

100 Questions & Answers on the Christian Orthodox Dogma

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Chapter one

The Holy Trinity

Q1: what is meant by the word hypostasis?

A1: the word hypostasis, in Greek is composed of two segments, 'hypo' means: under, and 'stasis' meaning: standing or upright, therefore the word hypostasis means "under the standing", theologically it means what the essence stands on, or what the nature or the essence stands on, the hypostasis is living existence having His own specific personality, and his own will, but one in the essence and nature with the other two hypostases without separation

Q2: who are the three hypostases?

A2: the three hypostases are: the father, the son and the Holy Spirit

-The father is God, regarding the essence, and the origin regarding the hypostasis

-The son is God, regarding the essence, and the begotten regarding the hypostasis

-The Holy Spirit is God, regarding the essence, and the emanate regarding the hypostasis

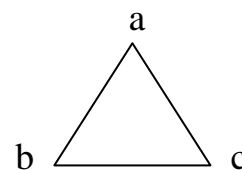
Q3: How is the divine essence one, meanwhile there are three distinctive and equal hypostases?

A3: To explain the notion of the oneness of essence for three distinctive hypostases whilst one in essence, we take an example: a triangle of pure gold, has three equal angles a, b, c

-The angle (a), is gold regarding the essence

-The angle (b), is gold regarding the essence

-The angle (c), is gold regarding the essence,

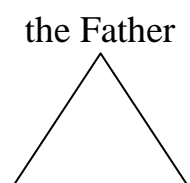


So the three angles has one essence, one existence, and one gold , which is the essence of the triangle, but (a) is not (b) , and (b) is not (c) and (c) is not (a)

As if (a) is the same as (b), then the line (ac) will lies on the line (bc) and there will be no golden subject at all

If we apply the same notion for the Holy Trinity:

-The father is God regarding the essence



-The Son is God regarding the essence the Son the Holy spirit

-The Holy Spirit is God regarding the essence

The three have the same essence, and the divine essence is in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

But the Father is not the same as the Son and not the same as Holy Spirit, also the Son is not the same as the Holy Spirit and not the same as the Father, and also the Holy Spirit is not the same as the Father and not the same as the Son

Q 4: Could we say that the existence in the Holy Trinity is confined to the Father alone? And the mind is confined to the Son alone? And the life is confined to the Holy Spirit alone?

A4: - No ,we couldn't say that , we have to notice that according to the fathers' teachings the existence or the essence is not confined to the Father alone, in the liturgy of Saint Gregory the Nazianzus we speak to the Son saying: **“O You who are, Who were, who continue unto the age”** as the Father has a real existence and He is the origin in the existence regarding the Son and the Holy Spirit , and the Son Has a real existence by the sempiternal begetting , and the Holy Spirit has real existence by the sempiternal emanation, but each of them is not separable in His existence or essence from the others

- Also the mind is not confined to the Son alone, as the Father has the property of the mind , and the Son has the property of the mind, and the Holy Spirit has the property of the mind, as this property is that of the divine essence, as Saint Athanasius said:” (the properties of the Father are the same as those of the Son except one property which is the Father being Father and the Son being son , then why the properties of the Father are the same as those of the Son ?that's because the Son is from the Father and holding the essence of the Father)(four discourses against the Arians- Discourse III, points 4&5-Nicene and post-Nicene fathers, volume 4, 1978)

But we say that the Son is the logos or the mind begotten or the mind spoken by, and the origin of the begotten mind is the Father

-concerning the property of life , it is also not confined to the Holy Spirit alone , as the father has the property of life, and the Son has the property of life, and the Holy Spirit has the property of life, as life is among the properties of the divine essence, and the lord Christ said: “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has given to the Son to have life within Himself”(john 5:26), it was said about the lord Christ being the word of God “In Him was life” (John 1:4), but the Holy Spirit as He is the life giver for the creation , therefore it was

said about Him “(the Lord, the Giver of Life) (according to the creed of faith , and the Liturgy Of Saint Cyril) , also He is the provider of life, (according to the third hour prayer)

It is dangerous to attribute the existence to the Father alone, and the mind to the Son alone , and the life to the Holy Spirit alone, as in that case we divide the one divine essence into three different essences , or that may result into attributing the essence to the Father alone (As long as He has the existence alone), thus we deny the essence for the Son and the Holy Spirit , or nullify their existence , therefore they will transform into properties for a single divine essence who is the hypostasis of the father

Q5: Is there a relationship between the nature of God (God is love) and our understanding of the Holy Trinity?

A5: yes, there is a definite relationship:

-The key of Christianity as we know is "God is love"(1 John 4:8, 16)

We ask whom did the Father love before He created the world, the angels and mankind? If the Father loved himself He would be selfish (ego-centric). God forbid that He is so, therefore there must be a beloved as the lord Christ said in His soliloquy with the father before crucifixion" for you have loved me before the foundation of the world"(John 17:24)... by the existence of the Son before the foundation of the world and over time , before all ages, we can describe God as love sempiternal, and not as if the love is an incidence or new event for the Father, so the fatherhood and love are concomitant, as long as the fatherhood exists there is love between the Father and the Son

-But the love wouldn't be perfect except by the existence of the third hypostasis, as the love towards the self is selfishness and not love, and the love directed towards the other whom there is no one but him (confined to only the other) is a specific love (exclusive love), meaning that it's an imperfect love, but the ideal love is that directed to the other and anyone else (inclusive love), here the importance of the existence of the third hypostasis outcrops for the sake of perfection of love

-If the creation exists at anytime and anyplace it will be included in the scope of that infinite love, as the triangle of love here is unlimited and without scales, that infinite perfect love is directed also towards the creation wherever and whenever it exists , as the lord Christ said: “so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them”(john 17:26) the perfect love is the love amongst the three hypostases and that's the greatest love in the whole existence

- Someone may ask why the hypostases aren't four or five?. To answer that we say that anything imperfect in God is against His divine perfection, also anything extra unnecessarily is against His divine perfection., the size of this love triangle is infinity, meaning that the size of love amongst the three hypostases is infinity, that love triangle is expanding to involve the

whole creation, any creature lies within the scope of that triangle is included by that love. So what is the need for a fourth or fifth angle?

Q6: Do the three hypostases have one will or three wills?

A6: The three hypostases have one will regarding the kind and three wills regarding the number, meaning that each hypostasis has a will and loves the other two hypostases freely, but that will is inseparable in its nature from the will of the other two hypostases as the kind of will is one, and they are included by one essence and a single divine nature, so what is decided by the Father, is decided by the Son, and also decided by the Holy Spirit by nature

Q7: what are the three hypostases sharing together? And in what way they are discriminating?

A7: the divine hypostases share together in all the properties of the one divine essence, and are discriminating from each other by the hypostatic properties only:

- The Father is the origin or the spring in the trinity, He is the origin of the essence and the existence for the other two hypostases
- The Son is begotten from the father , but He is not just a property , but a hypostasis having a real existence, and inseparable from the Father being the word of God
- The Holy Spirit is emanate from the Father , but He is not just a property but a hypostasis with a real existence and inseparable from the Father as He is the Spirit of the Father

-The Father is the spring, from whom the only begotten son by the sempiternal begetting before all ages is flowing without separation, also the Holy Spirit by the sempiternal emanation before all ages

-The Father is the wise who begets the wisdom, and emanates the spirit of wisdom

- The father is the truthful who begets the truth (John 14:6), and emanates the spirit of truth (John 5:26)

- The wisdom is a title for the Son hypostasis begotten of the wise father
- The truth is a title for the Son hypostasis begotten of the truthful father
- The word (logos) or (the uttered mind) is a title for the Son hypostasis begotten of the sane father

- all the substantial properties together, like the wisdom, the mind and the life...shared by all the hypostases together; so the Father is the truth regarding the essence, and the Son is the truth regarding the essence, and the Holy Spirit is the truth regarding the essence, but regarding the hypostasis, the Father is the truthful (spring of truth), and the Son is the truth begotten of Him, and the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth emanate of Him

Who can separate the truthful from the truth begotten of him?!

Who can separate the wise from the wisdom? The wisdom emerge from the wise spontaneously as a natural declaration for the unseen reality

We know the wise by the wisdom, and we know the sane from the uttered mind, and know the truthful by the truth emanating from him ...and so on

The Son is proclaiming the unseen Father to us, and we see the Father unto him, and the Holy Spirit inspires into us secretly in invisible way about the Father and the Son

-The son is called a son as he is the image of the father (Colossians 1:15)

The Holy Spirit is called a spirit, because He works without seeing Him, and among His titles the Spirit of truth, and He is the comforter, who comforts the human heart, and gives him the gift of peace and reconciliation with God

Here is a list of the hypostatic properties of the three hypostases, and examples of the substantial properties in which none of the three hypostases differ from the other, but they are as titles befitting each hypostasis according to his property

The Holy Trinity	The Father	The Son	The Holy Spirit
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">hypostatic properties</div> <div style="width: 45%; border-left: 1px solid black;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;">substantial properties</div> <div style="width: 45%; border-left: 1px solid black;"></div> </div>	Father and emanating fatherhood	Begotten sonship	Emanate The emanation
truth	The truthful (The spring of truth)	The truth (John8:32,14:6, Revelation 3:7)	The spirit of truth (John 14:7,15:26,16:17 ,1 John 4:6)
mind	The Sane (the spring of mind)	The mind (begotten) – the word (John1:1) The logos- the uttered mind	The spirit of mind (Spirit of understanding Isaiah 11:2)
wisdom	The wise (Romans 16:27, Jude 25)	The wisdom (Proverbs 3:19, 1Corinthians 1:24,Colossians 2:3,Revelation 5:12)	The spirit of wisdom (Wisdom 1:6, Isaiah 11:2)
love (1 John 4:8)	The lover	The love (1John3:16, John	The spirit of love

	(John 17:24)	14:6)	(2 Timothy 1:7)
life	The living (Ezekiel5:11,Matthew16:16 , John 6:57, Romans 14:11)	The life (John 11:25,14:6)	The spirit of life (Romans 8:2)
mightiness	The mighty (Matthew 6:13, Revelation 18:8)	The mightiness (1Corinthians 1:24,Revelation 5:12)	The spirit of mightiness (Isaiah11:2, Micah 3:8,2 timothy 1:7)
discernment	The discerning (Job 12:16, Isaiah 28:29)	The discernment (the letter 3:65 against the Arians by Saint Athanasius	The spirit of discernment (Isaiah 11:2)

Q8; why is the Son of God called the only –begotten Son?

A8- As there is no one else begotten of the Father of one essence with the Father and His divine nature..therefore He is the only son begotten of one essence with the Father carrying the same essence of the Father and His nature , so we say (the only gender), meaning that there no one else begotten by the same divine essence (that doesn't mean He is begotten of the essence , but He is begotten of the hypostasis as the essence doesn't beget) , but it is meant that there is no one else begotten of the Father carrying one essence with the Father , that's why they add in the true Arabic translation the word (gender), meaning that the divine gender as we say: the human gender, regarding the word (the only) here , it means that there is no one except Him begotten of the Father with the same essence from sempiternity

-the phrase (the only- begotten son) was mentioned several times in the new testament , for example what was mentioned in (John 3:16) “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.”.. it is meant by the sentence (the only- begotten Son), He is the only begotten of the Father by that way, but the Holy Spirit is by emanation, and not begetting, as the begetting belongs to the Son alone, so there is no interpenetration for any one in that property – the unique property of the Son – being begotten of the Father

Q9: How could the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be one God?

A9:we will give an example to explain and approximate that meaning: the fire has a flame , and the flame emerges light and heat , so the flame is called fire, and the light is called fire , and the heat is called fire :the proof for that :it is possible to say that we are igniting the fire ,

or igniting the flame ,sometimes we say that we are illuminated by the light , or illuminated by the fire , or we are warmed by the heat or we are warmed by the fire

So the flame, and the light and the heat emanating from it is one fire, and not three fires, but the flame is not the light and not the heat, although the flame is not the light and not the heat, yet the flame if it doesn't beget light and radiate heat will never be a fire at all , so the flame by its light and heat forms a real fire

-So if we contemplate in the Holy Trinity we understand that the Father is God, and the Son is God , and the Holy Spirit is God , like the flame is fire , and the light is fire and the heat is fire, as the father is God the father , and the Son is God the Son , and the Holy Spirit is God the Holy Spirit, we can say that the Father is God only without the word (father), as we say that the flame is fire , so the nomenclature is not a problem , but if the Son doesn't exist there is no God, as there is no Father without a son , as there is no fire without heat, even if there is a flame , as the flame without a heat is worthless , also the mind without thought is worthless , as the generator begets the electricity , and the light begets a ray , the mind begets thought, and the flowers beget odor, and the magnet begets a magnetic field , and the plant beget spores , and nothing in the whole existence doesn't beget except the stone and the solid inanimate

So God declared to us that He as one God is Father, and Son and Holy Spirit

Chapter two

The Incarnation and Nature of the lord Christ

Q1: What is the difference between the apparition and the incarnation?

A1; The divine incarnation is an inseparable union of two different natures into one nature , it's a hypostatic union , a real union, and union according to nature, and that doesn't apply to the apparition of God the Son in the old testament for our father Abraham, or Yacoub for example, as in those apparitions there was neither union between two natures nor real incarnation nor hypostatic union, therefore it is not named incarnation at all, but named apparition only

- the incarnation : includes the apparition and the incarnation
- the apparition : doesn't include the apparition and incarnation but is an apparition only

Q2: When was the lord Christ existent?

- **Was He existent at the time of His incarnation from the Virgin Mary by the action of the Holy Spirit?**
- **Was He existent at the time of creation of the world?**
- **Was He existent at the sempiternity and before all ages?**

A2: we say that the lord Christ is the word of God begotten of the Father before all ages, and as the Christ is the world of God, if we take the mind as an example we ask again: is there a mind without a thought?? Of course there is no mind without a thought , whenever the mind exists the thought exists , and whenever the thought exists , the mind exists also , as the mind and the thought are concomitant, as the mind that doesn't think is not a mind at all, in order to be a mind it must think , and the thought is begotten of the mind , so the mind is a father and the thought is begotten , so if the lord Christ for the Father is His sempiternal word, so the word is begotten of the Father before all ages

But is it possible for the Father to exist without the word hypostasis?

The Father and the Son are concomitant, so if the Father is sempiternal, then the Son is sempiternal also, it is impossible for the Father to exist without the word, as it is impossible for the word to exist without the Father, as the Father without the word couldn't be God , as the mind without thought couldn't be mind , therefore the Father without the world couldn't be God , and the word without the Father has no existence, as how could the word is begotten of who is not existent?

Saint Gregory the Nazianzus (the theologian) said: it is impossible for the Father to start being a Father in any particular time, not even at the beginning of creation, as long as He is Father, it is impossible to be a Father without a Son, meaning that in order to be a Father the

Son must be existent, and if the Father is Father since sempiternity, the Son should be existent also since sempiternity, therefore the Son is begotten of the Father before all ages

Q3: How was the word of God incarnated?

A3: He was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary as from the Virgin Mary He took the human nature or the manhood (the human soul and the human body), and the Holy Spirit the lord ,life-giver ,the creator formed the baby without man's sowing , He purified the Virgin Mary , sanctified her and filled her with grace , then formed the baby into her womb without taking any substance or any part of human nature from outside her, so He took the cells from her , the blood , calcium and everything pertaining to the human nature ,body and soul was taken from her, He took everything and formed the baby of them , as without marriage there couldn't be a baby of human nature

- As the Holy Spirit purified the Virgin Mary and sanctified her , and filled her with grace, as the manhood that was formed into her womb is from the Holy Spirit , therefore also the manhood that was formed by the Father's will and goodwill of the only begotten Son and the work of the Holy Spirit, was without sin, and as God formed from the Virgin Mary a live body with a human soul , the angel said:" Holy One which will be born of you shall be called Son of God"(Luke 1:35)
- In summary the Holy Spirit being the lord the life giver, the creator, in His work in the mystery of incarnation was able to form from the Virgin Mary that special human nature with which the word of God unites, as He took from the Virgin what the word needed to unite with, and that what the angel said to Joseph Mary's fiancé " for what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."(Matthew 1:20)

Q4: When did the divinity of the word of God unite with the manhood which the Holy Spirit formed from the Virgin Mary?

A4: The divinity of the word of God united with the manhood from the very moment of incarnation, like the cut of a sword, meaning that in a zero time the divine incarnation happened: the manhood was formed and the divinity united with the manhood, this solves a big problem for those saying about us that we are deifying the man, we believe in God incarnated and not a man deified, as Jesus is not a man deified, but we say that the word of God appeared in flesh

- So the union between the divinity and manhood happened in the very moment of incarnation, or the divinity united with manhood in the incarnation, and the best expression is (the manhood was found in the union). Meaning that the manhood was found into the process of union , or the occurrence of union was during the beginning of the manhood formation from the Virgin Mary with no time separation between them , meaning that it happened in the same moment of union itself

Q5: Could God incarnate?

A5: God is capable of doing everything, He is infallible, but not from the incarnation, as God is capable of doing everything, so if He couldn't incarnate then there is something that He couldn't do, and the only thing that God is not doing is the evil, and as the incarnation is a deed of mightiness and not weakness, so it is among God's capability

- God is infallible and unchangeable , He is unchangeable as if He is changeable He will continue to change till a day comes when He will not be good or unholy or He will perish , as changing may lead to disintegration , so changing is against the nature of God
- The incarnation didn't change the nature of God , as the union between the divinity and manhood was without mingling , confusion or alternation , as we say in psalmody about incarnation of the word (while He is God , He came and became son of man, while being the real God, He came and saved us) (theotekons of Thursday)
- For God to save us , that's His deed , as He couldn't see the creation perishing and not saving it" the lord's hand is not shortened so that it cannot save' (Isaiah 59:1)

Q6: what is the nature of the divine incarnation?

A6: Saint Cyril the great mentioned that the divine incarnation is a true union according to nature between the divinity and manhood, a hypostatic union surpasses the mind and cognition, it is a real union according to the nature, and it is not a union between persons but union between two natures in one person. A union according to nature and it is called a physical union

- **When the union is considered natural?**

-When it forms from the natures included in its formation, a single nature by union with each other, that what happened in the divine incarnation, the most famous utterance for Saint Cyril the great about the nature of the Christ is: one incarnate nature for the word of God or for God the word

- **The union according to the nature : the physical union**

-the natural union is the resultant from two natures or more into one nature, as an example for that, the human being who is formed of two different natures, dissimilar in their elements, meaning that from two basic essences; the body and the soul, when these two natures unite together result into the human nature which is one nature, we are asking does the soul change into body in its union with the body in the human being? Of course not. As it is a union between two natures forming one nature without mingling , confusion or alternation of the two natures , which is called the natural union or union according to the nature , so as the soul is not a body and the body is not a soul , but the union between them formed one nature which is the human nature , also concerning the word of God , the divinity united with manhood , meaning that the divine nature united with the human nature to form

one nature which is the nature of the incarnate God the word , without mingling, confusion or alternation, as God is unchangeable

- That what we mean by the phrase the natural union: such soul is for that body and such body is for that soul, as when God created the man He created the body, then “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7)

- Adam is a single human nature composed of two elements complementing in the union , that body is for that soul, and that soul is for that body, so in order to have a natural union , it is not possible for a monkey to unite with an angel for example as their natures differ from each other , so when the unclean spirits possess the animals or human , that ‘s unnatural situation (as an example ;when the lord Christ casted out the demons from the mad, blind and mute man and allowed them to enter the herd of pigs, the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea and drowned, as they couldn't tolerate the Legion which was dwelling into the man then entered into them. The legion were six thousand demons who dwelt into that poor man, the pigs couldn't tolerate them (Mark 5:1-20)...so it is not possible for the demon to dwell into a man or a pig , as that body was not made for the malicious demon , even if the demon dwelt into them it's a vain and temporary dwelling , it could never be called a union , therefore we insist on the notion of one nature of the Christ , as Nestorius considered God the word inhabited in a man and dwelt into him like a man living in a building as a house without natural union

- **The natural union for God the word**

- The word of God has the capability to incarnate, and the body He formed for Himself was formed specifically to unite with Him in a natural union , the word of God didn't take a person of mankind to unite with, but He took a human nature and united with it, therefore it is not a union between persons but a union between two natures in a one unique person , as that formed nature was formed specifically , and modulated – if it is acceptable to say- for the word of God to unite with in order to appear in flesh

- But How could that happened? It happened as it was formed without having a specific person to belong to, so the Christ is not two persons – a person of God, and a person of man – but He is one person combining the two natures in His one unique person

Q7: Did the divinity of the Son of God transform into manhood? And did the manhood transform into divinity?

A7: Neither the divinity transformed into manhood, nor the manhood transformed into divinity, but in their union together, and as a result of that union was the person of the lord Christ the incarnate God the word

-The lord Christ was for example touching the leper and he was cured from his leprosy, that hand was not a normal hand as it was united with the divinity , the leper said to Him : If You will, You can make me clean. And Jesus put out His hand and touched him... And He having spoken, the leprosy instantly departed from him “(Mark 1:40 – 42) , therefore I like very much and I am attracted always in the divine liturgy by the sentence , in which we

say:(You took bread into Your holy, spotless, unblemished, blessed and life-giving hands), as the hands of the lord Christ is the life-giving hands

Saint Cyril the great the pillar of faith says:(when the fire unites with the iron, the iron can burn without changing into fire, but it burns by the power of fire into it) , it is said for example : someone irons with the iron rod only, and the fire is not mentioned , but the listener understands that the iron rod was inflamed with fire and as a result of the union between the fire and iron, the iron could burn , therefore when we say :(by your life-giving hands) , we feel that the hands of the lord Christ was life- giving, they were not normal hands, but glowing with the glory of divinity by that degree needed during His accomplishment of His mission of redemption , but the lord Christ didn't show the visual glory for people to tolerate seeing Him , so His glory was manifested through His deeds , more than it appears in spectaculars seen by eye, although He showed a ray of His glory on transfiguration, so His face shone as the sun, shining in its mightiness, so it was not possible for anyone to see His face from the intensity of illumination , the lord Christ hid His glory and emptied Himself and appeared in flesh to accomplish the redemption as if He coruscated in the fullness of His glory , who could dare to approach him and nail his hands with the nail !!, but after His resurrection "He was taken up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16) when He ascended up to the heaven

-the manhood didn't change into divinity , but His body by the union is the body of the word of God, we don't forget that there is a complete union between the divinity and manhood surpassing the mind and perception , therefore when we say "the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28), meaning His divine blood , as that blood is united with the divinity, so only one drop of it is enough to burn up the sin present in the whole world , exactly as we said about the piece of iron which became capable of burning by its union with the fire , so a drop of the blood of the lord Christ has an action similar to that of the autoclave into which the surgical instruments are put while being infected with microbes , and come out of it totally sterile , that became a purifying blood , a life-giving blood , it is no longer a normal blood, therefore when the lord Christ shed his blood on the cross, the value of that blood for God the Father can pay all the debt of sin present in the world , so He said" He sent His Son to be the propitiation concerning our sins" (1 John 4:10) "not concerning our sins only, but also concerning the sins of all the world." (1 John 2:2),one drop of the blood of lord Christ is enough for the salvation of the whole world , as it is united with the divinity , even it is not altered from being a drop of blood

Q8: did the divinity of the lord Christ separate from His manhood at the time of His death? At the time of exit of the spirit of the lord Christ on the cross, when He said:" Father, into your hands I commit my spirit"(Luke 23:46), did the divinity of the Christ separate from His manhood? Is it possible for the word of God to die on the cross, without death of the divinity?

A8: the two questions are about one case... to answer, we ask the following question: did the spirit of man die by the death of the body? Of course the spirit doesn't die, but the body is the

one who dies, so if for me the poor man , when I die , my body only dies, and my spirit doesn't die , foremost when we speak about the divinity and manhood for God the word

- **The manhood of the Christ could die , without death of the divinity**, our teacher Peter the apostle mentioned the following verse denoting that" indeed being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3: 18-19), the lord Christ died on the cross by the flesh (bodily), but His human spirit didn't die , foremost His divinity didn't die
- Concerning the answer for the question regarding separation of the divinity of the Christ from His manhood on the exit of His spirit on the cross , we say the following example for clarification:
- If we dip the absorbent paper in a basin full of oil till the oil was absorbed by the absorbent paper, then if we tear up the absorbent paper while being inside the basin of oil into two pieces, would the oil separate from any part of the paper? of course it will not separate as it is basically united with the paper
- Similarly the human spirit of the Christ separated from the human body, but the divinity filling the whole existence is united with both the spirit and body, if the spirit went to the Hades or the paradise , in all cases the natural hypostatic union is persistent between the divinity and manhood , also the divinity is filling the whole existence, so why would it separate from Him ?,that separated was the human subsistence only (the spirit from the body) , but the divinity neither separated from the spirit nor from the body
- Thus we pray in the Syrian fraction in the holy liturgy (one is Emanuel our God, and inseparable after the union and undivided into two natures , that's what we believe , and confess and accept)

Noticing that the divinity is not the human soul of the Christ, as the divinity is sempiternal while the human soul has a beginning, and the divinity is unlimited, while the human soul is limited, and the human soul was created originally on the likeness of God and His image, but the divinity is existent from sempiternity as we said

Q 9: what is meant by the exchange of titles for the Christ?

