



## Summer Festival | 2026

But you must continue in the things which you have learned - II Timothy 3:14



ΜΙΑ  
ΦΥΣΙΣ  
ΤΟΥ  
ΘΕΟΥ  
ΛΟΓΟΥ  
ΣΕΣΑΡ-  
ΚΩΜΕΝΗ

Gr 7-9 | English Edition



**His Holiness Pope  
Tawadros II**



**His Grace Bishop  
Rewis**



**118th Pope of Alexandria  
and Patriarch of  
The See of Saint Mark**

**General Bishop of  
the Diocese of  
Melbourne and its  
affiliated regions**

## **Appreciation**

The summer festival central committee of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Melbourne and its affiliated regions would like to give thanks and appreciation to the **Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States** ([www.smfsus.org](http://www.smfsus.org)) for their blessed and tireless work in the translation, revision and art-work of St. Mark's Festival (Mahragan Al Keraza) books from the original Arabic version under the guidance and prayers of **H.G Bishop Youssef**.

May The Lord bless all their fruitful services and for many years to come.

**In Christ,**

**SF Melbourne Central Committee.**

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# Continue in What You Have Learned

## 2 Timothy 3:14

St. Paul wrote to his disciple, St. Timothy, saying, “Continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them” (2 Timothy 3:14)

St. Paul advised St. Timothy about the importance of striving with a spirit of strength, not one of hopelessness, to preserve the sound faith. He encouraged him to refute heresies with firmness, but also with meekness and love.

This is the theme of St. Mark Festival this year: there will always be resistance to the work of God. The devil will always resist the truth, but our reassurance is in the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ:



“The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church.” (Matthew 16:18)

### I. One Faith, Sound Teaching

#### a. **Why preserve the faith?**

- This is the faith that our Lord Jesus Christ established, and the apostles preached. It was preserved by the Church living it and handing it down pure and sound from generation to generation.
- Our Church has kept the faith unchanged, as it was handed down to us through the Holy Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers, and the Canons of the Ecumenical Councils. It is recorded in Church Tradition.

#### b. **Characteristics of an Orthodox Believer:**

- **Filled with Christ:**  
Knows Him intellectually, understanding that He is one of the Holy Trinity; abides in Him through the Eucharist; and has a relationship with Him through prayers.
- **Filled with the Holy Bible:**  
Faithfully knows God’s message to stand against all the wrong teachings that we come across every day.
- **Filled with the Holy Orthodox Church:**  
The congregation of *believers (one doctrine)*, gathered in the *sanctified* house of God (*rite*), led by the *clergy (Sacrament)*, in the presence of *angels and saints (tradition and role models)*.
- **Filled with the Church Fathers:**  
Knows their lives and righteousness, follows their example and teachings.
- **Integrated:**  
In the community, and not isolated.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### II. Resources of the Coptic Orthodox Teaching

- a. **The Holy Bible:** The Holy Bible is the foundation of all Church teachings. No teaching may contradict it; every teaching must align with the Scriptures.
- b. **Church Tradition:** The rites of the Church and teachings of the Fathers have been handed down from generation to generation, as they received it from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It is through Tradition that we received the Holy Bible.
- c. **Liturgy:** The Liturgy is a trusted resource like the canons of the Ecumenical Councils. We pray what we believe and do not teach anything different.



In the Divine Liturgy, we declare our faith in the Trinity, the incarnation of the Only Begotten Son of God, His redemption of humanity, His death on the Cross and His resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, and sending us the Holy Spirit, the Second Coming, and eternal life.

We also proclaim our belief in the Sacraments and the work of the Holy Spirit in us, that St. Mary is the Theotokos, and our belief in the intercession of the saints.

- d. **Biography and Teachings of Church Fathers:** The Church Fathers explained and taught the sound faith as agreed upon by the Church. Their lives and writings continue to guide us today.
- e. **Canons of the Ecumenical Councils:** These are decisions unanimously agreed upon in the council.

### III. Abiding in the Sound Faith and Handing It Down to Generations

- a. **Our Lord Jesus Christ established the Church on the rock of the Orthodox faith:**
  - “On this rock I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18)
  - He instructed His apostles to care for His people: “Tend My sheep” (John 21:16)
  - And to preserve the faith and teach it to everyone: “Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20)
- b. **Our Coptic Orthodox Church firmly rejects any teaching that differs from the true faith:**

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let them be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8)





## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### IV. Why and How to Reject Heresies and Wrong Teachings

#### a. **Why Reject Heresies:**

Our Lord Jesus Christ warned us of the false prophets who are “ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15).

Throughout the ages, the Church convened councils to refute heresies and to separate heretics when they insisted on their wrong teachings.

