

MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA 2017



ENGLISH EDITION | GR 5-6



"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

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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. The Sacrament of Repentance and Confession
2. The Doctrine of Redemption
3. St. Mark the Apostle
4. Fasting
5. St. Paul the Teacher of the World



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

## The Sacrament Of Repentance And Confession

In the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession, the sins we commit everyday are forgiven. Knowing the consequences of our sins helps us understand the importance of this Sacrament.

The consequence of sin is separation from God and His commandments. The bible says **“The wages of sin is death” Roman 6:23**. This is because when you choose to separate yourself from God, you're separating yourself from the source of life, and this means death. So a life of sin is actually a life of death. Since sin is separation from God, repentance is a return to God.

### MEMORY VERSE

**“Return to Me, and I will return to you.” Malachi 3:7**

Many times the devil puts obstacles in front of us to delay our repentance. He makes us doubt that our sins can be forgiven. But we must trust that God will always accept any sinner that turns to Him in repentance as He promised.

### MEMORY VERSE:

**“The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” John 6:37**

No matter how bad our sin is, if we repent, it will be forgiven. The Bible shows us many examples of this.



## THE STORY OF THE SINFUL WOMAN, LUKE 7:36-50

This story tells about a man named Simon who invited our Lord Jesus over to his house to eat with him. Simon was a Pharisee. Pharisees were distinguished by strict observance of the traditional and written law.

Because our Lord Jesus loves everyone, the sinners and the righteous, He used to sit and eat with sinners and tax collectors. He accepted Simon's invitation to teach us that He came for everyone and He loves everyone.



While our Lord Jesus was at Simon's house, a sinful woman, well known for her life of sin, entered the house. It was impossible for a woman of this status to enter the house of a Pharisee. The Jews and the Pharisees in particular did not accept sinners and did not have any dealings with them nor even touch them as they considered them unclean. That's why the sinful woman entering a Pharisee's house was very unusual.

She did that because she felt she needed forgiveness. She realized she was living in sin and she heard that our Lord Jesus accepted sinners. She was convinced that He would accept her despite all her sins, even though everyone else refused her. Knowing this, she repented in her heart and decided to look for Him. She came to Him with hope and confidence in His forgiveness as He is the only One who can forgive her sins.



She stood at Jesus' feet weeping. She washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She kissed His feet and anointed them with fragrant oil. Her tears were



more precious than the fragrant oil because they were a sign of true repentance.

Simon was surprised when he saw what happened and by doing so he sinned. In his mind, he couldn't tolerate our Lord Jesus' acceptance of the sinful woman and he criticized Him. He doubted that our Lord Jesus was even a prophet. He also judged the woman and openly said that she was a sinner. But our Lord Jesus proved to him that He was greater than a prophet when He answered the questions Simon had on his mind.



However, the salvation of Simon was just as important to our Lord Jesus as the salvation of the sinful woman. That's why He answered the questions Simon had in his heart. Jesus wanted to correct his belief that he was righteous and better than the woman, so He told him the story of the two debtors. The story went like this...

A rich man had two debtors. One owed him 500 denarii and the other owed him 50 denarii. Because they could not repay, he forgave them both. The Lord Jesus asked Simon, "Which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." Our Lord showed Simon





that the woman's love for Him and her faith in His forgiveness was greater than Simon's because she knew in her heart that her sin was great. Simon however did not think he was sinful so did not even think he needed forgiveness, and therefore did not love God as much.

Our Lord Jesus showed Simon that what the woman did to show her love was greater than what he did to show his love. Simon did not give our Lord Jesus water to wash His feet, but the woman washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. Simon did not kiss Jesus' head but the woman kissed our Lord Jesus' feet. Simon did not anoint our Lord Jesus' head with oil, but the woman anointed His feet with fragrant oil.



From this, we can learn that for true repentance we have to:

1. Have faith in our Lord Jesus' forgiveness and hope in His love
2. Recognize our sins and repent in our hearts
3. Have the will to stop the sin
4. Avoid the source of the sin so that we do not fall in the sin again

However, repentance alone is not enough. We need to confess our sins to a priest to obtain absolution and forgiveness.

The Sacrament of Repentance and Confession is a holy sacrament by which the sinner returns to God, confessing his sins before the priest. He then obtains absolution from the



priest through the authority granted to him by God. By this absolution, the confessor is granted the forgiveness of the sins he confessed.

**Repentance + Confession + Absolution  
=  
Forgiveness**



Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself instituted the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession. After His resurrection, He said to His disciples, **“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 20:22-23.

**Before confession, we should:**

1. Repent from the heart
2. Pray and ask God to help us remember all our sins and not repeat them



**During confession, we should:**

1. Be truthful in confessing all our sins and not hide any of them.
2. Not find excuses for ourselves

**After confession, we should:**

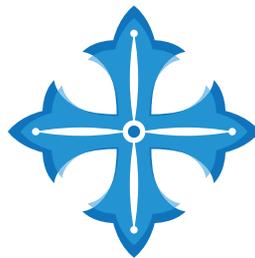
1. Pray and thank God that He forgave us
2. Ask God to help us not fall in the sin again
3. Follow the guidance of our father of confession
4. Partake in the Holy Communion



## MEMORY VERSE

***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”  
1 John 1:9***

Finally, when we receive the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession, we not only obtain the forgiveness of sins, but we also return to our first image as children of God. Just like in the parable of the prodigal son, when he returned to his father, the father was happy to see him come back home and accepted him. We also obtain hope in eternal life because through the Cross of our Lord Jesus, the door of Paradise was opened. With our Baptism, Confirmation, Repentance and Confession and Communion we have a place in the kingdom of heaven. These four sacraments are essential to our salvation.