A 9: as the person of the lord Christ is one, so He himself carried the title of Son Of God and the title of Son of man at the same time, He used frequently His human title for expressing divine matters, belonging to Him, also He was using His divine title to express human matters belonging to Him, thus affirming that He is one person

For example in using of His human title for expressing divine matters, He said:

1-"And no one has ascended up to Heaven except He who came down from Heaven, the Son of Man who is in Heaven" (John 3:13)

Obviously, the lord Christ is filling the heavens and earth by His divinity, but He used here the title of Son of man as the Son of God is Himself the Son of man, and no one else

2- "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:8)

And the lord of Sabbath is definitely God, and He used here the title of Son of man

3- "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him" (Matthew 25:31)

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father" (Matthew 16:27)

In His speech about the second coming of the Son of God in His glory- which is the glory of His Father also- He used His human title

In using His divine titles for expressing human matters, He said:

1-"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) , here we see the title of the only begotten son , which is the divine title of the Christ , being the only Son begotten of the father carrying the same essence of the Father .. We notice here the title is used pointing to the crucifixion of the lord Christ and His slain on the cross by His saying: (He gave His only- begotten Son), and His saying is explaining that

" But even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14), so God's only-begotten Son is Himself the Son of man

2-" But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father."(Mark 13:32), and the title of Son here means the Son of God, and the lord Christ used it for what is concerning Him from the human side (lack of knowledge), and not the divine side (knowing everything)

3- It was mentioned in the Old Testament, verses confirming the same principle, like the bible's saying: "for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Corinthians 2:8), so the title of the lord of glory is a divine title for the Christ, and here the passage is about His crucifixion, that matter is concerning Him from the human side

Thus we understand how the Virgin is called mother of God, as His birth of the Virgin belongs to Him from the human side, but He used His divine title, as the begotten of her is Himself the Son of God begotten of the Father, and no one else, also His divine title is His original title, while His human title was acquired when He was incarnated and became man

Q10; what is meant by saying the word hypostasis has two births?

A10:we believe that the hypostasis of word of God, begotten of the father before all ages , is Himself , meaning by His same person ,was incarnated and begotten of the Virgin in the fullness of time , thus the word of God has two births;

- **The first birth:** sempiternal according to His divinity, of the Father before all ages , and above time

- **The second birth:** chronological according to His body, of the Virgin Mary in the fullness of time

The sempiternal word is Himself, who took a body and was begotten of the Virgin Mary, and He didn't take a person of men, but He took the live body with a sane spirit that was formed of the Virgin Mary by the action of the Holy Spirit

Q11: What is meant by saying that the human nature which the Son of God took had found its person in Him?

A11; It means that the lord Christ when He was incarnated, He took the human nature and made it His own, meaning that it found its person in Him, and He had his own subsistence that discriminates Him from the rest of mankind, that specific subsistence discriminating the manhood of the Christ from the rest of mankind was not a self-sustained subsistence separable or independent from God the word

Q12: Are there utterances for the first fathers affirming that God the word when He was incarnated didn't take a human person?

A12; Yes, the saints fathers affirmed the presence of one unique person for the lord Christ who is the person of God the word

-**Saint Athanasius the apostolic** said: (the word of God (logos) came in His own person)

-**Saint Cyril the great** said: (God the word didn't take a person of men, but he Himself took a perfect human nature, a life – giving body with a sane spirit, and made that manhood His own one), meaning He made it in a natural union with His divinity (the second and third letters of Saint Cyril to Nestorius)

Q13: How could the Christ be a perfect man without taking a person of men in His incarnation?

A13: the word "person" in Greek is “prosporon” it is composed of two parts: “προς” means “towards”, and “οψεν” which means “face,” so the word “prosporon” means “ towards the face “meaning the one who heads towards the other ,deals with him , and makes a relation with him”, there are persons who are separated in their essence and subsistence like humans , and there are who are inseparable in the essence and subsistence like the hypostases of the Holy Trinity, each of them is into the other and fills the other, the Father is the origin in the inseparable subsistence for the Son by the sempiternal begetting and for the Holy Spirit by the sempiternal emanation

Therefore , the “prosporon” of the Father and the “prosporon” of the Son , in spite of being carrying the same essence and same nature (the undivided and inseparable essence), yet each of them is exchanging the relation and love with the other , as the lord Christ said to the father” for You have loved Me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24) , and He said to Him:” so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26), and He said to Him:” And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine” (John

17:10) , and the Father said about the Son in the baptism and transfiguration :” This is My beloved Son” (Matthew 3:17) , (Matthew 17:5)

The “prosopon” (the person) is the holder of the nature and His owner with all its components , and upon which the nature stands whenever it exists , the word” hypostasis” means a person holding an existent nature into Him, it points to the person himself and the nature he holds ,if someone holds a divine nature , so He is God, if a person holds a human nature , then he is a human , if someone holds an angelical nature , then he is an angel, and if a unique person holds the divine nature and the human nature together at the same time , then He is God and man at the same time, or incarnate God , that what happened in the divine incarnation

The lord Christ by his own person, holding the divine nature originally since sempiternity, He held in the fullness of time, the perfect human nature in His same own person, therefore our teacher Saint Paul said:” Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8), So the owner of the divine nature became Himself an owner of the human nature as His specific own nature , so that person the owner of the nature , concerning His divine nature : is a perfect God, and a true man , the same person , no other person was added to His person

Therefore there aren’t two owners, one owns the divinity and the other owns the manhood, but He Himself who is God from the sempiternity, and still God eternally, became a perfect real man (the word of God (logos) came in His own person) as Saint Athanasius said in his book about the incarnation, therefore the true faith is that the person of the Christ is one single person, and He Himself is the person of the sempiternal word of God

Q14: Did the incarnation alter God?

If God is unchangeable from the sempiternity till eternity, then How when the Word Son of God was incarnated , He didn't change , as before the incarnation He had no body , and after the incarnation He had a body, and ascended to heaven with that body, and entered into His glory?, then how our lord is sempiternal ,eternal ,perpetual and unchangeable , and at the same time we hear that God the word emptied Himself , and became a man , in addition to His withstanding of the agonies of crucifixion and His resurrection from the dead , also all the circumstances that He was subjected to as a man or deputy of mankind?

A14: in our creed the union between the divinity and manhood was without mingling, confusion or alternation, so we don't consider that divinity had changed because of His union with manhood, but there are abilities existent in God from the sempiternity, but they are materialized in the proper time, that doesn't mean that God had changed

-as an example for that (the subject of creation) as God was existent from the sempiternity and before all ages without the creation, then at the beginning of time He created the angels and the various creatures, does that mean God had changed, meaning that He was not a creator from sempiternity before the creation, then at the beginning of time He started to create, thus He had changed!!?

-to answer that we say:

The property of capability of creation is originally existent in the nature of God, it didn't emerge for Him as a new property belonging to His divinity, but He is capable of creating whenever He wishes, so the change in the nature is something, and the emergence of the capability of the nature in the proper time without change in it, is another thing, as the change happened in the creation since it was not existent, then it entered into the existence

-but there are other properties that couldn't be existent in the nature of God and His intentions then appear, as the process of creation in the time, or at the beginning of time, or the process of incarnation in the fullness of time, but they are concomitant and practiced sempiternity before all ages like the love for example " God is love" (1 john 4:8, 16), we couldn't imagine God without love ,but we imagine Him without the creation as the creation is not necessary for God as the love

- The creation is a deed of the deeds of God's love for the creation for the sake of its salvation, as love is in God from sempiternity, and before the incarnation He loved the creation, and in the incarnation, and after the incarnation He also is loving it , as God's love is extending , never change , and never increase, but after He sent the prophets to prepare the thinking of mankind for the action of redemption , the fullness of time came to accomplish the incarnation and redemption is spite that the incarnation and redemption were in the mind of God since sempiternity , as love is His nature " 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), there is nothing new emerged for His nature regarding His being a lover , and regarding the incarnation..As the creation is a capability existent in God then appeared in the proper time, also the incarnation is among the capabilities of God that actualized through the hypostasis of the Son

- So the only begotten Son who is" the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), among His hypostatic properties is to declare the reality of the Father for us, therefore He said:" He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John14:9), so we couldn't see the Father's love more than we have seen clearly in the cross" By this we have known the love of God, because He laid down His life for us"(1 John 3:16), The word Son of God has a special role by His hypostasis, as He is the image of the unseen God, or He is a declaration of the reality of God , as we couldn't see the mind, but we can know the mind through the word, as by the word the mind can imagine the unseen, the word Son hypostasis is the hypostasis who can declare for us the Father's intentions in a clear way , as among His capabilities " who, being in the

form of God, He took upon Himself the form of a servant"(Philippians 2:6-7), so the capability of God to create is like His capability to appear in flesh, without losing His original nature , and without any change in that nature

- **The meaning of unchanging in the divine nature**

The incarnation is not a new addition to the nature of God, as the love that God declared on the cross was not added to the nature of God , neither the capability to appear in flesh was added , but they are intrinsic capabilities in Him , and they appear in the proper time, the word of God in order to affirm that He didn't change and didn't loose anything from His divine capabilities because of incarnation , He intentionally showed His supernatural capabilities over the nature while He was suffering the agonies of death on the cross , therefore the sun disappeared , and darkened , as the Christ , the Son of righteousness was opening His arms on the cross according to the prophecy of Malachi "But to you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be on His wings "(Malachi 4:2)..also the earth quaked, and the rocks were sheared, and the centurion who executed the sanction of crucifixion when he saw that he said:, Truly this One was Son of God" (Matthew 27:54), thus it was confirmed to us that the divine nature of the word (logos) lost nothing of its capabilities, even while He was in the severest stages of agony and weakness approaching the death, even when He released the spirit into the Father's hands

Q15: Is the Christ God or Son of God?

A15: any king is the son of a king, so when we say about Him, that is the king, it is true, and when we say that He is the son of the king. It is also true as he is of the royal race, so He is a king, son of a king

The lord Christ is God because of His divine essence which is one with the Father in it, and He is Son of God because He is the word of God begotten of the Father before all ages, and every begotten one is a son

Chapter three

The Redemption and Crucifixion

Q1: Is the cross a declaration of the divine love only? Or it's also condemnation of the sin?

A1: the psalm says:” Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from Heaven” (Psalm 85:10-11), as the cross is a declaration of God’s love according to the lord Christ saying:” 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) , so the cross is also a declaration of the perfect holiness of God , and His absolute justice, also as it is written:” without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22)

-The divine forgiveness is a prepaid forgiveness : as the sin and righteousness are not equal for God , but God declares his perfect righteousness and absolute holiness , He must declare His wrath against the sin ,as Saint Paul said:” For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18) , and also Saint Paul says:” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”(Hebrews 10:31), it was said about the redemptive deed of the lord Christ as He is fulfilling the divine justice its claim mentioned in the book of revelation:” in righteousness He judges and makes war..... He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of Almighty God. ” (Revelation 19:11, 15)

-So God rages for the sin , that is very obvious in the holy books of the old testament, and the new testament , but there is a contemporary trend among some of the church people , quoting from recent western theologians claiming that God never rage because of the sin , and never punish people for their sins , and excluding the notion of fulfilling the divine justice its claim on the cross., and denying the notion of punishment in the sanction of death issued against man , thus starting to belittle the notion of redemption and the propitiation doctrine resulting in devaluating the worth of Christian creed ..it is an extremely dangerous subject

- The wrath of God

No one could deny the wrath of God because of the sin, but the perfect holiness of God must be declared as a rejecter of the sin and evil in man’s life, or rejecting the human sin , God’s justice in reckoning him for the sin means to declare the perfect holiness of God , by getting a fair punishment for the sin , even if the price is paid by one who carries man’s sin instead

of him , granting the sinner a chance for repentance and life, after the sinner discovers the ugliness of sin and hates it , accepting the healing and forgiving love of God which is given to him by the Holy Spirit in the sacraments

-the lost man who fell in the trap of devil , and fell under the divine wrath was in need of someone to save him , as the lord said:” I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.”(Hosea 13:14) , the issue needed also for someone who crushes the dominion of death and defeat its tyranny , and someone who liberates the captives of mankind those living or died on the hope, and delivers them from the captivity of Satan and rescues them from the divine wrath

- liberation of mankind from the dominion of Satan :

it is obvious from the utterance of the lord Christ to Saint Paul the apostle when He appeared to him on his way to Damascus , and said to him:” rise and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of what you saw, and in what I shall appear to you; delivering you from the people and the nations, to whom I now send you in order to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God” (Acts 26: 16-18)

- Rescuing the mankind from the wrath of God :

-The lord Christ withstood the wrath , the agony that He withstood was the result of the wrath declared against the sin, so the forgiveness in Christianity is not a priceless forgiveness , but a prepaid forgiveness , the one who paid the price was the lord Christ by the motive of His love , so the sinner will be embarrassed by that awesome love ..man is embarrassed from his sins that caused the pains of the savoir, and His suffering the reproaches and in His death , as the prophet David said:”the reproaches of those who reproached You have fallen on Me” (Psalm 69: 9)

-the man when he looks to the cross of the lord Jesus Christ he stands astounded from His love, and ashamed from every sin caused His crucifixion, he sees in the cross the love in its brightest form, and sees also the justice taking its role, and hears the words of the apostle threatening him and other believers:” for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's “(1 Corinthians 6:20) , isn't that the apostolic song:” that the living ones may live no more to themselves, but to Him who died for them and having been raised.”(2 Corinthians 5:15)

-God , in order to save us from the sequels of sin :” sent His Son to be the propitiation concerning our sins” (1 john 4:10),and He condemned the sin as our teacher Paul the apostle said:” God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3) ..The condemnation of the sin in flesh means that the sin was condemned on the cross. As God” He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all”(Romans 8:32), God did not spare His own Son, when He carried our sins in His body, but declared His wrath on the sin by leaving His only begotten incarnate Son to suffer and die in the place of the sinners , for the sin to get a just condemnation , here God is justified as holy and rejecter of evil

-God wants to declare His vengeance and wrath against man's sin, so whoever accepts that Christ carries his sins for him, will view by his eyes the sins nailed to the cross, and thus knows that his sins were forgiven, he will view by his eyes the sins condemned with fair judgment, for that Saint Paul said:" blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross"(Colossians 2:14)

- **Father Tadros Yacoub** explains that verse saying :(what does it mean the blotting out of the debt that was against us of the ordinances imposed by the law? It is the complete fulfillment of that debt by the cross)

-**Saint John Chrysostom** denoted the importance of lifting of the divine wrath to accomplish the reconciliation saying (to know that we took the Holy Spirit as a gift, God had reconciled with us ...God is not sending the grace of the Holy Spirit if He is angry of us, so that if you are convinced that the absence of the Holy Spirit is the proof of the wrath of God , you are affirmed that sending Him once again is the proof of the reconciliation, as if the reconciliation was not accomplished, God wouldn't send the Holy Spirit)
(The first sermon about the feast of Pentecost)

-So why do some people tend to see the divine love declared on the cross, and don't tend to see the sin condemned on the cross?

I afraid that some of those have sympathy with the sin, so they are not tolerating the wrath of God against the sin that we saw on the cross!!, so when they speak about the love they welcome it , and when there is speech about the condemnation of sin and the wrath of God because of the sin , they escape from confronting that fact which is not easing themselves or their consciousness , that's amazing , as even those who say that meaning reached to address the lord Christ saying:(whoever is conquered from his lusts ,your sacrifice will let him stand blameless and acceptable before your father, and whoever couldn't repent , isn't your sacrifice a repentance for him and you are guaranteeing him) , look what is the intention behind that mental trick? Ignoring the divine justice and escaping from confronting the notion of punishment, then stepping into the Hades of declaring God's acceptance of the sinners without repentance

That horrible series which if left will lead to belittling of the sin and demolition of the folk; here we remember the utterance of our teacher Saint Paul:" He who despised Moses' Law died without mercy on the word of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy of punishment, the one who has trampled the Son of God, and who has counted the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? "(Hebrews 10:28, 29)

-" For we know Him who has said, "Vengeance belongs to Me, I will repay, says the Lord." And again, "The Lord shall judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"(Hebrews 10:30, 31)

-and also his saying: " Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for also, "Our God is a consuming fire. "(Hebrews 12:28, 29)

-Today, when we say forgive us lord, when we sin, the lord says to us (yes I will forgive you, but you have to understand that your sins 'price was paid, with a very expensive price, and whoever is not appreciating that price will fall into doubled condemnation)

Q2: Why doesn't God forgive us without the cross?

A2: some are saying: why doesn't God forgive on man's request without the pains of the cross and its sufferings? We answer them: If God forgives without full and just punishment for the sin He will be like who is considering the good and evil equal for Him, and if the forgiveness is a sign of His mercy, but where is His perfect holiness as a rejecter of evil if the sin doesn't take a just punishment?, we understand that God is telling us: I forgive you, but I forgive for whom is realizing the worth of forgiveness, that its price was paid with very expensive price, it became possible for whoever accept the grace of healing from sin by the action of renewal and purification made by the Holy Spirit

-What is the use of a patient asking the doctor to forgive him for his illness, without asking him for the healing?!!

It is foremost for the patient to ask the doctor to heal him with all the necessary medications, similarly it is not enough to ask God for forgiveness without the presence of a reason for that forgiveness, but we must ask for the forgiveness on the account of the Christ' blood ,with the request of healing and acceptance of taking the medication given by the heavenly doctor which is the renewal of the nature by baptism and practicing the holy sacraments , the blood of Christ that we partake is the eternal life, the Holy Bible says about the cure of the disease of sin's pleasure which the lord Christ paid for it:" by whose stripes you were healed"(1peter 2:24), it was said also:"He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was on Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each one to his own way; and the lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"(Isaiah 53:5, 6)

-Man feels that the price of his salvation is paid, and the lord Christ bought him with his blood, so he would no longer be for himself, he is buried with the Christ in the baptism, so when the sin comes and say to him: take your share of pleasure, he says to it: where is my share of the pleasure? Does the dead have a share in that?

-For that the apostle says: "count yourselves also to be truly dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:11), so man sees that his sin was paid for to attain the forgiveness, when Satan comes to him saying: go and sin once more, he answers him: How could that be? That sin has a very expensive price... the forgiveness is totally paid for as" For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)

-thus the death which I deserve , the Christ my savoir had paid for it fully , the man is ashamed of himself whenever he looks to the cross, and feels ashamed , despises himself , and hates himself , and hates the soul that asks for the sin and its pleasure ..He rebukes himself and says because of that temporary cheap pleasure, the Christ who loved me was

scourged with the whips and nailed by nails, so every forbidden pleasure man accepts the lord Christ had paid for it by the enflaming whips on His blessed body, those which He withstood in an amazing patience, while He is innocent

-So if we ignore the divine justice... What is the need of the cross basically? And what is its necessity?

Was the cross just an act, for the lord Christ to show for us His love only?!!

And what is meant by the word (Redemption)? When He says:" to give (the Christ) His life a ransom for many"(Matthew 20:28), or "who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 timothy 2:6), did the word redemption become a meaningless word?

Amazingly, some are denying that the redeemer gives himself in the place of the sinner, or put himself in the place of the sinner, while the Holy Bible says clearly:

-Isaiah the prophet says:" and the lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6)

-Saint John the Baptist says:" the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

(John 1:29)

-Also Isaiah the prophet says:" He should put forth His soul as a guilt-offering" (Isaiah 53:10)

-Our teacher Peter the apostle said in his first epistle : " knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"(1 peter 1:18-19)

-Our teacher Paul the apostle said:" Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us"(Galatians 3:13)

-and he said:" for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"(1 Corinthians 6:20)

- and said:" blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Colossians 2:14)

What does it mean the blotting out of the debt that was against us? It is the complete fulfillment of that debt by the cross. So why do we consider paying the debt an insult to the beloved savior?

Saint Paul said:" For He has made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"(2 Corinthians 5:21)

-Mar Ephraim the Syrian said (Praise for the rich who paid for us what He didn't borrow, and wrote on Him a deed and became indebt (the second chant for the nativity)

-Saint Ambrose said: (by the body he was hanged on the cross, and for that He became accursed He who carried our curse) (Explanation of the Christian faith, the second book, chapter 11)

-Saint Athanasius said:"(as the word of God (logos) is above all , so it's befitting to Him naturally to pay the debt by His death, by offering His temple and human vessel for the sake of all) (Incarnation of the logos , chapter 9, paragraph 2)

Q3: did the Christ die for us or He died by us? Did He die for us or we died with Him on the Golgotha?

A3: In our days, some are saying that the lord Christ didn't die for us, but die by us, meaning that He didn't die on the cross instead of us, but died by us, thus we died with Him!!!, and they are saying that it is wrong to say that He suffered for us or crucified for us, or died for us ...the answer is as follows:

1-Those people forgot that the all church is saying in the creed of faith in all our liturgical prayers about the lord Christ that: He came down from heaven, and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary and became man, And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate) so obviously we believe that He was crucified for us

2- the lord Christ himself said that:" even as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"(Matthew 20:28)

3- What is the meaning of the ransom, if that is not as a substitute for those whom He redeemed?

If we died with the Christ on the day of redemption, In that case we would paid the price of the salvation by ourselves on the day of crucifixion

4- We were crucified with the lord Christ, and were buried with Him on the day of our acceptance of the sacrament of baptism, as our teacher Paul:" Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life. knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him" (Romans 6:3, 4, 6)

The Holy spirit by an action surpassing the nature and above time and place works in the sacrament of baptism and takes from the worthiness of the Christ death and gives us...He gives us the forgiveness by the worthiness of the blood of His crucifixion, and grants us the new nature that befits the life of sonship to God, and makes us remembering in His body which is the church (Colossians 1:24), the divine grace is unlimited, but we are limited

5- We were not existing before we exist to share with the Christ in offering Himself as a ransom for the life of the world, how could we exist before two thousand years? Did we take the unlimited state for our human subsistence which is limited by time and place?! We were in the root of Adam when he sinned in the paradise as we are his offspring according to our human nature , but we are not from the offspring of the Christ according to our human nature , as the lord Christ didn't beget people bodily as Adam , but the Holy Spirit is renewing that nature in the baptism and grants us the adoption by the new birth by the water and Spirit as "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6), we become the children of God in the baptism, and transfer from

belonging to Adam to belonging to the lord Christ as long as we are fixed in Him , and live in the life of holiness and righteousness , thus we become members of His body which is the church , which He is its head

6- The lord Christ shared in our nature without a sin, to be able to die in the place of all whom He redeemed when He carried their sins nailed to the cross

-About that **Saint Athanasius the apostolic** said in His book "the incarnation of the logos," chapter eight :(therefore as He took of our bodies a body similar in nature to ours, as everybody was under the sanction of the corruption of the death , He gave His body for death as a substitute for all, which He offered to the Father, He did all of that for His passion on us , in order first: to nullify the law which sanctioned to demolish mankind, as everybody died in Him , for its dominion is finished in the body of the lord, He will no longer cling his nails in **mankind for whom He deputized** , second: to restore mankind to the incorruption after they returned to the corruption , and revive them from death by His body and the grace of His resurrection, and rescue them from the death as rescuing the ash from fire)

-Also he said in the ninth chapter;

(as the logos saw that the corruption of mankind couldn't be nullified except by the death as a mandatory stipulation , and it is impossible for the logos to withstand the death as He is immortal , and being the Son of Father, hence He took for Himself a mortal body as through His union with the logos , who is above all, will be worthy to die as **a deputy for all**, and to remain in incorruption because of the logos who came to dwell into Him and for everybody to be set free from corruption later on by the grace of resurrection from dead , and as He offered for the death that body He took for Himself as an offering and a sacrifice free from every impurity, He lifted the sanction of death immediately from all whom He deputized , as He offered as a substitute to them a body similar to theirs)

-The lord Christ deputized for the sinner mankind , and was crucified instead of them and paid the debt that was for us, He has nobody with Him on the cross on the day of His crucifixion, as He is the only savior as there is salvation in no other One, and He is the only one without a sin, and the only one who could carry the sins of the whole world , and be an acceptable ransom before the heavenly Father because of His perfect righteousness and the surpassing sacrifice in its worth in the view of God the Father, as it is the sacrifice of the only begotten son , "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)

7- If there is anyone who was crucified with the Christ in the day of redemption on Golgotha, so why was that dialogue between the prophet Isaiah and the lord Christ by the spirit of prophesy:

- Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One adorned in His clothing, bending down in His great power?

- I who speak in righteousness, great to save.

- Why is your clothing red, and your garments like one who treads in the winepress ?

- I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with Me; for I will tread them in My anger and trample them in My fury; and their blood will be sprinkled on My garments, and I will stain all My clothing"(Isaiah 63:1-3)

- Isn't Him the savoir Jesus Christ whom John has seen in a revelation ridding a white horse" And He had been clothed in a garment dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. .. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of Almighty God.... Lord of Lords"(Revelation 19:13-16)

- if there was someone who shared the Christ on the day of His crucifixion, then why He said:" and of the peoples there was no man with Me"(Isaiah 63:2), and why He said to His disciples:" Behold, the hour comes, yea, has now come, that you will be scattered, each man to his own things, and you will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me"(John 16:32) , if He had among his people who was crucified with Him , then why He said to those who wished to arrest Him:" if you seek Me, let these go away" (John 8:18), and why did He say:" I lay down My life for the sheep"(John 10:15), and when Caiaphas prophesized , and said:" You do not know anything at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die **for the people**, and not that the whole nation perish. And he did not speak this of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied "(John11: 49-51)

- How could anyone dare to say that He shared with the Christ in His crucifixion on the day of Golgotha and in His offering of the redemption sacrifice, while the prophet Isaiah said:" All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each one to his own way; and the lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"(Isaiah 53:6)

8- The serious question is as follows:

If we were crucified with the Christ on the day of His crucifixion, so that He was not crucified for us, but crucified by us, as some say, so would we crucify with Him once again in baptism or not?!!, is it possible for the crucifixion to be repeated for Him or for us?, and what is the value of the church sacraments and the baptism? And what is the work of the Holy Spirit in the church?