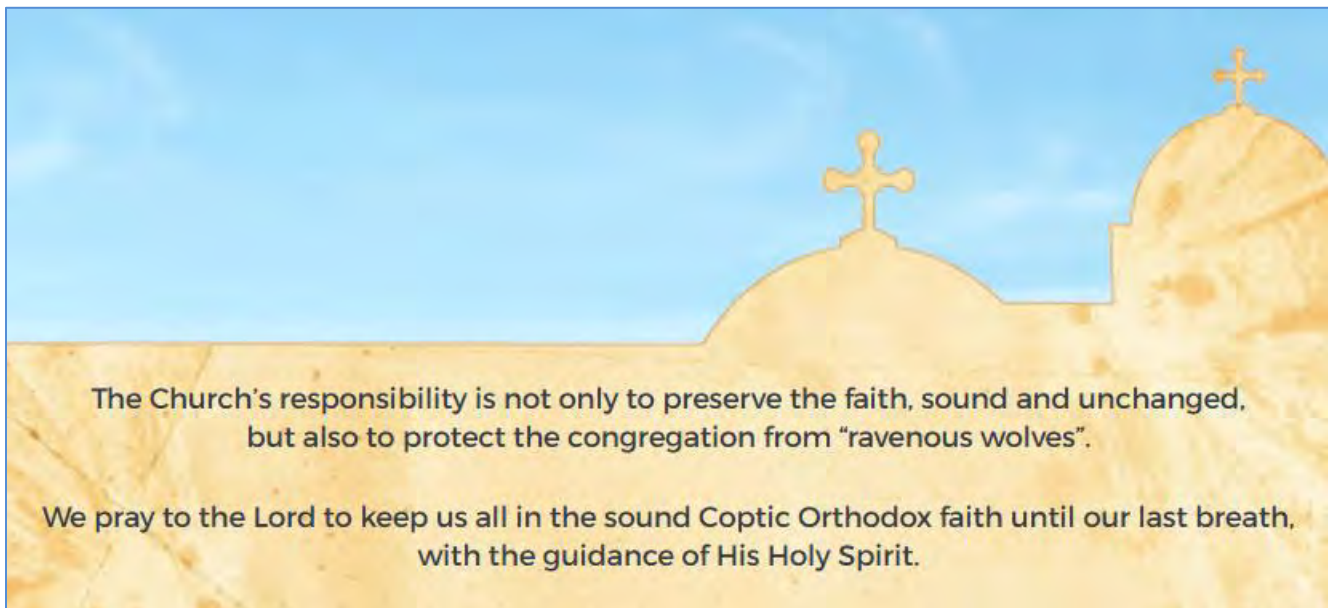
We honor the heroes of the faith who participated in keeping the true faith sound, such as St. Athanasius, St. Cyril, St. Dioscorus, St. Samuel the Confessor, and others.

We, too, should follow in their footsteps, remaining faithful in keeping the true faith, pure and unchanged, just as we received it.



#### b. **How the Church Handles Heresies:**

- **Warning:** “warn those who are unruly.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- **Avoidance:** “Note those who cause divisions... and avoid them.” (Romans 16:17)  
“From such withdraw yourself.” (1 Timothy 6:5)
- **Rebuke:** “Rebuke them sharply.” (Titus 1:13-14)
- **Separation:** “Put away from yourselves the evil person.” (1 Corinthians 5:13)



# The Inheritance of My Fathers

## 1 Kings 17-22

The First Book of Kings is a continuation of the Second Book of Samuel. It tells the story of the kings over a period of about 100 years, starting from the end of David's life, followed by his son Solomon taking over the kingdom, and continuing until Ahab, king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, around 1000 B.C..

### The Purpose of the Book

The Book tells us the story of many kings who faced similar circumstances. Some walked in the way of the Lord, holding firm to His commandments and teachings, while many others turned away from His commandments, led the people astray, and contributed to the collapse of the kingdom. It teaches us that man has the freedom to choose either to be firm in spiritual teachings or to blame circumstances. Circumstances should not be an obstacle to hold on to God's commandments.

- It is not just a historical narrative of the kings' wars and deeds, but a spiritual look at historical events. The writer was inspired by God, who preserves those who hold fast to His commandments. We see that those who rely on Him are protected.
- The reason for the kingdom's collapse was the kings' pride, which is the reason for every division, split, and conflict within the church.
- The journey mentions the sins of the good kings without concealing the good deeds of the evil kings.

After a glorious period for Israel under the reign of King David then King Solomon, David's descendants failed to maintain the unity of the kingdom, and the people began to drift away from God.



God sends His prophets to warn the kings and the people, urging them to repent. However, only a few of the kings of Judah repented, while all the kings of the kingdom of Israel continued in their corruption.

**Writer of the Book:** Most likely the prophet Jeremiah, who quoted from the writings of the prophet Gad and the prophet Nathan.



# “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

**Sections of the Book:** The Book consists of 22 chapters and is divided into 3 parts:

## 1. Chapters 1–11

Begins with the story of Solomon, his coronation as king after the death of his father David, and continues until the end of his reign (**the united kingdom**).

