

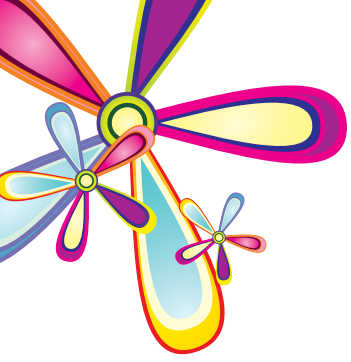


Mahragan Alkeraza

2011



English Edition
Gr. 3 - 4



H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Pope of Alexandria



TABLE OF CONTENTS



SECTION I - STUDY MATERIAL

PAGE

1.0	Introduction	4
2.0	Our Lord Jesus was incarnate to save me	6
3.0	Our Lord Jesus taught us to serve others	16
4.0	Our Lord Jesus gave us understanding and wisdom	23
5.0	Our Lord Jesus Taught me to be kind	30
6.0	Our Lord Jesus taught us how to thank Him and praise Him	36
7.0	Memorization	42





INTRODUCTION

Mahragan Alkeraza 2011

It is with great pleasure that we welcome another year of the Mahragan competitions. Last year was a great success with so many churches participating in Egypt, North America, Europe, Australia and elsewhere around the globe. Last year, there were over 119,000 participants in the finals who represented around 10% of the total participants. With the blessings of His Holiness Pope Shenouda and under the continued care of His Grace Bishop Moses, we are expecting this year to attract a much wider audience and be the source of blessing for many of our children and servants everywhere.

The theme this year “Christ is our Life” reflects the true essence of our Christian faith. It’s very important for our youth and kids to experience Christ in all aspects of their life, whether it’s in absorbing the rich material offered in the Mahragan, in the diverse activities offered to them or in the sports competitions that are made available to them throughout the Mahragan.

The material emphasizes the following three areas

- 1- Who is Christ**
- 2- Christ is our life**
- 3- Christ is our role model**





We hope 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 church, the Coptic Orthodox Church.

God bless the efforts of all who participated in the coordination of the Mahragan activities and all the participants.

✠ My best wishes for a happy
Festival
✠ Bishop Mousa





OUR LORD JESUS WAS INCARNATE TO SAVE ME

It was the year 2200. Mirna and Mario went to visit Grandpa at his farm over the weekend. They liked to play with the animals at Grandpa's farm, but what they enjoyed most is to listen to their Grandpa's old stories.

Mario: Mirna let's go take permission from GGrandpa to go to his storage place. I want to see the old things that he keeps there.

Mirna: But Grandpa is sleeping now.

Mario: We can go now and when Grandpa wakes up, we'll tell him that we didn't take his permission because he was sleeping.



So very quietly, Mirna and Mario went to GGrandpa's storage place. They started to look around.

Mirna: Mario, look! This is an old radio from the year 2100. It's 100 years old! Let's have a closer look, it's an antique!

Mario: No it's not! We read about these devices many times at school. Let's look for something else. Do you see that thing that GGrandpa has on the shelf up there?

Mirna: What thing?

Mario: Over there! It has a strange shinny wrap. It looks like something really important.

Mirna: Yes, now I see it. Why is it so shinny when everything here is covered with dust?

Mario: It must be something really precious. That's why Grandpa takes such good care of it.

Mirna: Let's see what's inside.





Mario: We can't do that! Grandpa might get upset. We should wait until he wakes up and then ask him to open it for us and tell us the story behind it.

Mirna: Look Mario! There is something written on it. Can you read it?

Mario: No I can't. I have to get closer to be able to see.

Mario took a ladder and climbed up to get a closer look.



Mario: The label says "a gift from the gift tree".

Mirna: A gift? What does "gift tree" mean? The only trees I know are fruit trees like apple trees, orange trees...

Mario: What does "gift" even mean?

Suddenly, they heard a voice saying "It's something precious that people used to give each other."

Mario: Uh-oh... We're in trouble now!

Mirna: Grandpa, we really wanted to take your permission before coming here, but you were sleeping.

Grandpa: You shouldn't have come here without my permission. If I was sleeping, you should've waited for me to wake up.

Mirna & Mario: We are really sorry Grandpa.

Grandpa: That's fine. I really wanted to tell you about all my good memories. Everything in this place has a nice story behind it and can serve as a life lesson.

Mario: What is the story of this box?





Grandpa: A long time ago, people used to do something really nice... They used to give each other something on different occasions. They called it a "gift", it was a sign of care and love. They used to put it in boxes like this one and wrap it very nicely. But now, people forgot about it and instead, they use other things like email, facebook, and text messages. That's why you didn't know what it was when you saw it.

Mirna: Oh! This is very interesting. We've never heard of gifts before.



Mario: Okay, one second... now we understand what gift means. But a "gift tree", how could this be?

Mirna: I heard for example about the mango tree that produces mango. What about the gift tree? Would it produce gifts?

Grandpa: I'll tell you the story. The gift tree is of the same family as the tree that was used to make the Cross that Jesus was crucified on to save us. So all the trees in this family of trees dedicated themselves to serve people just like Jesus Christ redeemed us and gave us a new life.

Mirna: What do you mean by redeemed us? How did He give us a new life?

Grandpa: I'll tell you the story from the beginning...





In the beginning, God created man in His own likeness and His own image. He gave him power over all creation. He distinguished him from all the other creatures.

Mario: Yes, I know, He gave him intelligence, right Grandpa?

Grandpa: Right! All this because God loved man so much.

But Adam and Eve sinned, they disobeyed God's commandment. He said to Adam "but of the tree of the



knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Genesis 2:17



That's why the death sentence was brought upon them and their children. Here, death means separation from God. They won't be able to live with God anymore. Exactly like a lamp! What will happen if you cut the power?

Mario: The light will go off.

Grandpa: That's right Mario! This is exactly what happened with Adam and Eve when they sinned. Sin separates man from God. So as the lamp cannot give light when it's separated from power, can't live when he is separated from God.





Mirna: But why death? Doesn't God love us? Couldn't He forgive Adam and Eve?

Grandpa: Of course God loves us very much. That's why He came down to earth to save us. Don't forget that even though God is loving and merciful, He is also just.

If God had simply forgiven Adam, He wouldn't have been just. Because He warned Adam and He told him that the result of sin is death. Adam didn't obey. Adam and Eve sinned against God. How can God accept something wrong? That's why He couldn't just forgive Adam and Eve.

Mirna: Now I understand that the result of sin is death. Whoever sins shall die.

Can't God just create a new man and get rid of the old one, instead of coming down to earth to save him?

Mario: Create a new man? How? It doesn't work that way.

Grandpa: You're right Mario.

God is our father who loves us. He can't let man die. He created him in His own image.

That's why God came down to earth. He was incarnate, and died on the cross to save us because He loves us. We are His children so

He wanted to save us from the punishment of death. He wanted to unite with us again and give us the life that we lost when we became separated from Him. He gave us a new life.

Mario: Now I understand... God loves us so much that's why He created us in His own image. When we sinned and disobeyed God, we were separated from Him and the judgement of death came upon us.

God didn't want to create a new man instead of Adam because He loves Adam. Because God is just and holy, He couldn't just forgive Adam. God is also a loving God; that's why He came down on earth, was incarnate and died on the cross instead of us. He took away the judgment of death from us and gave us a new life. Right Grandpa?