-We get the partnership of death with the Christ in baptism . for that Saint Paul the apostolic said in his talk about the baptism :” For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;” (Romans 6: 5), and in his saying:” we have become united with him denotes that it was something that happened on the time of baptism , and didn’t happen before, or why he said “we have become “ means becoming something new !!

Q4: why was the cross specifically? Why did the lord Christ choose to die crucified?

A4:1- By the cross He became the priest and the sacrifice, on the cross He raises His hands as a priest, while at the same time He is the hanged slain

2-by the cross He was the dead who raised as it was mentioned in the book of revelation that He is” a Lamb stood, as if it had been slain” (revelation 5:6)

3- By the cross He reconciled the earthliest with the heavenliest: as the connection between the earth and heaven reaches it utmost on the cross

4- The cross sign points to the sacrificed ego or the complete obedience

5- By the cross the prophesies were fulfilled

6- By the cross He reigned on a tree

7- The cross gave a three hours chance to accomplish the work, and for the lord Christ to say the seven utterances

8- The cross is the tree of life

9-and the cross erased the curse:" for he that is hanged is accursed of God" (Deuteronomy 12:23)

10-and the cross symbolizes the divine throne: the cross as a sign has four branches or wings, and symbolizes the divine throne which is encircled by the four non-incarnate living creatures, and the four living creatures symbolize the salvation in its stages, as the image of man symbolizes the incarnation, and the image of calf symbolizes the sacrifice, and the crucifixion, and the image of lion symbolizes the resurrection, and the image of eagle symbolizes the ascension

Q5; how could the lord Christ dies while He is God the incarnate Logos?

A5: the lord Christ died by the body, But He didn't die by His divine nature, as the normal person has a body and spirit, his spirit didn't die, but his body dies, while He is one person, as after the body of man dies, his spirit remains alive as our God " He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living "(Mark 12:27)

-Likewise also when the lord Christ died on the cross, He died by the body, while His human spirit remains alive, and both of them were united with the divinity "indeed being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison"(1 peter 3:18), by that we understand that the incarnate logos could die by the body , and don't die by the human spirit , also naturally likewise He doesn't die according to the divine nature , as neither the human spirit dies nor the divinity dies

Q6: How was He put in the tomb? And who was ruling the universe at that time?

A6: The one who was put in the tomb was the body of the lord Christ being united with the divinity, whilst at the same time His divinity is filling the whole existence , and not confined to the tomb and ruling the whole universe

Anyone has a T.V on which he can receive the image and transmission, but the transmission is filling the whole surrounding universe, so it is possible that the same transmission be received by someone else in any other country of the world, it is the same transmission, so in spite that the transmission is filling the higher atmosphere in the world, yet it could be received by a small apparatus with all its details, events, colors and words

So when the lord Christ was incarnated in the womb of the Virgin, the divinity united with the limited manhood, at the same time the divinity was filling the whole existence, and not confined to a place, so if the T.V transmission is possible to fill the atmosphere in the whole world, and we are not astounded from receiving it in a small apparatus in the home!!Do we wonder that the divinity of the lord Christ is filling the whole existence whilst the Virgin Mary receive Him incarnated in her womb by an unutterable mystery and glory, and the same situation when He was in the tomb and He himself said:" And no one has ascended up

to Heaven except He who came down from Heaven, the Son of Man who is in Heaven" (John 3:13), meaning that His divinity is filling the heavens and earth

Chapter Four

Old and New Heresies and Heterodoxies

Q1: what are the heretic thoughts of Arius?

A1:- He denied divinity of the Son and His equality in essence with the Father

-Arius considered the Son as the first creature, and said: as long as the son is begotten, and the Father is the only one who is not begotten, so the Father alone is God

- He considered the logos (the word) a god but a created god, and he is the first creature, not of the same essence with the Father , and he is an intermediate creature between God , the real God(the Father) and the created world , as it is not befitting for God to communicate with the creature , therefore he used the logos-and he is a creature inferior to God – as a tool to create the world , so Arius philosophized the phrase:"All things came into being through Him"(John 1:3) and said that such intermediate creature , that inferior one could never be equal to God in essence and sempiternity

- Arius declared that God had never been a human, but there was a time when He was not a Father

-Arius used the verses pointing to the humanity of the lord Christ to affirm nullity of His divinity

Q2: Is that Father being the only one who doesn't obtain His existence from another hypostasis means that He is surpassing in essence over the Son and also over the Holy Spirit?

A3: So simply, if the Son obtains His subsistence and essence from the Father by begetting before all ages, so the Father couldn't be the real Father without the Son and the Holy Spirit

-for example, could anyone ask if the wise is greater than the wisdom, or not? the question itself is a wrong question, as the wise couldn't be considered wise without the wisdom emerging from him, although being the origin of wisdom or the spring of wisdom, yet the wisdom is his intrinsic nature and essence, so the difference between the wise and the wisdom is not in the essence of wisdom, but the difference is who is the spring, and who is the current

- **Likewise, the three hypostases are discriminating among each other in the hypostatic properties:**

-As the Father is the origin and the spring

- The Son is the begotten of the Father

- And the Holy Spirit is the emanate of the Father

-Saint Athanasius used the analogy of the spring and the current in describing the relation between the Father and the Son, as he said that the spring and the current have one and the same water, the spring is the father and the current is begotten , but the spring of water doesn't beget a current of oil or mercury or any other liquid , thus we see no difference in the essence between the spring and the current , so it is impossible for a spring of sweet water to produce a current of bitter water or salty water , Saint James the apostle spoke about that point, as he said:" Does a spring send forth at the same hole the sweet and the bitter? Can the fig tree, my brothers, bear olive berries; or a vine, figs? So no spring can yield both salt water and fresh" (James 3:11, 12)

- **The text of what Saint Athanasius said is:**"as the river emerging from the spring is inseparable from it , in spite of that there are actually two visible things and two names , likewise the Father is not the Son , and the Son is not the Father ,as the Father is Father of the Son , and the Son is Son of the Father , and as the spring is not the river, and the river is not the spring, but both of them have the same water which is flowing in a passage from the spring to the river, likewise the divinity of the Father passes into the Son without flowing or division , as the lord Christ says:" for I came forth and have come from God", but He is always forever with the Father , and He is in the bosom of the father , and the bosom of the Father is never devoid of the Son according to His divinity

-As **Saint John the evangelist** said:" No one has seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him"(John 1:18), so the bosom of the Father is never devoid of the Son even when He was incarnated and the Father sent Him to the world and said:" I came forth from God"(John16:28)

-Saint Athanasius said:" how wouldn't be unbeliever who says:"there was a time when the Son was not existent, as that's exactly like saying:"there was a time the spring was dry lacking the life and wisdom, but such spring would never be a spring)(the second article against the Arianism , chapter 6:19), therefore the spring if it doesn't beget will never be a spring , so if we cancel the Son ,we are cancelling the Father

- **Saint Gregory the theologian** affirmed that the fatherhood of the Father couldn't be an incidental property, or acquired, for that he rebutted Ephnomios the Arian and said to him:" you ask me when did the Son exist? I answer you: the Son existed when the Father was not a Father, meaning by that to rebuke the heretic and silence him, as it is not possible for the

Father, not to be a Father, then started to acquire the fatherhood by creating for Himself a son in a particular time

- As an example for that we say: the mind without a thought could never be a mind, so if the mind has no beginning, then the thought has no beginning too, as long as the mind is a father and the thought is begotten, and the mind is the origin of the thought, therefore the mind doesn't precede the thought in existence

- As we said before the wise is not considered wise without the wisdom, and there is no power in the existence that could strip the wisdom out of the wise, therefore as the wise is giving for the wisdom its existence, so the wisdom affirms and establishes for the wise his worth and reality of his nature, as if he loses it he will lose his worth and nature and the property of his essence

-The flame is not considered a fire without the heat emerging of it, so if the flame loses the heat, it will never be called a fire, then what is the comparison between the flame and heat?, if the flame is the origin of the heat, it is considered a fire by its heat, so if it loses it, it would lose its nature and worth, so how could someone asks which is greater the flame or the heat emerging of it? There is no flame without a heat, and there is no heat without a flame

-Concluding that issue we say: the difference between the Father and the Son is neither in the essence nor in the subsistence, nor in the existence, but it is only in the state of existence, as would your essence differ if you are sitting on a chair or running fast? The difference is in the state of existence and not in the existence

- **Every father is begetting a son of the same essence and nature** , but in the case of any existent , the begotten is independently existent and there is a separation although the father is begetting an existent similar to him in essence , but in the case of the trinity , the begetting is over the time, as there is no beginning and there is no antecedent and subsequent, it is like the begetting of the thought of the mind, so as the Father is the spring of wisdom , and the Son is the wisdom , therefore they could never be separated from each other , there is no separation in the trinity but the begetting is like the begetting of the current of the spring , and the thought of the mind and the ray of the light

- **Saint Gregory the theologian** explained that in his dialogue with Ephnomios and said: how do you claim that the properties of fatherhood and sonship change the essence of the Father and the Son? Is it possible for the man to beget a deer or a monkey?! The father begets an existent equal to him in essence, so the fatherhood is a property of the hypostasis and not related to the essence, as it is a hypostatic property, and not among the properties of the essence

Q3: What is the heresy of Sibelius?

A3: Sibelius presumed that God is one hypostasis and not three hypostases, meaning a single hypostasis with three names, and that hypostasis when He created us is the Father, and when He saved us is the Son, and when He sanctified us is the Holy Spirit

Q4: How could we rebut the heresy of Sibelius?

A4: to rebut that we mention the distinctive role of the three hypostases in:

(1)The creation

We believe that the Holy Trinity is the creator, and the three hypostases are working together with a distinctive role of each hypostasis in their single action , as the lord Christ says:” For whatever things He (the Father) does, that also the Son does likewise”(John 5:19) , it was also said in the Psalms:” By the Word of the lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth”(Psalm 33:6) , that means the Father had created the heavens and all within by His word (logos) and the Holy Spirit, and in the book of Genesis He wrote :” In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and empty. And darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light. And there was light:”(Genesis 1:1-3), it is noticed here the participation of Holy Spirit and the word (logos) in the creation of the heavens and earth in the first day of creation, and subsequently in the rest of the six days of creation

-it is certainly known that God the word the only begotten Son, it was written about Him:” All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being”(John 1:3) , it was also said about Him:” For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist”(Colossians 1:16-17), a lot was mentioned in the holy books affirming that the Son is a creator also like the Father, and as we say in the Gregorian liturgy about the Son:”(the consubstantial, co-enthroned and co-creator with the Father), the phrase (co-creator) means the participation of the Son with the Father in the creation

- It was mentioned in the book of Job:” the Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life”(Job 33:4) , also it was mentioned in the same book:” But a spirit is in man giving them perception, even the breath of the Almighty:”(Job 23:8) , those utterances mean that the Holy Spirit created man and gave him the life and created within him the sane spirit as the Holy Spirit is called :” the breath of the Almighty:” and that was mentioned in (Job 33:4, Job 23:8)

-We say about the Holy Spirit in the creed of faith:”(the lord, the life-giver) (the treasury of good things and the Life-Giver) (the fourth prayer, or the first prayer of the second group), as

we believe that the Holy Spirit is the one who gives the life for the living creatures, as He is the life giver and Bestowal of the life

(2) The Salvation

Concerning the salvation , it is not the work of the Son alone , but is the work of the three hypostases ,and each hypostasis has a role distinctive from the other in the work of salvation , our teacher Saint Paul said:" the Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God"(Hebrews 9:14) , meaning that the Son offered Himself as a sacrifice for God the Father by the Holy Spirit , thus we see that God the Father was:" whereas God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19), and in the church hymns we say about the incarnate Son:"(He who offered Himself as an accepted sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of our race , which His good father smelt at night on the Golgotha)

(3) At the river of Jordan

At the river of Jordan the Son was in the water founding the holy baptism, and the Father as the heavens opened was saying:" This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17), and the Holy Spirit descending and lighting upon the incarnate Son like a dove

(4) The incarnation

And in the incarnation the Holy Spirit formed manhood for the Son – of the Virgin Mary- to unite with in a hypostatic union, also He sanctified the womb of the Virgin Mary

-The Son said in the fortieth psalm and Saint Paul quoted it also:""Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but you have prepared a body for me" (Hebrews 10:5-7), Saint Paul quoted that text from the Septuagint translation

-The Son here says to the Father: you did not ask for the sacrifices of the old testament, and I came to do your will and offer my body as an acceptable sacrifice with which you are pleased, and you have prepared a body for me (meaning of course the perfect manhood of a body and a sane spirit), here we notice that formation of the body of Jesus is attributed to the Father and not only to the Holy Spirit

-It was also mentioned that:" For that in her is fathered of the Holy Spirit"(Matthew 1:20), so did the Holy Spirit who prepared the body or the Father? We couldn't separate, the Holy

Spirit formed the manhood – including the body- in the womb of the virgin, but He formed that by a divine power that's from the Father by the Son in the Holy Spirit, as the fathers said

-Also Saint Cyril the great said:"(God the word formed for Himself a manhood from the womb of the Virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit), that coincides exactly with what we said, and accords also with what the lord Christ said that whatever things the Father does, these also the Son does likewise.

-The witnesses of Jehovah are concentrating on the verse saying:" The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do"(John 5:19), we rebut them saying: the Son is doing nothing of Himself as He is not doing independently from the Father, as whatever things the Father does, those also the Son and the Holy Spirit do, but with distinctive roles in the single divine work of the trinity

(5) The Golgotha

-For example in the Golgotha the Son was offering Himself to the Father , so the Father must smell that sacrifice as fragrance of joy and satisfaction , and breaths a fragrant aroma of an acceptable sacrifice..If the Father is absent from the scene, for whom the Son offers Himself?

-To approximate the concept we say that the Father here took the role of the judge as He who takes for the divine justice its claim, although the divine justice belongs to each of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but in order for the work to be accomplished, one should take the role of the sacrifice or the intercessor, and the other takes the role of the judge who accepts the sacrifice as a fulfillment of the divine justice , here the work is one which is the salvation, but the Father has a role that He couldn't be away from , also the Son , and the Holy Spirit , through the liturgy the church is explaining to us that doctrine simply and in an lovely and easily acceptable way as we say in the hymn:"He who offered Himself as an acceptable sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of mankind, that His good Father smelt at night on Golgotha" we shouldn't forget in all of that, the Father wasn't incarnated nor crucified , and also the Holy Spirit , as the Son alone who took that role but the three hypostases are sharing together in the work of salvation so that the Son after His ascent to the heaven , the Holy Spirit became the one who is saving us by the action of the holy sacraments :” but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit”(Titus 3:5)

(6) The Life and Gifts

Everything in the existence of deeds, talents or gifts of God is from the Father by the Son in the Holy Spirit , even life itself ,it is true that the Holy Spirit is the life giver but the life has its origin in the Father , as the fathers said:”every gift , and energy has its origin in the Father and actualized through the Son in the Holy Spirit or by Him” the essence is one, and from Him emerges the energy and ability, it doesn't emerge from the Father alone or from the Son alone , or from the Holy Spirit alone, but it is emerging from the trinity, but every hypostasis plays a specific role for that ability to actualize

Fathers utterances:

Here are some of the fathers' utterances pointing to that:

Saint Gregory bishop of Nisus: ' every action coming from God to the creation, and named according to our understanding of it, has its origin in the Father, and comes to us through the Son, and finalizes in the Holy Spirit

-**Saint Athanasius** (the Father creates everything through the word (logos) in the Holy Spirit) also Saint Athanasius said:"the Father makes everything through the word (logos) in the Holy Spirit)

(7) The Saviour title

The salvation is a Trinitarian deed, but the crucifixion on the cross is the deed of the Son ,while the Father has a participating or accompanying role in the same deed, which is the acceptance of the sacrifice by which the Son offered Himself, and the Son offered Himself as a sacrifice by the Holy Spirit , and the Holy Spirit was pointed to by the divine fire that came down from Heaven and consumed the sacrifices offered on the altar in the old testament , so He is the divine fire that consumes the sacrifice

-It was mentioned in the epistle of Saint Paul the apostle to his disciple Titus what affirms that the Father has the title of saviour like the Son who Has the title of saviour , he said:" But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:4-6), here our teacher Paul the apostle entitles each of the Father and Son with the title (our saviour), he entitles the Father (God our saviour), and the Son he entitled (Jesus Christ our saviour), and attributed to the Holy Spirit also the deed of salvation by saying:(saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit)

Q5: what is the heresy of Macedonias?

A5: Macedonias, who was the patriarch of Constantinople, denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit

Macedonias said that the Holy Spirit is inferior to the Son as:

- He receives what is for the Son "He will receive of Mine and will announce it to you."
(John 16:14, 15)

-And:" He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He hears, He shall speak."(John 16:13)

- And He testifies for the Son as the Christ said:" when the Comforter has come...He shall testify of me"(John 15:26)

- He is sent from the Father:" But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things "(John 14:26)

And He is sent from the Son:" And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth" (John 15:26)

Q6: How do we rebut the heresy of Macedonias?

A6:(1) that poor one forgot that the divine inspiration had said also about the Son:

" The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do"(John 5:19), if he read that verse carefully he wouldn't consider the sentence : "the Holy Spirit is not speaking of Himself" a diminishing of the stature of the Holy Spirit below that of the Son , also the Son doing nothing of Himself is not belittling the Son below the Father , as if we follow that rule adopted by Macedonias then we will deny also the divinity of the Son as He said:" : " The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do"(John 5:19)

-Both of the two sentences mean that the hypostasis of the Son and the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit none of them do anything in separation from the other two hypostases, so neither the Son works separately from the Father and the Holy Spirit, nor the Holy Spirit works separately from the Son and Father, and that confirms the oneness of the divine essence

- **(2) The fathers like Saint Athanasius said :**(the Father does all things through the word in the Holy Spirit)

- **Also Saint Gregory the bishop of Nisus said:**(every action coming from God to the creation, and named according to our understanding of it, has its origin in the Father, and comes to us through the Son, and finalizes in the Holy Spirit)

-The oneness of the Father and the Son that the lord Christ said that He and the father are one"(John 10:30) is the reason why the Son can do nothing of Himself, as it is only one capability for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

- **(3) Saint John the Chrysostom explained the wrongness of Macedonias' teaching** in his exegesis of the sentence:" the Holy Spirit receives what is for the Christ and announces it to us. "And He does not speak of Himself" and mentioned the following:"

- When God wished to assign seventy elders for helping Moses the prophet in taking care of the people of Israel , the lord said to Moses:" I will take of the spirit on you, and will put it on them" (Numbers 11:17) , so was God inferior to Moses the prophet?! God forbids, will God burrow from Moses the Holy Spirit (His talents)?!

-The reason behind that definitely, without any doubt, is that God wished to prove for the seventy elders that they are helping Moses and will not separate from him, but work in harmony and unity, not to get any division in the congregation

-The Holy Spirit also takes what is for the lord Christ and tell us as He is not less than the lord Christ as claimed by Macedonias, but to affirm that the Christ is the head of the church, and the gifts and talents bestowed to us were from the lord Christ, and we are the members

of His single body. So the Holy Spirit as He is the Spirit of the Father, He is also the spirit of the Son, or the spirit of the Christ, as it is written

(4) The Holy Spirit takes of what is for the Christ and announces to us and shall not speak of Himself, as any man can claim that the Holy Spirit dwells into Him and he receives an inspiration from the Holy Spirit, and saint John the apostle says:” do not believe every spirit, but try the spirits to see if they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God” (1 John 4:1-2), because the Bible says that many false prophets have gone out into the world. So how would we know the real Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God), unless He Doesn’t speak of Himself, or testify for the Christ being the Son begotten of the Father before all ages, as Saint John the apostle said in the same epistle:” And we know that the Son of God has come, and He has given us an understanding so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and the everlasting life” (1 John 5:20), so the Spirit who is testifying for the divinity of the lord Christ and His incarnation and death and resurrection for the salvation of the world His testimony would be the testimony of truth , and He will be the real Holy Spirit

-It is known that many prophets had came out to the world, and any of them could claim that the Holy Spirit was telling him what he said and what he taught , so how would we know that unless the real Holy Spirit Has properties?

-Those are the reasons that made the lord Christ to give a definite definition for the Holy Spirit when He said:" He will glorify me, for He will receive of Mine and will announce it to you. All things that the Father has are mine. Therefore I said that He will take of mine and will announce it to you" (John 16:14, 15), so He is not taking only what is for the Son and announce to us, but He also takes what is for the Father and announces to us, as all things that the Father has are for the Son also, thus the lord Christ completed His saying and said:" Therefore I said that He will take of mine and will announce it to you"

- (5) And about the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit:

-The lord Christ said:" And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father"(John 15:26), that means the Holy Spirit is not the Son

-And He said also:" And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, so that He may be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth" (John 14:16, 17), so the word (another) here doesn't mean His separation from the Father or from the Son, but means that He has His own specific discriminative personality, and He is another hypostasis

-" the Holy Spirit said, then, separate Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them."(Acts 13:2), the sentence "the Holy Spirit said" denotes that He is speaking, and the sentence:" separate to me "points to the personality of the Holy Spirit as He was the speaker, having the speaker article , not only that but the lord Christ said:" He

will glorify Me"(John 16:14), and the word (He) denotes a person and not just a power or energy, and He said also about him:" However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come" (John 16:13), so the lord Christ said about Him:"He" and "has come", and " speaks" and also:"hears "and " takes" and " announce" and "testify"

-All of those things mentioned about the Holy Spirit denote being a hypostasis, so as the Son Has His real person which we recognize when He came for the salvation of the world, also the Holy Spirit Has also His own real person that we recognized when He came to guide the church and testify for the Christ and work in the sacraments

Q7: Are there teachings for the first fathers of the church about the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit?

A7: yes, there are, here are some of them:

1-Saint Ignatius of Antioch the Theophorus (30 -110 G), He was the first patriarch for Antioch after the apostolic epoch , he wrote in his brief letters calling the Holy Spirit one with the Father and the Son with a special discrimination for His person , meaning one in essence and discriminative according to the hypostasis

-**Saint Ignatius knew** that the Holy Spirit is a hypostasis saying:" separate Barnabas and Saul to Me", as He was speaking, guiding, teaching and leading, it is difficult to understand that the Holy Spirit Has a person , as the Father is known , and the Son came as a person and lived as a person among people and they saw Him , no one denies that the Son is a person , but the Holy Spirit some may think of being a power or energy, here the announcement of saint Ignatius for the faith handled to us about the reality of the Holy Spirit by that image appears , that was because of his closeness to the apostolic epoch

2-Saint Theophilus of Antioch mentioned the expression (trinity) in his writings explaining that He is God and the word and the wisdom, seemingly he meant the spirit of wisdom in his denotation of the Holy Spirit when he called Him the title wisdom, but as those matters were in the early Christianity (the second Gregorian century), the title of the spirit of wisdom was not settled yet in nomenclature of the Holy Spirit, hence Saint theophilus the martyr says the following sentence: **the Trinity of God and His word and His wisdom**

-the importance of the utterance of **theophilus of Antioch** is being the oldest of what we have about the title "the trinity" concerning the three hypostases

3-By the end of the third Gregorian century Methodius bishop of Soar (260 – 312 G) testified for the tradition of the apostolic church and said frankly (the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father in essence)

4-Saint Athanasius resisted in his letters against the Arians the notion of the Holy Spirit as uniting the Father with the Son or represents the link of unity between the Father and the Son , so He is not a hypostasis, that was the mistake in which the catholic fall till now , as the catholic say that the Father is the lover and the Son is the beloved and the Holy Spirit is the love binding them together

Saint Athanasius (296 – 373 G) resisted that notion and said: as the word doesn't take the Holy Spirit to become Himself also in the Father, neither the Son receives the Holy Spirit but rather He Himself gives Him to all, and the Holy Spirit doesn't unite the Word with the Father, so the Son is in the Father as He is His word and ray)

-**Notice:** if we make the Father as the lover and the Son as the beloved that means they have alone the dynamics of the deed, thus the Holy Spirit turns into just energy among them interchanged between the Father and the Son, thus the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit will be nullified

-In our Trinitarian understanding the three hypostases are interchanging the love between each other, as the love is a property of the essence and not a hypostatic property of the Holy Spirit, the love is a property of the essence, so it is in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit by the same magnitude and effect, thus each hypostasis loves the other and interchanges the love with Him, the Holy Spirit is not an exception for that rule

Q8: what is the heresy of Apollinarius?

A8: Apollinarius thought that the human soul must be a human person, so he cancelled the existence of the human soul for the Christ, in order not to have in the Christ a divine person and another human person, as he was occupied by the notion of the Trichotomy composition of man , he said as man is composed of a body , soul and a sane spirit , likewise God the incarnate logos is composed of a body , and a soul and a sane spirit who is the hypostasis of the word or His divinity, as God is a spirit

-Apollinarius taught the notion of (logos – sarex) or (the word- the body), he tried to explain the union between the divinity and manhood as the divinity took the place of the human soul in the Christ , therefore the union between the divinity and manhood is the substitute of the union between the human soul and body in the normal person

Q9: how to rebut the heresy of Apollinarius?