## 2. Chapters 12–16

The kingdom splits after Solomon into the **Northern Kingdom**, which consists of 10 tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and the **Southern Kingdom**, led by Rehoboam son of Solomon. The Southern Kingdom consists of the tribes of **Judah and Benjamin**, with **Jerusalem** as its capital (**the divided kingdom**).

**We will study the third part of the book (Chapters 17–22).**

## 3. Chapters 17–22

The story of **the prophet Elijah** and **the kings of the Northern Kingdom**.

### Chapter 17: Elijah the Great Prophet

Elijah means "My God is Yahweh"

God sent the prophet Elijah at this critical time. His presence coincided with the reign of King Ahab. Elijah was one of the greatest prophets of Israel. The Lord had prepared him spiritually during this time of great deterioration. Elijah told King Ahab: **“There shall not be dew nor rain these years except at my word.” (1 Kings 17:1)**

This was because the people in their delusion believed that Baal, their idol, was the one who gave them rain and crops.

God arranged for ravens to bring Elijah bread and meat morning and evening, which is against the ravens' nature. He drank from the brook until it dried up because there was no rain. Then the Lord commanded him to go to Zarephath in Sidon. Elijah went there and met a widow who fed him. Her flour and oil didn't run out because of her faith. Despite being a Gentile, she was faithful in carrying out God's commandments.

Elijah asked the widow to bake him a cake first and then bake another one for herself and her son after. The woman acted as Elijah told her. Elijah, the widow and her household ate for many days during the time of famine.

The verse **“We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)** reminds us to trust God even when it's hard. Obeying God brings blessing, even when it doesn't make sense to us.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

Later, the widow's son became ill and died. Elijah prayed to God for the boy to return to life and God heard him.  
**"The word of the Lord in your mouth is truth." (1 Kings 17:24)**

Elijah did not write a book of prophecy, but he was honored greatly. He was present at the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor and ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire.

### Chapter 18: The Confrontation Between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

The Lord called Elijah to appear before Ahab after three years of no rain because God wanted to end the punishment and send rain upon the earth.

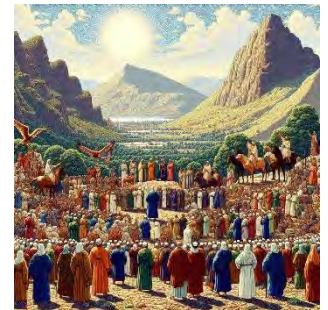
During that time, Jezebel had killed the prophets of the Lord. She took advantage of Elijah's disappearance and the lack of rain to try to please her gods. Perhaps the killing of the prophets was one of the reasons behind the drought and famine. God preserved a group of faithful people. Obadiah, who was responsible for King Ahab's affairs, feared the Lord greatly. At that time, there were 100 prophets, and Obadiah hid them in two caves and provided them with bread and water.

Ahab summoned Obadiah and asked him to search for springs and valleys to save the horses from dying. They split up and searched separately. During the search, Obadiah met Elijah. Elijah asked Obadiah to tell Ahab that he had found Elijah. But Obadiah was afraid that if he told Ahab and Elijah disappeared, he would be killed. Elijah assured him that he would come to see Ahab.

#### Mount Carmel:

Elijah asked Ahab to gather all the people of Israel on Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who ate at Jezebel's table.

Elijah came forward and asked the people: "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people said nothing.



Then Elijah asked the prophets of Baal to cut a bull and place it on the wood without setting it on fire, and Elijah would do the same. Then they will pray, and the god who answers with fire, is the true God. The people agreed. The prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice and called on Baal from morning till noon. But there was no response.

At noon, Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord that Ahab had broken. He took 12 stones according to the number of the tribes and made a trench around the altar. He cut the bull into pieces and put it on the wood. Then he asked for four pots of water to be poured over the offering and the wood. This was repeated three times until the water ran down and filled the trench around the altar. Elijah prayed to the Lord. The fire of the Lord fell, burned the offering, the wood, the stones, the dust, and even licked up the water in the trench.

## **“BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)**

When the people saw this, they fell on their faces and shouted, **“The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”** Then Elijah ordered them to seize the prophets of Baal, and none of them escaped.

The Lord had given Ahab many opportunities to repent: first through the drought and famine, and the second time through the miracle of fire and rain, and the lastly when he was saved from the Syrians. But he wasted all those opportunities.

### **Chapter 19: Elijah’s Depression**

Ahab told Jezebel, his wife, everything that had happened on Mount Carmel. In response, Jezebel sent a message to Elijah, that she would kill him.

Elijah fled to Beersheba, and instead of seeking God’s protection, he ran in fear. This was his first sin. God then asked Elijah twice, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

The second sin when Elijah asked God to take his life because he felt alone and afraid.

God then told Elijah to stand in His presence on the mountain. There was a powerful wind, followed by an earthquake, and then a fire, but God was not in any of these. After all that, there came a gentle whisper, and in that quiet moment, Elijah heard the voice of God.