## The Sinful Woman Washes Jesus' Feet



### Across

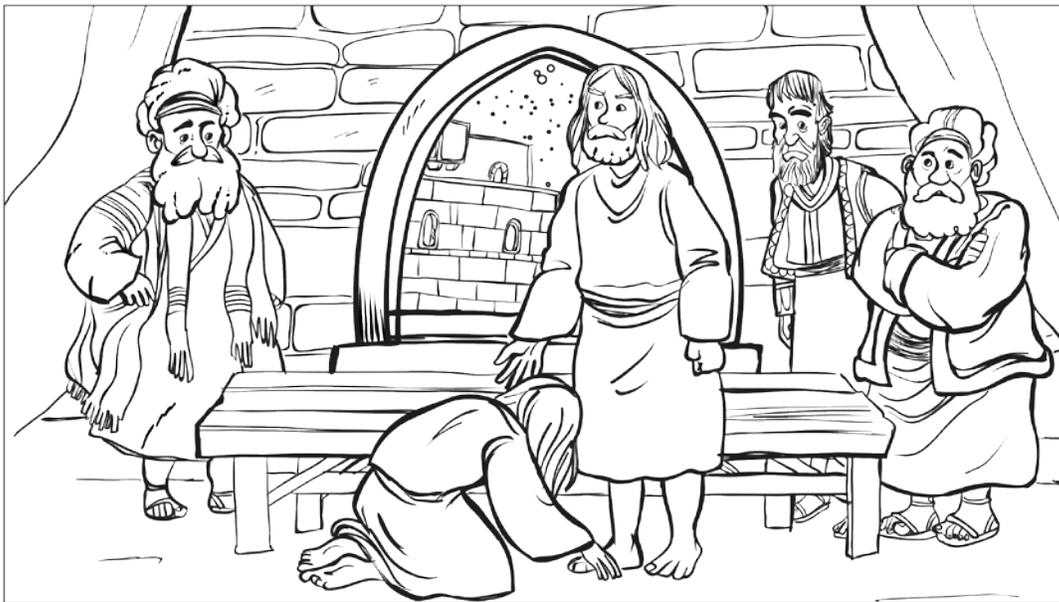
- Using her tears and hair, she continued to wash Jesus's feet and then she \_\_\_\_\_ them.
- The woman who came to Jesus was known to everyone in the town to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
- The creditor in the story forgives both the men their \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus says, "The woman loves much, because she is \_\_\_\_\_ much."
- Which Pharisee invited Jesus to his house for dinner?

### Down

- After she started to wash Jesus's feet, \_\_\_\_\_ started to fall from her eyes from the weight of her sins.
- In the story Jesus tells, the first man owes the creditor 50 \_\_\_\_\_, and the second man owed 500.
- Jesus was invited to be questioned, observed, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- The woman washed Jesus's feet with the finest \_\_\_\_\_ she could afford.

## Jesus Anointed By The Sinful Woman

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



## The Doctrine Of Redemption

On the last day of creation, God said, **“Let Us make man in our image according to Our likeness” Genesis 1:26.** He finished His work with a “personal touch.” God formed Adam from the dust and gave him life by sharing His own breath, differentiating him from all the other creatures that He had made.



**“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” Genesis 1:27.**

God gave man free will when He said to him, **“of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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 2:16-17.**



Unfortunately, Adam and Eve misused the free will God gave them. They listened to the serpent and ate from the forbidden tree. They disobeyed God and fell into sin and thus all their descendants inherited sin.

## THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

The judgment of death fell on Adam and all his descendants. **“The day you shall eat you shall surely die.”** As St. Paul writes, **the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)** and the judgment of death means separation from God. That’s why they were kicked out of the Garden of Eden.



Also, because of sin, Adam and Eve’s nature was corrupted and all their descendants with them. Therefore, man inherited the sin and the corrupted nature as a result of Adam’s sin. As St. Paul said:

### **MEMORY VERSE:**

***“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Romans 5:12***

## RETURNING TO GOD TO RESTORE THE LIFE LOST DUE TO SIN

Because God loved man, He did not want to create another human. However, the judgment of death had to be removed and our nature renewed from the corruption of sin. There lies the Divine dilemma. God is fully Holy and fully Just. He cannot just forgive man due to His justice and also forgiveness would not renew humanity’s corrupted sinful nature.

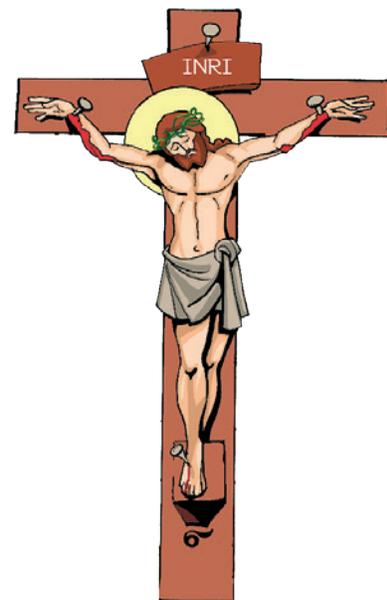


The only solution was a redeemer who would take on the penalty of death on behalf of all humanity and renew its corrupted nature.

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REDEEMER

### The redeemer had to be:

1. Human since man was the one who sinned.  
The redeemer cannot be an angel or any other creature.
2. Able to die on behalf of mankind and take away the sentence of death that was put on Adam and his descendants.
3. Without sin, because if he had sin, he would need a redeemer himself.
4. Stronger than death to conquer death and give us victory and life.
5. Unlimited so he can redeem all mankind from Adam to the end of the days.
6. A creator so he can renew our nature that was corrupted by the sin.



These characteristics can be found in God alone because of His great love, God sent His only Son down to earth. Jesus was incarnated from St. Mary, the Virgin. He died on the cross instead of us to redeem us and take away the sentence of death from us. As St. Peter said,



## MEMORY VERSE

***“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”***

**1 Peter 1:18-19**

He died on the cross and on the third day He rose from death. Through God’s incarnation, death and resurrection, He redeemed mankind. He took away the death sentence from us and renewed our nature.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross can take away the sin of the whole world. For us to deserve this redemption, we have to believe and be baptized. When we sin, we have to confess and partake in the Holy Communion.

Redemption through the cross was in God’s mind from the beginning. The Old Testament contains many prophecies, symbols and rites that help us understand the concept of redemption.





## A. PROPHECIES

David the prophet prophesied about Jesus' betrayal by Judas and details surrounding His Cross, His death and His resurrection

### **Psalm 22:16-18**

They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

### **John 19:23-24**

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

### **Zechariah 11:12**

Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.

### **Matthew 26:14-15**

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.

## B. SACRIFICES

All the accepted sacrifices in the Old Testament were a symbol for our Lord Jesus Christ. The people offered them for the forgiveness of their sins. The blood sacrifices were a symbol of Christ. The idea was to bring an innocent animal to die on behalf of the sinner.



The Old testament sacrifices symbolized the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus on the Cross.