A9:1- Saint Gregory Nazianzen said: (What is not taken will not be saved), meaning that what God the word didn't take in His incarnation and unite with His divinity could never be saved , so if He took only a body He will save the body only, and if He took a soul only He will save the soul only, and if He took a body united with a human soul He will save the human bodies and their souls , so briefly God the word must take in His incarnation a complete human nature not lacking a body or a soul

2-The fathers of Constantinople council said that the lord Christ has a sane human soul as He came for the salvation of mankind and not for the salvation of animals, the Christ should had a complete humanity for the redemption of mankind to be accomplished, the human soul like the body needs redemption, and it is responsible for falling of man, as the Spirit sinned with the body and in need of salvation, therefore the word of God must take it with the body

3-what occupied the fathers the most against the Apollinarism was that the sane human soul by its ability to choose is the seat of sin, they considered the sane human soul in man is the stronger essence and is capable of taking the decision, and as the person in man is linked with the sane soul, therefore the sane soul is the one who takes the decision, as when the body dies the person is not lost but remains existent with the soul , like the saints when they were martyred or transferred ,their souls with their persons were still existent and make the miracles, and sometime speak with the believers

-Also in the incarnation of the logos, there was a linkage between the person and the divinity, so neither His human soul, nor His body has a person, but His person is in the sublimest essence, who gathers the three natures together: the nature of divinity with the human soul and the body nature

- **To explain that we say:** in man there are only two natures forming one nature, therefore the person is existent with the human soul who is the sublimest essence in man, but in the Christ the sublimest essence is the divinity therefore His person is linked with His divinity and is uniting the manhood with Him in the same one person

- The person is the owner of the nature and its holder and owner of the essence and its holder, he is the owner of the ego, and as God the word He himself took a manhood and became a man , and He Himself was incarnated , so He is not in need of another owner sharing with Him or competing with Him , He doesn't need to have two persons , one owning the manhood and another owning the divinity as in such case it will be just a dwelling , as the presence of two means the dwelling of one into the other like the dwelling of the Holy Spirit into man , and each of them has his own person , thus the divinity of the lord Christ is united with His manhood and both of them (the divinity and manhood) are owned by the same person , who is the person of the word hypostasis

-The sentence of (the sane human soul – meaning the sane human spirit – by its ability for choice was the origin of the sin) which was said by the fathers was because the soul is the one who chooses, as the person in linked with the sane spirit who is the sublimest essence in man, so always the decision by the end is the decision of the man's soul linked with the person, as the decision is a personal decision

- To rebut the saying that the sane spirit doesn't mean a person , which was announced by Apollinarius saying that there is no human soul in the Christ for there is no human person in the Christ , to rebut that we say: the mind is a property of the nature , so we call the human nature a sane nature , thus the lord Christ took a sane human soul when He took a complete manhood , meaning the body and soul from the Virgin Mary by the action of the Holy Spirit , so such sane soul found His person in the incarnate Son of God , meaning that the Son of God gave His own person for the human nature He took , meaning that the human nature personalized in the person of God the word

- So the answer of that proposed question: how would the lord Christ be a man without taking a human person? He became a man as His own person took the human nature specific to Him and made it His very own nature , so the person of Son of God holder of the human nature is a man, as the human nature once taken by a person he is a man , and the human nature was personalized in the person of the only begotten Son as owner and holder of the that nature, thus the word became a man and continued to be God as He is , and that what we are reciting in the psalmody (while He is still God , He came and became a Son of man, but He is the real God who came and saved us) (Theotekons of Thursday)

Q10: What are the heretic teachings of Nestorius?

A10: Nestorius said that the logos (God the word) is far above union with the substance, therefore He took a man from the womb of His mother (he is Jesus) and dwelt in him and inhabited him, and made him the tool of salvation for mankind

-Nestorius separated the nature of the logos divinity from the nature of the man Jesus of Nazareth, he said the only begotten Son (monogenesis) was not born of a woman, but that one born of her was the man Jesus of Nazareth in whom the logos dwelt, from the moment of His formation in the womb of His mother by the act of the Holy spirit and without man's Sowing

-He considered the Christ inherited the original sin or the tendency to sin as a man , and He is in need of salvation , and He offered himself as a sacrifice for Himself and for the whole world , and the logos dwelt into Him and accompanied Him from the womb and gave Him His dignity and titles (as an honor only), and His authority , image and will , thus He gave Him His authority to perform all the miracles He did and to take the title of Son of God as a way of honoring, and He is not a real God

-He said who is born of a man is a man and not God, and each nature begets similar to it, he said also that the logos accompanied Jesus of Nazareth in his pains and strengthened him to tolerate the crucifixion , and used him as a tool for the salvation of mankind

-He refused to call the Virgin mother of God (Theotokos), and he said we should call her mother of the Christ (christotokos), and he said also that the title Theotokos pertains to the heavenly Father only in His begetting of the Son before all ages, so he calls the Father (Father of God)

- Nestorius considered God the word dwelt in a person of man , thus the Christ is of two persons, and he titled the union occurring between them by prosopic union (personal), meaning a union of persons in the image , dignity and authority , and he said (I unite the dignity and worshiping but I separate the natures), and said (for the dignity of the God dwelling in a man , man is worshiped with the God), thus he had worshiped someone else with God , and presented Jesus as a prophet , then asked to worship him like God , thus he

presented a distorted image for Christianity which could be easily accused of polytheism , and he ignored God' saying: " My glory I will not give to another"(Isaiah 42:8)

Q11: How can we rebut the Nestorian heresy?

A11: for rebutting the heretic thoughts of Nestorius we say:

-When the hypostasis of the word of God came for incarnation, He didn't add a person to Himself but personalized the human nature into Him, so the lord Christ as Saint Cyril the great said didn't take a person of mankind, but He took the human nature of the virgin Mary who begot him, meaning the hypostasis of logos took the human nature and formulated it into Him, and He made it his very own

-The nature of the lord Christ as Saint Cyril the great said (one incarnate nature for God the word)

-We believe that the hypostasis of the word of God begotten of the Father before all ages is Himself who was incarnated and born of the Virgin in the fullness of time; therefore the word of God has two births:

- **The first birth:** sempiternal, according to His begetting of the Father

- **The second birth:** chronological, according to His manhood from the Virgin Mary

- The sempiternal word He himself took a body and was born of the Virgin Mary, He didn't take a human person but took the live body with a sane soul of the Virgin Mary

-Saint Paul affirmed that saying:" Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), meaning that Son of God He himself became the Son of man , and the Son of man who is Jesus Christ is not another person but Son of God the logos

-So the begotten of the father before all ages came and dwelt in the unblemished womb of the Virgin, and was incarnated of Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, and became a man, meaning that God was manifested in flesh or God became man : " great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16)

-We believe that God became man and not a man deified, and became a god or equal to God in dignity, as we say in the theotekons of Monday:"He shined bodily of the Virgin without man's sowing to save us" and we say also in the theotekons of Thursday:" (while He is still God, He came and became a Son of man, but He is the real God who came and saved us)

-And the incarnate God when He died on the cross, He didn't die by His divinity but died by the flesh, as we pray and say (O You, Who tasted death in the flesh) in the prayers of the ninth hour

-It is definitely known that the martyr when he is killed, his body is the one killed and not his soul, as the lord Christ said: "do not fear those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matthew 10:28), so foremost when the lord Christ was crucified the one who died on the cross is not His divinity and not His human soul, but the one who died on the cross is His body but His human soul didn't die

-Thus Saint Peter said about the lord Christ: "being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3:18-19)

-Therefore we pray in the liturgy and say: "He descended into Hades through the cross" meaning that His spirit that He committed into the father's hands when He said: "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46), had gone united with His divinity to liberate those in the prison after pronouncing to them fulfillment of the redemption, and His body united with the divinity was laid down in the tomb and was not corrupted, and when His spirit returned and united with His body, He raised from the dead in the third day by the mightiness of His divinity

-The lord said: "Before Me no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, I am the lord; and there is none to save besides Me. You are my witnesses, says the lord, that I am God" (Isaiah 43:10-12)....who is the speaker here, isn't Him the lord? Isn't Him the savior? Isn't Him the only God who said about Himself: "I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever, Amen" (Revelation 1:17-18), isn't Him the hypostasis of the incarnate Son who said to His disciples: "you shall be witnesses to Me" (Acts 1:8)?

-The lord Christ was born of the Virgin regarding the body, but He didn't take His divinity of her, He himself who was begotten of the Father regarding His divinity before all ages He himself was incarnated and born of the Virgin regarding His manhood in the fullness of time, therefore He said about Himself to the Jews: "Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I AM!" (John 8:58)

-Pop Cyril the pillar of faith tried many times to explain such things to Nestorius with no use, and said to him: (what belongs to the body of God the word is belonging to God the word), and said to him: "as we say that who was born of the Virgin Mary is God the word therefore we should call her mother of God as who was born of her is not someone else "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8)

In the Nicene Constantinopolitan creed of faith that Nestorius himself acknowledges we say: "We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only – Begotten Son of God, Begotten of the father before all ages" so was Jesus Christ begotten of the father before all ages? To answer that we say: Jesus Christ who was born of the Virgin Mary He himself the one begotten of the father before all ages

-The lord Christ in order to affirm the oneness of the person in Him, He said to Nicodemus:” no one has ascended up to Heaven except He who came down from Heaven, the Son of Man who is in Heaven" (John 3:13), so how could the lord Christ say to Nicodemus, while he was sitting before him, that the Son of man is in the heavens? that could not be understood unless the Son of man is Himself the Son of God filling the whole existence according to His divinity, and as He is Himself ,so it is possible to attribute to His human title what belongs to His divine nature , and to attribute to His divine title what belongs to His human nature , like His saying to Nicodemus :” 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), here He used His divine title (the monogenesis) pointing to His crucifixion

Q12: What are the main disagreements with the Catholics?

A12: 1- The emanation of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son

2- The purgatory doctrine

3-The forgivenesses and the excess virtues of Saints

4- The headship of Saint Peter over the apostles

5- The infallibility of Pope of Rome in teaching from the seat of Patriarchate

6- The headship of Pope of Rome over the Christian churches in the world

7- The immaculate conception of Virgin Mary from her parents

8-The resurrection of Virgin Mary and her ascension and sitting on the heavenly throne

9- The matrimony with the nonbelievers

10- Salvation of the nonbelievers

In addition to those there are other disagreements like:

1- Cancellation of most of fasting by the Catholics

2- Deprivation of the children from the Holy Communion, and making the ritual of the first communion at the age of 8 years

3-Postponing the anointment of children with Myron to the age of 8

4- Non- immersion in the baptism, and pouring only a small dish of water on the child head

5- Nullity of using the bread in the communion, and using the pastry instead, and prohibition of partaking of the blood by the congregation

6- Forbiddance of the priests from marriage for the Latin Catholics

- 7-Allowing the laity men and women to enter the sanctuary
- 8- Entrance of the sanctuary with the shoes
- 9-Allowing the nuns to give the body to sick people in the hospitals
- 10-Allowing the deacons to carry the body and give it to the various clerical ranks
- 11- Prohibition of divorce in case of adultery
- 12- Non – looking to the east in praying
- 13-Making more than a mass on the same altar on the same day
- 14- The priest prays and partakes the communion in more than one mass on the same day
- 15- Lack of fasting for nine hours before the communion, and fasting for two hours only for food and only half an hour for drinking
- 16- Allowing anyone to baptize, even if non-Christian

Q13: How to rebut those saying the emanation of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son?

A13: our church believes that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father, but the Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father and the Son, and they added in the eleventh century the sentence (and the Son) to the creed of faith in the part of the emanation of the Holy Spirit, we will explain the wrongness of the catholic creed by that:

First: the utterances of the Holy Bible:

The lord Christ said in the gospel of our teacher John:" And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of me"(John 15:26).

Second: the Nicene Constantinopolitan creed of faith:

The creed of faith founded by the fathers stated that **(We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father...)**

So neither the Holy Bible nor the creed of faith include that doctrine of Catholics saying that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father and the son , which is the sentence recited officially by the Romanian catholic church in the creed of faith since year 1054 G.

-Objections and their rebuttals:

The Son sends the Holy Spirit

-The Catholics object by the saying of the lord Christ about the Holy Spirit: "whom I will send to you" (John 15:26), and they say: as long as the lord Christ will send the Holy Spirit so the Holy Spirit is emanating from Him

-But it is noticed that the lord Christ said:" whom I will send to you from the Father "and He said in the same verse:"that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father"

- In addition to that the emanation is something and sending is something else, as the emanation is sempiternal while the sending is timely

- The lord Christ said also:" But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you." (John 14:26), it is noticed here that He says:" whom the Father will send" so sometimes He says:" whom I will send to you" and in another occasion He says:" whom the Father will send ", but in emanation He said only that He proceeds from the Father

- If the sending is exactly the same as the emanation as the Catholics claim, so how would they answer the saying of the lord Christ in the book of Isaiah:" From its being, I was there; and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, has sent Me" (Isaiah 48:16), if the sending of any of the hypostases is from the Father and another hypostasis it is always an image of the relation of that hypostasis with the Father who is the spring and that other hypostasis who shared in sending Him, so the sending of the Son will be based on that wrong assumption, He is an image of His sempiternal begetting , therefore the Son will be begotten at the sempiternity of the Father and the Holy Spirit as He was sent from the Father and the Holy Spirit , and that's untrue

-We notice the expression:"His spirit" in (Isaiah 48:16) , it was mentioned in the form of the actor and not the acted upon , meaning that the lord Christ was send from the Father and from the Holy Spirit, so does that mean the Son is begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit before all ages ? Or the sempiternal begetting is something and the chronological sending is something else? The Catholics don't dare to deny that the Son is begotten of the Father only before all ages

- As the begetting and emanation are sempiternal, while the sending is chronological (happening in a particular time), the begetting is above time, while the sending is in the fullness of time, as the Bible said:" But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4)

- As the lord Christ said to His disciples:" It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you. And you shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:7, 8)

- It was mentioned in the book of Acts of the Apostles :” And having met with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father which you heard from Me”(Acts 1:4), the sentence (to await the promise of the Father) denotes that sending of the Holy Spirit is a chronological event, and in the first verse we find that the lord Christ was speaking about (times and seasons)...the dwelling of the Holy Spirit on the

Disciples on the day of Pentecost is a chronological event, but the emanation could not be for anyone to await it as it is above the time and before all ages

Father and Son' Ownership

-The Catholics are trying to relay on the utterance of the lord Christ said to the heavenly Father:” And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine”(John17:10) and say if the Father is the one emanating the Holy Spirit, and all what is for the Father is for the Son, so the Son also must be emanating the Holy Spirit

- We rebut that, as the lord Christ mentioned such saying during His soliloquy with the Father when He was speaking about the disciples and said:” They were yours, and you gave them to me”(John 17:6):” And all Mine are yours, and yours are Mine”(John17:10)

-So what is the link between the heavenly Father's Ownership of men, and the lord Christ' ownership of His saints disciples for the Son to be emanating the Holy Spirit?!!

The existent essence is something and the ownership is another thing, thus the relation of the Father to the Holy Spirit is the relation of the subsistence of the Holy spirit from the Father, as the Father is the origin or the spring in the Holy Trinity , and it is not an ownership relationship, as the Holy Spirit is not among the possessions of the Father , but He has a one and the same subsistence with the Father and the Son, and the divine essence of the Holy Trinity could never stand without the Holy Spirit

-If we apply that verse on what is belonging to God Himself, it doesn't mean in such case more than the essence of the Son being Himself the essence of the Father, and never means that the Son Has the fatherhood like the Father, as into the divine essence there is only one Father, and the word Father in Aramaic or Syrian language means (origin), it doesn't mean only the meaning of a father but means the two meanings (father and emanating),therefore if the lord Christ being the sempiternal Son owns all what is for the Father , that doesn't mean more than He has all the properties of the divine essence like: the sempiternity, the truth, the wisdom, the life, the mind, the love , the omnipotence , the omnipresence, and the creation (from that comes the ownership of creation)..Etc, but it never means for the Son to share fatherhood with the Father, as how could He be a Son and Father at the same time?, as if He is sharing the Father in His fatherhood, the result is that the Son will be father of Himself, or

in other meaning the Son will be Himself the Father, and Sibelius who was anathematized by the church said no more than that

-We shouldn't forget that the Lord Christ had said to the Father:" And all Mine are yours, and yours are Mine" (John17:10), does that mean the Father has also the sonship , and will be begotten of the Son, that is unacceptable and irrational , and no one ever accept that , and that nullify the claim of the Catholics

-Even from the linguistic aspect, when the lord Christ said:" And all Mine are Yours and Yours are Mine "He specified the Father with His own title , by that He excluded what is specific for the Father from what is whole , if you say for example "all what is for the teacher is mine", nevertheless the teacher is a teacher and I am a student even if we share in the rest of the items together , so we discriminate between the substantial properties pertaining to all the hypostases together , and the hypostatic properties pertaining to each individual hypostasis discriminatively , for the hypostases not to confuse together ,so the Father has the fatherhood , and the Son Has the sonship and Holy Spirit Has the emanation

(3) Spirit of the Son or Spirit of the lord Christ

They are objecting by the following verses:

- "if the Spirit of God dwells in you, But if anyone has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His"(Romans 8:9)

- "through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:19)

- " And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father"(Galatians 4:6)

The Catholics say that if the Spirit of the Son is himself the Spirit of the Father, so the Holy Spirit must be emanating from both of them

We rebut by the following remarks:

1-In (Galatians 4:6) He speaks about the sending of the Holy Spirit and not the emanation, as He says:" God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son"

2-In the same verse , He says:" into your hearts" and what is into our hearts are the supreme talents and gifts of the Holy Spirit , and not the essence of the hypostasis , or else we would be the Holy Spirit Himself, and become gods by the full meaning of the divinity

3-The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Son - as mentioned in the previous verse – as the Holy Spirit has the same essence of the Son and also of the Father , as He is the spirit of the Son because of the oneness of the divine essence, and not because of His emanation from the Son

4- The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the lord Christ (Romans 8:9) , as He has anointed Him "The Spirit of the Lord is on Me; because of this He has anointed Me" (Luke 4:18) , as because He settled on Him and into Him when He was incarnated , and accepted the anointment for our salvation , as He was declared the anointed of the Lord , and head of the church

5- The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of wisdom (Ephesians 1:17), (Spirit of understanding) (Isaiah 11:2), Spirit of Holiness (Romans 1:4), Spirit of Faith (2 Corinthians 4:13), Spirit of declaration(Ephesians 1:17),Spirit of counselling (Isaiah 11:2)

So should the Holy Spirit emanate from all of those together? And how does He emanate from the faith for example? , is the faith a fourth hypostasis?!!

-So the objection saying that calling the Holy Spirit the Spirit of the Son or Spirit of the Christ means His emanation from the Son is an objection with absolutely no place

6- The Holy Spirit also is called "Spirit of the Son " or the Spirit of the Christ" as He testifies of the Christ as the bible says : " And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me"(John 15:26), therefore the lord Christ said:" But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you"(John 14:26), and the sentence " will send in My name" means that His name is (the Spirit of the Christ) or (the Spirit of the Son)

(4) The breath of the Holy Spirit

- The Catholics object also saying that the lord Christ breathed the Holy Spirit on the face of His disciples after the resurrection, which means – in their opinion – that the Holy Spirit is emanating from the Son

-That objection is a vain objection , as the lord Christ didn't breath the essence of the Holy Spirit hypostasis on the face of His disciples, but He breathed His authority and special talents of binding and absolution , and forgiveness of sins (like the breath of the bishop – being the high priest- in the ordination of the priest)

-Therefore we find that when the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit is mentioned – by Himself- He is mentioned with article of definition (the Holy Spirit), as it was mentioned in:" And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father (John 15:26)

-**Notice:** the one who was sent was the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit, but those granted to the church were the talents of the Holy Spirit

-**So whenever the Holy Spirit is mentioned regarding His talents, authority and gifts, He is mentioned without the article of definition (a Holy Spirit)**

- Therefore the correct translation of the utterance of the lord Christ to His disciples – when He breathed on their face" Receive a Holy Spirit" (John 20:22),it means the gift of priesthood which is of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the church, no wonder in that , as the bishop does the same thing when he ordains a new priest , as the lord Christ being the greatest High priest , had to give the gift of priesthood to His disciples before ascension to the heavens , after He accomplished the redemption on the cross and raised triumphing from among the dead, or else from where would we get a high priest to ordain the disciples after the ascension of the lord Christ?, but He affirmed the role of the Holy Spirit in ordination of the pastors , and granting the gifts of priesthood when He said to them: "Receive a Holy Spirit"

-**Finally we say:** who is the origin of existence of the Holy Spirit? The Father or the Son?, Or the Father alone?, Definitely the Father is the origin , but the origin has no beginning , as He is sempiternal outside the scope of time, whereas there is no antecedent and subsequent ,

Like the fire, whose flame had no beginning, as the heat emanating from it is also without beginning, but the heat is emanating from the flame and not from the light begotten of it, the case is: is the origin of the Hypostasis of the Holy Spirit the Father or the Son? Definitely the origin is the Father from whom the Holy Spirit emanates

Q14: is it possible to marry the non-believers? , And why?

A14: the matrimony in the Christianity is like the union of the Christ with the church (Ephesians 5:22-33)

The man in Christianity is the head of woman, the women submits to the man like submission of the church to the Christ

-So how could such example of marriage be between a Christian and non-Christian partner?

-And how could the man be an example of the Christ in the family if he is a non-believer?

Therefore the permission of matrimony of a Christian with a non-Christian is a demolition of the marital life from the Christian aspect

-And what is the fate of children born in a family torn from the religious aspect?

-And what is the fate of Christian partner in countries mandating that man should follow a particular religion? And those countries mandating that the children should follow a particular religion? And what is the fate of children born under sanctions forbidding them of being Christians?, would the church be the responsible for that?

-Could the church baptize children born in a family torn from the religious aspect, having no disciplinary fate in the Christian life, nor a legal fate in their religion?

-If our teacher Paul the Apostle said:" For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband"(1Corinthians 7:14), he means the marital relation between man and woman married a real marriage before the faith will not be considered an adultery when one of the partners believes, as Christianity respects the marriage prior to faith and discriminates between it and the adultery and fornication , and considers believing of one partner will sanctify the marital relation between a man and his only women who is his wife, and sanctify the resultant of such marriage of children in a condition that such children will not be under a statue mandating them to be non-Christians

-Generally our teacher Paul the apostle didn't mention that children will be born in the future, but he spoke about already born children, which denotes that he is speaking about a marriage prior to faith, and for the new marriage after faith, he said:" the woman is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39)

-We affirm with all certainty that Christianity doesn't accept a new marriage in which the two partners don't share in the faith and dogma , spiritual life and the same baptism , and if the Holy Bible in the old testament prohibited marriage with non-believers of the foreign women, for that Ezra expelled all women after their marriage and called the whole congregation to repent (look into Ezra 10:2-17), so foremost will be the epoch of grace and Holiness and sonship to God and the Holy sacraments

Q15: Is it possible for the non-believers to be saved?

A15: that teaching was actually declared by the second Vatican council in the dogmatic constitution in 1964 G, and in the pastoral constitution in 1965 G

-That teaching is the biggest blow directed towards the Christian faith, and the mission of evangelism with the death of the Christ and His resurrection, and the toil for evangelizing with the Christ bible, as our teacher Paul the Apostle said to his disciple timothy:"

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel, in which I suffer ill as an evildoer, even to bonds. But the Word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 timothy 2:8-10), it is obvious here

that he considered the reaching of evangelism with the gospel for the elect by the apostles and the servants of the word as a mandatory condition for them to attain the eternal salvation

- **About the elect also he said:**” as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy” (Ephesians 1:4), and also said:” And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be the First-born among many brothers. But whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, those He also justified. And whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Romans 8:28 – 30)...it is obvious from the utterances of Saint Paul the apostle that God knows his children before the foundation of the world, and those are called according to His purpose, according to His foreknowledge that they will accept the invitation, **and it is not possible to have someone who is accepting the invitation and be left without invitation**, as the bible says :” the lord's hand is not shortened so that it cannot save”(Isaiah 59:1)

-Also it is definitely known that without **faith** man could never escape from the wrath of God which was upheld against mankind before the coming of the lord Christ :” He who believes on the Son has everlasting life, and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God **abides upon him**”(John 3:36)

-Also **the baptism** is a condition for entering and seeing the kingdom of God:” Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. , Unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3-5), without the baptism how could man have spiritual eyes in the body of resurrection by which He can inherit the kingdom and see its glories!!