### **The Call of Elisha:**

After this, Elijah found Elisha plowing with twelve pairs of oxen. Elijah threw his mantle on him as a sign that Elisha was chosen to be his disciple.

Elisha asked if he could go to kiss his parents. Then he slaughtered his oxen, cooked them to feed the people, then followed Elijah and served him. Elisha was one of the 7,000 people who did not bow to Baal.

It is important to run to God in times of trouble, not away from Him. He will support and comfort the faithful soul.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### Chapter 20: God is Glorified Through Elijah

God sent many warnings and miracles to encourage King Ahab to repent. Eventually, Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, along with 32 allied kings, horses, and chariots, besieged Samaria.

Ben-Hadad demanded to take all the silver, gold, wives, and children of the king of Israel. King Ahab agreed at first, saying, “I and all that I have are yours,” but the elders of Israel advised against this. Ben-Hadad became angry and threatened to take everything in the city, even the dust.



God loved Ahab. Despite King Ahab’s wickedness, God sent him a prophet who helped him win the battle against Ben Hadad. King Ahab chose 232 young officers of the provinces. They went out at noon while the King of Syria was eating and drinking in his tent.

God gave Israel a great victory! The Syrians fled, and Ben Hadad escaped on his horse.

Elijah the prophet warned the king of Israel that the king of Syria would return to fight him again in a year and should be prepared. **"Let not the one who puts on his armor boast like the one who takes it off" (1 Kings 20:11)**

Ben-Hadad’s advisors claimed Israel’s God was only strong in the hills. They suggested fighting on the plains instead and reorganized their army.

Ben-Hadad agreed to fight them in the plains and changed his army. He removed the kings and put captains instead.

The children of Israel looked like two small flocks of goats, while the Syrians filled the land. Once again, God supported the King of Israel in his battle against the Syrians, for God is the Lord of both hills and valleys. The children of Israel killed 100,000 Syrian soldiers in one day. The rest fled to the city of Aphek, where a wall fell on 27,000 of them.

However, Ahab disobeyed God again. Instead of destroying Ben-Hadad as commanded, he made a treaty and let him go.

A prophet disguised himself and approached Ahab with a message from the Lord. He revealed the king’s mistake and condemned him for letting go of the man God had determined to destroy.

Ahab returned home angry and refused to repent.

### **Chapter 21: Naboth's Vineyard**

King Ahab returned troubled after his victory because God warned him about the consequences of releasing the King of Syria. He went to his palace in Jezreel and there he saw a beautiful vineyard that belonged to Naboth.

King Ahab desired the vineyard, however Naboth refused to give it to him because it was the inheritance of his fathers. Ahab was very upset, he laid in his bed and refused to eat.

Jezebel asked why he was upset. When he told her about the vineyard, she promised to get the vineyard for him. She wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and nobles of the city where Naboth lived. In the letters, she instructed them to proclaim a fast and seat Naboth in a place of honor, then bring two scoundrels to testify falsely that he had blasphemed God and the king. Then they would stone him to death.

After Naboth's death, Ahab to take possession of the vineyard.

**Naboth** is a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ who was falsely accused even though He was completely innocent.

The word of the Lord came to Elijah to go to Ahab, who was in Naboth's vineyard, and speak to him. Elijah asked, "Have you murdered and also taken possession?" The Lord said: "In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood as well."

Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" Elijah replied strongly telling Ahab that God would bring disaster upon him just as He punished the evil kings before him. Jezebel would also be punished, along with all his descendants, for they had not followed the command of the Lord and His teachings but instead followed idols.

When Ahab heard Elijah's words, he tore his clothes and repented before God. Because of Ahab's humility and repentance, even though it was temporary, God delayed the punishment until his son's time.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### Chapter 22: The End of Ahab

The Lord gave Ahab a chance of three full years to repent, but he did not. Instead, he planned to take back Ramoth Gilead from Syria by force. He was encouraged by 400 prophets of Baal who fled from Elijah.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, visited Ahab, king of Israel. Ahab asked him to join him to get back Ramoth Gilead. Jehoshaphat agreed but he hesitated and said, **“Please inquire for the word of the Lord today”**.

Ahab gathered the 400 prophets and asked them if he should fight for Ramoth or refrain. They told him to go, **“for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king”**.

But Jehoshaphat doubted them and asked, **“Is there not still a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of him?”**

Ahab said that there was still one man whose name was Micaiah, the son of Imlah, but he had never prophesied good concerning him. Ahab called for Micaiah who stood courageously before the kings and said that he could see all Israel scattered on the mountains, like the sheep that have no shepherd. This meant that Ahab would die in battle, and Ahab understood that, so he ordered that Micaiah be imprisoned.

Despite the presence of a true prophet, Ahab chose to believe lies. Fearing that the prophet's words would come true, he disguised himself as an ordinary soldier and removed his royal robe. However, Ahab could not escape God's judgment; he was struck by an arrow and died near Ramoth, just as Micaiah prophesied.