Grandpa: Bravo Mario... This is exactly what happened.

Mirna: I have another question. I understand that incarnation means that He took flesh and was born from St. Mary...But what do you mean by "He took away the judgement of death from us"?





Grandpa: It means that He paid our debts. It's like a man who has a huge debt that he can't afford to pay off. Then a rich man comes and pays all his debts. Jesus died on the cross for you and me. He carried all our sins; the ones we did, the ones we are still doing and the ones that we'll be doing. He carried them all on the cross. This is God's redemption for us.

Mario: Does this mean that anything wrong I did or will do, God will forgive it right away?

Grandpa: Careful Mario. We don't deserve this redemption and our sins won't be forgiven unless we are baptized. We also have to repent and confess our sins. We have to take communion so we can abide in Christ and Him in us.

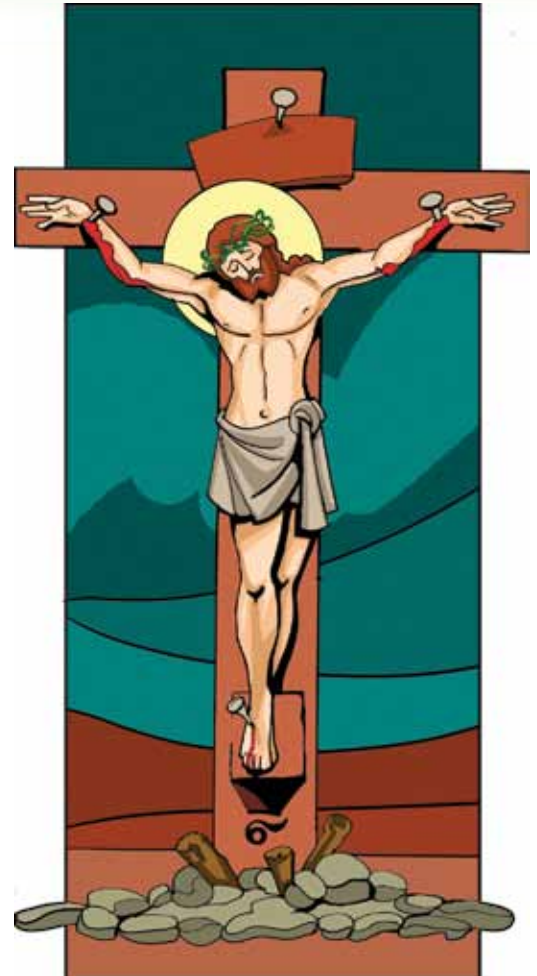
Mirna: So for all my sins to be forgiven I have to be baptized, repent, confess and take communion?

Grandpa: That's right Mirna.

Mirna: Now I understand salvation and redemption! It means that God carried all our sins, paid off our debts on the cross, and took away the sentence of death from us.

Grandpa: By the way, the redemption on the cross was God's plan from the beginning... That's why we see lots of symbols of the cross in the Old Testament. Do you want me to tell you about one of these symbols?

Mirna: Yes! Another story! Please, we want to know more about our Lord Jesus.





The bronze serpent

(Numbers 21:4-9)

God directed Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. The Israelites were very happy that God delivered them from their bondage in Egypt. They wandered in the wilderness for many years before they reached the Promise Land. During all those years, God took care of them, but they always complained against God and against Moses. They complained about the food, so God sent them food from heaven called "Manna", which was described as white coriander seed that tasted like wafers made with honey (Exodus 16:13 & 31). Also, when they longed for meat, God sent them birds to eat; these birds were called quails (Exodus 16).

Once again, they complained against Moses and Aaron because there was no water and they were very thirsty. God brought them water out of the rock. (Numbers 20:1-13)

They spoke again against God and against Moses, calling Manna, "the worthless bread". Because of their repeated complaining, God sent fiery serpents among the people that bit them, causing many of them to die.

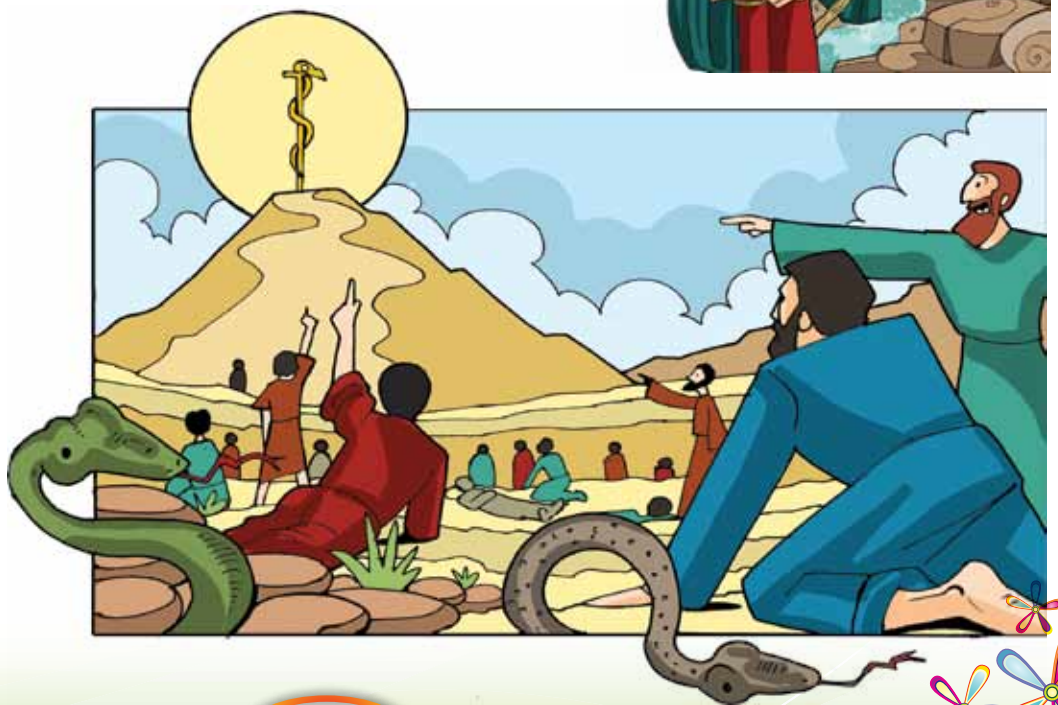
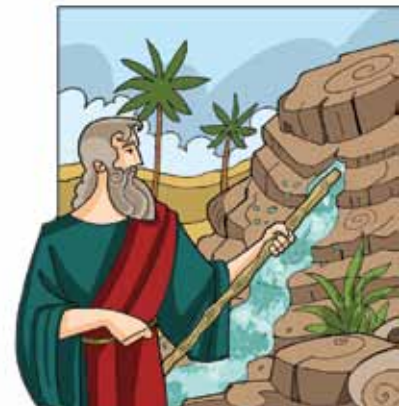
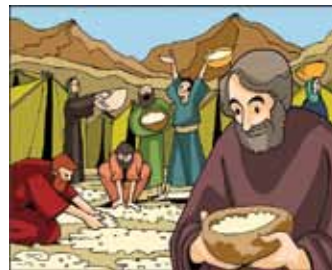
After this, the people went back to Moses, confessed their sins and asked Moses to intercede to the Lord that He may remove the serpents from them. God listened to them.

Mario: What did He do?