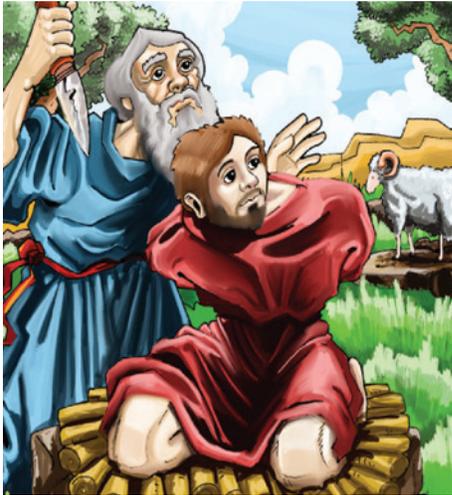
The sacrifice had to be:

- Without blemish –our Lord Jesus the Lamb of God was without blemish.
- Pure –our Lord Jesus was without sin.
- The sinner put his hand on the head of the sacrifice and confessed his sin. The sin would be transmitted from the sinner to the sacrifice. The sacrifice then carries the sin and dies on his behalf. This is a symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ who carried the sin of the whole world and died on behalf of all humanity.

### C. CHARACTERS

Many characters of the Old Testament were also a symbol of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus on the cross. Among them was Isaac, Abraham’s beloved son, who went with his father carrying the wood of the burnt offering on his shoulder and came back alive. He was a symbol of our Lord Jesus who also obeyed His Father, carried His cross, was crucified and died, but resurrected and also came back alive.





Isaac was Abraham's only son from Sarah. God said to Abraham take your only son Isaac.

Our Lord Jesus is the only begotten Son (John 3:16).

Isaac did not do anything to deserve death.

Our Lord Jesus is without sin and does not deserve the punishment of death (1 John 3:5).

Isaac carried the wood of the burnt offering and walked to the land of Moriah. Isaac was bound and laid on the altar.

Our Lord Jesus carried the cross and walked to Golgotha.

Our Lord Jesus' hands and feet were nailed to the cross.

Isaac obeyed his father when he bound him and laid him on the altar.

Our Lord Jesus Christ obeyed to the point of death, even the death of the cross, with His own will on our behalf. His will was His Father's will.

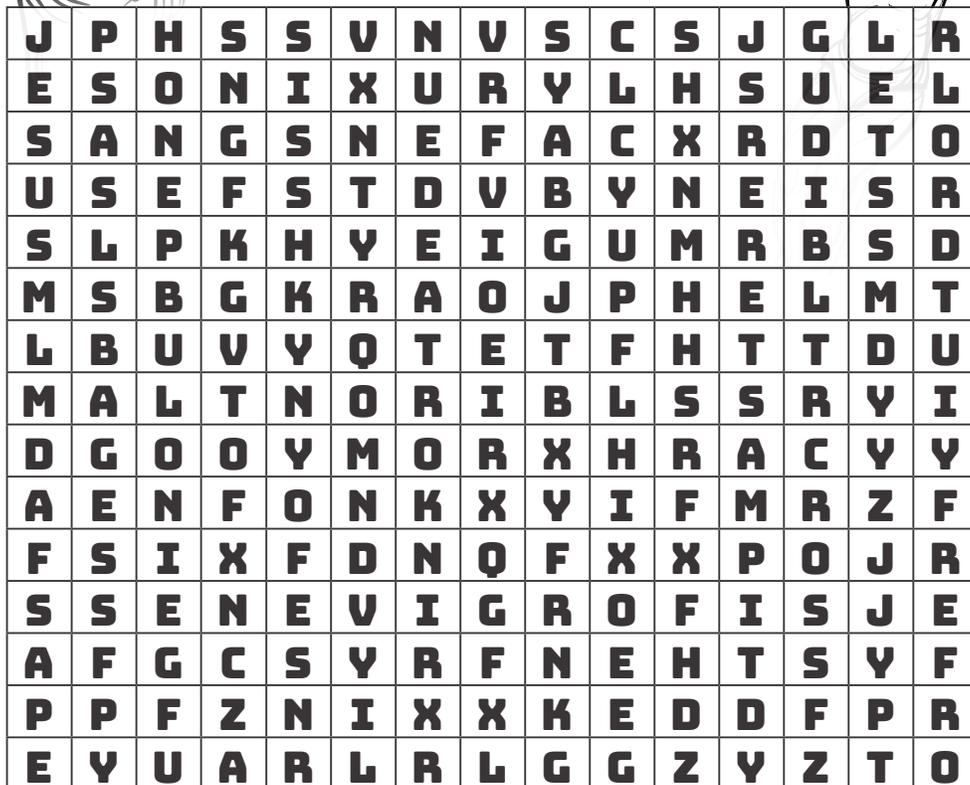
Isaac returned to his house alive.

Our Lord Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead and ascended to heaven.

## Redemption Word Search



Discover the hidden words.