**“I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things”  
(John 8:28)**





# Fall and Rise

## 1. God Creates Man:

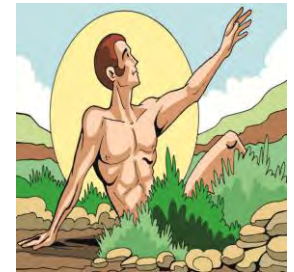
From the beginning, God loved man, even before He created him, the proof is that He prepared all the other creatures for him before He created man. He created man differently than all the other creatures. Man is the only creature into whom God breathed the breath of life from His mouth.

**“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)**



Because of God’s love for man, He created him in His image.

**“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)**



## 2. He Gives Him the Commandment:

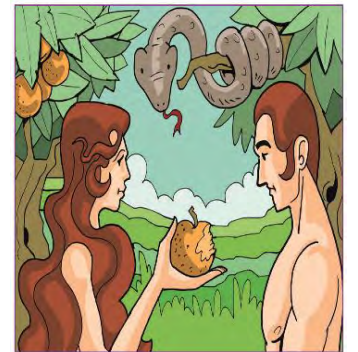
God loved man so much that He also gave him free will—the ability to choose what he wants. God told Adam to eat from any of the trees in Eden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God could have prevented Adam from eating from the tree, but since God created Adam with free will, He left him to choose to do what he wants.

**“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)**



## 3. Man Disobeys the Commandment:

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve ate from the tree. They misused their freedom when they listened to the serpent and disobeyed God.



## 4. Humanity Falls:

Adam and Eve sinned, and all of mankind now carries the same sin. We inherited the original sin since we’re all in Adam. Adam and Eve and their sons received death because of sin, **“For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23)**. Death here means that they will no longer live with God.

Sin also destroyed our pure nature. Adam was cast out of the Garden of Eden, and all humanity with him. As a result, man inherited the sin of Adam as well as the corrupted nature.



**The sentence of death had to be removed,  
and our corrupted nature had to be renewed.**

## **“BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)**

### **5. Incarnation:**

Our Coptic Orthodox Church believes that our Lord Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word of God. **He is fully divine and fully human in one nature.**

The Holy Liturgy tells the story of the creation of man, his fall through the envy of the devil, God’s care, and sending the prophets. It tells of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, His crucifixion, death, resurrection on the third day, His ascension to heaven, sending His Holy Spirit, and establishing His Church.

In His incarnation, He took the nature of man. **“He resembled us in everything, except for sin, alone.” (Liturgy of St. Gregory)**



### **6. Salvation:**

Our Lord was incarnate to save us from the sentence of death and the corrupted nature.

He had to die for us to save us from death:

**“while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).**

His Holy Blood shed for us cleanses us:

**“and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).**



### **Characteristics of the Redeemer:**

- 1. Must be human:** Man is the one who sinned.
- 2. Must die on behalf of man:** **“for the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).**
- 3. Must be unlimited:** The sin of Adam was against the unlimited God.
- 4. Must have no sin:** If he is a sinner, then he will need someone else to save him.
- 5. Must be a creator:** To be able to renew the corrupt nature of man.

**Our Lord Jesus Christ granted us that the work of redemption would continue through the Sacrament of Eucharist, in which we receive the blessings of forgiveness, purification, sanctification, abiding in Him, and eternal life.**



# Katamarus



With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our holy Fathers specified readings for each day of the year. These readings offer us a strong and rich spiritual meal. This meal aims to direct us in the way of the Lord. It also reveals to us the nature of the Church, its depth, its approach, its theological thought and its purpose for the salvation of men.

## First: The Liturgical Readings

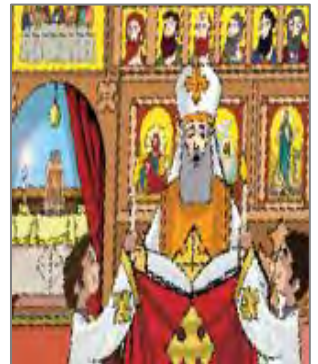
The liturgical readings are considered an integral part of the Church's worship. They are read in the first part of the Holy Liturgy which is called the **Liturgy of the Word**.

Through the readings, the Church shows her children God's love and His work of salvation, along with the necessity of commitment to faith, repentance, and spiritual struggle in order to be worthy of receiving this redemption.

In this way, we may become ready for the joyful eternity that awaits us, and the kingdom prepared for us since the foundation of the world.

## The Holy Liturgy has 10 readings (9 from the Holy Bible):

1. **Vespers Psalm** – from the Book of Psalms
2. **Vespers Gospel** – from the 4 Gospels
3. **Matins Psalm** – from the Book of Psalms
4. **Matins Gospel** – from the 4 Gospels
5. **Pauline Epistle** – from the 14 Epistles of St. Paul
6. **Catholic Epistle** – from the 7 Catholic Epistles
7. **Praxis** – from the Book of Acts of the Apostles
8. **Synaxarion** – shows how the Holy Bible was lived out by the saints, who serve as good role models for us to imitate. By reflecting on the end of their lives, we are inspired to follow their faith and works.
9. **Liturgy Psalm** – from the Book of Psalms
10. **Liturgy Gospel** – from the 4 Gospels





## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### Second: The Katamarus Books

“**Katamarus**” is a Greek word, ‘kata’ means “according to,” and ‘meros’ means “part.” It is a book that contains the liturgical readings throughout the year; and it is a two-part book, Coptic and English.

