



His Glorious Manifestation

"And the Word became flesh and dwelled among us, and we behold His glory, as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14)

On the 11th. of the Coptic month Tobi (January 19th), our church celebrated the feast of Epiphany, which is one of the seven major feasts of our Lord Jesus Christ. Epiphany means manifestation, in our Coptic church, it is called "Theophany" which means "Manifestation of God."

A Public Manifestation

Epiphany is the first public manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the time of His birth, our Lord was revealed to a few privileged people, namely some poor shepherds who "were keeping watch over their flock by night." (Luke 2:8). But in the Epiphany, a great crowd witnessed that Jesus came to the banks of Jordan to be baptized. (Luke 3:21)

Aspects of Manifestation

This solemn manifestation consists of two aspects:

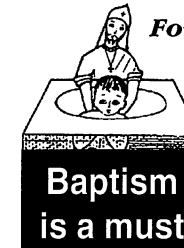
- 1-**The aspect of humility**, represented by the baptism to which our Lord submits. John the Baptist was "preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Luke 3:3). But Jesus, being God in the flesh, did no sin. He himself said, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46) and, consequently, there was no need for Him to be baptized, yet He came to the banks of Jordan to be baptized by John. And when John tried to prevent Him, Jesus said: "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3:15)
- 2-**The Aspect of Glory**, this glorious aspect consists of two testimonies given to Jesus:
 - a) The human aspect of John the Baptist who gave witness saying; " I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34)
 - b) The divine aspect of the Father and the Holy Spirit. That of the Father was the voice that came from heaven and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:17), and that of the Holy

Spirit was revealed by the dove that descended and remained on Him. (John 1:33)

Baptism A New Creation

From what has been seen during this glorious manifestation, and from the words which accompanied it we learn that the life in Christ receives the beginning of its existence from the baptismal washing as St. Paul puts it: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27)

St. Paul adds, as well, that those who are baptized are created anew, he says: "If any one is in Christ he is a new creation." (2 Corin 5:17)



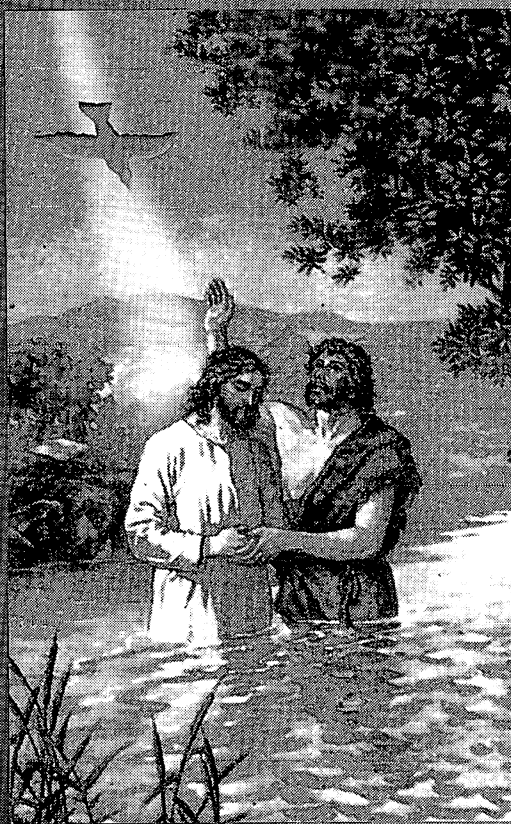
Baptism is a must

For this special act of Jesus, it is rather necessary to be imitated, Christ has been baptized on purpose to leave us an example that we should follow His steps. It was for our sake that He was baptized Baptism is a must because: "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." (John 3:5)



A Note From Sr. Benna

*Dear Rev. Father,
 How kind and thoughtful of you to send us a copy of your church bulletin! We are interested and found the article about "The Burning Bush" interesting!
 We will never forget the Copts. They were an inspiration to all of us. May God continue to bless all of you abundantly.
 Gratefully,*



*"This is my beloved Son,
 in whom I am well pleased"*

(Matt. 3:17)

Christ and Jonah

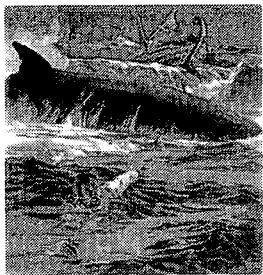


By H.G. Bishop KARAS

Bishop and Abbot

of St. Anthony Monastery - California Desert

February 17th.,
Marks the start of Nineveh Fast



“ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40).

During this month, our beloved church celebrates the fast of Nineveh, which is the shortest and most liked fast to all the believers. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the church has arranged that we celebrate the fast of Nineveh before going together with Jesus Christ through the fast of the Holy Lent, Why ?

Jesus, the Lord of Glory said “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold a greater than Jonah is here” (Matt. 12:41).

The church is showing us the way that we should follow during the fast of the Holy Lent, and also is teaching us that true repentance should accompany our fast, same as the people of Nineveh have done.

Knowing Him Better

For some, religion is a passing fad, for others, it is the corner stone of their life. They thrive on their love for God and unceasingly search to know all about Him. However, sometimes they have doubts, which stand as a stumbling block on their way to Him. They seek guidance because they need to be assured that God does exist. Only then, that they will totally submit themselves to His will.

To help such group with their dilemma, we will try to simply answer some of their questions so they can grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Is There a God?

Some people say “there is no God, because I cannot see Him”. It is true that God is invisible, but that doesn’t mean He does not exist. There are many things in our everyday life that we cannot see, yet we know that they exist.

We cannot see air, yet we know it is there because we cannot survive without it. We cannot see electricity, yet we know that it is there and we cannot imagine our life without it. We cannot see love, yet we feel it in our hearts.

We cannot see God, yet we know He is there because He is the creator of the wonderful world all around us. It is full of beauty, from the tiniest insect to the vast unending universe. As St. Paul puts it, “For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” (Rom. 1:20)

Things do not Happen by Chance

Let us take the example of a book, the words do not fly through the air and happen to land in the right order. Someone has to put it altogether to make sense. So a book must have an author - someone to write it. A building must have an architect - someone to plan it. So too with our world. It did not all happen by chance, someone planned it, put it together. This great Designer,

Architect and Creator, we call God.

Great People Testify that He Exists

King David

David testifies that God is present everywhere. He said: “Where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold You are there.” (Psalm 139 : 7,8)

Pope Shenouda III

His Holiness hangs on a wall in his office, a small sign that says “God Exists” as a connotation of his firm belief in the existence of the Most High.

Albert Einstein

Einstein one of the greatest scientists, wrote:

“My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable, superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.

Congratulations

To:

- ❖ **Alfred and Deborah Hanna** for becoming one in Christ. May the Lord bless their life and make their marriage honorable and blameless.
- ❖ **Murad Rafael and Basma Jagoub** for the blessed occasion of their engagement. May the Lord look after them and end up this undertaking in happiness and joy.
- ❖ **Hani and Vivian Kbalil**, for the baptism of their son **Michael Mina**. May the Lord bless the new born child to grow in grace and stature before God and men.