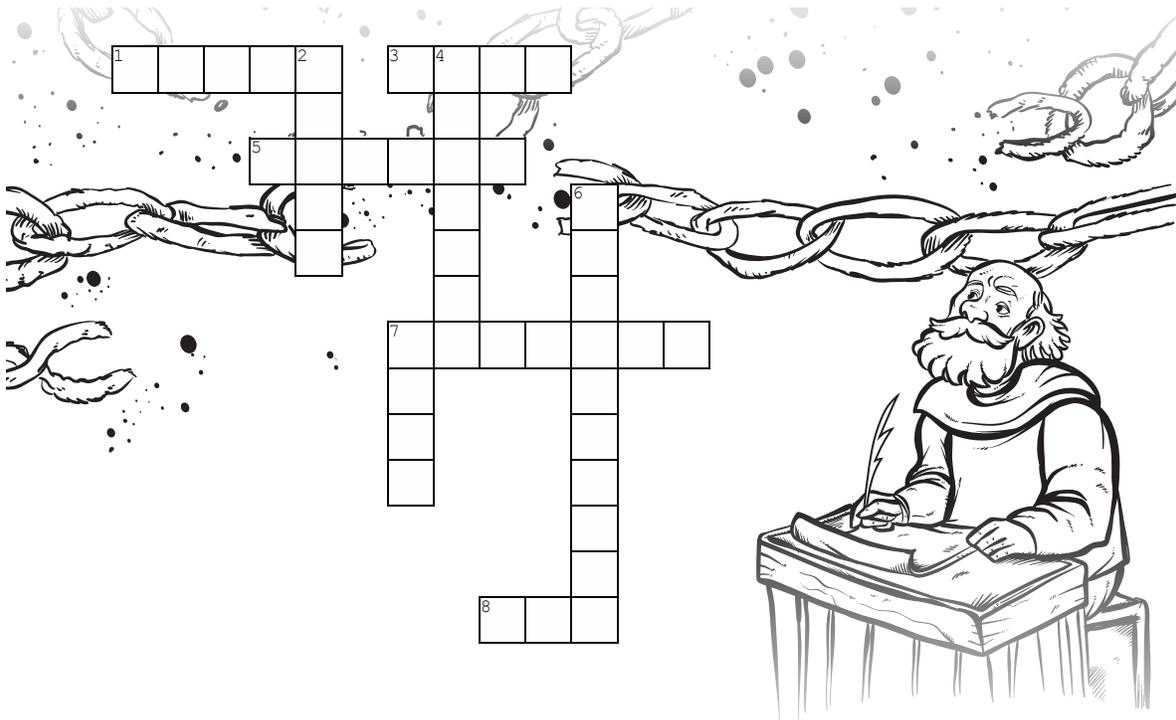
### Word Bank

BLOOD  
SLAVERY  
MASTER  
SIN

REDEMPTION  
CHRIST  
DAUGHTERS  
SONS

FORGIVENESS  
JESUS  
CROSS  
LORD

## Redemption Crossword



### Across

1. In him we have redemption through his \_\_\_\_\_, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.
3. Jesus said "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you \_\_\_\_\_."
5. Slavery means being owned by a \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Redemption is an act of purchasing an individual from the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is a form of slavery.

### Down

2. For the wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
4. The riches of the world will eventually come to an end, but the benefits of Jesus' redemption are \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross purchased our \_\_\_\_\_.
7. As slaves to sin, our end would be death. As slaves to Christ we are adopted as \_\_\_\_\_ and daughters of God.

## St. Mark The Apostle

St. Mark was born in the city of Cyrene, one of the Five Western Cities in Pentapolis, the western part of Libya. He was born to wealthy Jewish parents. His father Aristopolos and his mother Mary raised him in the fear of God and took great care of his education. He studied the Torah and was fluent in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.



His Jewish name was John, which means “God is gracious” and his Roman name was Mark, which means, “Hammer.” His parents migrated to Israel because of the Barbarian attacks on their town and finally settled in Jerusalem.

They had a house in Jerusalem during the time of our Lord Jesus’ ministry. That’s how St. Mark met our Lord Jesus and was one of His 70 disciples. His mother Mary was one of the women who were serving our Lord Jesus and invited Him to her house. Her house was one of the famous houses in the history of Christianity because in it the following important biblical events took place:



1. On Holy Thursday, our Lord Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples. On that day Jesus washed His disciples’ feet and instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist

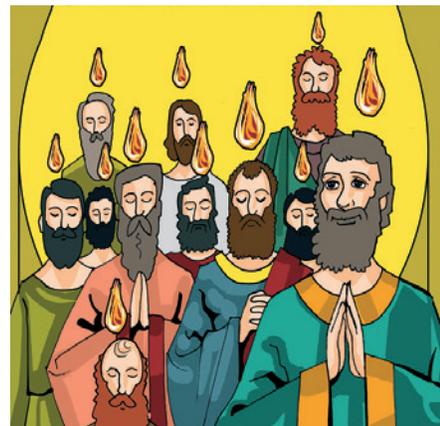
2. After the resurrection, our Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples. This was also where the disciples gathered to pray.
3. The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples on the day of the Pentecost.

St. Mark's house is considered all over the world to be the first Christian Church. During this time, St. Mark was learning the Christian faith from our Lord Jesus. That's why the Coptic Orthodox church calls St. Mark "The Beholder of God," "The Apostle" and "The Evangelist."



### **ST. MARK'S FIRST MIRACLE:**

One day St. Mark and his father encountered a ferocious lion and lioness. Through St. Mark's prayer in the name of Jesus, the beasts fell dead. Because of this miracle, St. Mark's father believed in our Lord Jesus.



After receiving the Holy Spirit, St. Mark started his service with St. Peter in Jerusalem and Judea – St. Mark was one of St. Peter's relatives. St. Mark also served with St. Paul and St. Barnabas in their first missionary journey. He then served with St. Barnabas in Cyprus. When St. Paul asked St. Mark to go to him, he went and helped him in the service. He served in Cyrene and preached there for many years.

Finally, he preached in Egypt. When St. Mark first arrived to Egypt, he went to Alexandria. When he entered the city, his shoe was torn because of all the walking he had done. He went to a cobbler called Anianus to repair it. A cobbler is a person who fixes shoes.

While Anianus was repairing St. Mark's shoe, the tool pierced his finger. Anianus shouted in Greek saying "EIS THEOS" which means "O, One God." When St. Mark heard these words, his heart rejoiced. He found it suitable to talk to him about the One God. St. Mark took some clay, spat on it and applied it to Anianus' finger, saying in the Name of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The wound was healed immediately.



St. Mark started to talk to Anianus about our Lord Jesus Christ, His Incarnation, His Death, His Resurrection, His Redemption and His Ascension to heaven to prepare a place for us.

Anianus invited St. Mark to go to his house and brought to him his family. St. Mark preached to them about our Lord Jesus. They all believed and he baptized them. They became the first fruit of St. Mark's ministry in Egypt.

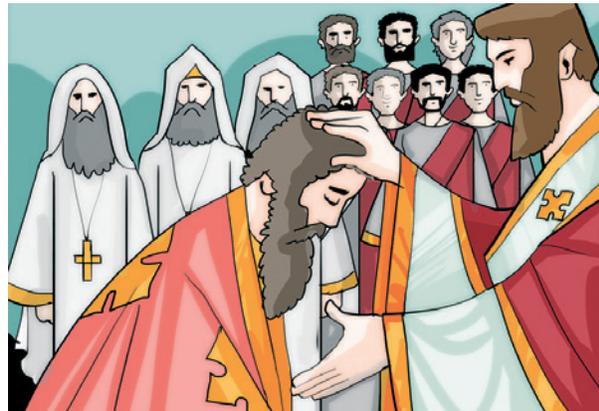


The Christian faith spread all over Egypt and the number of believers increased. When the pagans of the city heard that, they were very angry and wanted to slay St. Mark.

The faithful advised him to leave for a short while to preserve him for the benefit of the church and its service. St. Mark ordained St. Anianus a Bishop for Alexandria, along with three priests and seven deacons. He went to the Five Western Cities, remained

there for two years preaching, and ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons. He then went to Rome to serve with St. Paul and stayed in Rome until the martyrdom of St. Paul.

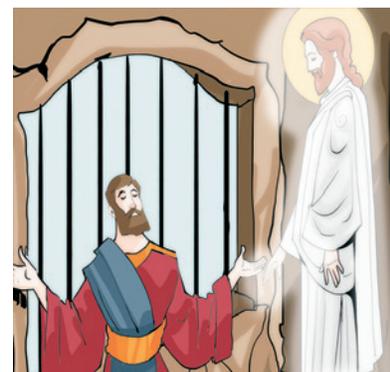
After that, St. Mark returned to Alexandria. He found that the believers had increased in number so he built a church for them. He continued to preach and to teach the believers about the Christian faith and the number of Christians increased every day. That's why our church calls him "the Disperser of the Idols."