All the books of Katamarus compose one unit which is very carefully arranged by the Fathers of the Church. The primary goal of these readings is to imprint upon the mind of the believer the image of the greatest event of every believer: the **Incarnation and Redemption**, which reveals God's immense love for humanity and His divine care.



The liturgical readings follow a general spiritual and divine structure and reflect a deep theological philosophy. These readings are organized across 4 books:

1. **Annual (Rotating) Katamarus:** Includes readings for both Weekdays and Sundays, with separate readings for each.
2. **Great Lent Katamarus:** Includes the readings of the Great Lent.
3. **Holy Pascha Katamarus:** Includes the readings of the Holy Pascha.
4. **Holy Fifty Days Katamarus:** Includes the readings from the Glorious Feast of Resurrection until the Feast of Pentecost.

We can split the liturgical readings into two sections, **Annual Sundays Readings and Annual Weekdays Reading**. Each section will highlight an aspect of the nature of the Church.

### 1st: Annual Sundays Readings

The liturgical readings during Sundays show the work of the Holy Trinity in the Church and they take the believer on a divine spiritual integral journey. This journey highlights the unceasing work of God towards the Church and humanity.

### 2nd: Annual Weekdays Readings

The Church has arranged the liturgical readings during the weekdays to be based on the Synaxarion of the day (the saint's biography of the day, or a feast celebrated, such as the Lord's Feasts, Feasts of St. Mary, the angels, and saints).

There are **55 different daily readings**, which are repeated on similar occasions. These readings are carefully chosen to show that the saint or feast celebrated is indeed a living gospel and an example to follow in their love to Christ and obeying His commandments.



# “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

## 3rd: The Organization of the Readings

### 1- The Lord's Feasts: each feast has a specific reading

#### a. Major Feasts of the Lord:

Annunciation – 29<sup>th</sup> of Baramhat (April 7)

Nativity – 29<sup>th</sup> of Keiahk (January 7)

Epiphany/Theophany - 11<sup>th</sup> of Toba (January 19)

Palm Sunday

Resurrection

Ascension

Pentecost



#### b. Minor Feasts of the Lord: each feast has a specific reading

Circumcision – 6<sup>th</sup> of Toba (January 14)

Wedding at Cana of Galilee – 13<sup>th</sup> of Toba (January 21)

Presentation of the Lord in the Temple – 8<sup>th</sup> of Amsher (February 15)

Covenant Thursday

Thomas Sunday

Entrance of the Lord into Egypt – 24<sup>th</sup> of Bashans (June 1)

Transfiguration – 13<sup>th</sup> of Mesra (August 19)



### 2- Feasts of St. Mary, the Mother of God: all have the same Gospel reading: [Luke 1:36-56](#)

a. Her birth – 1<sup>st</sup> of Bashans (May 9)

b. Her entry into the temple – 3<sup>rd</sup> of Keiahk (December 12)

c. Her departure – 21<sup>st</sup> of Toba (January 29)

d. Consecration of the first church in her name – 21<sup>st</sup> of Baouna (June 28)

e. Revealing of the assumption of her body – 16<sup>th</sup> of Mesra (August 22)



### 3- Archangel Michael: 12<sup>th</sup> of Hathor (June 19): [Matthew 13:23-43](#)

### 4- Prophets: [Matthew 23:14-26](#) – This Gospel reading is repeated 20 times throughout the year on the commemorations of different prophets.

#### Examples:

a. Moses the Prophet – 8<sup>th</sup> of Tote (September 18)

b. Isaiah the Prophet – 6<sup>th</sup> of Tote (September 16)

c. Hezekiah the King – 4<sup>th</sup> of Mesra (August 10)



### 5- The 12 Disciples: [Matthew 10:1-15](#)

#### Examples:

a. Martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul – 5<sup>th</sup> of Abib (July 12)

b. Martyrdom of St. Philip the Apostle – 18<sup>th</sup> of Hator (November 27)

c. Martyrdom of St. Andrew the Apostle - 4<sup>th</sup> of Keiahk (December 13)



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### 6- The 70 Apostles: [Luke 10:1-20](#)

#### Examples:

- a. Martyrdom of St. Stephen the 1<sup>st</sup> Martyr – 1<sup>st</sup> of Toba (January 9)
- b. Martyrdom of St. Timon the Apostle – 26<sup>th</sup> of Baba (November 5)
- c. Martyrdom of Aristopoulus the Apostle – 19<sup>th</sup> of Baramhat (March 28)



