why didn't Peter want to eat?

Stan: The problem was that all these animals were considered unclean for Jews and it was forbidden to eat them. That's why Peter did not want to eat. But the voice spoke to him a second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." This was repeated three times. And the sheet was taken up into heaven again.

Doe: What a strange vision. What did it mean?

Stan: Peter too was confused and wondered within himself what this vision meant. Meanwhile, the men who had been sent by Cornelius came to the gate and asked about Peter. The Holy Spirit said to Peter to go with them and not to worry because God has sent them.



Peter went down and said, "I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" They told him what happened with Cornelius. He invited them in and gave them a place to sleep. On the next day, Peter went away with them, and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him until they arrived in Caesarea.



Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and he had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." Peter went in to his house and found many who had come together. He told them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. So now tell me, for what reason have you sent for me?"

So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour, I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.' So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."





Peter was so happy to hear this news and stayed with them and taught them about the Lord Jesus. He even baptized them. So you see, even though they were not Jews, God accepted them and wanted Peter to help them even though they were different.

Doe: I'm sorry for saying what I said before. All of the residents here are welcome on our planet.

Ray: Yes! And thank you for all your help.

Doe, Ray, Albert, Professor Stan and a few of the residents headed to Planet Vlato to restore sound once again to the planet. Professor Stan's device successfully gave back all the sound it took from the planet and the planet was repaired. Albert was so proud of Doe and Ray for all their hard work. Together, they saved the planet!





Memorization

THE TRISAGION

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who was born of the Virgin, have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who was crucified for us, have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who rose from the dead and ascended into the heavens, have mercy on us. Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of all ages. Amen. O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Lord, forgive our iniquities. Lord, forgive our transgressions. Lord be with the sick of Your people. Heal them for the sake of Your holy Name. Our fathers and brothers who have slept, repose their souls. O Who alone is sinless, help us and accept our prayers. For Yours is the glory, dominion, and triple holiness. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless us, Amen.

Memorization

GOSPEL OF THE 12TH HOUR

Gospel According to Saint Luke (2:25-32)

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what the custom of the law required, Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as You have promised, You now dismiss Your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel." Glory be to God forever. Amen.



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