It came to pass, when he was celebrating the feast of the Resurrection, the pagans attacked the church. They seized St. Mark, bound him with a rope and dragged him in the roads of Alexandria, and the ground of the city was covered with his blood.



They cast him that night into a dark prison. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him and gave him peace and told him that he will receive the crown of martyrdom. The next morning, the pagans took St. Mark from prison. They tied his neck with a thick rope and did the same as the day before. St. Mark delivered up his soul in the hand of God and received the crown of martyrdom on the 30th day of Baramouda.





The pagans then gathered firewood and prepared a big fire with the intention of burning St. Mark's body. A severe storm blew and heavy rains fell. They became frightened and fled away in fear. The believers came and took the holy body, wrapped it up and placed it in a coffin that they laid in a secret place in the church.



St. Mark's ministry was widespread in many places not only in Egypt.

### **MEMORY VERSE:**

***"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**

St. Mark was very faithful in his teaching. He contributed a lot to the Coptic Orthodox Church:

#### **1. The Gospel according to St. Mark**

He wrote the Gospel according to St. Mark, which was the first Gospel written.

#### **2. The Divine Liturgy (St. Cyril's Liturgy)**

He put together the prayer of the Divine Liturgy that he prayed and taught to St. Anianus after him. It is one of the oldest



liturgies in the history of the Christian church. Pope Cyril I made some modifications and additions to the Liturgy which is why it is now known as "St. Cyril's Liturgy".



### 3. **The Catechetical School of Alexandria**

He instituted the Christian Catechetical school of Alexandria, to stand before the teachings of the pagan philosophers. Many Christian leaders who served the church graduated from it.

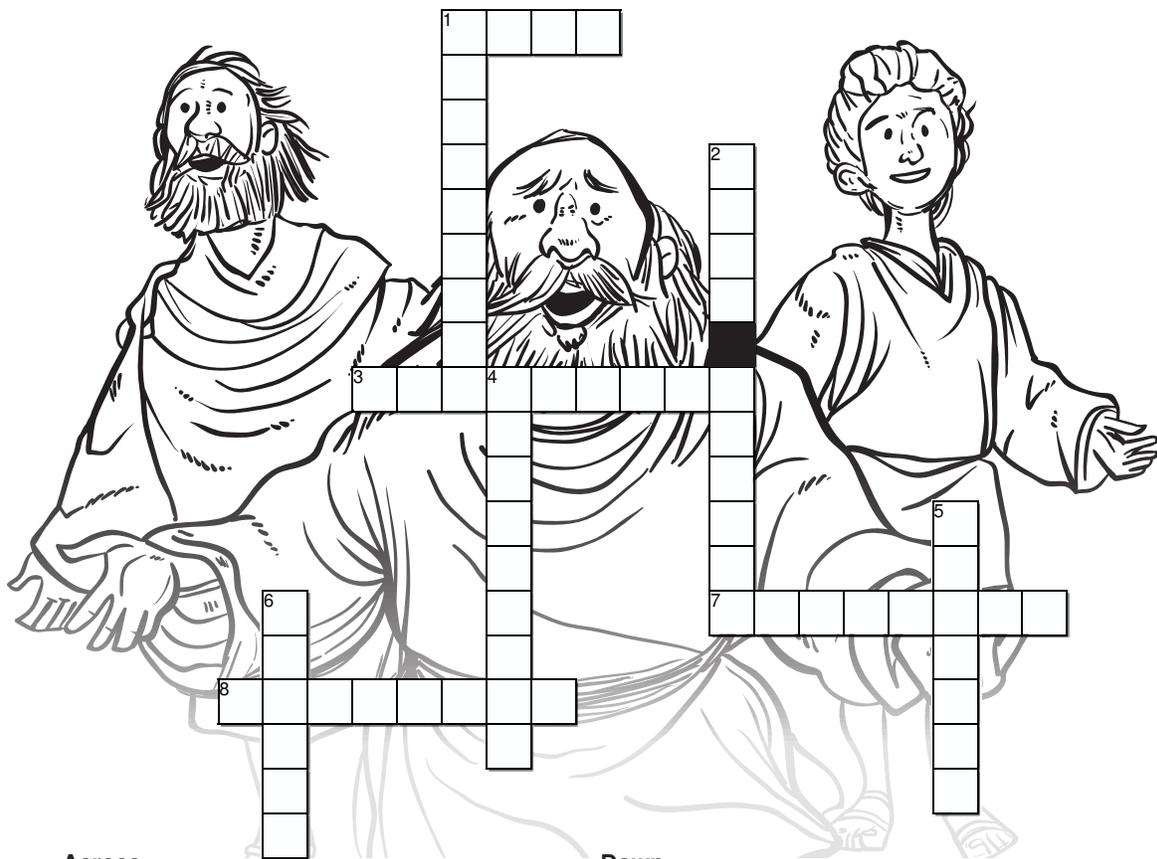
### **ST. MARK'S TITLES**

1. **The Beholder of God** - St. Mark witnessed many events that were performed by our Lord Jesus Christ in his house
2. **The Evangelist** - He wrote the Gospel according to St. Mark
3. **The founder of the church in Egypt** - He was the first to preach Christianity in Egypt
4. **The Apostle** - He was one of the seventy apostles appointed by our Lord Jesus
5. **The Martyr** - He shed his blood for the sake of our Lord Jesus

### **ST. MARK'S FEASTS IN THE COPTIC CHURCH**

1. **30 Baramouda** - His martyrdom
2. **30 Babah** - The discovery of his head and the consecration of his church
3. **17 Baounah** - The return of his relics from Rome to Egypt during the papacy of Pope Kyrillos VI

## Apostles' Ministry



### Across

1. The disciples had the big job of spreading the good news of Jesus's \_\_\_\_\_, death and resurrection to the world.
3. Jesus said, "Go and make \_\_\_\_\_ of all nations."
7. That day, three \_\_\_\_\_ people were brought into God's family.
8. Peter ran out into the crowded streets and told everyone in their own language to "Repent and be \_\_\_\_\_!"

### Down

1. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, they could speak new \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Who did Jesus say was coming after he left?
4. What was another name Jesus gave to the Holy Spirit?
5. After a final lesson, the \_\_\_\_\_ opened and Jesus rose up into the sky.
6. What appeared on the disciples' heads?