### 7- Martyrs- divided into 6 groups:

- a. Prince of Martyrs
- b. Martyrs of the Coptic Church: [Luke 11:53 – Luke 12:12](#)

#### Examples:

- i. St. Mina the wonder worker – 15<sup>th</sup> of Hator (November 24)
  - ii. Saints Apakir and John – 6<sup>th</sup> of Amsher (February 13)
  - iii. St. Abanoub – 24<sup>th</sup> of Abib (July 31)
- c. Martyrs of the Eastern Church
- d. Dismembered Martyrs
- e. Groups of Martyrs of the Eastern Church
- f. Martyrs of the One Church



### 8- Patriarchs- divided into 2 groups:

#### a. Patriarchs of the Coptic Church: [Matthew 16:13-19](#)

#### Examples:

- i. Martyrdom of St. Peter the Seal of Martyrs and the 17<sup>th</sup> Patriarch– 29<sup>th</sup> of Hator (December 8)
- ii. Departure of Pope Aghathon, the 39<sup>th</sup> Patriarch– 16<sup>th</sup> of Baba (October 26)
- iii. Departure of Pope Theophilus, the 23rd Patriarch – 18<sup>th</sup> of Baba (October 28)

#### b. Patriarchs of the One (Catholic) Church: [John 10:1-16](#)

There are 16 including:

- i. St. John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople – 17<sup>th</sup> of Hator (November 26)
- ii. St. Severus of Antioch – 14<sup>th</sup> of Amsher (February 21)
- iii. Pope Cyril I, Patriarch of Alexandria – 3<sup>rd</sup> of Abib (July 10)





## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### 9- Monks: [Luke 12:32-44](#)

#### Examples:

- a. Departure of St. Anthony – 22<sup>nd</sup> of Toba (January 30)
- b. Departure of St. Hilarion – 24<sup>th</sup> of Baba (November 3)
- c. Departure of Abba Isaac – 19<sup>th</sup> of Bashans (May 27)



### 10- The Virgins: [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

#### Examples:

- a. Martyrdom of Saints Pistis, Helpis, Agape and their mother Sophia – 30<sup>th</sup> of Toba (Feb. 7)
- b. Departure of St. Sarah – 15<sup>th</sup> of Baramhat (March 24)
- c. Departure of St. Theopista – 20<sup>th</sup> of Tote (September 30)

**Our Church gives us a nourishing spiritual meal each day by reminding us of the saints, so we can follow their righteous lives and follow their example.**



# **St. Severus of Antioch**

## **The Life of St. Severus of Antioch**

St. Severus was born in the year 459 A.D. in Asia Minor to wealthy Christian parents.

After the death of their father, his mother sent him and his two brothers to Alexandria to receive an education in philosophy, as well as in the Greek and Latin languages.

Later, St. Severus went to Beirut to study law. He did very well in his studies and eventually returned to his hometown to work as a lawyer.

Alongside his academic success, St. Severus grew spiritually. He fasted every day and spent most of his nights in church.

He then decided to visit Jerusalem, and there he began to have a strong desire for service and monasticism.

He went to the monastery of St. Lawendius in Palestine and became a monk in the year 488 A.D. at the age of 29. He lived alone in the desert, dedicating all his time to worship and spiritual studies.

He later had to go to the monastery of St. Romanus in Palestine to stay there because of his illness. He was still hardworking in everything he did despite his sickness and encouraged the monks to also work hard.

Many monks predicted that he will be a protector of the Orthodox faith and the Church.

He became well known in all places. Many priests and monks came asking questions about the Holy Bible and doctrine.

He built a monastery in Palestine with the money he inherited from his parents and attracted many to the monastic life.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### St. Severus Protects the Faith

St. Severus refused to let the Orthodox faith be changed by all the heresies that were spreading at that time. He came out of his monastic seclusion to protect the faith.

- He wrote many letters in response to the wrong teachings spread by some heretics
- He showed strong opposition to the heresies and wrong teachings.
- He resisted any teaching that was not from the Orthodox faith, like the Council of Chalcedon.



In the year 512 A.D., St. Severus became a Patriarch of Antioch.

**"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."  
(2 Timothy 2:2)**

He sent a letter to the Patriarch of Alexandria explaining and confirming his Orthodox faith, which he had received from the Apostles. He also explained his rejection of the heresies. St. Severus faced many persecutions because of his faith.

### Persecutions and Exile

The Roman emperor Justinian, who was in agreement with the Council of Chalcedon, persecuted all who did not agree with it. He sent for St. Severus and tried to convince him to give up his faith. When St. Severus refused, the emperor began persecuting him.

To escape the persecution, St. Severus fled to Egypt, where he lived for 20 years (except for a brief period when he traveled to Constantinople). While in Egypt, he continued to care for his flock, sending them letters to strengthen their faith.