-**The bible declared the fate of those not obeying the gospel:**” in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all those who believe “(2 Thessalonians 1:8-10)

-And in narration of Saint Paul for the incidence of appearance of the lord Christ to Him – while he was going to persecute the Christians in Damascus –he said to king Agrippa that Jesus said to him:” for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of what you saw, and in what I shall appear to you; delivering you from the people and the nations, to whom I now send you in order to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the **authority of Satan** to God, so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:14-18), and completed saying:” After this, king Agrippa, I did not disobey the

heavenly vision. But to those first in Damascus, and Jerusalem, and to all the country of Judea, and to the nations, I made known the command to repent and to turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance “(Acts 26:19-20)

-It is obvious from the words of Saint Paul that those who didn't hear about the Christ are:

- 1-Blind (in order to open their eyes)
- 2- In the darkness (so that they may turn from darkness)
- 3- Under the authority of Satan (from the authority of Satan)
- 4- Away from God (to turn to God)
- 5- Unbelievers of the Christ (they may receive.....by faith in me)
- 6- Their sins were not yet forgiven (they may receive remission of sins)
- 7- Has no inheritance yet with those who are sanctified (they may receive inheritance among those who are sanctified)
- 8- They should repent (to repent and to turn to God)
- 9- They should works worthy of repentance (doing works worthy of repentance)

So how could be saved those who didn't attain all the sequences of faith even if some object by not heard? God did not leave Himself without witness even at the far end of the world; He uses the angels to minister those who shall be heirs of salvation? (Hebrews 1:14), if it is necessary He would appear Himself as He did to Saul of tarsus to make him Paul the apostle

View of the Holy Bible for the idolatrous religions

- The idolatrous religions are worshipping of Satan according to what is written in the Holy books:
- "The things which the nations sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. And I do not desire that you should have fellowship with demons" (1 Corinthians 10:20)
- "All those who serve graven images are ashamed, those who boast themselves in idols" (Psalm 97:7)

Therefore the worshipping of idols is without excuse regardless of evangelizing with the gospel as Saint Paul says:" For the unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are

clearly seen, being realized by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, for them to be without excuse"(Romans 1:20)

• **Fate of the idolaters and non-believers:**

- " He who overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son.

But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, **and idolaters**, and all liars, will have their part in the Lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."(Revelation 21:7-8)

Q16: How to rebut those saying of the immaculate conception of Virgin Mary from her parents?

A16: that Catholic teaching is totally contradicting with the bible teachings: as the Virgin Mary herself said:" My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46), confessing that she needs salvation like the whole mankind, it is definitely known that who resembled us in everything except sin alone is the lord Christ alone , therefore His death was considered for us as He was not deserving death , He who did no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth, He was totally devoid of the original sin , and in His righteousness He was absolutely righteous and Holy therefore He was the only one capable of redeeming the mankind by His death

-They claim that in order for the Christ to be devoid of the original sin, the Virgin Mary should be devoid of it, we rebut by the following:

First: the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin and purified ,sanctified her and filled her with grace , therefore what was taken of the virgin to become a body for the word Son of God , was purified by the Holy Spirit to befit the dignity of the sempiternal Holy who will unite with it, in a complete union surpassing the description and perception as said by the Bible:" The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, and for this reason that Holy One being born of you will be called Son of God."(Luke 1:35)

Second; in addition to that if we accept the catholic doctrine of necessity of emptiness of the Virgin from the original sin, for the lord Christ not to inherit it from her, we are asking them how could the Virgin not inherited the original sin from her parents unless they were also devoid of the original sin, and what about their parents and grandparents up to Adam..

By the logic of Catholics there must one of two conditions not more:

- 1- Either Adam and Eve didn't sin
- 2- Or the parents of the Virgin Mary were not from the siblings of Adam and Eve

Definitely, the Catholics couldn't reach to either of those two conditions, and they must reject that doctrine that has no biblical basis

-We are asking the Catholics also: if the Virgin Mary didn't inherit the original sin, so why did she die? She shouldn't die like the rest of mankind, for the Christ when He died, He didn't die for Himself- as He is without a sin- but He died in the place of the others

Q17: What about the Catholic heresy concerning the resurrection of the Virgin Mary and her ascension alive to the heaven of heavens (where is the throne of God , and the Christ is sitting on the right hand of the power) and her sitting on the right hand of the Christ?

A17: That doctrine was invented by Pope Bios the roman on year 1950 G, it is totally discordant with our doctrine we received of the tradition about the ascension of the body of the Virgin lady only after her death, meaning that she didn't rise yet from the dead, but her body only was carried by the angels to a special place in the heaven, but we don't know where is the body of the Virgin Lady now, and we don't know exactly where are Elijah and Enoch now

That Catholic doctrine is contradicting with the texts of the Holy Bible:

-like the utterance of Saint Paul:" I speak a mystery to you; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet. For a trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed." (1 Corinthians 15:51,52), it is noticed in the utterance of Saint Paul (all) , he didn't exclude anyone as the Catholics are excluding the Virgin Lady from the final resurrection...definitely what is meant by (the last trumpet) is the second coming of the lord from the havens

-Also the lord Christ said to His disciples:" I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, so that where I am, you may be also" (John 14:2, 3)

-Are there three comings for the lord Christ?

-The first coming: in his incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension

-The second coming: in order to take the Virgin Lady specifically, leaving the heavenly sanctuary without an intercessor

-The third coming: to take the rest of Saints

-An objection and its rebuttal:

Some may rebut by what is seen in the icons of death of the Virgin Lady where the Lord Christ had received her pure spirit in the form of a little child surrounded by the angels, that was before the ascension of her body where the body was laying on her bed surrounded by the fathers apostles

-We answer that saying : any apparition of the lord Christ doesn't mean His second coming to the world , as that apparition will be similar to His apparitions prior to His incarnation , and doesn't mean coming out from Holy of the Holies by His body by whom He ascent to the Higher heavens after His resurrection from the dead

-We repeat saying : all the apparitions of the lord Christ in the new testament after the ascension were similar to the apparitions of God in the old testament , or the heavens may open and He appears by His body risen from the dead in His glory as the viewer can tolerate , like Saul of tarsus who saw Him before his believing in Him and before losing his vision, and like Stephan who saw Him and his face became like an angel ...but the body of the lord Christ never get out from holy of the holiness where He ascent to the higher heaven except in His awful ,dreaded, full of glory second coming

- The lord Christ entered the Holies only once:

- We don't forget here the utterance of our teacher Saint Paul that the lord Christ had:" entered once for all into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption for us."(Hebrews 9:12)

- And His saying:" Since then we have a great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God" (Hebrews 4:14)

- And His saying also : " For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens"(Hebrews 7:26),here we stand in front of that verse: the ascension of the lord Christ to the higher heavens is linked with His headship of priesthood and propitiatory intercession before the Father...is there any other propitiatory intercessor but the lord Christ?...the intercession of Virgin Mary is a pleading intercession , but the Catholics wanted her to be considered a Coredeemer

-The priesthood of the lord Christ is practiced in the heavenly sanctuary:

That is obvious from the following verses:

- " Now the sum of the things which we have spoken is this: We have such a High Priest, who has sat down on the right of the throne of the Majesty in Heaven, a **Minister of the sanctuary** and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."(Hebrews 8:1, 2)

- And He added also:" For if indeed He (the Christ) were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the Law (the Jews' priests), who serve the example and shadow of heavenly things"(Hebrews 8:4, 5)

-That means the priesthood of the lord Christ being the greatest high priest must be practiced in the heavenly sanctuary, and not on earth, and His presence before the Father is the mystery of forgiveness which all of us gain as Saint John says:" if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation concerning our sins"(1 John 2:1, 2)

-Saint Paul affirmed the same meaning saying:" For Christ has not entered into the Holy of Holies made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now **to appear in the presence of God for us.**"(Hebrews 9:24)

-Saint Paul affirmed that Jesus has entered as forerunner for us, as he said:"where Jesus, our forerunner, has gone on our behalf, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek"(Hebrews 6:20)

-By His entering into Holy of the Holies He gave to the priests of the new covenant the right of offering the Eucharist offering bread and wine on the order of Melchizedek, so we couldn't sanctify the divine sanctuary as priests of the new covenant unless the lord Christ is a minister in the sanctuary as the greatest High priest

- So when Saint John saw his revelation, he said:

-" And I saw, and behold, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, amidst the elders, a Lamb stood, as if it had been slain"(Revelation 5:6)

-And the heavenly orders were chanting:" You are worthy to take the book and to open its seals, for you were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood" (Revelation 5:9)

-" And I heard every creature which is in the Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are in the sea, and all who are in them, saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the One living forever and ever"(Revelation 5:13, 14)

-It is obvious from that also when John the beloved had seen – as we mentioned- the lord Christ in the midst of the throne with the twenty four elders, and the four non-incarnated creatures ...he saw the lord Christ as a lamb stood, as if it had been slain, but he didn't see the Virgin lady in that scene, and saint John had seen his revelation by the end of the first Gregorian century and the Virgin Lady had already died for many years..So why John didn't

see the Virgin there with the lamb and how did she sit on the right side of the Christ and be absent from that heavenly scene?

-The lord Christ couldn't leave the heavenly sanctuary or how would the forgiveness be accomplished.. The Holy Spirit didn't dwell except after His entry into the heavenly sanctuary, and for that the lord Christ said:" it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you"(John 16:7)

- How would the lord Christ be the firstfruit of those who slept, and How it is said:" Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? "The lord strong and mighty, the lord mighty in battle"(Psalm 24:7, 8)... That prophecy is for the lord Christ alone, who by His own blood entered once for all into the Holies, so is the Virgin Mary also the lord strong and mighty?! Of course not

-The lord Christ had entered into the place where none of human nature had entered , as we say in the fraction of the great Saturday :(the place where no one of human nature could enter)

-Would the Virgin Mary be also a high priest as she entered where the Christ is doing His job as high priest? Do the Catholics accept the priesthood of a woman?

That Catholic heresy is an extension of the heresy of the Immaculate Conception, and shares with the heresy of the Coredeemer

-Answering the question concerning the saying of the psalm: the queen stood on the right hand of the king..we rebut that saying: many prophecies mentioned the events in the past tense before they actually happened by a long time like the psalm' saying:" They pierced my hands and my feet"(Psalm 22:16), which was said before the crucifixion of the lord Christ by about thousand year and the prophecy came in the past tense , that's a known way in many prophecies , thus the time of sitting of the Virgin lady on the right side of the lord Christ in His kingdom didn't happen yet , as it will be fulfilled after the general resurrection in eternity

-Where is the spirit of the Virgin Mary?

The Virgin by her spirit is present in the paradise interceding for us, and her prayers before the throne are offered by the twenty four priests as they offer incense which is the prayers of the saints

-the Virgin Mary was in the paradise and still there, and her body didn't rise of the dead yet, but as we said is preserved in a certain place in the heaven till the coming of the lord, and it had been carried by the angels to there

Such doctrine is diminishing of the Virgin affair:

-Finally we say: what is thought by the Catholics about the resurrection of the Virgin body and her ascension to the highest heaven, meaning the kingdom of God is diminishing of the affair of the Virgin Mary, while they are trying to dignify her they are diminishing her affair.. The reason is the lord Christ will come personally to take his saints to the kingdom, while Virgin Mary would be taken by the angels to the highest heaven ,as the Christ said:" In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, so that where I am, you may be also"(John 14:2,3), and that will happen in His second coming as we said before , so if the lord Christ will come to take his bride (the church) , He will come by His body that was crucified for us and raised , so How would He send His servants only to take the queen of the earthliest and heavenliest?

Q18: what are the dogmatic disagreements with the Anglican Church?

A18:- The emanation of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son similar to the Catholics

-Cancellation of four sacraments of the church , they are the matrimony, the chrismation, the confession, the unction of the sick, and acknowledging only three sacraments which are the baptism, the Eucharist and priesthood

-Negligence of monasticism, thus permitting bishops with all their ranks to marry

- Cancellation of all fasting

- Absence of high authority in the church like that of the Holy Synod for orthodox, to preserve the true dogma and prevent heresies and deviations

- Permission of ordination of women in the rank of full diaconry, and serving the altar, then in the rank of full priesthood, and serving the sacraments, then in the rank of assistant bishop then bishop responsible for parish or see including rising of the bronze serpent, and all women in those ranks are allowed to marry, and some of them are divorced

- Believing in the salvation of non-believers without faith and baptism

- Allowing multitude of wives for the Christian Christianized in Africa

- Defending the homosexuals, and ordination of them in the ranks of priesthood in some of their parishes

- Permission of Bible' criticism, and using the human mind as a source of theological teaching

- Using new language in the Holy Bible to avoid using the known nomenclatures like the Father, and the Son, claiming that such titles point to the supremacy of man over woman in the church authority

Q19: what is the opinion of the Orthodox Church in the priesthood of woman?

A19: the answer of that question will be through the letter prepared by His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third about the opinion of the Coptic Orthodox church on the subject of granting priesthood to women, and he sent it to Lambeth convention for the Anglican bishops in England on year 1988, it was mentioned in it:

1- Not allowing women to teach in the church:

-For that **Saint Paul the apostle** says: “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I do not allow a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. But she will be kept safe through childbearing” (1 timothy 2:11-15)

-We notice the teaching of Saint Paul the apostle in that issue had given justification for that forbiddance not related to the social circumstances prevailing at that time, nor the special circumstances of the church pastured by His disciple Timothy, but based on things pertaining to man and woman from the beginning of creation and even before the exit of Adam and Eve from the paradise because of the sin

- If we know that woman shouldn't teach in the church, so foremost she shouldn't be granted a priestly rank, as the priest serves the sacraments beside the teaching and leadership of the church within his responsibility

-Man is the head of woman according to the teachings of the Holy Bible:

Saint Paul the apostle says:” Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything” (Ephesians 5:22 -24)

-How that teaching could be applied in case of granting the priesthood to woman? And how could she submit herself to her husband in everything, if she is taking the leadership, pasturing and teachings? It is supposed that the sheep are submitting to their shepherd, the disciples to their teacher, the individuals to their leader, and the sons to their fathers

-We read also :” But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God, For the man is not of the

woman, but the woman of the man. Nor was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man"(1 Corinthians 11:3, 8, 9)

-None could deny that the priesthood is an extension of the Christ 'salvation deed on earth, thus the priest represents the lord Christ in His salvation missionary, it was said about the Christ that He is high priest and not high priestess

-From other aspect we notice that it was not a coincidence that the lord Christ came as a man and not a woman, therefore the bible says:" Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by powerful works, and wonders and miracles, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know"(Acts 2:22), any child born could be a male or female but the lord Christ was born male as He is the greatest high priest, and for Him the spiritual fatherhood and headship over the whole church , as He is the head of the church, therefore it was said about Him:" For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be on His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"(Isaiah 9:6) , so the divine inspiration here declares clearly that there is a very tight relation between the fatherhood and the headship and leadership and guidance

3-It didn't happen in the history or tradition like that priesthood for woman:

-The lord Christ chose his apostles from men, and He didn't choose a single woman, not even as exception, but He handled the church to twelve men, then He sent a missionary of seventy men, and enjoined the disciples for the church (Matthew 28, Mark 16), and all of them were men, also the apostles fathers didn't choose a single woman to be a priestess, but assigned all their successors from men only with no single exception

4-Saint Mary the Virgin and her relationship to the priesthood:

The Virgin Mary being the holiest person didn't take any of the priesthood jobs, and if the priesthood is permissible for woman, she should merit more than anybody else in all ages and everywhere

Those requesting for the priesthood for woman should contemplate practically in the example of the Virgin Mary, who begot God the logos truly and shared in upraising Him- and He is the greatest high priest – but she kept her natural role as a mother and she never requested for priesthood

5-The Eucharist and Priesthood:

We notice that the lord Christ had handled the sanctification of Eucharist to His men disciples who were around him on the Passover table and said:" this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19)

6- Origin of the priesthood:

-When God commanded Moses to take the Levites males for Him in the place of all first-born among the sons of Israel, he found a difference in number equal to 273 males ...meaning the number of the Levites males were less than the presumed (that was 22273 male) by 273, then the lord ordered for them five shekels for each head (Numbers 3:40 -47)

If it was possible to grant priesthood to woman, it was foremost to take that difference from the females born before their male brothers

7-The priesthood is for men only:

We notice that the kinds of priesthood the Holy Bible presented to us were all for men, those of the first patriarch fathers like Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or the Aaronian' priesthood, or the priesthood of Melchizedek, or the priesthood of the apostles and their successors of the bishops all were men priests, **thus the priesthood of woman is a heresy in religion**

8- Divisions in the church:

Undoubtedly such heresy in religion will lead to conflicts affecting unity of the church, Weather the unity of the Anglican church internally , or its relation with the other churches , here we like to say that we are looking forwards for more approximation between the churches not more separation

9- The results of exaggeration of giving the woman rights outside the bible teachings:

We see the world moving quickly for modification of the biblical teaching, to the point that those defending the woman rights are trying to impose feminization on the name of God Himself , and banning of the word (our father) or (your heavenly father), and there are changes made to the bible in many parts concerning the divine hypostases and their interrelation with each other , like the relation of the Son with the heavenly Father, and some concerning the redemption and the propitiatory work of the Christ , and His spiritual fatherhood as a high priest

10- Practical obstacles:

There are practical obstacles concerning the woman in the periods of pregnancy, delivery and breast feeding , for which the employed women take long vacations from their jobs, so being involved with the work of priesthood may lead to negligence of the house wife job completely including uprising of the children

Q20: what is the doctrine of guaranteeing the eternal life proclaimed by the Protestants?

A20: we truly know that the lord Christ guaranteed for us the eternal life by His blood, as the bible said:" the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7)

-In the Holy liturgy before communion in the last confession, the priest says about the body of the Christ :(Given for us for salvation, remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of Him)...so we believe that the lord Christ guaranteed for us the eternal life

-But there is a very important point : man should be always ready, as the lord Christ said:" And you yourselves be like men who wait for their lord, whenever he shall return from the wedding, so that when he comes and knocks, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord will find watching when he comes. Truly I say to you that he shall gird himself and make them recline; and coming up he will serve them. ...And know this that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be dug through. Therefore be ready also, for the Son of Man comes at an hour when you think not"(Luke 36, 37, 39, 40)

- **(But he whom his master finds sleeping is unworthy of going with Him)** as we say in the prayers of the first watch of midnight prayer

-So if the lord Christ guaranteed for us the eternal life, does that mean we live promiscuous or reckless life and say: (He is my guarantee, He is my comforter), definitely that's wrong, so we say that the lord Christ guaranteed for us the eternal life if we are honest

-Thus in the second chapter of the book of revelation, He says to **the angel of the church in Smyrna**:" Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches, He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death"(Revelation 2:10, 11)

-Here He says He who overcomes? So it is a conditional guarantee..But could the reckless and reluctant say: I guaranteed the salvation? How could be?!

-And **He says to the angel of the church of Ephesus**:" I know your works and your labor and your patience, and how you cannot bear those who are evil. And you tried those pretending to be apostles, and are not, and have found them liars. And you have borne, and have patience, and for my name's sake you have labored and have not fainted. But I have against you that you left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent"(Revelation 2:1-5), so if He says to the bishop of the church : "**remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent**" so How foremost for the rest of congregation ?

- **And He says to the angel of the church of Thyatira:**" I know your works and love and service and faith and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first. ...But that which you have, hold fast until I come.**And he who overcomes and keeps my works to the end**, to him I will give power over the nations.And I will give him the Morning Star"(Revelation 2:19 – 25)

- **And He says to the angel of the church of Sardis:**" The one who overcomes, this one will be clothed in white clothing. And **I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life**, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."(Revelation 3:1-5)

-So there are people whom their names are written in the book of life, but it is possible to be erased and blot out, for His saying: The one who overcomes, **I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life**"

-As an example for that a student ,whose name is written in the collage, and he kept falling for three successive years, and taking the grade of very week, so automatically they will blot out his name from the collage records, and be expelled of it

Therefore He says:" The one who overcomes, I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life"

-That one whose name was written in the book of life was he a believer or nonbeliever? Definitely he was believer as he couldn't deceive God and pretends with faith

-That verse is rebutting the claims of Protestants who are saying that the believer could never perish

What guarantees the eternal life for man is to be honest to the end, therefore we say in the midnight prayer :(**blessed is the servant whom He finds watching, but he whom He finds sleeping is unworthy of going with Him**)

The lord Christ says addressing the shepherds:" Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall set over his house servants, to give them their portion of food in season? Blessed is that servant when his lord comes and finds him so doing. Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions. But if that servant says in his heart, My lord delays his coming, and shall begin to beat the male servants and women servants, and to eat and drink and to be drunk, the lord of that servant will come in a day when he does not expect, and at an hour when he does not know. And he will cut him apart, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers"(Luke 12: 42 – 46), and that was the fate of the dishonest unwise steward with the unbelievers, although he was a believer, and that was because of his reluctance and dishonesty

Q21: Who are Jehovah's Witnesses group?

A21: Jehovah's Witnesses are one of the most dangerous groups that attribute itself to Christianity, while it isn't, they are people who are trying to intrude themselves among the Christians as if they are Christians, but they are in fact more to the Jewish religion than to the Christian religion, whereas they share with the Jews in sanctification of Saturday, and they deny divinity of the lord Christ, also they deny divinity of the Holy Spirit, and they don't believe in the Holy Trinity

Q22: How did the group of Jehovah's Witnesses arise?

A22: Charles Russell

The founder of the heresy of Jehovah's Witnesses was Charles Taze Russell, he was American in nationality born on year 1852 G, his father was a Presbyterian protestant, and in his early life he was afraid of the notion of death and the everlasting judgment

He was close to the Adventists while he was eighteen years old, and continued with them for two years, and was influenced by their sermons on denying the everlasting torment for the evildoers and death of the spirit like the body, also on calculating the exact time for the second coming of the Christ, and after his separation from them he gathered around him a punch of people who admired him, and they started to study the Holy Bible together and annotate it in their own way..This group was called (the disciples of Taurat)

He started to publish books including his thoughts and believes; also he founded an office of seventy employees worked as travellers from country to another for publishing his publications and spreading his thoughts, beside those there were hundreds of his followers doing free voluntarily advertising work..Within few years Russell was able to spread his believes in more than twenty countries of the world

He was famous of His prophecies about end of the world and the second coming of the Christ, and he defined the year 1914 G as a fixed time for the second coming of the Christ, and when the alleged year came and the Christ didn't come, Russell was markedly embarrassed, but he was tenacious in his calculations and declared that is such year Jesus Christ was enthroned as king of the world

Russell personality was characterized by deceive , and he fall in marital infidelity , that his wife divorced him after 27 years of marriage , and there were judicial sanctions sentenced against him concerning his problems with his wife and many other fraud and deception cases

Joseph Franklin

He is the successor of Russell, he was working as a judge, and he committed many unethical mistakes even in violating the rules of his profession

That judge prophesized after the failure of Russell prophecy of the second coming of the Christ on year 1914 G, he said that the Christ will come on year 1925 G, and when the Christ didn't come, he and his group were tremendously shocked, and he lived with his wife and son unable to face the people, but he gathered his group again and made a conference for them in Columbus, Ohio on year 1931 G, and called them Jehovah's witnesses group , the meaning of that nomenclature is that they consider their belief in the Father only without the Son and the Holy Spirit , and He is the true God , and His own specific name was mentioned in the book of exodus (Exodus 3:14)," Jehovah "means "I AM THAT I AM ", ignoring that the same name pertains to the Son also , who appeared to Moses in the bush , and He declared to him that name , and it pertains also to the Holy Spirit, as the essence of Jehovah the triune Hypostases is one subsistence

That group started by 25 thousands person on the days of Russell, and was gradually spreading, and now their number reached about five millions person or may be more all over the world

Q23: what are the main doctrines of Jehovah's witnesses? , and How to rebut them?

A23:

(1)Denying the everlasting judgment of the evildoers

Probably, that was what attracted Russell to that doctrine as he was terrified of the everlasting punishment

Rebuttal:

-that doctrine will push people for belittling the sin and abandoning the spiritual striving

The words of the lord Christ are clear on that issue:

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And all nations shall be gathered before Him. And He shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And indeed He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats off the left" (Matthew 25:31-33)

"Then He also shall say to those on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me no food; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink (Matthew 25:41-43)

He said also:" And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life"(Matthew 25:46)

(2)The human soul dies with the Body

The lord Christ affirmed that the human soul doesn't die with the body ...as He said:" You err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in Heaven. But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:29 -32)

-Also the parable of Lazarus and the rich man mentioned by the lord Christ affirms that (Luke 17:16)

(3) Denying divinity of the lord Christ

They are similar to the heresy of Arius in that:

The verses they rely on are:

“For My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28)

-That verse was said by the lord Christ about His state being in the body on earth, and He emptied Himself from the glory, Saint Paul said:" who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death" (Philippians 5:8)

Therefore the lord Christ by emptying Himself, He said about Himself "for My Father is greater than I" but concerning His essence He said:" I and the Father are one! "(John 10:30), "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9)

So in the eve of His pains, He said to the Father:" I have glorified you upon the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do. And now Father, glorify me with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was" (John 17:4, 5), so His divine glory the sempiternal before all ages is preserved with the Father in the heavens "

Important Rule:

+All the verses mentioned in the Holy Bible about the lord Christ those used by the Arians , and after them Jehovah's witnesses to prove that the Son is not equal to the Father in essence , those verses were said about incarnation of the Christ , and His humanity and emptiness of Himself , but they were not said about Him concerning His divinity as His divinity is unchangeable

-“There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17)

That verse was mentioned in the speech of the lord Christ with the rich young man who came to Him saying:”And behold, one came and said to Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And He said to him, why do you call me good? There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:16, 17)

We notice that the lord Christ said to him:” Why do you call Me good?, and he didn’t say to him :”Don’t call me good “

The question here to provoke the mind of the young man, as if saying to him: who am I in your opinion?