## Fasting

Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Physically speaking, fasting means to abstain from food for a certain period of time and then to eat simple food, without animal or dairy products.

Spiritually speaking, fasting gives us the opportunity to control our body to protect it and to give your spirit power over your body.

This was the first commandment that God gave Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when He told them that they could eat from all the trees in the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. During the fast, we train ourselves to do all what pleases God. Fasting helps us to be filled spiritually and brings us closer to God.

Our Lord Jesus Himself fasted for 40 days and 40 nights before starting His ministry. He rejected all the temptations of the devil. He explained to us that spiritual food is more important than physical food when He said to Satan:

### **MEMORY VERSE:**

***“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4***

This was not a new commandment in the New Testament but it was in the Old Testament scripture (Deuteronomy 8:3).





The main purpose of the fasting is to control our lives, our bodies, our spirits and our souls and put them in submission before God.

### HOW DO WE ATTAIN SPIRITUAL SATISFACTION DURING THE FAST?

During the fast we have to be closer to God through:

1. Prayer
2. Repentance
3. Practicing spiritual virtues

Through fasting, we acquire spiritual virtues that help us get closer to God. The main goal is to love God.

### THINGS TO DO

The fast should be accompanied with prayer, almsgiving, bible reading, repentance, divine liturgies, etc. It should be an opportunity for us to acquire virtues and live with them for the rest of our life.



### THINGS TO AVOID

During the fast, we should not seek people's praise by showing that we are fasting. As our Lord Jesus said,



### MEMORY VERSE:

***“But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matthew 6:17-18***



We should avoid and flee from sin, especially the habits that we easily fall into, such as judging, lying, swearing, etc. because fasting without repentance is not true fasting.

The church wants to take us back to the original status of man before the fall. Back then, man's food was vegetarian but God allowed man to eat meat only after the flood.



There are examples in the bible about abstaining from certain foods. For example, Daniel and the three youth asked to be given vegetables to eat and when tested against the others, their features were better than all the young men who ate from the king's delicacies.

In the Old Testament, Moses the prophet fasted for 40 days to be worthy to speak to God and to receive the Law from Him. In the New Testament, St. Paul referred to fasting in his letter to the Corinthians, saying, **"in fasting often" 2 Corinthians 11:27.**

Not only do we find examples of individual fasting in the Bible but also communal fasting. In the Old Testament, Esther and all her people fasted so that God may have mercy on them. He accepted their fasting and prayers and saved them (Esther 4:3-16). Likewise, in the New Testament, it was said about the apostles, **"as they ministered to the Lord and fasted" Acts 13:2.** Communal fasting shows that we all worship God in one spirit.

The church fathers, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, put for us fixed periods of fasting that have beautiful spiritual meanings. Thus, we can all be in one spirit in our worship and fasting.

## THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH FASTS

- + **A. Wednesdays** - Commemoration of the betrayal of Judas and his plot to deliver our Lord Jesus to the Jews.
- + **B. Fridays** - Commemoration of our Lord Jesus' suffering and crucifixion.
- + **C. Advent Fast** - Just as Moses fasted for 40 days to receive the tablets with the Law, we fast to receive the Incarnate Word of God. An additional 3 days were added for the miracle of moving the mountain of El-mokatam.
- + **D. Nativity Baramoun** - A preparation for the Feast of the Nativity.
- + **E. Epiphany Baramoun** - A preparation for the Feast of the Epiphany.
- + **F. Jonah's fast (Nineveh's fast)** - Just as the people of Nineveh fasted and repented.
- + **G. The Great Lent** - Preparation week plus 40 days that Jesus fasted plus the Holy Week.
- + **H. The Fast of the Apostles** - The Apostles fasted after they received the Holy Spirit, before starting their ministry.
- + **I. St. Mary's fast** - A commemoration of the fasting of the Apostles to see the assumption of St. Mary's body to heaven.