Grandpa: He said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live. So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived" (Num. 21:8-9).

Mirna: So they didn't die?

Grandpa: Of course they didn't Mirna.



Mario: I don't understand anything. How was the bronze serpent a symbol of the cross?

Grandpa: There are many similarities between the cross and the bronze serpent... let's open our Holy Bible and do the comparison; then you will understand.



Similarity

- 1- They were both put on a high place: Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole and our Lord Jesus was lifted up on the cross

Old Testament

"So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole"
Numbers 21:9

New Testament

MEMORY VERSE

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" John 3:14

- 2- They both gave life: Whoever looked at the serpent lived. Likewise, whoever believes in Jesus' salvation on the cross, is baptized, repents and confesses their sins will be forgiven.

"...and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived" Numbers 21:9

MEMORY VERSE

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Mario & Mirna: Now we understand.

Mirna: Grandpa, it's amazing how much God loves me. He loves us all! To prove His love for us, He decided to die on the cross instead of us. He saved us! He brought us back to Him, giving us new life.





The Bronze Serpent

(Numbers 21:4-9)

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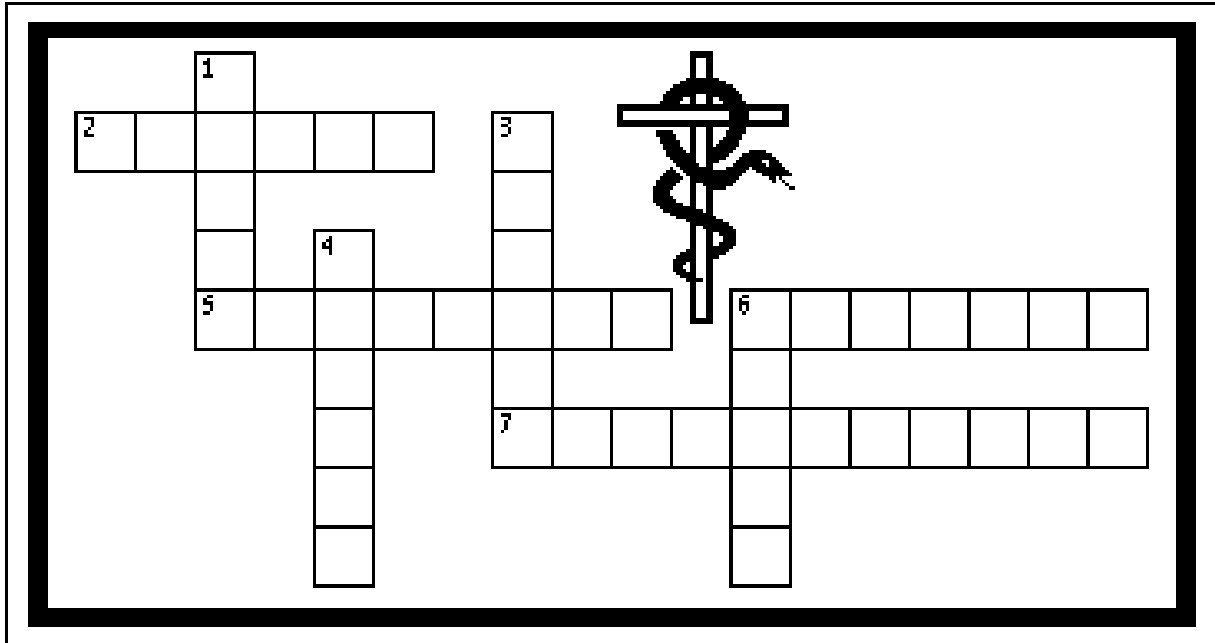
BREAD
BRONZE
DISCOURAGED
LIVE

LOATHES
LOOKED
LORD
MOSES

POLE
PRAYED
SERPENTS
SINNED



Activity



- 1 DOWN "And as _____ lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." **JOHN 3:14**
- 7 ACROSS The children of Israel "journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very _____ on the way." **NUMBERS 21:4**
- 6 ACROSS "And the people spoke against God and against Moses: 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul _____ this worthless bread.' " **NUMBERS 21:5**
- 5 ACROSS "So the LORD sent fiery _____ among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died." **NUMBERS 21:6**
- 3 DOWN "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, 'We have _____ for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.' " **NUMBERS 21:7**
- 4 DOWN "So Moses _____ for the people." **NUMBERS 21:7**
- 6 DOWN "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he _____ at it, shall live.'" **NUMBERS 21:8**
- 2 ACROSS "So Moses made a _____ serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived." **NUMBERS 21:9**



OUR LORD JESUS TAUGHT US TO SERVE OTHERS

Mario: I liked the story of the bronze serpent so much. That was such a nice story Grandpa. But why did you tell us this story?

Mirna: Mario, have you forgotten about the gift tree?

Mario: Oh! Yes! That's why this tree was so giving. It used to give to all people who asked for gifts. If this tree still exists, we could have had many gifts.

Grandpa: The tree still exists.

Mario & Maria: Wow! Where is it?

Mirna: Let's go see it.

Grandpa: No need. In a few days, this tree will be gone.

Mirna: Grandpa, what are you talking about?

Grandpa: People don't appreciate this tree anymore. They want to get rid of it to expand the city museum.

You know what guys, I'm so tired, I need a nap. I'll be back in a bit.

When Grandpa left, Mario whispered to Mirna...

Mario: What do you think? Let's go see the tree!

Mirna: Yes, but Grandpa...





Mario: He is taking a nap. We'll be back before he wakes up. Don't waste time, let's go!

So Mirna and Mario left very quickly and headed toward the city museum. When they reached the museum they met with Uncle Hannah the security guard.

Mario: Uncle, can you please let us in? We are here to see the gift tree.

Uncle Hannah: What? Are you talking about the gift tree? No one ever comes to see it. Very soon, they will cut it down. Go see something else, something more useful.

Mirna: Uncle please, we came especially to see this tree. Can you please let us in?

Uncle Hannah took Mirna and Mario to where the tree was. There, they met Uncle Nour, the keeper of the tree.

Uncle Hannah: Good news Nour, you've got visitors. They are here to see the gift tree. You haven't had any visitors for long time. It seems that someone in the city still remembers this tree.

Uncle Nour: Unbelievable! Someone wants to see the tree? Okay! Since we have visitors, there is hope that we can keep the tree.

Mario: Is this man the keeper of the tree?

Mirna: How can he guard it?

Uncle Nour: Is it because I'm blind? Who are you?

Mirna: My name is Mirna and this is Mario my brother. I'm very sorry, I didn't mean to offend you. I just found it really strange.

Uncle Nour: It's not strange. I'll tell you the story of someone who was just like me. He couldn't see, but he was very helpful to everyone around him.

Mario & Mirna: Please do!





St. Didymus the Seer



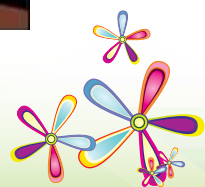
Uncle Nour: Okay, I'll tell you the story of one of the great fathers of the church, St. Didymus the blind. He had a very strong will and overcame many difficult situations. He helped many people throughout his life.

He was born in year 313 AD in Alexandria. His name means "Thomas" or the "Twin". He lost his vision when he was 4 years old.

Mario: He probably wasn't able to do many things like playing, reading, writing or even walking.