The proof that the lord Christ didn’t refuse to be titled as” the Good” that He said about Himself:” I am the Good Shepherd. The **Good** Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep” (John 10:10, 11), thus it is applicable to the lord Christ that He is God as He is the Good, and There is none good but one, that is, God

The Bible says about the case of mankind before the salvation:” “They are all gone out of the way, they have together become unprofitable, and there is none that does good, no, not one.” (Romans 3:12)..Therefore if that was the state of mankind, the question of the lord Christ:” Why do you call me good? It means He is asking the rich young man: do you know that I am the incarnate God therefore you call me Good? So you should accept my commandment to you:” Go, sell whatever you have and give it to the poor, and come, take up the cross and follow me” (Mark 10:21)

(4) Jehovah's witnesses are denying divinity of the Holy Spirit

They consider the Holy Spirit just a power or an energy emerging from God, thus they deny His hypostasis, and deny also His divinity that was denied by Macedonias

In their translation of the Holy Bible known as (New World Bible Translation), they translate the statement of the book of Genesis: "And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2) as "And the power of God moved on the face of the waters" although the word in the Hebrew origin means Spirit and not power

Rebuttal:

-The lord Christ said about the Holy Spirit:" the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father" (John 15:26) ,

-"and the Holy Spirit Himself speaks as Hypostasis and says:" separate Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2)

-when Ananias and Sapphira lied on Peter the apostle, he said to Ananias:" Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart for you to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of

the land?You have not lied to men, but to God" (Acts 5:3, 4) , thus it is obvious that the Holy Spirit is God, as whoever lies on Him, he lies on God

-It was mentioned in the book of Job:" The Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life"(Job 33:4), so the Holy Spirit is the creator

-It was mentioned in the book of Psalms:" Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I go up into Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the furthest parts of the sea; even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:7-10), so the Holy Spirit, meaning the Spirit of God is present everywhere, wherever God is present, His Holy Spirit is present also, He is one with the Father and Son, the Holy Trinity equal in essence

(5) They believe that the angels marry the humans

They annotate the following verses wrongly:" the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were good. And they took wives for themselves from all whom they chose. And also after that, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore to them, they were mighty men who existed of old, men of renown" (Genesis 6:2, 4)

They annotate: The sons of God → the angels

The daughters of men → the humans

Definitely, that is wrong annotation, and the correct annotation is:

The sons of God → men of Seth' siblings

The daughters of men → women of Cain' siblings

They say in their books that the angels watched the women while they were bathing and they got excited and the desire was provoked within them towards women, then they married them because of that sexual desire..That represents a kind of perversion and misleading in the exegesis of the books, as the lord Christ said frankly that the angels:" they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30)

(6) They consider governments as from Satan

That contradicts with the Bible words:

"Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but of God; the authorities that exist are ordained by God. So that the one resisting the authority resists the ordinance of God"(Romans 13:1, 2)

Jehovah's witnesses forbid also saluting flag of the country, and consider that a pagan' worshipping, although saluting the flag has no relation to worshipping, and there is no divinity or lordship attributed to the country' flag

(7) They consider honoring the icons, the cross and the Holy liturgy pagan' worshipping

They consider honoring the icons a pagan' worshipping:

Rebuttal:

-The commandment forbids us from worshipping the images and statues:" You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them" (Exodus 20:5)

God commanded Moses anciently to make two cherubs statues of pure gold stretching forth their wings covering the mercy-seat in the tabernacle, and He commanded him to put the cherub' image as a repeated icon on the walls of the tabernacle , there was similar to that also in the temple of Solomon , beside the Ark of covenant made by Moses the prophet, and worshipping was neither offered to the ark of covenant nor the cherubs , but the lord was revealing His glory and speaking to Moses between the cherubs above the ark' covering

It is known that icons in the church have a teaching value

Honoring of icons of the Saints is honoring of the Saints and asking for their pleading intercession, and not worshipping them at all

-They consider honoring of the cross a pagan 'worshipping:

Rebuttal:

-The words of Saint Paul:" But may it never be for me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14)

-Also:" to who before your eyes Jesus Christ was **written** among you crucified?"(Galatians 3:1)

The cross in the orthodox concept extracts its power from being the sign of salvation; therefore the lord Christ said that at end of the world:" the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens" (Matthew 24:30) , and Paul the apostle said:" For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to those being lost, but to us being saved, it is the power of God"

(1 Corinthians 1:18), the word will be heard and the sign will be seen, so what is the difference?

-They refuse the altar and communion and consider it a pagan ‘worshiping:

Rebuttal:

-The words of Saint Paul:" We have an **altar** of which they have no right to eat, those who serve the tabernacle"(Hebrews 13:10).

- The prophecy of Isaiah:" In that day there shall be an **altar** to the lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at its border to the lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness to the lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt, for they shall cry to the lord because of the oppressors, and He shall send them a deliverer, and a great one, and will deliver them. And the lord shall be known to Egypt, and Egypt shall know the lord in that day, and shall offer sacrifice and offering" (Isaiah 19:19-21)

-They refuse kneeling before the sanctuary

Rebuttal:

-" But I, in the abundance of your grace, I will come into your house; I will kneel in your fear toward your holy temple"(Psalm 5:7)

-They consider everything in the church even kissing the cross a pagan’ worshiping and they say that the church is the house of devil, and they forbid their followers from entering the church, as they stand outside the church even in the wedding ceremonies of their relatives

(8) They forbid blood transfusion and organ transplantation

Forbiddance of blood transfusion came from the notion of God' forbiddance of eating blood, as He said:

-" But you shall not eat of flesh with the life in it, or the blood of it"(Genesis 9:4)

-" That you abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication" (Acts 15:29)

Eating of blood is definitely forbidden in the two testaments the old and new..But there is definitely a great difference between a person eating meat with its blood like the sausage made with blood, and the strangulated birds in the European stores (that's definitely a sin), and another person having blood transfusion to rescue his life

-What do they say about the maternal blood flowing into the baby's veins till his birth from her and cutting of the umbilical cord? Do they forbid that also, thus forbidding marriage and child bearing?

(9) Wrong believes concerning resurrection of the Christ

They believe that the lord Christ when He raised from the dead He didn't rise by His body by which He was crucified, but He raised as a spiritual creature, God created for Him a new Spirit and new body, but the old spirit died with the body..And they believe that the body by which he was crucified transformed into gases, or God might hided it in a certain place as commemoration for the act of redemption, and they justify their doctrine as the form of the Christ had changed after His resurrection

-But the Bible words affirm that the lord Christ was Himself by His body which was crucified, raised from the dead, that body was glorified in the resurrection, and here are the proofs:

-In the apparition of the Christ to His disciples after the resurrection:" He showed them His hands and His side" (John 20:20), to let them see the signs of the nails and spear

-He said to them:" Behold My hands and my feet, that I am He! Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see me have" (Luke 24:39)

-In His speech with Thomas:" Reach your finger here and behold my hands; and reach your hand here and thrust it into my side (at the site of the spear 'stab); and do not be unbeliever, but believing" (John 20:27)

-Saint Paul said:" And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is worthless, and your faith is also worthless. And we are also found to be false witnesses of God" (1 Corinthians 15:14), therefore those believers of the Jehovah's witnesses heresy are false witnesses for Jehovah with full worthiness

(10) Defining the date of the lord' second coming

They defined the year 1914 G as a date for the lord' coming, and when the year came and the Christ didn't come, Russell and his followers put a strange explanation to escape from his embracement as he declared the following (in the year 1914 itself, Jesus Christ was enthroned as a king over the world as He started His royal activates by expelling the punch of devils and demons from the heavenly domain, and they descended to the earth and ignited the war fire within it)

-On the year 1914 G a new period started , the followers of that heresy called it (time of the end) , in which the righteous are segregated from the wickedest, they claim that God delegated them to accomplish that mission, and all those are superstitions having no supporting texts from the Holy Bible

(11) Sanctification of the day of Saturday and refusal of the day of Sunday

-It was mentioned in the book of Genesis:" And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work which God created to make" (Genesis 2:3), on that basis believers of the heresy of Jehovah 's witnesses rely, similarly also the heresy of the seventh day Adventists, as the lord : "blessed the seventh day"(Genesis 2:3), and it is the day of the lord according to the fourth commandment : " Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8)

-But Those heretics are ignoring that man was created on the sixth day, and sinned on the seventh day in the paradise, and he needed to return back to God to recreate him again:" So that if anyone is in Christ, that one is a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17), for that the Christ intentionally created eyes for the born blind on Saturday , and healed the man with infirmity at the pool of Bethesda on Saturday, and when the Jews objected that and wanted to kill the lord Christ ,He replied them saying:" My Father works until now, and I work" (John 5:17) , Thus He explained that being the creator He started to recreate again , and He completed the new creation in the beginning of the new week on Sunday, or the eighth day when He raised from the dead

- " For in that He died, He died to sin once; but in that He lives, He lives to God" (Romans 6:10)

- " But now we having been set free from the Law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter"(Romans 7:6)

-The fourth commandment is preserved in Christianity, as the word Sabbath in the Hebrew language means "rest", and we worship the lord and celebrate Him in the commemoration of His glorious resurrection from the dead , so we don't breach the commandment of preserving the Sabbath , but confirm it by the Sunday rest, therefore our teacher Paul the apostle said:" Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbaths, For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ"(Colossians 2:16-17)

The most evident proof that the rest of the lord , the old God ,from creation was terminated , more than that mentioned in the book of revelation : " And He sitting on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."(Revelation 21:5), the rest of the first week was a symbol for the old testament , and the rest of the new week is a symbol for the new testament and the eternal life , where the scope is open for the everlasting rest starting from the resurrection of the lord from the dead that:" bringing life and immortality to light" (2 Timothy 1:10)

Q24: In what way do the Jehovah's witnesses group share with the Jews in doctrines ?

A24: Jehovah's witnesses are truly more to the Jewish religion than to Christianity

1-they share together in sanctification of the day of Saturday

2-And they accord together in denying divinity of the lord Christ

3-They share with the group of Sadducees of the Jews in denying the resurrection of the evildoers consequently denying the presence of everlasting judgment for the evils, as the sect

of Sadducees don't believe at all in the resurrection from dead and believe in vanishing of the spirit

Q25: Who are the group of The Seventh day Adventist ?

A25: the sect of the Seventh day Adventist started in the United States of America on year 1831 G, it was officially registered there on year 1861 G, and they entered Egypt on year 1932 G as Christians , while they are not

Q26: How was the group of Adventists founded?

A26: the founder of that heresy was William Miller , who was born in America on year 1782 G, he studied the Holy Bible for two years from 1816 – 1818 G, of that study he concluded that end of the world will be on 1843 G (that study was based on wrong annotation for what was mentioned in the prophecies of Daniel the prophet), he started to publish his creeds , and some followers gathered around him, and when the year 1843 G ended and the lord Christ didn't come , some of his followers got frustrated , and quitted him

-One of his followers was Samuel Snow, who tried to rescue that group , and said that by the accurate calculation , the Christ will come on October 22 th 1844 G, so the followers of that notion sold their properties and resigned from their jobs and clothed with white cloths and came out to the mountains chanting for reception of the Lord Christ , and when the lord Christ didn't come also on that date , the group was intensely frustrated , that they called that day" day of the great frustration", and from that time onward lot of their followers quitted them

-On the period from 1840 – 1850 G, the teaching of sanctification of the day of Saturday was intruded into that group by Joseph Bates who convinced the group with it

-Then Ellen white appeared on the theatre of events, and that lady played a major role in the history of the Adventists ...Ellen had a stone casted on the left side of her forehead when she was young during her presence in the school, and that was about to kill her, and her brain was badly damaged and she had epilepsy, that she couldn't complete her academic study at school

-Ellen claimed that she had a dream affirming necessity of sanctification of the Jewish Saturday for the Christians , as she claimed that she saw the fourth commandment illuminating with a dazzling light amongst the ten commandments on the two stones , that commandment is:" Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8)

-The group of William Miller considered Ellen white as messenger from God , and a prophetess and visionary , and that all what she saw was a divine message for that group

- Ellen white died on year 1915 G, and among her books translated to Arabic language , the book of “the great wrestling” ,” the desire of all nations” ,“ the fathers and prophets” , “ the healing missionary “, “ the story of life “and “ the Acts of Apostles” those big books were written by whom didn’t finish her scholar study

-That group entered to Egypt on year 1932 G, and its activity was limited initially , but recently tried to spread widely by organizing meetings at homes , and arranging conferences in their churches , and establishing schools belonging to them trying to attract more followers

Galal Doas, the nephew of the priest ‘Helal Doas” tried to organize wide scale activities for the Adventists all over Egypt, and the Coptic orthodox church resisted him, together with some other denominations, and he failed, and the official sect of Adventist proclaimed that he was dissident of them, but obviously their doctrines are the same and their graveness is the same

Q27: What are the main heresies of the Adventists?

A27:it was mentioned in the magazine of “ the evangelism” (Al-Keraza) on the edition of November 20th 1992 G, edited by His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third about that subject the following:

- They believe that the lord Christ is the angel Michael
- They believe that the lord Christ was born with the original sin
- They entitle the Holy Spirit as (Deputy of the chief commander of the lord)
- They believe that Saturday is the lord ‘day instead of Sunday
- They don’t believe in immortality of the human spirit
- They believe in three comings for the lord Christ
- They believe in the earthly kingdom, and that heavens will not be for humans
- They believe in vanishing of the evildoers, and not their torment
- They neither believe in priesthood, nor in the intercession, nor most of the church sacraments

• Also in reference to their books we find that they:

- Attack the doctrine of Eucharist, and entitle it by the pagan ‘sacrifice
- They believe that Ellen White was a prophethess and messenger , although she wrote very obvious theological and scientific grave mistakes
- They believe that the lord Christ lost the hope in His resurrection and acceptance of the Father for His sacrifice, so he separated from the Father and fall into despair during His pains before the crucifixion and during it

Q28: what is the sanction of the Coptic Church concerning the sects of Adventists and Jehovah’s witnesses?

A28:The holy synod of our Coptic orthodox church declared officially , headed by His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third , in its meeting held on Saturday June 17 th1989 :”Considering the sects of Adventists and Jehovah ‘s witnesses as non Christian sects , we

don't profess them as Christians and we don't profess the translations of the Holy Bible pertain to them , and we warn of attending their meetings , or allowing them to enter homes of the Coptic orthodox , like all the heretics and heterodoxies)

Q29: Are the Assyrian churches considered Nestorian, and where do they exist nowadays?

A29: the Assyrian churches are present in Iran, Iraq, India, United States of America and Canada, and also they have churches in many places in Europe and Australia, their heritage is in eastern Syrian language

The Assyrian church honors Diodore the tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius (the first and second are the fathers of Nestorius in dogma), but it is not a church founded by anyone of those three who wrote in the Greek language, but it accepted their teachings and lived by them, and refused the doctrine of the Council of Ephesus on year 431 G They honor those three and mention them in their daily prayers, and celebrate them in the fifth Friday after the Epiphany, a special feast named "Feast of the Greek fathers", and they say Nestorius the Saint, and they also attack Pope Cyril of Alexandria, and Saint Sewers of Antioch, and all the followers of their teachings

-Metropolitan Abrim the contemporary Indian Assyrian said:" Although the eastern Assyrian church didn't share in the conflict between Nestorius and the Patriarch of Alexandria (means Pope Cyril the twenty fourth Patriarch) , yet it is a historic fact that the church in the Persian empire(means the Assyrian church) had accepted the Christological expression of Nestorius (Publications of Pro-Oriental institution)

-On the article presented by Metropolitan Afran Moken the Assyrian in the fifty ninth ecumenical symposium for Pro-Oriental in Vienna on June 18 th 1990 G – carrying the title : 'Was Nestorius a Nestorian', it was mentioned the following:(on the second Wednesday after the coming of the Christ- the nativity fasting- the church ask that the prayers of Diodore. Theodore and Nestorius would be a fence for them), and those prayers speak about Nestorius as a saint, and about their holy teachings, and they speak about those three together as teachers, priests and saint men, and the prayer speaks also about the attackers of Nestorius like Cyril of Alexandria, and Sewers of Antioch as being evildoers, and on the fifth Friday after the epiphany they celebrate the commemoration of the Greek fathers

- On year 2004 G, they also put on their church official web site what they call "Anathemas of Saint Nestorius against Cyril), they are twelve anathemas against the anathemas of Saint Cyril the great the twelve, the first anathema of them says:"Everyone says that Emanuel is a true God and the Virgin Mary, the mother of Emanuel is the Mother of God will be anathematized "is there more clear evidence on their non Christian doctrine in denying divinity of the lord Christ?

All of that denote that we don't accuse them of being Nestorians, but they say and testify on themselves of being Nestorians, by asking for the prayers of Diodore, Theodore and

Nestorius and making celebrations for them, and by saying about Saint Cyril, and Saint Sewers and Pope Dioscorus as evildoers

Chapter Five

Exegesis of biblical verses

Q1: What is the meaning of “whom, being in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6)

A1: Our teacher Paul the Apostle said:” For let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8)

-The word” **form**” mentioned in the previous text about the form of God , and the form of a servant in Greek language is (Murphy)(μορφή) meaning the form with the nature, and not (icon) (εἰκων) which means the external form without the nature, as the external form doesn't bear the same nature, like one was photographed – the photo in its nature is a paper and colors – but the owner of that photo is a man, so in such case the nature of the photo is different from that of the original – although it declares about the original , but it is just a photo, and is called icon (εἰκων)

-Another example is man, he is on the image of God, but his nature is different from that of the original who is God , as man is a created but God is the creator ..There is a clear difference in the nature

-But the word (Murphy)(μορφή) which was said about the only begotten Son in His relation to the Father it means the form holding the same nature, as the Son the logos holds the form of His Holy father and His same nature and essence without division, and in His incarnation also He held the same human nature of ours – without a sin- making it one with His divinity,

therefore Saint Paul used also in the same previous text the word (Murphy)(μορφή) denoting the form of the servant taken by the Word of God , meaning that He took a real human nature

Q2: What is the meaning of “He emptied Himself” (Philippians 2:6)?

A2: “who, being in the form of God ...He emptied Himself” means He accepted to be in a form not surrounded by the visible glory, but doesn't mean He emptied His own person of His original nature, that He lost His nature, so the sentence “emptied Himself” means that He was found in a form while he appeared in flesh not surrounded by His visible glory

- The good thing is that Saint John says:” And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth” (John 1:14)..The lord Christ emptied Himself from the visible glory befitting His divine nature which is the same nature of the Father and the Holy Spirit
- In spite of that when He dressed with manhood and concealed His visible glory, He kept also preserving His invisible glory in the spiritual dimension ,therefore John said:” And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth”
- A ray of that glory for which Saint Peter said:” And we heard this voice being borne from Heaven, being with Him in the holy mountain” (2 Peter 1:18), so that ray of the visible glory was on the mountain of transfiguration before the crucifixion, in order to give the disciples an aid supporting them at the time of horrible tribulation in His pains, crucifixion and life giving death on the cross
- Amazingly, He was found in the form of servant and not only that but:” And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:8)
- Just humbling Himself as God by incarnation is a very great work, but that was not enough for Him, but after He humbled Himself and took the form of servant , regarding His behavior as a man , he said:” He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. “so He humbled Himself and put Himself in obedience for the Father , He humbled Himself below all , so that He washed the feet of the disciples then endured the pains, humiliations, and indescribable scorning ...so even as a human He was humble and meek to be the example and model

Q3: What is meant by "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14)?

A3: It was mentioned in the book of exodus in the old testament:" And Moses said to God, Behold, when I come to the sons of Israel, and shall say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they shall say to me, What is His name? What shall I say to them? And

God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And He said, so you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:13, 14).

Here God wants to say that He is the existent and His existence is not created from another creator who made Him, As He is existent by His nature, while for any other creature, his subsistence is a made subsistence or created

For some annotators " I AM THAT I AM "means that God says about Himself I am the existent who is existent always , to fulfill His promises and grant His gifts and goods in every time and place

Q4:What is the exegesis of the utterance of the Lord Christ to the Father:" And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent"(John 17:3)

A4: the lord Christ has come to the world to lead the world to liberation from the idolatrous worshipping to worship the real God of Abraham, and for the world to know that God the creator is Himself God the savior who 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)

-There are two conditions to reach the eternal life:

-The first condition: to believe that Jehovah is the real God, refusing all the idolatrous gods which are not true gods

-The second condition: to believe that Jehovah the Father had loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son as a redeemer and savior for the world by the sacrifice of the cross, and to follow the teachings of the lord Christ whom was sent from the Father to the world

-What affirms the intention of the lord Christ by the sentence:" You, the only true God "what Saint Paul the Apostle had mentioned in his first epistle to the people of Corinthians:" Then concerning the eating of the things sacrificed to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God except one. For though there are those who are called gods, whether in Heaven or in earth (as there are many gods and many lords), **but there is to us only one God**, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; **and one Lord Jesus Christ**, through whom are all things, and we by Him" (1 Corinthians 8:4-6)

-It is obvious here in confirmation of the only God doctrine, that the apostle refuses all the other idolatrous gods named gods, whom are not true gods

-When it is said about the Father He is the only true God, it means by His divine essence He surpasses all the other idolatrous gods and has alone the true divinity

But the Father is not God with a separate essence and the Son is God with another separate essence, But the Father and His word are one essence , one divinity, and one nature

-**The Father is a hypostasis distinctive from the hypostasis of the Son** , but the distinction is not in the essence or existence or subsistence , but in the state of existence or the state of subsistence, as the Father is like the spring, and the Son is like the current begotten of Him with no separation, so if the Father is the only true God alone among all the gods, likewise the Son is " true God of true God "as we say in the creed of faith , and the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit is one God in the essence, in spite of being three hypostases equal in glory, dignity, sempiternal mightiness, and all the divine characters

-It is remarkable that Saint Paul the apostle says by the synonyms expression:" For though there are those who are called gods, whether in Heaven or in earth (as there are many gods and many lords), but there is to us only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:5-6), he is speaking about the multiplicity of gods and lords , but in the Christian faith there is no such multiplicity, as he says:" there is to us only one God, the Father, ... and one Lord Jesus Christ "and by his saying:" one Lord Jesus Christ "he didn't exclude the Father from being a lord , likewise with the same tenacity he said:" there is to us only one God, the Father "he didn't exclude Jesus Christ from being God , but he meant as long as we believe in the one triune God , He is the only God and only lord fulfilling the bible' saying:

- " Hear, O, Israel. **The lord our God is one lord**" (Deuteronomy 6:4)

- " "You shall worship **the Lord your God**, and **Him only** shall you serve."(Luke 4:8, Deuteronomy 6:13)

-So, if it is said we have one lord "Jesus Christ "that sentence approves definitely that Jesus Christ is the true God , who is with His Father and the Holy Spirit one essence and one divinity, to whom we prostrate and glorify

-Also it was mentioned in the epistle of Saint Paul the apostle to the people of Ephesus his saying:" one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all" (Ephesians 4:5, 6)

-In that the same meaning of the previous utterance about the only lord and only God is actualized, as the lord Christ said:" I and the Father are one!" (John 10:30), meaning they are one God and one lord, so if it said about the Father He is one God, it means nihility of other gods but the Father and His word and His Spirit, and if it is said about the Son He is one

lord, it means nihility of other lords but the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit who are one in the lordship as well as in divinity, one trinity, whom we worship and glorify

Q5: What is the meaning of the verse:” I have glorified you upon the earth” (John 17:4)?

A5: How did the incarnate Son glorify His heavenly Father in His incarnation and apparition to the world?

About that matter Saint John wrote in his gospel:” 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 out of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came to be through Jesus Christ”(John 1:14, 16, 17), those words said by the lord disciple John the apostle:” and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father” means that the glory seen by the disciple is what is befitting to the only begotten Son of God

-What is that glory which John the disciple whom Jesus loved meant?