A



B



C



D



E



F



G

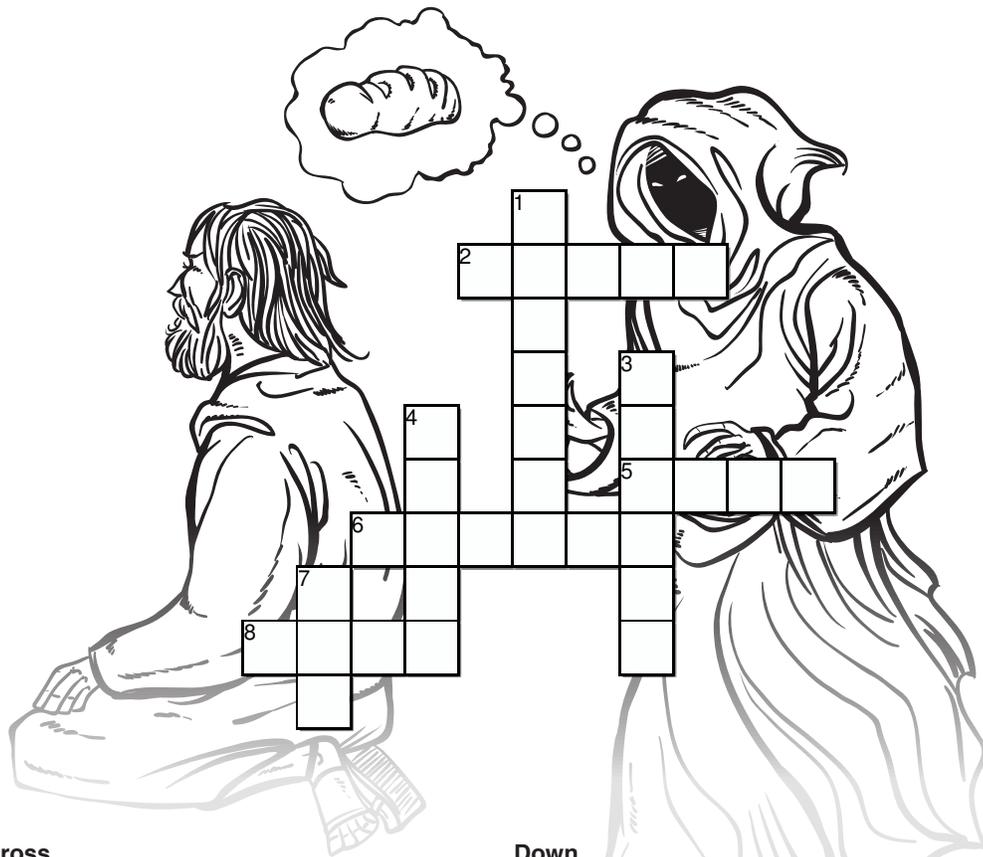


H



I

## Jesus Tempted Crossword



### Across

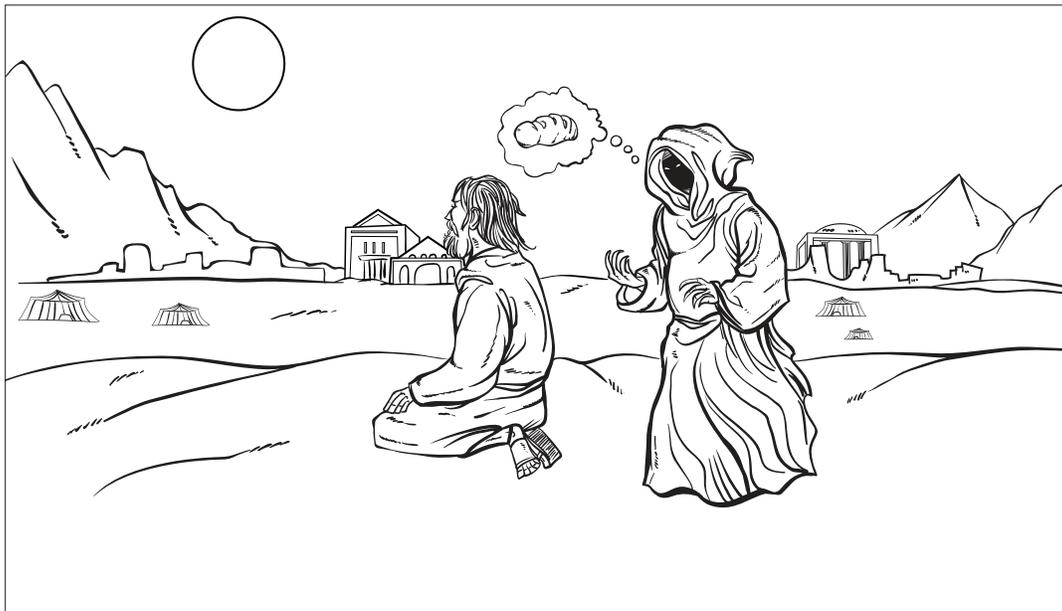
2. How many days did Jesus stay in the wild?
5. On the mountain, Jesus told Satan to "Be \_\_\_\_\_."
6. What high building did Satan take Jesus to the top of?
8. Jesus said that man should live by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God

### Down

1. On the mountain, Satan wanted Jesus to \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who did Satan say would take care of Jesus if he jumped off the temple?
4. Satan asked Jesus to turn the stones into \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Jesus was focused on \_\_\_\_\_ instead of himself, to resist temptation by Satan.

# Temptation Of Christ

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



## St. Paul the Teacher of the World

St. Paul used the talents that God gave him, to teach and preach in the whole world. In a very short time, he was able to preach Christianity in different continents—Europe and Asia. He endured many hardships with joy to achieve his goal. Many people profited from his preaching. He wrote 14 epistles in the New Testament, from which we continue to learn until today.

St. Paul was born in Tarsus in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). It was a main center for Greek philosophy. He was a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin, but he had the Roman citizenship. His Hebrew name was Saul meaning, “asked for” and his Greek name was Paul meaning “small.” He grew up in Jerusalem and was brought up by Gamaliel, a leading authority in the Jewish religious establishment (Sanhedrin). He studied the Old Testament and Jewish history from an early age.



In his early years, he was persecuting the church. The Bible tells us that when St. Stephen was stoned, St. Paul was guarding the clothes of the people who stoned him. At that time, St. Paul thought that he was doing what was pleasing to God.

As he was traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus on a mission to arrest the Christians there, our Lord Jesus appeared to him. He was then transformed





from a persecutor of the churches to an apostle and preacher of Christianity. He traveled far and wide preaching the good news of God's salvation.

### **The desert of Arabia**

After his conversion, he did not start his service right away. He went to Arabia for 3 years to learn more about the faith and then he returned to Damascus.

### **Damascus**

He preached in the synagogues that our Lord Jesus was the Son of God. The Jews persecuted him. He then left and went to Jerusalem.

### **Jerusalem**

He preached in Jerusalem and the Jews tried to kill him.

### **Tarsus**

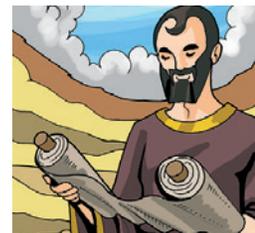
The believers helped him escape from Jerusalem and he went to Tarsus and stayed there for 5 years.

### **Antioch**

St. Barnabas joined him and they spent one year preaching in Antioch after which they returned to Jerusalem.

Afterwards St. Paul, St. Barnabas and St. Mark left Jerusalem and went to Antioch. From there St. Paul began his three missionary trips.

On his missionary trips, St. Paul preached to many different people:





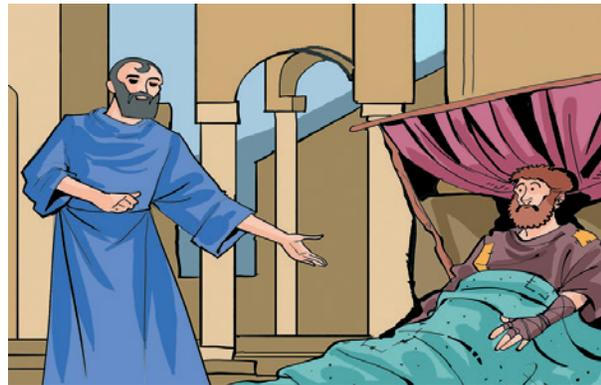
### **MINISTRY IN THE SYNAGOGUES**

The synagogue of the Jews was the place where the Jews and the gentiles who entered Judaism assembled to pray, worship and read parts of the Old Testament. The synagogues were St. Paul's main target on his missionary trips because a great multitude assembled there.



### **MINISTRY TO THE WEAK**

The city of Lystra was a city in Asia, and one of the Roman colonies. There a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. St. Paul healed him and used the opportunity to preach God's message to everyone who witnessed the miracle.



### **MINISTRY TO THE PHILOSOPHERS**

The City of Athens was full of idols. When St. Paul saw that the city was given to the idols, his spirit was provoked. He started to preach about our Lord Jesus to the Jews and the Gentile worshipers. There, he encountered a group of philosophers, as there were many philosophers and poets in Athens. They wanted to know more about St. Paul's teachings. They took him





to Areopagus, which was a hill that was a meeting place for the councils of the city of Athens to discuss different matters and they asked St. Paul to speak about this new doctrine that he was preaching. St. Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious.” He told them that he saw an altar with the inscription “To the Unknown God” and that he will tell them about the One whom they worship without knowing. He called them for repentance.