Uncle Nour: What happened with him was different. Although he lost his vision, he didn't lose his trust in God. Because he loved God, he had faith that God would never leave him. He decided to learn how to read and write.

Mirna: Read and write! How? He can't see!





Uncle Nour: St. Didymus was able to learn all the letters of the alphabet by himself. Do you know how? He engraved the letters on pieces of wood, and with his fingers, he was able to read.

Mario: Engraved letters? That's the Braille system.... But the Braille system was not invented till the 19th century. How did St. Didymus do it?

Uncle Nour: Well, our Saint was 15 centuries ahead of Braille.

Mirna: He truly was a great saint.

Uncle Nour: God gave him a very good memory. He was able to memorize a large portion of the Holy Bible. Since he studied with eagerness, he was able to acquire a vast knowledge of grammar, music, arithmetic, and other sciences in a short amount of time.

Everyone who heard about him was astonished and amazed at all his knowledge. Even great scholars were not able to understand how a blind man can attain this level of knowledge that surpassed many. St. Athanasius highly esteemed him, placing him as the head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria in 346 AD.

He was a good friend of the great St. Anthony, the father of the monks. St. Anthony visited him numerous times and told him "don't be sad because you lost the bodily eyes but rather rejoice that God gave you a spiritual sight like that of the angels with which you can attain the true knowledge."

St. Didymus wrote about 48 books, 20 books on theology and 28 commentaries on the Old Testament and the New Testament.

He departed in peace in the year 398 AD.

Mirna: That's a beautiful story, Uncle Nour!

Mario: You know Uncle, many people who could see can't do what St. Didymus did.





Uncle Nour: You're right Mario... That's why the church calls him Didymus the Seer not the Blind. St. Anthony himself told him that he had eyes like angels.

When Uncle Nour was done with his story, Mirna whispers to Mario...

Mirna: Aren't we going to see the tree? Let's remind him.

Mario: Uncle, Uncle!! We came to see the tree. Can you please show it to us?

Uncle Nour opens the door, and for the first time the kids see the tree.

Mirna & Mario: Wow! What a beautiful tree!

Mirna: Mario, do you see its big branches?

Mario: The boxes that are hanging from it look like the one we saw at Grandpa's place. They are all shinny.

Uncle Nour: What do you think of the bows?

Mirna: They have very nice colors.

Uncle Nour started to tell them the story of the tree. Mirna and Mario looked at the tree with all the gifts hanging from it. They were very happy.






Activity

The Master Becomes a Servant

(John 13:1-17)

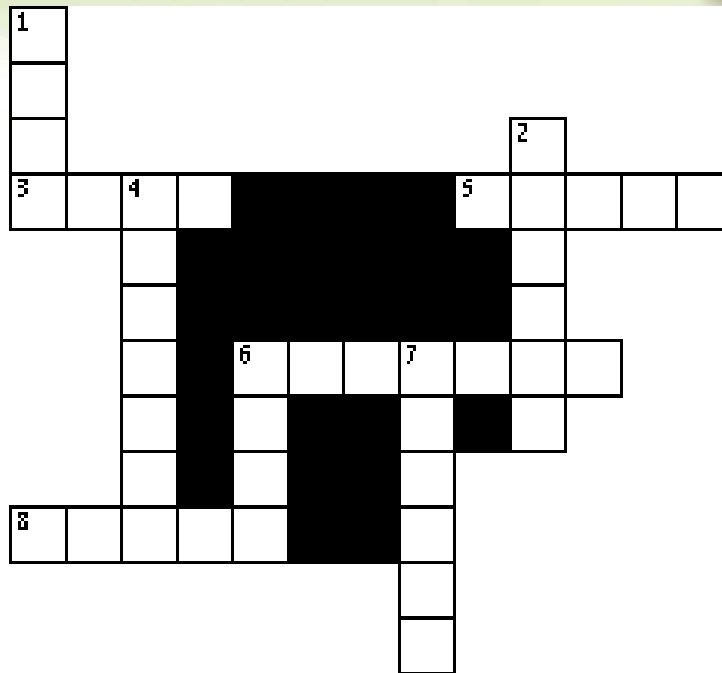


M J L Y D D H V G I Z G J U B Y M A T W D N S G B O N K C O
C V G Q H R E H C A E T O H E F K E Q T Y R F B T T H S E O
T I B P I H O S G N Y V B Y A B N L T U E Y B W F S I M B Y
Q E Y V I M F H V T R E F J Q O B B I T U T C N U E B M Q D
F A V M A Y B D B T B A O A T W H D E R O I L S Z R P G G U
D A Z V L U X L N S I B B L S B A P B K B T E E F E F H T Q
N Q Y O N K Z A I Y D Y V C C C G M A I Z J J S H O T A H K
G Z U T F S V H F T A Z E Q T W K M C Z S A Y U Z D N I S N
V P V J R R G Z B G M R H Y B A S M D U E A C B P E A O Y J
G F M Z E E F E L R D J U D A S S B N W J F L M R A F Y Z R
K M Y S D P B S Y R I Q C V H V U E V M A S T E R F W A U B
Z G A O K P C Q E K R V P F G W L O L A M K S I U V B E B W
D E J V S U B U Q U G E A D A B M R B P B B S D K A V H T K
I W R L F S Z Z T P K Y S Q K P O H C T I W C L B S N Q O F
Y K O C B S A F F S F B S D E F T P V C T C A A A V F O U N
N R M E Y V K E B Q Q P O I N A J N C O B J S S H B B V H R
A G Q G D Y E N B V N B V D C B B T A B K Y N I H Z B C E N
P B D V C T I M K Y I N E B B E H Y W U Q Z B W D P S C D B
N J T T P Z L F S E G Y R V C G Z L Z M A I R T A N F C C I
A A O Y L N U I I Z J Q K W C G J C Z P Q V E H N S H Z P D
W H U E E O H E S P L Q Z Z T H L O E A T I V F G Z E J W M
Q P C R X W B V B A D B M F B B L Y T J V J M I R I Y S B L
L R H B A K P M W U E F J O W Y B Y Q Y I S T T E T E Z Z D
Q M E W M I P N J T K E A J R B Y C H K J V Q D A J D D K H
K A Q I P Z Y I R Y G Z P L S A C Y D Q I Q S R T B J U I Q
E U J B L A J A F E C H N N Q P Z D D K Z O U O E I B M I C
K L B U E A Y M K D B F E A U E A W S Y V D G L R Y B J U M
H M B W R W V J G K B M P Y R U J S F O L B G K I B R Y V J
Y I H N Z C T C A J V C B O G R L A N O G S B C K Q D U N W
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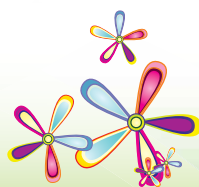
BETRAY
DISCIPLES
EXAMPLE
FEET
GREATER

JESUS
JUDAS
LORD
MASTER
PASSOVER

PETER
SERVANT
SUPPER
TEACHER
WASH



- 6 ACROSS "He who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who _____ himself will be exalted." **MATTHEW 23:11-12**
- 6 DOWN "...Jesus knew that His _____ had come that He should depart from this world to the Father..." **JOHN 13:1**
- 2 DOWN "Jesus, knowing that the _____ had given all things into His hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God." **JOHN 13:3**
- 3 ACROSS "...He poured water into a basin and began to _____ the disciples' feet." **JOHN 13:5**
- 8 ACROSS "_____ said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' " **JOHN 13:8**
- 7 DOWN "Jesus said to him, 'He who is _____ needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean.' " **JOHN 13:10**
- 1 DOWN "So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you _____ what I have done? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.' " **JOHN 13:12-13**
- 4 DOWN "Most assuredly, I say to you, a _____ is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him." **JOHN 13:16**
- 5 ACROSS "If you know these things, _____ are you if you do them." **JOHN 13:17**





OUR LORD JESUS GAVE US UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM

Mirna: It's such a beautiful tree. I didn't think it would be that beautiful!