-Did he mean His seeing of the lord transfiguring on the mountain of Tabor when He ascent to the mountain to pray taking with Him Peter, James and John:”and He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.”(Matthew 17:2), that scene which Saint Peter the apostle said about:” but rather became eyewitnesses of His majesty, For He received from God the Father honor and glory when a voice was brought to Him such as this by the Magnificent Glory:”This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And we heard this voice being uttered from heaven, when we were with Him on the holy mountain” (2 Peter 1:16-18), undoubtedly that revelation or scene had left a deep impression into the mind of the three apostles when they saw a ray of glory of the only begotten- Son

-Saint Paul the apostle wrote that God spoke to us in His Son , and said about Son of God that He is “the brightness of His glory” (Hebrews 1:3), meaning the Brightness of the Father’s Glory

- But the case in fact is not limited to the awesome transfiguration scene in the mind of Saint John the evangelist when he wrote:” And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth” (John 1:14), as it is obvious that he linked His vision of that glory and others by what they saw in the Christ of the fullness of grace and truth

-Satan could marvelously transform himself into an angel of light, and He could astonish the people by spectacles and transcendental deeds, therefore the lord Christ didn’t show His

glory only by His luminous spectacle on the transfiguration mountain, but glances of that glory appeared in all aspects of His biography and life , including the glory of His love and humbleness ... thus we could discriminate between the false glory and the true glory, between the apparent glory and the genuine glory

-“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9)

- Our teacher Saint Paul the apostle wrote about the lord Christ:” For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9)

The logos hypostasis united with the complete human nature that He took of the Virgin Mary from the first moment of incarnation , thus all the divine properties became properties of the incarnate Son who was incarnated by one nature collecting the properties of the two natures without any of them to vanish into the other , but we could see all the properties of the divinity in the one incarnate Son , thus the lord Christ said to His disciples :” He who has seen Me has seen the Father”(John 14:9), and our teacher Saint Paul the apostle said:” God was manifested in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16), as the Christ is:” the image of the invisible God,” (Colossians 1:15), and that explains the utterance of Saint John the evangelist :” And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth”

-The lord Christ was” full of grace and of truth” , and in Him “dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”, the disciples saw in the lord Christ the goodness of God , His righteousness, His holiness, His kindness , His long patience , His mercy, His love, His mightiness , and His endeavor for the salvation of people , and what is in Him of truth, justice, firmness ,and refusal of evil , they touched His humbleness , gentleness, pardoning and wonderful forgiveness for the sinners repenting from all their hearts , and they touched His care for the sick and tortured and His endeavor to ease them , they saw Him passionate on the multitude and pity on them granting rest for the weary, and feeding the multitude in the wild areas in the wilderness , and touched His long patience with them , and enduring their weaknesses as beginners to bring them to strength , and enduring their ignorance to bring them to the true knowledge , they touched His love to the end , when He is giving Himself for them , enduring the horrible pains to save them from the eternal demise , the scourges on the back of the lord Christ were remedy for the agonies of sins and pleasures of the sins that corrupted our human nature

-They touched His sublimity of teachings, and listened to the words of grace coming out of His lips, which is affecting the listeners with extreme mightiness and depth...And He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes

-They touched the truth in Him..and He who said about Himself:" I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6), the truth didn't show up and was declared so obviously like that declared in the lord Christ

-They touched the Holiness of God in the person of the lord Christ...God the Holy who is alone without a sin ...and the lord Christ said to the Jews:" Which of you convicts me of sin?"(John 8:46), a perfect purity , perfect whiteness, perfect sublimity, amazing clearness , extreme simplicity ...mightiness in refusing the evil and perseverance on the face of tyrant ...liberation from the lusts and inclinations

-And about His triumph over the death and Satan, that was the most prominent divinity mark, and our teacher Paul the apostle wrote on that:" who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord"(Romans 1:4), and the lord Christ said about His triumph over death and Hades : " When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know that I AM" (John 8:28), meaning it will be understood that He is the incarnate God, the dwelling of all the fullness of the Godhead bodily in the lord Christ , meaning union of His divinity with manhood , had banned corruption from His body in the tomb : " You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10), and He conquered all the powers of Hades in His human spirit:" but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison"(1 Peter 3:18)," You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts for men" (Psalm 68:18)

The lord had crushed by the authority of His divinity all Satan' power:" Having stripped rulers and authorities, He made a show of them publicly, triumphing over them in it." (Colossians 2:15), truly He is:" the lord strong and mighty, the lord mighty in battle. He is this King of glory" (Psalm 24:8)

Q6: what is the meaning of the verse:" all Mine are yours" (John 17:10)?

A6: in His soliloquy with the Father, the lord Christ said:" all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine" (John17:10), and said also to His disciples:" All things that the Father has are Mine" (John 16:15), And Saint Athanasius the apostolic said: the Son Has all the properties of the Father except that The Father is Father and the Son is Son

-That definitely because the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have one divine nature and one divine essence...so all the properties of the divine essence are for the Father as well as for the Son, and also for the Holy Spirit, but for the hypostatic properties or characters, every hypostasis individualizes by them alone , as the Father has the fatherhood in trinity , and He is Father of the Son , and emanating the Holy Spirit, and the Son has the sonship being the

only-begotten Son of the Father by begetting (look into John 3:16), and the Holy Spirit has the emanation being the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father (John 15:26)

-And as the characters of the divine essence are the same for all the hypostases, likewise all the capabilities and divine gifts are emerging from the divine hypostases together

So the capability for creation is for the Father , and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the talents granted to the church are granted from the Father by the merits of the blood of the only begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit is the one who grants them to the church by His work into it through the sacraments and talents and divine gifts, therefore the lord Christ said about the Holy Spirit : " However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He hears, He shall speak. And He will announce to you things to come. He will glorify me, for He will receive of mine and will announce it to you. All things that the Father has are mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and will announce it to you"(John 16:13 -15)

-The lord Christ linked between the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and His own gifts for the church, considering them also gifts of the Father, as He said:" He will receive of mine" , then He said:"All things that the Father has are mine", actually all what is for the Holy Spirit are for the Son , and all that the Son has are for the Father, and all that the Father has are for the Son and the Holy Spirit as the divine essence for the Son is one and the same for the Father and the Holy Spirit .. And there is no hypostasis separable from the other in the essence

-Also the divine work is one work, in spite of discrepancy of the role of each hypostasis in that work, so in creation all the hypostases were working together, and in salvation all the hypostases were working together and are still working...Therefore in the salvation God sent His son to incarnate by the work of the Holy Spirit, and on the cross God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and Saint Paul said:" who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9;14), therefore the only begotten Son had offered Himself as an acceptable offer before God the Father by the Holy Spirit , and after the lord Christ completed the redemption , He ascent to the heavens and sat on the right side of the Father , and being the greatest High priest He sent the Holy Spirit who works in the church and delivers to it all the blessings of redemption, and whatever given by the Holy Spirit to the church of talents are from the gifts of the heavenly Father, by His only begotten Son Jesus Christ our lord, therefore our teacher James the apostle says:" Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth with the Word of truth, for us to be a certain firstfruit of His creatures" (James 1:17, 18)

The Father's glory and His possessions and Kingdom are for the Son also:

From the sentence "all Mine are yours" (John 17:10), we understand also that all the glory of the Father is for the Son also, and all possessions of the Father and His kingdom belong to the Son also

- **Glory of the Father:**

-The lord Christ said about His second coming for judgment and proclamation of the kingdom of God:" But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And all nations shall be gathered before Him"(Matthew 25:31-34)

-But the lord Christ as He said that:" when the Son of Man comes in His glory" he said also" For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He shall reward each one according to his works" (Matthew 16:27)

-Thus the lord Christ didn't discriminate between His glory and the glory of His Father in His speech about His second coming for judgment, as the glory of the lord Christ being Son of God is the same as the glory of the Father with no minor difference in the glory, as the three hypostases are equal in the divine glory, therefore we give the doxology for the trinity

-When the lord Christ said in His soliloquy before the crucifixion:" And now Father, glorify Me with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:5), He meant that His sempiternal glory is itself the sempiternal glory of the Father before the creation of the world, although the lord Christ concealed much of His glory when He appeared among us in the flesh when He emptied Himself taking the form of a servant , also the lord Christ called the Father before the crucifixion saying:" Father, glorify Your name! Then there came a voice from the heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again" (John 12:28)

-And when Judas Iscariot went out after the dinner of the Jewish Passover, to go to the high priests and became a guide for those arrested the lord Christ, the lord said:" Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall immediately glorify Him" (John 13:31, 32)

-And in His soliloquy with the Father immediately after those events, He lifted up His eyes to Heaven and said:"Father... Glorify Your Son so that Your Son also may glorify you" (John 17:1) the glory of the Father is the same as the glory of the Son as He has the same one essence with the Father

-The lord Christ was titled as:"the shining splendor of His glory"(Hebrews1:3), so if the Son is the shining splendor of the Father's glory, then how could we separate between the glory of the Son and the glory of the Father

-The glory of the Father is revealed clearly to the creation by the only begotten Son, thus we say in the Gregorian liturgy :(who revealed to us the light of the Father)

-In addition to that it was said about the Son," Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"(Philippians 2:11). Meaning that the Son is lord , or lord of the creation that lives in the Glory of God and reflects that glory ,so God is glorified into it and through it, we are frequently title the lord Christ by:(lord of Glory), which is said about Him by our teacher Paul the apostle (1 Corinthians 2:8)

- **kingdom of the Father:**

-Due to intensity of Father's love for the Son, He calls His kingdom (kingdom of the son), He says:" the kingdom of His dear Son" (Colossians 1:13)

- And as the Father has the title "the King of kings and Lord of lords ...whom no one of men has seen, nor can see" (1 Timothy 6:15, 16), likewise the Son also has the same title and was seen by John the evangelist in his revelation:" And He had been clothed in a garment dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God, And He has on His garment, and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:13,16), it was said about Him in the same book:" and the Lamb will overcome them. For He is Lord of lords and King of kings"(Revelation 17:14)

-Therefore in the Day of Judgment, it was said about the Son, that:" He shall sit on the throne of His glory" (Matthew 25:31), and His title is the king (Matthew 25:24)

-The kingdom of the Father is the same as the kingdom of the Son...and all of that actualized into us by the work of the Holy Spirit who makes the kingdom of God in our midst. (Luke 17:21) , by His dwelling into us , leading us in the way of the kingdom in order to be for God , and He reigns over our life forever by His grace

Q7: What is the meaning of the verse:" And I sanctify myself for their sakes" (John17:19)?

A7: The lord Christ said to His disciples:" And I sanctify myself for their sakes, so that they also might be sanctified in truth" (John 17:19), here we stand at the sentence "I sanctify myself "and How it was said by the lord Christ? Or what is the meaning aimed at by His saying?

-The sanctification is a word meaning the consecration: like what was said:" Sanctify all the first-born to me"(Exodus 13:2), or consecrate for me every first-born, and the Saint is a heart consecrated for loving God , and in the sanctuary , the Holy was the place consecrated for offering the incense, table of bread of the presence, and the lampstand with its seven lamps, but the Holy of Holies is the place highly consecrated for the ark of covenant of the

lord, and nobody could enter into it except the high priest only once per year , it is the place where the lord dwells with His glory on it and appears over the merey seat in-between the golden cherub

-Holiness is a consecration for loving God – we couldn't understand holiness away from loving God...That holiness, "without which no one shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14)...as without loving God more than everything we couldn't live in a real partnership with Him

-When the lord Christ said" I sanctify myself for their sakes"(John 17:19), in His saying so, He is different from any other person..as **that means He consecrated Himself in His incarnation for the sake of His disciples**, as He said:" I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15)

-The lord Christ advanced in revealing His consecration of Himself for the sake of the church:

-Before crucifixion, He ministered an amazing ministry in which He toiled profoundly for the sake of preaching the gospel..He said about Himself that:" the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28)

-On the Cross, His sacrificing missionary reached its peak as:" No one has greater love than this that a man lay down his life for his friends"(John 15:13)

-Even after the resurrection, He specified forty days to wipe the grieves of His disciples, and to show them the joy and certainty of the resurrection

-When He ascent to the heavens, He is interceding for us before the Father:" we have an Advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1), John had seen Him in the book of revelation in the form of:" Lamb stood, as if it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6)

-The relation of the lord Christ to the church is uninterrupted relationship, the Christ is the head, and the church is His body...It is an amazing love relationship, it is a relation of a bridegroom occupied with His beloved bride...He devoted Himself for her

-Amazing is your humbleness O lord Jesus Christ when you say that you consecrated yourself for the sake of the church..That humbleness is emerging from the love..As love can do everything

Q8: what is the meaning of the verse:" He kneeled down and prayed" (Luke 22:41)?

A8:-in the time of tribulation and bitter grieving, the lord enjoined His disciples saying:" Pray that you do not enter into temptation." (Luke 22:40), and as He enjoined them He did the same, giving Himself as an example for everybody, and a deputy for mankind in its agony and grieve which it deserves because of the sin...in an amazing humbleness, He

kneeling down on His knees and prayed, with all pulverization, and poured spirit, and amazing supplication, and yelling from the heart ...”And being in agony He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44)

-That deep contrite prayer had attracted the heavenliest:” And an angel appeared to Him from Heaven, strengthening Him.” (Luke 22:43), probably the angel was chanting that everlasting song:” the mightiness, and glory and blessing and honor to you”, or he was reverberating the trisagion (Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal)... Or to proclaim admiring of the heavenliest for that wonderful love that endured the grieves as:” having loved His own in the world, He loved them to the end” (John 13:1)...in all conditions the appearance of the angel affirmed participation of the heavenly powers in the time of temptation, grieve and agony

-Our teacher Paul the apostle described that deep contrite prayers presented by the lord Christ during His agonies and grieving and said:” For Jesus, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared, though being a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And being perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:7-9)

-All that said about the supplications of the lord Christ before the Father in the times of agonies and pains, we should look at in the light that the only begotten Son had emptied Himself taking the form of the servant (look Philippians 2:7), but in spite of that He Himself remained the word of God the omnipotent , as He was incarnated , and became a deputy for mankind:” And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”(Philippians 2:8)

-Therefore He says:” though being a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8), meaning though being Son of God who Has the same essence with the Father and His capabilities and will, yet as a deputy of mankind had showed obedience in His acceptance of pains and grieves , pleasing the heart of the heavenly Father

-In His supplication and prayers , He was asking for the salvation of mankind from the clutches of death and its gripe, and He was raised by the Father from dead by the same divine mightiness by which He raised Himself , and by which the Holy Spirit raised Him, as the capability of the trinity is one divine capability , though being a Son yet He supplicated to the Father for the resurrection from dead , as by that He deputized for mankind in pleasing the heart of the heavenly Father , and justifying the divine justice in its full claim , and in attaining the eternal life

-The bible says :” and was heard in that He feared” (Hebrews 5:7), therefore it was not a matter of disclaimer of the divine justice claim that could never change ...but actually the man Jesus Christ fulfilled the claim of the divine justice , and the Father complied with what was requested by the righteous Holy ,free of sin Son of man, when He offered Himself as a guilt-offering as:” He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for transgressors “(Isaiah 53:12)

Q9: What is the meaning of the verse:” Yet it pleased the lord to crush Him; to grieve Him”?

A9: Why the Father pleased that the incarnate Son be crushed by grieve?

It was the pleasure of the Father’s heart to reconcile the world for Himself in the Christ, that pleasure is full of sacrifice and its motive is love...the strife between God and man was not something pleasing the heart of God, it was not possible for the reconciliation to happen without blood shedding, and without true propitiation in which the holiness of God was proclaimed as a refusal of evil and sin in man’s life

-In all of that the lord Christ endured in complete submission for His heavenly Father, and in amazing humbleness He endured all the grieves surpassing description, as said by the prophet Isaiah:” The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, nor turned away backwards. I gave My back to the strikers, and My cheeks to pluckers; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting” (Isaiah 50:5,6)

Q10: What is the meaning of the verse: ” My Father and Your Father, and My God and your God”?

A10: The lord Christ accepted in His humbleness to consider Himself among His brothers of men:”Therefore in all things it behooved him to be made like His brothers, in everything without a sin” (Hebrews 2:17)

Therefore He said to Mary of Magdalene:” go to my brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and Your Father, and to My God and your God” (John 20:17)

-But it is known that fatherhood of the Father to the lord Christ is something and His fatherhood to mankind is something else, as the lord Christ is the Son of God by nature (according to His divinity), but we are sons of God by adoption , also there is a difference between our state as servants of God , and the state of the lord Christ who took the form of a servant , for we are servants being created, while the lord Christ is the creator who emptied Himself and was incarnated taking the form of a servant, and appeared in flesh as human, and became Son of man

-The difference between the dignity of the lord Christ and the dignity of any man like Moses the prophet, was explained by our teacher Paul the apostle and said:” For He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, because he who has built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God”(Hebrews 3:3-4) meaning that the difference in dignity between the lord Christ and Moses the prophet is the difference between the dignity of the creator and that of created

Sonship of the Christ to the Father

The lord Christ is the only begotten Son (monogeneses Ioas), He is the only one who Has the same nature of the Father and His essence by the sempiternal begetting of the Father , therefore He was called “the only” and any other begetting of God is by adoption , and not according to the nature and essence , begetting of the only begotten Son of the Father before all ages is like the begetting of the ray of the light by the same nature and essence

As **His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third** says: the title of the lord Christ is the Word (logos) meaning that His title is (the pronounced divine mind)

The Hypostasis of the Son (the word) according to the teaching of Saint Cyril the great, has two births:

The first birth: sempiternal of the Father according to His divinity

The second birth: in the fullness of time from the Virgin Mary according to His divinity

-Our teacher Saint Paul the apostle says:” Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8), meaning that He Himself is in the Past, present and the future, before incarnation, and in incarnation and to the end of times, meaning that who is born of the Father before all ages, is Himself who was incarnated from the Virgin in the fullness of time and born of her in flesh, and he himself will stay forever

-The same words of Saint Paul the apostle are reverberated by the father priest in the pleading prayers while He is incensing between the first and the second aisle in the church in the evening and morning incense procession and in the Pauline procession in the holy liturgy as he says:”Jesus Christ is Himself yesterday, today and forever, by one hypostasis we worship and glorify Him.. The sempiternal Son of God is Himself the Son of man; He is the word of God who took flesh of the Virgin Mary – by the act of the Holy Spirit – making it His own body

-All what is befitting to the Word ‘own body is attributed to the Word like the begetting, the agony and death..Although the Word according to His divine nature doesn’t need a new birth, and doesn’t agonize or die, but as He acquired a body, He agonized and died by that body attributing to Himself all pertained to His own body

-For that the Virgin Mary was called (Mother of God = Theotokos)as that one born of her is the true God, the incarnate word of God , who in truth , gave birth to God the Logos, as we say in the commemoration of saints in the Holy liturgy , and as we reverberate in the antiphon of praxis also in the holy liturgy (who gave birth to God the Logos)

He took all ours and gave us all His

The lord Christ took the form of servant, for us to become on His likeness and image, and the lord Christ accepted to become son of man, for us to become sons of God, therefore He liked to call the apostles His brothers:” go to my brothers and say to them” (John 20:17)

It was written about Him in the psalms:” I will declare your name to my brothers” (Psalm 22:22)

Our teacher Paul the apostle says:” For it became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to perfect the Captain of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." (Hebrews 2:10 -12)

The Lord Christ took the sonship for man (which belong to us) and gave us sonship to God (that belongs to Him), for that Mary the Magdalene said after His resurrection from the dead:” I ascend to My Father and Your Father, and to My God and your God”(John 20:17)

By His descent from the heavens He took from us the sonship for man, and by His ascension to the heavens He granted us the sonship for God, as He sent the Holy Spirit that begets us in the baptism from God, and makes us sons of God by adoption on the likeness of God and His image

Q11: what is the meaning of the verse:”the First-born of all creation” (Colossians 1:15)?

A11: On reference to the strongest Greek dictionaries, it was obvious that:

The translation of the Greek word (πρωτο τωκε proto tokos) which was translated as (**First-born**) is **inaccurate translation** , as the word (πρωτο τωκε proto tokos) is composed of two words :

- The verb (τικτω) means to beget
- (πρωτος), it is preferring expressions form the word (προ) which means (before – antecedent – superior) as regards the place, the time, the eminence, the order and importance

Therefore the sentence meaning will be: **Existing before all creation** or **Superior to all creation** or **Preeminent over all creation**

That meaning is the accredited meaning by the strongest and most modern translations of the Holy Bible published by the international union of the bible societies U.B.S in English and French language

Q12: What is the meaning of the verse:” the Head of the creation of God” (Revelation 3:14)?

A12: if we refer to the original Greek text we find that the verse is :”the origin of God’s creation”, as the word (αρχι) means : (beginning, source, principle , ruler), that translation was accredited by U.B.S from the Greek language in the most recent translation of the new testament in English and French

Q13: what is the meaning of the verse:” though being a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8)?

A13: the word Son of God couldn’t mean according to His divinity , but concerning His manhood He means ,as Saint Athanasius the apostle said:”Amazingly, the Word of God (by incarnation) became in man and not in man in the same time”

-By that we can understand the meaning of the obedience of the incarnate logos to His heavenly Father , He as regarding His sempiternal sonship to the Father has no obedience relationship ,as the Son and Father are equal in glory and dignity , and whatever the Father does , the Son does likewise , but concerning His incarnation , the Son practiced the obedience through His enduring of pains , though being a Son regarding His divinity , yet He learned obedience concerning His manhood, and all of that by His one and only person who united His divinity and manhood in one nature gathering His characters and properties of the two natures, so we say in the Gregorian liturgy (you blessed my nature in yourself , and fulfilled your law for me) meaning that the incarnate Son had subdued our human nature to the heavenly Father in His person with total freedom

Q14: What is the meaning of:” Yet not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39), which the Son said to the Father on the eve of His pains?

A14: When we speak about the will we should differentiate between the wish and taking the decision, as the natural will means the wish , the personal will means the decision , thus we can explicate the lord Christ’s utterance in translating the original Greek text :” Yet not as I will, but as You and I will” (Matthew 26:39), meaning not as I wish according to my natural human wishes , but as you and I wish according to the personal divine wish , and according to the divine procurement , and that’s our decision in fulfilling the redemption me and you and the Holy Spirit , and it is also my personal decision to complete the redemption on the

cross , therefore our teacher Paul the Apostle said about the completion of the redemption by the lord Christ :” for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame” (Hebrews 12:2), so How could He say that while He was the one who said to the Father :” if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” (Matthew 26:39), that’s the difference between the natural wishes and the personal will , by His personal will He decided to make the redemption , but concerning the natural human wish , undoubtedly He didn’t wish the humility and betrayal of Judas and others , that He said:” My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death”(Matthew 26:38):” Yet it pleased the lord to crush Him; to grieve Him” (Isaiah 53:10)

-Yet not as I wish, but as You and I wish, meaning not as I wish according to my humanity, but as we wish together according to the triune procurement for the salvation ...that doesn’t mean that the lord Christ Has two wills, as it is meant here not the personal will, but only the natural will as it was said:” He afterward hungered”(Matthew 4:2), when He hungered afterward did He transfer the stone to bread and ate? No...therefore the natural will is the wish in eating but He continued in fasting by His will

-Therefore when we say in the Gregorian liturgy :(You blessed my nature in Yourself and fulfilled your law for me) it means He submitted our humanity – meaning our human nature specific to Him in His blessed person – to the will of His heavenly Father , so if Adam had disobeyed God till death , then the Christ obeyed the Father till death according to His humanity , and erased the disgrace , and that’s the summery of the redemption case: it should for the second Adam to come to submit full obedience for the heavenly Father , the Son gave His free person to our human nature that He took of the Virgin , hence there was an existent named second Adam owning the free will and our nature but at the same time without a sin, so when He offered obedience through His person , hence our nature entered in the scope of full satisfaction for God

Q15: What is the meaning of the verse:” My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28) said by the Christ?

A15: As much as that verse annoyed Arius the heretic, it is very joyful to the hearts of the meek and humbles, the lord Christ said that verse simply and humbly, as being taken the form of a servant by incarnation:” And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8)

As the lord Christ is the greatest model in humbleness , although being the hypostasis of the sempiternal Son , equal to His Father in all properties of the divine essence , and being sempiternal with the Father , yet He emptied Himself and obeyed unto death ..therefore our teacher Paul the apostle presented what the lord Christ had done as an example for humbleness ,as He said:” For let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who,

being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”(Philippians 2:5-8)

- **Emptiness of Self**

By those sentences our teacher Paul the apostle explained the truth of divine incarnation, as the sempiternal only-begotten Son being “the image of God “took the form of servant”, He didn’t change from His divine nature, but He emptied Himself meaning that He abandoned having His divine glory visible on earth, when the divine glory veiled into the body...as He took the form of servant and found in fashion as man.

For that the lord Christ said – being in the flesh form on earth –that the Father is greater than Him meaning ; as He emptied Himself , hence the form of servant is the visible one ...and by His ascension to the heaven He will enter into His glory , or the image of God from which He emptied Himself temporarily in the view of whoever had seen Him in the form of His incarnation on earth, thus He entered by the resurrection body into the state of glory of God’s image , therefore He said to His disciples :” If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28), meaning that they should rejoice by His ascension to the heaven bodily whereas His first divine glory from which He emptied Himself from, as He took the form of servant to put Himself unto death and redeem the mankind , and all that is affirmed by what is said by the lord Christ in His soliloquy with the Father just before the crucifixion :” I have glorified You upon the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now Father, glorify me with yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was” (John 17:4, 5)

Meaning that the message of the lord Christ on earth was glorification of the heavenly Father and the Son had emptied Himself to complete the redemption , and after completion of the redemption on earth , His ascension to the heaven became the way by which the Father declares entrance of the lord Christ into His glory, whereas He appears with the Father in the heavenly sanctuaries for our sake ...and by that He would enter into His glory which He has before foundation of the world , which He didn’t lose by the incarnation but concealed from His viewers on earth to complete the redemption , and Saint Paul the apostle spoke about that truth by His saying:” And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among nations, believed on in the world, and **received up into glory**”(1Timothy 3:16), as God manifested in the flesh,, is the lord Christ who emptied Himself taking the form of a servant , and He Himself was raised in glory as:” it was necessary for the Christ to suffer these things **and to enter into His glory**?“(Luke 24:26)

-Thus it is obvious that saying of the lord Christ “My Father is greater than I” pertains to His presence in the circle of emptiness on earth, but after His entrance into His eternal heavenly glory , there is no place for that saying, as He is equal to His Father in His sempiternal and everlasting divine glory

Q16: What is the exegesis of the verse: “There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17)?