Not only did St. Paul preach to different people, but he also preached in different circumstances, like while in prison, or in sickness, or on trial.

In the city of Lystra many people were resisting St. Paul’s preaching. They persuaded the multitudes, stoned St. Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. Despite his pain, his ministry did not stop. He continued teaching everyone about our Lord Jesus.



The Jews also persecuted St. Paul and resisted his ministry. When they saw him in Jerusalem, they raised the multitude against him. They dragged him outside the temple and beat him. The commander of the Roman troops arrested him. St. Paul asked to speak for himself and addressed the crowd, but the Jews raised up against him. The commander ordered that St. Paul be taken and flogged. St. Paul objected because it was not lawful to scourge a Roman man who was not condemned. During his trials and imprisonment, he continued preaching to everyone. St.





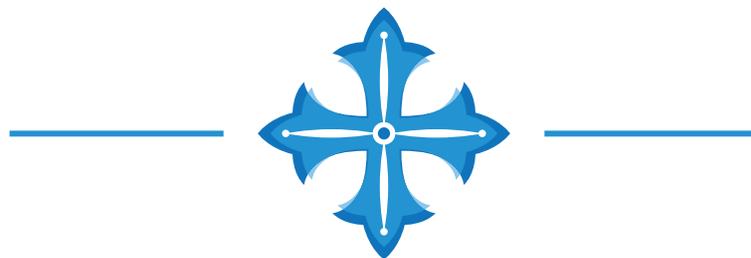
Paul was sent to Rome because he appealed to Caesar. He preached during his journey and even during his stay in Rome.

On his way to Rome, there was a big storm and the ship was about to break. Everyone on board was scared, but St. Paul reassured them and told them that an angel of God appeared to him and told him "Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you."

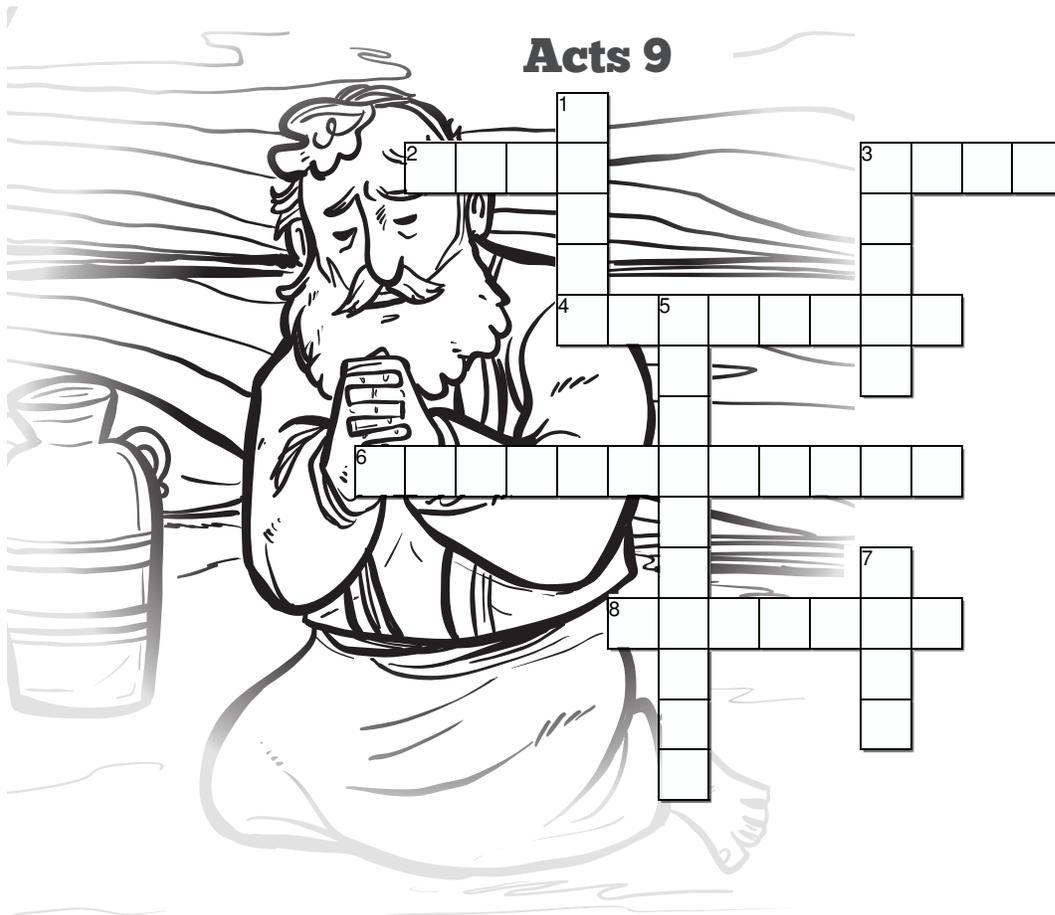
In Rome, although he was in prison, St. Paul wrote 4 Epistles, which we call "the Prison Epistles" (Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians). St. Paul set a great example of struggle for the salvation of others. He outreached to each and every one in every circumstance, as he said,

**MEMORY VERSE:**

***"To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."***  
**1 Corinthians 9:22**



## Paul's Conversion



### Across

2. What new name did God give Saul?
3. Religious leaders were putting Christians in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What city was Saul traveling to?
6. Paul suffered through jail, stoning, shipwreck, beating, riots, \_\_\_\_\_, and pain to bring the gospel far and wide.
8. Who did God send to Saul to heal him?

### Down

1. A light that was brighter than the sun left Saul \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Who asked Saul, "Why are you persecuting me?"
5. God chose Paul to be a \_\_\_\_\_, and spread the good news of Christ.
7. Who was the worst enemy of the Christians, and the one who had presided over Stephen's death?

## Paul's Missionary Journeys

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.





**Memorization**

## PSALM 124

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people both now and forevermore. The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, for then the righteous might use their hands to do evil. Do good, O lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart. But those who turn to crooked ways the Lord will banish with the evildoers. Peace be upon Israel. Alleluia

**Memorization**

## GOSPEL OF THE 11TH HOUR

Gospel According to Saint Luke (4:38-41)

Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So He bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them. When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying His hands on each one, He healed them. Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew He was the Christ. Glory be to God forever, Amen.



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