Mario: It's a shame that the people in the city don't know about it. If only they see it, they will love it.

Uncle Nour: Did you hear what they want to do with it?

Mario: Yeah, Grandpa told us.

Mirna: Uncle Hannah also confirmed the news. But we have to do something to save the tree.

Mario: It's a big problem!

Uncle Nour: But every problem has a solution, we just need to figure out what caused the problem.. This isn't hard if we put our minds to it. The Holy Bible teaches us to be wise.



MEMORY VERSE



"Wisdom is better than strength" Ecclesiastes 9: 16

Don't you remember what happened with Abigail?
How with her wisdom, she was able to solve her problem.

Mirna: Who is Abigail?

Mario: A new story! Uncle can you please tell us her story?

David and Abigail (1 Samuel 25:1-35)

Uncle Nour: Abigail lived at the time of David the prophet. She was a wise, intelligent and beautiful woman. The meaning of her name is "Source of Joy". She lived in the Wilderness of Paran with her husband Nabal, but Nabal was not like her.

Mirna: What do you mean by that?





Uncle Nour: He was not wise. Even the meaning of his name is “Fool”. The Bible says that he was harsh and evil in his doings. Nabal was very rich and had many sheep and goats. After the death of Samuel the prophet, David and his men were staying in the Wilderness of Paran. They were protecting the place from the attacks of the Palestinians and also from wild beasts.

Mario: Isn't the Wilderness of Paran the place where Nabal's shepherds were? This means that David was protecting Nabal's property as well.

Uncle Nour: Very good observation Mario!

Uncle Nour: One day, David heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

Mario: What does “shearing his sheep” mean?

Uncle Nour: It means to cut off their wool to sell it.

Uncle Nour: So David sent ten young men and said to them, “Go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. Tell him: ‘Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! Your shepherds were with us, and we didn't hurt them, nor was anything missing from them. Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them.’”

Mirna: Oh! David was so kind to Nabal. I'm sure that Nabal gave him all he asked for.

Uncle Nour: Unfortunately, Nabal as I told you was not a wise man. He answered David's kindness harshly, refusing to pay David for the service of protecting his shepherds and shearers. He even cursed David, his family and his people.

Mario: Unbelievable! What did David do when he heard what Nabal said?



Uncle Nour: David who was always known for his patience and self-control got very angry. He vowed revenge and ordered the elimination of Nabal's household even though David used to only fight God's enemies.

Mirna: So did David end up fighting Nabal?

Uncle Nour: God always protects His children. He prevented David from fighting Nabal so he wouldn't do anything wrong.

Mirna: What happened?

Uncle Nour: One of Nabal's servants went to tell Abigail about what happened. He also told her that David's men were very good to them. They were protecting them night and day when they were in the fields. The servant informed Abigail because he knew that she was a wise woman not like her husband.

Mario: What did Abigail do to solve the problem that her husband caused? This is a huge problem, just like the one we are having now.

Mirna: She probably tried to apologize to David.

Uncle Nour: Very good. You're right Mirna. Abigail prepared massive amounts of food: loaves of bread, sheep, roasted grains, raisin and figs... Once all of the provisions were prepared and packed, she loaded them on donkeys and asked her servants to go ahead of her. But she didn't tell her husband. As she was riding her donkey, she met David and his men descending towards her.

Mario: What did she do when she saw them?

Uncle Nour: She quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. She apologized for her husband's behaviour. She told David that she didn't see the men whom he





sent. She asked him to accept her gifts and to forgive her husband Nabal.

Mario: Abigail was a wise woman. Because of her wisdom, David spared her and forgave Nabal.

Uncle Nour: Yes, David was delighted with Abigail's wisdom. He praised her because she prevented him from avenging himself with his own hand. He said to her...



MEMORY VERSE

"blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed" 1 Samuel 25:33

Mirna: Mario, since Abigail was able to solve her problem, we can solve our problem too and save the tree. I have an idea.

Mario: What is it?

Maria: You know what we can do? We can go around and tell everyone in the city about the tree! When they hear about it, they will be very happy and won't allow it to be cut off. Do you like my idea?

Mario: It's not that easy! The people won't believe us without seeing the tree with their own eyes.

Mirna: You don't like my idea?

Mario: No, but we need to add a little more to it. For example, we can try to show the tree or a gift from it to the people.

Mirna: Brilliant idea! But how would they know that this is a gift and that it's coming from the gift tree?





Mario: Good question! We can write a note on each box saying “this is a gift from the gift tree that you want to cut down”.

Uncle Nour: Very good idea! We can also try to explain to them the meaning of a gift.

Mirna: What about if we do all this in secret and make it a surprise for everyone?

Mario: Yes! And people will find the gifts at their doors.

Uncle Nour: But there is another problem. You’re only two people. How can you do all this by yourself?

Mario: You’re right Uncle! What shall we do?

Mirna: Not a problem at all! We can call all our friends and explain everything to them. I’m sure they will want to keep the gift tree!

Mario: Perfect! Maria you’re starting to be wise just like Abigail.

Mirna: Thank you Mario. We’ll then ask our friends to help us distribute the gifts to everyone in the city.

Mario: Would we have enough gifts for everybody?