The emperor who ruled after Justinian also tried to convince St. Severus to leave the Orthodox faith, but he refused. For this reason, Empress Theodora who was Orthodox in faith, urged St. Severus to escape. He returned to Egypt and stayed there until he departed.

He stood firm in Orthodox faith because he believed it was every Christian's duty to preserve the pure faith. The Holy Bible was his reference, and he rejected any teaching that strayed from it.



## “BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED” (II TIMOTHY 3:14)

### Miracles and Humility

God worked many miracles through the prayers of St. Severus. Out of humility, he often hid his identity and lived as a simple monk.

One day, he went to pray the Divine Liturgy in a monastery. When the serving priest began the Prayer of Reconciliation, the Holy Bread disappeared from the altar. The priest cried and thought this was because of his sins. An angel of the Lord appeared to him and told him that it is not proper for him to offer the sacrifice when a patriarch is present. The angel pointed to St. Severus. The priest asked St. Severus to pray the Liturgy. As soon as St. Severus entered the sanctuary, the Holy Bread reappeared, and they continued the prayers.

### Legacy and Departure

St. Severus left many writings and teachings about many aspects of the faith, such as the nature of God, Christ's relationship with the Church, and the Holy Sacraments.

He also translated many Syrian and Greek texts into Coptic, which helped spread the true faith.

St. Severus gave us an example to follow. He stayed firm in faith and defended the truth. Like St. Severus, we are called to know and be firm in our Orthodox faith, to preserve it, and to lead others in love, peace, and service.

Pope Severus departed in the Lord in Egypt on the 14th day of Amsher in the year 538 A.D. He was buried in a monastery west of Alexandria.

**Our Coptic Church commemorates him in the Divine Liturgy and celebrates 3 feasts for him:**

1. His coming to Egypt on the 2nd of Baba (October 12)
2. His departure on the 14th of Amsher (February 21)
3. His burial in the monastery on the 10th of Keiahk (December 19)

**May the prayers of St. Severus be with us all. Amen.**



# Memorization

## Psalm 45 (44) of the Third Hour in the Agpia

My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever. Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; The peoples fall under You. Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions. All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia, Out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad. Kings' daughters are among Your honourable women; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir. Listen, O daughter, Consider and incline your ear; Forget your own people also, and your father's house; So the King will greatly desire your beauty; Because He is your Lord, worship Him. And the daughter of Tyre will be there with a gift; The rich among the people will seek your favour. The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colours; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; They shall enter the King's palace. Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons, Whom You shall make princes in all the earth. I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the people shall praise You forever and ever. **Alleluia**

## **The Gospel of the Third Hour in the Agpia**

### **THE GOSPEL**

**(John 14:26-15:4)**

A chapter from the Holy Gospel  
according to St. John  
may his blessings be with us all. Amen.

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. “You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. “And now I have told You before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. “But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here. “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. “Abide in me, and I in you.

**Glory be to God forever. Amen.**

## **Litanies of the Third Hour in the Agpia**

O' Good Lord, do not take Your Holy Spirit away from us, this which You sent upon Your holy disciples and honourable apostles at the third hour. Create a pure heart in me, O' God and put a new and loyal Spirit within me, do not banish me from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. **Thok-sa-patri Ke ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty.**

O' Lord, who sent Your Holy Spirit upon the holy disciples and honourable apostles at the third hour, do not take this away from us, O righteous Lord. We ask You our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Logos, renew with in us a right and life giving spirit, a filial spirit of chastity, holiness, justice and authority. Our Almighty God, the light of our souls, illuminating every person who comes into this world, have mercy upon us. **Ke-neen Ke-a-ee Ke-is-touse E-onas ton E-onon. Amen.**

Mother of God, full of grace, you are the true vine that carries the fruit of life. We ask you and all the apostles to pray for the salvation of our souls. Blessed be the Lord our God whom we praise each day, because He prepares our path as He is the God of our salvation. **Ke-neen Ke-a-ee Ke-is-touse E-onas ton E-onon. Amen.**

## **Sayings of the Church Fathers**

1. "Read the divine Scriptures constantly. Never, indeed, let the sacred volume be out of your hand."  
(St. Jerome)
2. "Faith is the eye that enlightens every conscience, and without faith, the soul is blind."  
(St. Cyril of Jerusalem)
3. "The glory of God is man fully alive; and the life of man consists in beholding God."  
(St. Irenaeus)



## Anthem 2026

(Our doctrine, from the start,  
established by God himself,  
preached by the apostles,  
and our fathers kept it safe.) **2x**

a strong tree of faith,  
its roots trace back to history,  
pure and watered by God's words  
(Rites and also liturgy) **2x**

firm,  
firm in my faith and doctrine  
Our church is fatherly  
Orthodox as my forefathers  
Heroes of the Coptic church.

Mark, Athanasious, Dioscoros,  
heroes and pillars of faith,  
though heresies arise,  
still we're steadfast in our faith.

Rooted in your church,  
**be firm in what you've learned.**

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