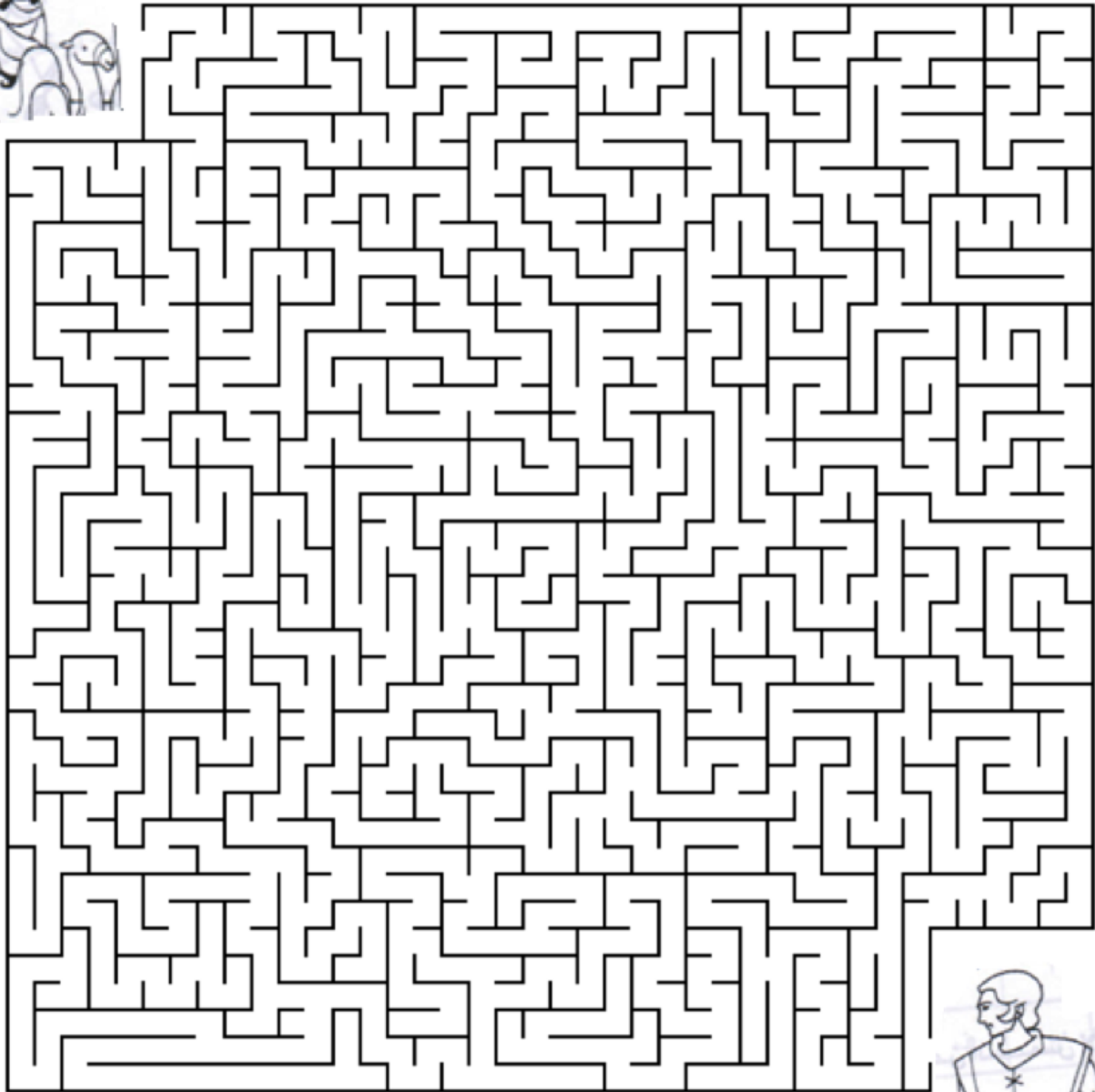
Uncle Nour: The gift tree will never run out of gifts. It’s a giving tree, it will always give gifts to anyone who asks.

Mario: Let’s start!





Help Abigail Find David





Activity

Abigail Stopped David From Sinning

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

8. Abigail Stopped David From Sinning

ABIGAIL
ALIVE
APPOINTED
AVENGED
BLAME
BUNDLE
BURDEN
DAVID
DAYBREAK
DONE

DONKEYS
EVIL
FACE
FIGS
FOLLY
FOOL
HURLED
INSULTS
INTEND
LEADER

LIVING
MEET
NABAL
NEEDLESS
OWN
RAVINE
SENT
SEVERELY
SLING
STAGGERING



OUR LORD JESUS TAUGHT ME TO BE KIND

Mirna and Mario told all their friends the story of the gift tree and how gifts are very important in our lives. Their friends were very glad to help them. They all started to distribute the gifts to all the people in the city. While they were working, Mirna heard Mario yelling...

Mario: I don't want Mark to come with us. He always ruins everything! He is not very nice either!

Peter: You're right! He is very difficult to deal with. We'll tell him that we don't want him with us.

Fady: Maybe he would change this time if we treat him nicely.

Madonna: It's also not very nice to tell someone that we don't want him with us.

Uncle Nour: Madonna and Fady are right. What they said is exactly what the Bible teaches us to do. The Bible teaches us to be kind to each other. Do you remember what St. Paul did to Onesimus, the runaway slave?

Madonna: Who is St. Paul? What did he do to Onesimus?



ONESIMUS THE RUNAWAY SLAVE

(EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO PHILEMON)

Peter: I know! The church considers St. Paul "the philosopher of Christianity". He wrote 14 Epistles (letters) in the New Testament, writing four of them while he was in prison.

Uncle Nour: That's correct! You will find his story with Onesimus, and how he treated him with kindness in his Epistle to Philemon. He wrote this Epistle when he was in prison. I'll tell you all about it.





Philemon lived in Colosse. He was a Roman citizen, not a Jew. His name means "beloved". He became a Christian through St. Paul's preaching. Philemon was a wealthy member in the church of Colosse; his house was the church where the people would gather to pray. Philemon, his wife Apphia and his son Archippus loved Jesus and served Him.

Philemon had a slave who was very talented. Back then, slaves were viewed as a property. People could purchase a slave from a marketplace where slaves were auctioned off. So Philemon bought Onesimus. The name Onesimus



means "useful". Unfortunately, Onesimus was not useful.

Mirna: Why?

Uncle Nour: He robbed his master and ran away to Rome. In Rome, he spent all the money he stole from Philemon. Do you think God would abandon Onesimus because of what he did?

Mario: Of course not! But what did God do?

Uncle Nour: God arranged that Onesimus meets St. Paul while he was under house arrest in Rome. As you know, when St. Paul appealed to Caesar, he was sent to Rome where he stayed in his own rented house awaiting trial. He was chained to a Roman soldier, but he could receive friends and visitors (Acts 28:30). This is where he met with Onesimus.

In spite of his chains, St. Paul was preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul talked to Onesimus about our Lord Jesus. He told him how our Lord shed His blood on the





cross to save us. He also told him that God is always ready to accept the sinners if they repent, no matter how bad their sins are.

Peter: Did Onesimus listen to St. Paul? Did he believe?

Uncle Nour: As a matter of fact, Onesimus believed in the Lord Jesus. He repented and confessed all his sins. St. Paul baptized him. From that time, his life changed completely to the point that he became a bishop.

Mirna: What about Philemon? What did he do?

Uncle Nour: St. Paul sent a letter to his beloved Philemon, in Colosse, asking him to forgive Onesimus.



Mirna: What did he say in this letter?

Uncle Nour: He said: "I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints.... Therefore I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me." (Philemon 1: 4-10)

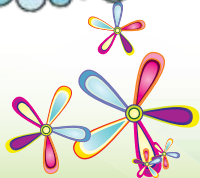
Mirna: How can St. Paul call a robber and a runaway slave his son?

Uncle Nour: Because he repented and his life was changed. He

became a good person. Not only that, but St. Paul said that he was a slave, but now he is better than a slave! He is a "beloved brother".

Mario: Wow! St. Paul was really very kind to Onesimus.

Uncle Nour: St. Paul's kindness to Onesimus was not only by words, but also by deeds. He said to Philemon that anything that





Onesimus owes, he will repay.

Peter: Did Philemon forgive Onesimus?

Uncle Nour: Of course he did. He received him and treated him like a brother, just like St. Paul asked him. He told him "receive him as you would receive me" Afterwards, Onesimus became the Bishop of Berae. He was martyred on the 21st of Amshir. Now who can tell me what helped Onesimus the runaway slave become a bishop?

Mirna: It was the way St. Paul treated him.

Madonna: Truly, he treated him with love and kindness.

Uncle Nour: Very good! As the bible teaches us, kindness is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It means that we should be nice to others and treat them with love, exactly like what St.

Paul did with Onesimus. We also have to be kind because we are God's children. To show the work of the Holy Spirit in us we should have the fruits of the Spirit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. The Bible teaches us saying...

MEMORY VERSE



All of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous" 1Peter 3:8

Mario: You're right. What I did to Mark was wrong. I have to forgive him and reconcile with him. From now on I'll be nice with everybody.

Madonna: Okay, come on guys, let's distribute the gifts.





Paul Writes to Philemon

(Philemon 1:1-25)

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

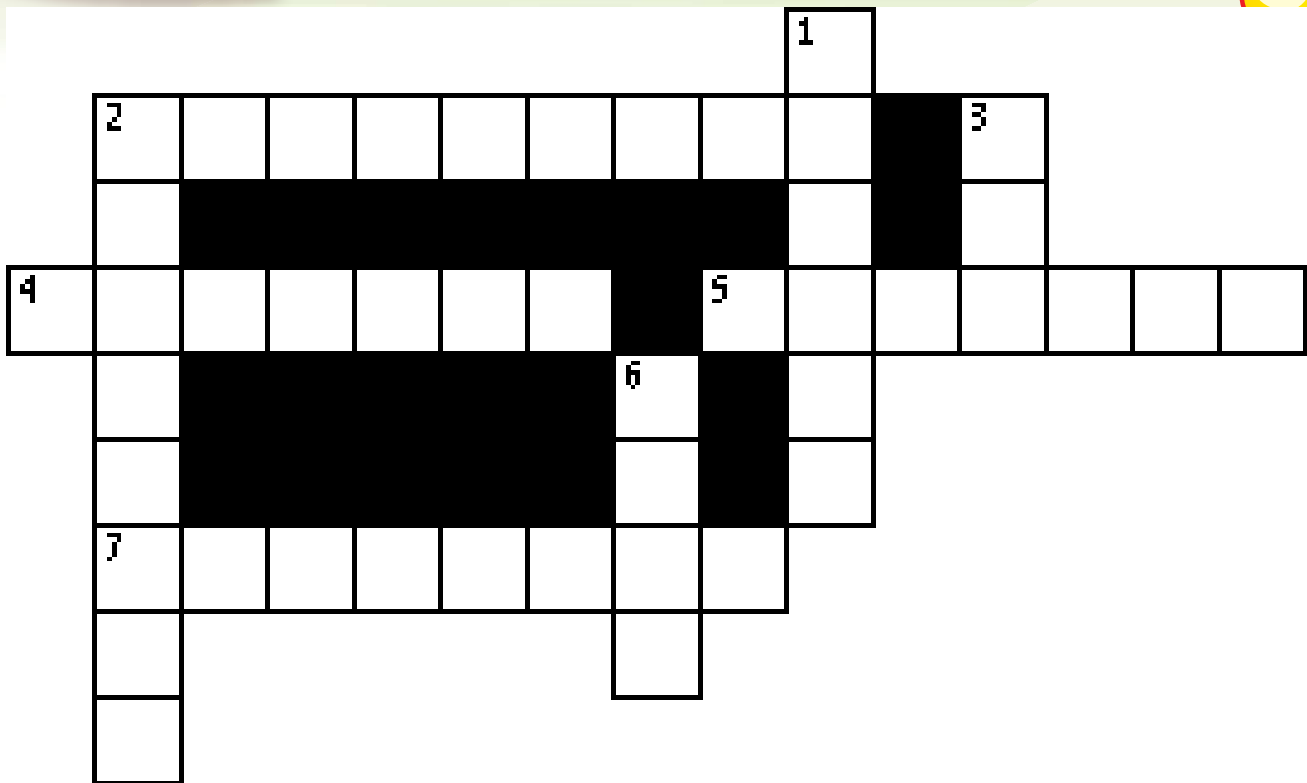
**BOLD
BROTHER
CHAINS
CHRIST
FAITH
FRIEND
GRACE**

**LOVE
ONESIMUS
PAUL
PHILEMON
PRAYERS
PRISONER**

**PROFITABLE
SAINTS
SAVIOR
SLAVE
SPEAK
SPIRIT**



Activity



- 5 ACROSS "I thank my God, making mention of you always in my _____, hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints." **PHILEMON 1:4-5**
- 1 DOWN "For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the _____ of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother." **PHILEMON 1:7**
- 2 DOWN "I appeal to you for my son _____, whom I have begotten while in my chains." **PHILEMON 1:10**
- 7 ACROSS "I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might _____ to me in my chains for the gospel." **PHILEMON 1:12-13**
- 4 ACROSS "For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might _____ him forever." **PHILEMON 1:15**
- 6 DOWN "But if he has wronged you or _____ you anything, put that on my account." **PHILEMON 1:18**
- 3 DOWN "Yes, brother, let me have _____ from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord." **PHILEMON 1:20**
- 2 ACROSS "Having confidence in your _____, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say." **PHILEMON 1:21**



OUR LORD JESUS TAUGHT US HOW TO THANK HIM, AND PRAISE HIM

The kids divided themselves into groups. They went to each house in the city and put a gift at the door. People started to open their gifts and read the notes. But their reactions were different. Some were very happy with the gifts, some were really amazed and asked their relatives about the story of this tree and some did not really care. Many people took their gifts and started to do exactly as it was written on the note "offer it to someone you like". After they were done, the kids went back to Uncle Nour to tell him what they did.

Mario: All done! We gave out gifts to everybody.

Peter: But some people were not happy.

Mark: I'm pleased with what we did. I'll be more pleased if people start to use gifts again so they can deal with each other with love and kindness.

Mario: I'm not very optimistic.

Uncle Hannah entered the room while they were still taking.

Uncle Hannah: You guys have to leave now! I have to evacuate the museum. Tomorrow we'll start our project to expand the museum.

Mirna & Mario: That's it? Are they going to cut down the tree?

Peter: I told you that this was not going to work. They will cut down the tree tomorrow. All our work was for nothing!

Uncle Nour: Don't lose hope. As long as we live, we have to have hope.

Uncle Hannah: Enough talking! I have to close the museum. By the way Nour, don't forget to take your stuff. After they cut the tree, you won't have a job.

Uncle Nour: Nobody knows what will happen tomorrow.





When the kids left the museum, they were very sad. They were very surprised that Uncle Nour still had hope. They decided to meet the next day, to say goodbye to Uncle Nour and see the gift tree for the last time.

The next day, when they went to the museum, they found Uncle Nour standing at the door.

Mario: Good morning Uncle Nour. How are you today?

Uncle Nour: Good morning kids. I'm confident that today will be a better day.

Mirna: Do you still have hope?

Madonna: This is very strange. They will cut down the tree and you will lose your job, but you still have hope!

Suddenly, they heard lots of noises. Many people from the city were coming towards the museum.

Peter: See! All the people are coming to cut the tree.

Mark: But they are holding the gifts that we gave them. They look very happy. I don't think they're here to cut the tree.

Mirna: Maybe they came to return the gifts. Can you hear what they're saying?

People: No one will cut the tree! No one will cut the tree!

One of the people: We know what you guys did and how with your wisdom you protected the gift tree.





They all started to tell to each other what happened when they shared the gifts with other people.

Grandpa: Mirna... Mario.

Mirna & Mario: Grandpa, where were you? Did you see what happened?

Grandpa: Yes, I heard about what you guys did. You brought the joy to the city one more time. You made the people appreciate the importance of the gifts. The Mayor made a decision.

Mirna, Maria and all the kids: He won't cut the tree!

Grandpa: Yes!

The Kids: Hurray! We did it!

Uncle Nour: Do you understand now, why I told you that as long as we live we have to have hope. God teaches us to always have hope. He brings light after darkness, sunrise after sunset, hope after despair. We have to thank Him and praise Him for all His grace. That's why we have to thank Him all our lives and when we go to heaven, we'll praise Him with the angels and the saints forever.

Mario: Do you mean that all we'll be doing in heaven is praising God? What does praise mean? What should I do when I praise God?





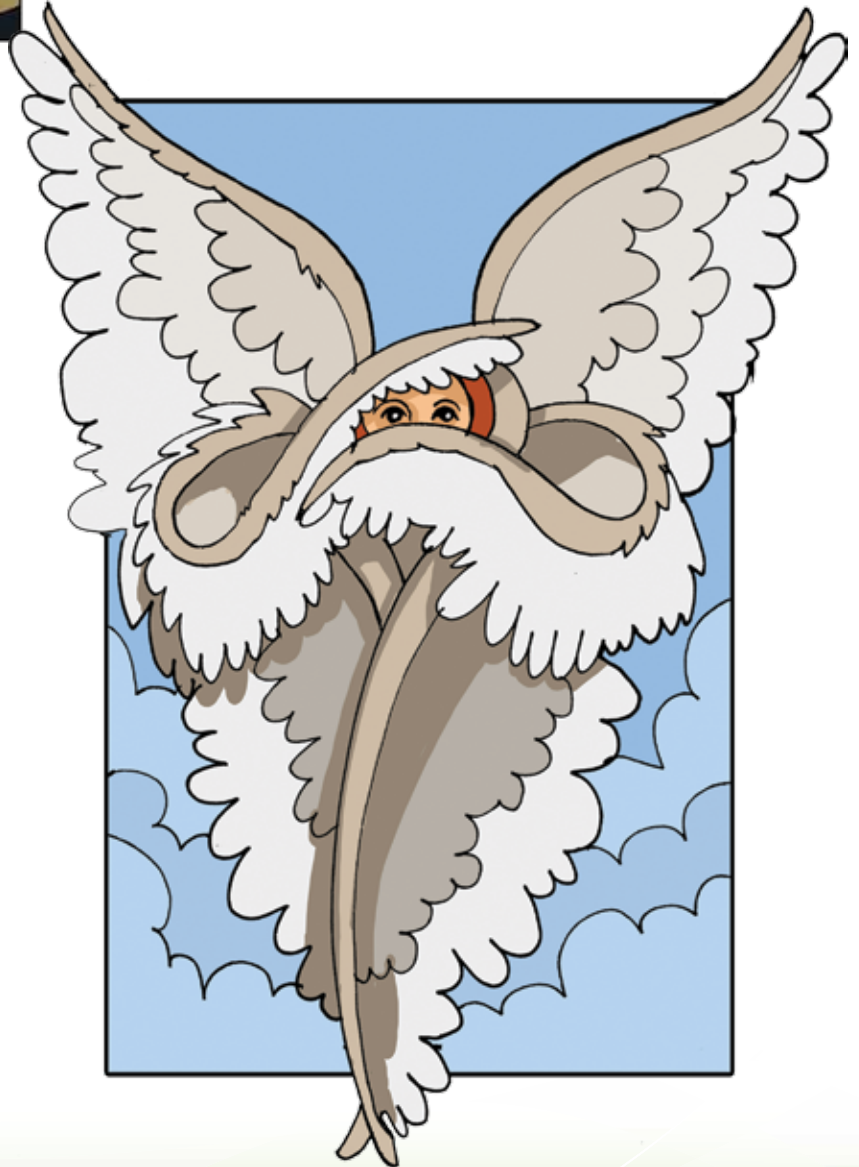
Uncle Nour: Praise is the language of the angels. Language is not just letters and words, it is the work of the angels in heaven. When we go to heaven, we'll do like them too. We'll praise God! We'll offer Him our love. We'll rejoice in His presence. But I want to ask you something, can someone become a doctor without going to grade 4?

Mirna: Of course not.

Uncle Nour: Same with us, we'll never know how to praise God in heaven, if we don't learn how to praise Him here on earth.

Peter: You mean that if we don't praise God on earth, we won't be able to praise Him in heaven?

Uncle Nour: Yes Peter.





MEMORY VERSE



"So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture,
will give You thanks forever; we will show
forth Your praise to all generations". Psalm 79:13

Our praise on earth makes us coworkers with the angels. As I told you, praise is the work of the angels. There is a special rank of angels called the "Seraphim" whose job is to praise God all the time. Isaiah the prophet tells us about them "Above it stood Seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"
Isaiah 6:2-3

Our praise on earth gives us angelic qualities, like joy, love, kindness and humility. "I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High." Psalm 9:1-2

When we praise God we stand in His presence. Praise fills us with joy and grace. It shows on our face!

David the prophet used to praise God all the time and say:



MEMORY VERSE



"Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing praises to
His name, for it is pleasant." Psalm 135:3



Mark: You're right Uncle. Can you please tell us what should we do when we praise?

Uncle Nour: When we praise,

we lift up our hearts and our thoughts to God. We thank God for all that He did for us.

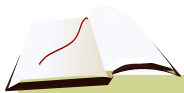




Through praises, we thank Him. We rejoice in the Lord.

Sometimes we are very happy with all that God is doing for us but we don't know what to say. So we praise Him. Praise provides us with the right words to use.

Most importantly, we ask for the forgiveness of our sins. Finally, we have to understand that praise is a sacrifice that we offer to God. We do this because He loved us and offered Himself as a sacrifice for us. So we offer him the sacrifice of our hearts, which is our praise.



MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."
Hebrews 13:15

When Uncle Nour was done, they all stood up to praise God, and to thank Him for all that He did for them. Everybody went home. Mirna and Mario returned to the farm with Grandpa. They took permission to continue looking in his storage place.

Mario: Mirna, come and see! Look at what is written on this box! "The Toy Hospital".

Mirna: It sounds like a new adventure!

Mirna & Mario: Grandpaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa...





Memorization

The Gospel of the Prime Prayer.

I- This prayer reminds us of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead. We pray it in the morning, to thank God for giving us a new day and to honor His Holy Resurrection.

John: 1: 1-17 - The Gospel according to St. John may his blessing be upon us. Amen

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. ⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" ¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Verses to show the importance of the sacrament of Baptism for our salvation.

1- Without baptism there is no salvation:

"Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God". John 3:5

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned". Mark 16:16

2- The apostles baptized in different occasions.

The day of the Pentecost - "Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

Paul and Silas baptized the Philippian Jailer - . "And immediately he and all his family were baptized".

Acts 16: 33





The baptism of Lydia the seller of purple - And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. Acts 16: 15

3- Baptism should be in the name of the trinity.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Matthew 28:19

4- Baptism should be by immersion

"Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead". Colossians 2:12

"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". Matthew 3:16

5- Through baptism, we become children of God

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ". Galatians 3:26-27

6- The importance of baptism for children

"But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."" Matthew 19:14



Activities



I am seeking my brothers

Hymns & Tasbeha

Coptic Language

Drama & Mime

Arts

Creative Writing

Sports



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