A16: that verse was mentioned in the speech of the lord Christ with the rich young man:” And behold, one came and said to Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And He said to him, why do you call me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments. The young man said to Him, I have kept all these things from my youth up; what do I lack yet? Jesus said to him, If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in Heaven. And come, follow Me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. “(Matthew 19:16-22)

-We notice here that the lord Christ didn’t say:”Don’t call me good” , but He said to him:” Why do you call Me good?!”, and the word “why “doesn’t mean negation , but means inquiring , and also teaching for that young man who was speaking to Him , not to say that statement when he talks to any of the Jewish teachers, like the scribes and Pharisees and high priests , but supposedly He specifies by it one only who is God , and to know the dignity of whom He was speaking to

-The proof that the lord Christ didn’t refuse to be called the good, is His saying about Himself:” I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” (John10:11), so who could say that the lord Christ negates for Himself the goodness! And He said before to the Jews:” Which of you convicts me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do you not believe me?” (John 8:46)

-In the eternal judgment He will say to the servants who made the will of God, and obeyed His commandments:” Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”(Matthew 25:21)

-There was no one on earth at that time could be called the good but the lord Christ only, as the Bible says: "They are all gone out of the way, they have together become unprofitable, there is none that does good, no, not one."(Romans 3:12)

-It is known that the lord Christ is the only one without a sin as Paul the apostle said:” Therefore in all things it behooved him to be made like His brothers,(without a sin) (Hebrews 2:17), and in his epistle to the people of Rome:” But now a righteousness of God

has been revealed apart from Law, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe (Romans 3:21-22)

- Saint Paul said about Adam :” Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed on all men because all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12), and said also:” For if by the offense of the one many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift in grace; which is of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

..Therefore as by one offense sentence came on all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came to all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous” (Romans 5:15-19)

-But why does He say to the faithful servant in the judgment day:” Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:21), although He said to the rich man:” There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17)!!, The explanation for that He wouldn't say that here in the present time on earth , as He says on earth:” they have together become unprofitable, there is none that does good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12), but when man is getting into the eternal life there he will be called the good servant , the bible says:"Blessed are those whose lawlessnesses are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will in no way impute sin." (Romans 4:7,8), so whoever is entering into the eternity would be washed and justified and had his sins forgiven , and God says to him:” I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins”(Isaiah 44:22)

-As his sins were forgiven ,so on his entrance into the eternity he will hear the sentence of the good servant, but here on earth while he is under the pains , it is not possible to say about any man that he is good , as there is none good but one, that is, God....even if it was said it is not said before the fulfillment of redemption as everyone was under condemnation , and there was no one good but one who is Jesus Christ alone, but after the fulfillment of redemption , we could say that there are good people and righteous ,that when man is crowned with the righteousness after completion of His striving , then he could be called the good

-Thus, there is no good one in all mankind by the meaning of perfect goodness except the lord Christ, so that verse affirms that the lord Christ is God

-As explanatory example for the saying of the lord Christ to the rich young man: if someone met a doctor , whom he didn't see before and didn't know , and said to him:” how are you doctor? Here the doctor asks him: why do you call me doctor? Or how did you know that I am a doctor? Do you say that as a complement, or you know that I am a doctor actually?

Q17: what is the meaning of:” partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4)?

A17: this verse is mentioned in 2 Peter 1:4:” partakers of the divine nature” and not “in the divine nature ‘, and there is great difference between the two

Saint Peter denoted by that verse in the first place to the heritage of the kingdom of God, the proof for that is He himself in the fifth chapter from his first epistle in verse 1, he said: ” I exhort the elders who are among you, I being also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed” (1 Peter 5:1)

Thus it is noticed that intellectual attitude of Saint Peter towards the heritage of the kingdom of heaven.. then he says in the verse 10:” But the God of all grace, He calling us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, He will perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you” (1 Peter 5:10), thus it is obvious that intellectual attitude of Saint Peter for the heritage of the eternal life to which the believers of the Christ were called

The apostle started his second epistle by the same prospective that he spoke about in his first epistle as it was mentioned:” according as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who has called us to glory and virtue, through which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, **having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust**. But also in this very thing, bringing in all diligence, filling out your faith with virtue, and with virtue, knowledge.....For so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ “ (2 Peter 1:3-5,11)

-It is obvious in the introduction of the second epistle that Saint Peter persuade the congregation of believers for the spiritual striving and escaping the corruption in the world through lust, by demeanor in the virtues befitting the Christian faith, in order to gain the promises, to be partakers of the divine nature affirming that it means an entrance shall be ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom

-That explicates his saying:” partakers of the divine nature”, it means clearly partaking with God in work, and in the believers’ endeavor towards the virtue , and the life of holiness befitting the believers away from the lusts of corruption present in the world ,the holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord , which is the partnership , gift and talent of the Holy Spirit , which if man continues to enjoy it by tenacity in the Christ , he will be partaker in the heritage of the eternal kingdom , that's to gain the grace of eternal life and enjoy with God the eternal happiness, and partnership with the saints in the light

Thus he says in the same first chapter, verse 10:" Therefore, brothers, rather be diligent to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10), he mentioned also in his first epistle an

invitation for the life of holiness also as he said:" as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One who has called you, you also become holy in all conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judges according to the work of each one, pass the time of your earthly residence in fear"(1 Peter 1:14-17)

Simply, the exegesis of the sentence "partakers of the divine nature", is in the lord's saying: "be holy for I am holy "meaning that we partake with God in His holiness, then in His eternal kingdom, but the perfection of God is an absolute perfection, and the perfection of the whole creation in general is a relative perfection, as God is unlimited, while we are limited , also the holiness of God is an intrinsic natural holiness and our holiness is a holiness by grace , meaning it is gifted from God , and there is a difference between the pure gold and the golden plated metal , although they are sharing the shining and beauty , like the saying of the lord Christ : " Then the righteous shall shine out like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43)

- **What is the difference between "Partakers of the divine nature" and partakers in the divine nature"?**

-The difference is like we say we are partakers of George or we are partakers in George, we are partakers of George means we and George share together in work or have a store of cloths for example and we share together in the ownership of that project , while partakers in George means that George was sold in the servants market and we bought him and he became divided between us as partners , he entered into our possession , and that was happening before the cancellation of servitude as a person was bought by one or many persons so they became partners in him or in his ownership

So is it appropriate for us to be partakers in the divine nature? That's blasphemy on Godwho could not participate in the divine essence, or just approach it or perceive it?

We are partakers of the divine nature in work , holiness , love and in the eternal life and its happiness , but as much as our limitedness we gain the uncreated grace surpassing the nature in the talents of the Holy Spirit , and that concerns the energies of God and not the divine essence , as said by Saint Basil the great

Q18: what is the meaning of the lord Christ' saying:" But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father"(Mark 13:32)?

A18: when the lord Christ said:" But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father"(Mark 13:32), as explained by Saint Athanasius , that is according to His humanity , He emptied himself , and being found in fashion as a man taking the form of a servant , so He didn't accept according to His humanity to acquire the

knowledge of the last day , condescending from that knowledge according to the procurement till He was raised to the heavens and lifted in glory

-It was mentioned in the article (45) from the third letter of Saint Athanasius against the Arians:(Those who love the Christ and hold the Christ, know that the wisdom said I don't know, not because He didn't know, as being the wisdom He knows everything, but to show the human side, as the ignorance pertains to mankind, and He dressed in flesh that doesn't know, which in His presence in it, He said according to the body:" I don't know"

Therefore after His saying" nor the Son knows "and His speech about the ignorance of people during the time of Noah, He added immediately:" Therefore you also be ready, for in that hour you think not, the Son of Man comes." Also "Therefore watch; for you do not know what hour your Lord comes' (Matthew 24:42, 44), but as I became like you, for your sake I said:" nor the Son" as if He doesn't know as God, He should say: "Therefore watch as I do not know what hour your Lord comes", but actually that He didn't say, but by saying:"you don't know "and "in hour you think not " He explained that the ignorance pertains to mankind, for them He took a body similar to their body, and became a man, and said:"nor the Son knows", as He didn't know by the body although He knows as the word of God)

-He said also in the article (46) of the same letter:(when the disciples asked Him about the end , He said:"nor the Son" bodily , according to the flesh , to show that He as a man doesn't know, as the ignorance is of the human properties , but as He is the wisdom , and He will come , and being the judge and the bridegroom knows when and in what hour He will come , and when it will be said:" "Awake, sleeping ones! And arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."(Ephesians 5:14), and as He became a man so He could hunger and thirst and mourn with people, thus with people as man He doesn't know although He as God being the word of the Father and His wisdom He knows, and there in nothing He doesn't know)

So when He says: I know, it is according to His divine mentality

And when He says: I don't know, it is according to His human mentality

According to His humanity He doesn't know, without separation between the divinity and manhood

For that we give a simple example; if someone supposedly came and knocked on the tomb of the lord Christ on Saturday after His death by body on the cross, and called:"O Jesus", and no one opened to him, then He left, and that person met the lord Christ after the resurrection, and told Him that He knocked on the tomb on Saturday, did He hear him? , so if the lord Christ said to him:"I didn't hear " He would be honest, as according to the body , He didn't hear, as the body died a real death , thus the bodily hearing sense was not working, and by

His saying: "I didn't hear" He wanted to confirm His death according to the body lest someone think that He was alive hearing the knocking while He was inside the tomb, so that answer is to confirm the reality of His complete humanity, and if He said: "I heard" He is also honest, as according to His divinity He hears everything... He is honest in His words in both conditions

Strangely in the person of the lord Christ, He was dead and alive at the same time... He was dead according to His humanity and alive according to His divinity... He is dead and alive at the same time... He died truly by the body, and at the same time He didn't die according to His divinity

Similarly, He knows truly according to His divinity, and He doesn't know according to His humanity, but when He was lifted in glory, His humanity entered in the state of glorification befitting the only begotten Son.. Thus we say in the liturgy of Saint Basil: (He ascended into the heavens and sat at your right hand, O Father, **He has appointed a day for recompense**)...and the statement (He has appointed a day for recompense) means that when He was lifted in glory, the notion of emptying Himself from some aspects of human knowledge was terminated... by that He presented to us the model in humbleness and not looking for what is in the scope of the Heavenly Father, when He emptied Himself taking the form of a servant

The lord Christ simulated His brothers in everything except the sin only, so if He knew the day and hour during His presence on earth, How would He simulate His brothers in everything except the sin only?!!, the knowledge of the day and hour means that there is something that He didn't simulate us in (which is the knowledge of the day and hour), but He accepted to pass through all that pertain to human being including the hunger, thirst, and including also to attribute to Himself nullity of knowledge, and that was the greatest blow to Satan when the lord Christ says: "But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father"(Mark 13:32) as Satan said it is not possible for the logos who is the sempiternal wisdom that he doesn't know the day and hour, so he was skeptical in the divinity of the lord Christ and His ability to conquer the death, so he consummated the conspiracy of crucifixion with all therein of betrayal, rudeness and aggression, Satan forgot that the lord Christ was speaking in that matter according to His humanity as He emptied Himself taking the form of a servant: "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8), the summary of that issue is that Satan didn't understand the meaning of self emptiness of the Son the Word, equal to His Father in the essence, as emptying the self contradicts totally with Satan's persuasion for deifying the self!!

Chapter six

Sacraments of the Church

Q1: Is it possible to repeat the baptism?

A1: the baptism is one baptism, and it is performed by three immersions on the name of the trinity, or one God of three hypostases, as we say in the creed of faith:(We confess one Baptism for the remission of sins) also the Holy Bible says:" one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5), as the lord who is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit one God, and the faith is one that's the straight orthodox faith , and the baptism also is one

The circumcision in the Old Testament was a symbol of the baptism, and it was impossible for anyone to be circumcised twice, likewise the baptism also is not repeated.. our teacher Paul the apostle said:" For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened,., and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, and who have fallen away; it is impossible, I say, to renew them again to repentance" (Hebrews 6:4-6), meaning that they couldn't get rebaptism again, but there are other ways for repentance for the baptized person apart from baptism

We will mention now a story from the church history affirming our faith of one baptism: it was mentioned during the epoch of Pope Peter the final martyr , that a wife of a minister in Antioch wished to baptize her sons in Egypt, she came to Egypt and while she was in her way there was a strong storm in the sea , the mother feared that her children might die without being baptized , so she baptized them by her blood as she wounded herself on the boat and anointed them by the blood on the name of the father , the son and the Holy Spirit (Notice: of course it is not necessary to baptize by blood, but the water is the basic requirement, and it is known that blood contains a big percent of water)

After their arrival to Alexandria she went to the cathedral – it was the Sunday of baptism – and His Holiness the pope was the one baptizing in the church, the lady went to him to baptize her children, when His holiness started to baptize them he noticed that every time any of the two boys gets into the basin of baptism, the water freezes, His holiness the pope patriarch astonished , and asked the mother about her story , she narrated to him what happened on their way, and how she baptized her children on the boat on their way , the pope said to her: the baptism isn't repeated , and he didn't baptize them again, but anointed them

with the holy Myron only...that story explains to us the greatness and worth of that sacrament for the salvation of man, and also that baptism is not repeated

Q2: Does the blood of the Christ we partake in the Eucharist contain red blood cells, hemoglobin, plasma and the rest of the blood components present in the human blood?

A2: In the Eucharist the wine in the chalice transforms into blood of the lord Christ, but that blood is not composed of red blood cells, hemoglobin, platelets and plasma, as if it is so, then we would smell the blood odor..But it is a wine mixed with water, transforms by the action of the Holy Spirit sacramentally, and becomes a true life giving divine blood of the lord Christ having the power of eternal life, but concerning its taste, composition and characters under the microscope it doesn't alter, but remains under the form of wine and water

Some stray minded people may ask for analysis of the holy blood in the lab to confirm if it contains blood cells or not, some say many superstitions, and we hear many preternatural things, so we should refer to the church headship to know if what is said accords with the orthodox line and the straight dogmatic theological meditation or they are superstitions, definitely in the church history there are miracles, we read the sinaxarium daily but we refuse the false miracles

When the wine in the chalice transforms it attains the effectiveness of eternal life of the lord Christ' blood, as the shed blood on the cross and the blood in the chalice are the blood of Son of God, but the blood in the chalice has the form of wine although it is the blood of God the incarnate Word, so it oughtn't to contain blood cells to be considered blood, as it is supernatural wine as it is divine blood under the form of wine of water as we said

That accords with the iron and fire example, as before the iron unites with fire, it hasn't the ability to burn , likewise the wine also in the church is a natural wine before dwelling of the Holy Spirit , but after dwelling of the Holy Spirit it becomes a divine blood cleansing the sin and grating the eternal life, that blood is the same blood of the lord Christ shed on the cross , but sacramentally , meaning that we don't see the blood cells into it when we view it under the microscope , as that is a materialistic mediation and it is not behooving to think of the church sacraments by such literal way away from faith

Q3: We partake of the Christ body in the sacrament of Eucharist in the church, and we know that the church is body of the Christ, so how could that be?

A3: The church being body of the Christ is the congregation of believers, including definitely the bishops, priests, deacons and the congregation, some ask how could the church be the body of the Christ, and we say that we partake of the body of the Christ?

The reason behind that astonishment is that some confuse between the general presumptive meaning and the specific meaning of the body of the Christ

So simply, and briefly, the church by the meaning of the Christ' body means that all are members united together by the action of the Holy Spirit in the church to be a body, as we say the nation' body meaning those living together in one nation, but what we speak about is much more sublime than just the members of one nation, as there is a supernatural work into it which is the sacramental work of the Holy Spirit into the church, when He unites all the members in one body, and the Christ will be the head, and that's definitely supernatural, it starts by faith and getting into the membership of the Christ' body in the sacrament of baptism that makes man a member of that body, and fix him by the fixation sacrament, and he got fixed in his membership by partaking of the lord' body and blood after the repentance and confession, as we all partake of one bread which is the lord' body, so we are in one body gathered together in the Christ by a supernatural sacramental unity

But the lord Christ' body which was crucified on the cross is the divine body born of the Virgin Mary, and that was offered as a sacrifice for the life of the whole world, and raised from the dead and ascent to the heaven and sat on the right side of the Father, that for His name every knee should bow, of heavenly ones, and of earthly ones, and of ones under the earth, that's the body who dwells sacramentally on the altar by the action of the Holy Spirit, and be present amongst us granting us the power of uniting with the Christ, meaning uniting with the eternal life granted to us as a grace

There is a difference between the church being the body of the Christ by the general meaning, with the Christ Himself its head, and the head Himself who is Jesus Christ our lord and God and savior by His very own body bowed to because of the union between the divinity and manhood from the very moment of incarnation

But what is the difference in one sentence between the Christ 'own body and the Christ body which is the church, His body?

The difference is that **the Christ own body is the head of the general body which is the church**, meaning that all the church whose head is the Christ, so above the general body is the Christ' own body who is the head

The private body is the head of the church, and the general body is the congregation of believers whom their head is the Christ, sometimes there is an overturn between the head and body, meaning that the body is in the place of the head, and the head is in the place of the body, so the things are mingled, but simply the Christ' own body is in the place of the head, so our teacher Paul the apostle says:” **He gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His body**”(**Ephesians 1:22-23**), therefore when we talk about the Christ and the church, we talk about one head, about a bridegroom, and bride, so it is inappropriate to say that the bridegroom is the bride, also it is inappropriate to say that the Christ 'body which is on the altar is Himself the Christ body by the meaning of the church, as that places the bride in the place of the bridegroom

- Who could speak about the Christ without the church or the church without the Christ?

Q4: What is our doctrine in the sacrament of Communion according to the faith of our Orthodox church?

A4: Our doctrine in the sacrament of communion or the Eucharist or the sacrament of thanksgiving – according to the Christian orthodox faith – is that we partake of true body and true blood under the form of the bread and wine, and that the church calls that the great mystery of godliness : "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh"(1 Timothy 3:16) , that's the true salvation sacrifice that the lord Christ handled to His disciples the night before His pains just before His crucifixion , some call it the last supper, and others call it the lord supper, and others call it the mysterious supper

Q5: what is meant by the lord Christ' saying" this do in remembrance of me"?

A5: it means a live persistent remembrance and not a symbolic remembrance
In every liturgy prayer, the Christ blood is present in the cup, therefore He said:" This cup is the new covenant in my blood" we live the new covenant, not as a remembrance that was lost and finished, but as a live long-lasting persistent remembrance, therefore He said:" as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."(1 Corinthians 11:25)
-Saint Paul the apostle explained that more clearly and says:" For "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show" the Lord's death until He shall come."(1 Corinthians 11:26), therefore we say that it is a live remembrance and not just a symbolic remembrance...as we proclaim the lord' death, as the cross sacrifice by the lord body and blood is truly present amongst us ...so if the blood of the Christ shed on the cross is Himself that present in the liturgy, so there is no greater remembrance than that..And we proclaim the lord death when we drink of that cup as we believe that what is inside the cup is a real blood under the form of wine, and we couldn't tell by what we don't see and test, so those proclaimed the resurrection are the resurrection witnesses, and those proclaiming death of the lord are witnesses of His death, therefore we proclaim the lord death and resurrection and also His second coming as we test those things a real test in the sacrament of Holy communion

Saint Paul the apostle says:" I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? "(1 Corinthians 10:15-16), so what would we bless, If that is a symbol?

The lord Christ blessed on the cup on the night of His pains and said:" And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink all of it. For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"(Matthew 26:27, 28). So if the master lord Himself says that is my blood, so who could say that it is just a symbol? Don't we believe in the honesty of the lord Christ words? And how would the symbol forgive the sins? So we partake of the lord body and His blood for the forgiveness of sins as the lord

Christ said: " For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28)

Saint Paul the apostle says: " For "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show" the Lord's death until He shall come"(1 Corinthians 11:26) , we understand from that verse that the effectiveness of the life giving death of the Christ who killed the death by His death pass through our subsistence and within us when we partake of that blood , therefore Saint Paul completes his saying : " So that whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, he will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:27) , so how would he be guilty if that is not a real blood or real body!!!and says also:” But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body” (1 Corinthians 11:28,29) meaning that he is not discriminating if the lord body present in the paten is a real body or that’s just symbolic or memorial ?!!!

Q6: What do we call the great Thursday, as the Covenant Thursday?

A6: As the lord Christ on that day made a covenant with His church by founding the great sacrament of Eucharist, and as we all know the lord Christ said:”This cup is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20), (1 Corinthian 11:25), and that’s the difference between the new covenant by the blood of the lord Christ, and the old covenant which was by the animals' blood

- **The sacrifice in the Old Testament:**

When Moses the prophet made the covenant between God and the people, he took blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled on the people and said:”that’s the blood of the covenant “, He sprinkled it on the altar and the arc of covenant and the contents of the tabernacle of congregation , and sprinkled also over Aaron and his sons ...it was a covenant by animals' blood , it was mentioned in the book of exodus :” And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the ears of the people. And they said, all that the lord has said we will do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said; behold the blood of the covenant, which the lord has made with you concerning all these words” (Exodus 24:6 -8)

The book of covenant could be the books written by Moses the prophet till that time in which that event happened, meaning the book of genesis, and part of the book of exodus or possibly it means the Ten Commandments in the book of exodus

So the Old Testament is a covenant between God and His people, and it includes commandments the most important of which were the Ten Commandments that God gave to His people and they pledged to listen and obey them

For the relation between God and His people to be authenticated, it was authenticated by the blood of sacrifice ... Moses the prophet took half of the blood and sprinkled on the altar, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the people, and said:” Behold the blood of the covenant, which the lord has made with you concerning all these words” (Exodus 24:8)

- **The sacrifice in the New Testament:**

When we speak about the new testament we find that what happened by Moses the prophet was just a symbol for the new testament , as instead of the animals' blood offered in the old testament as it was said:” they offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bulls to the lord” (Exodus 24:5) the new covenant was **by the Christ blood** , and all of us as Christians believe that the Christ' blood is the new covenant between God and His redeemed and loyal people who believed in the crucifixion of the lord Christ and His resurrection

We should understand that the covenant' blood includes commitment for obeying God's commandments as the lord Christ said:" If you love me, keep my commandments..... He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me." (John 14: 15, 21) therefore the covenant blood is tightly linked with commitment for obeying the lord Christ's commandments

The lord Christ gave by Himself the new covenant' blood to His disciples the night of His pains, the same blood that was shed on the cross, is itself which the lord Christ gave to His disciples on the covenant Thursday; therefore it is called (the covenant Thursday) as that is the covenant between God and His people

Therefore our teacher Paul the apostle says:" For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and giving thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me." In the same way He took the cup also, after supping, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood; as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of me." For "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show" the Lord's death until He shall come"(1 Corinthians 11:23 – 26), it is noticed in that text that the lord Christ didn't speak about the blood only, but He linked the blood with the cup, and that was mentioned in the gospel of our teacher Luke:" This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you" (Luke 22:20), He didn't say that blood is the new covenant , but He said "this cup" definitely He didn't mean the empty cup, but the cup containing His blood

And lest some may think like the protestant who claim that the new covenant is the Christ' blood that was shed specifically on the crucifixion day , and there is no need for the blood that the orthodox speak about in the liturgy , we rebut that saying : the lord Christ didn't say "that blood is the new covenant" but He said "this cup is the new covenant " so He linked the new covenant with the sanctification cup , but not the empty cup alone but " This cup is the

new covenant in my blood”, so the basis is the blood of the lord Christ present in the cup , which was itself shed on the great Friday on the cross

So if the new covenant is linked with the cup of Eucharist(the sacrament of thanksgiving), then how would the cup be a symbol only and not a true commemoration?!!

Any church having no real blood in the Eucharist cup, has no new covenant of the lord therein in a real state

- **The covenant of salvation and the eternal life**

The lord Christ gave us the sacrament of Eucharist being the covenant between Him and us, and He said:" This cup is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20), as someone writes a conveyance by the blood that means an infrangible covenant, especially if it is divine blood, blood capable of conquering all authorities of Satan, blood capable of cleansing every sin, blood capable of giving the life

Thus we speak about the life giving body in the liturgy as the life giving body being united with the divinity, the source of life for the creation...As the lord Christ said:"

- "I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in me, though he die, yet he shall live"(John 11:25)

- " He who partakes of me, even he shall live by me"(John 6:57)

- " Whoever partakes of my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:56)

The partaking of the lord' body and His blood is union with the eternal life..So the partaker eats and drinks of the life giving sacrifice after proper preparation ... after repentance and confession, so He unites with the eternal life, thus He will be qualified and deserves the grace of resurrection in the last day, and deserves the resurrection body

Q7: Is the cross sacrifice repeated on the altar every day?

A7: The cross sacrifice is only once and not repeated, but it is extending, it is not extending forwards only but backwards also, the proof for that the lord Christ offered His body and blood on the night of His pains by Himself before the crucifixion, so the Eucharist sacrifice (the sacrament of thanksgiving) could be extending throughout time as that's a surpassing mystery and a divine mystery above the time and place, in the liturgy we say (He instituted for us this great mystery of godliness:" great is the mystery of godliness" (Timothy 3:16)

Saint John Chrysostom (347 -408 G) says:" don't we offer daily offerings? Yes we do, but we make remembrance of His death , and that sacrifice we offer daily is only one as He was offered once, as we always offer the same only lamb , not offering now a lamb and tomorrow

another, but the lamb is always Himself, so the sacrifice is one , are the christs many?, because the offering is given in many places, God forbid, as the Christ is one in every place and He is here all of Him one body, and as He is offered in many places while He is still one body not many bodies , also the sacrifice is one only) (Sermon for Saint John Chrysostom to the Hebrews , article 17)

When we offer bread in a church in Cairo and another bread in Alexandria for example, and we make a mass there and here, that doesn't mean there is oblation there and another one here, or there is a lamb here and another lamb there, but it is one lamb and one Christ who is the " the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)

The psalm spoke about the old testament sacrifice:" I will go into your house with burnt offerings" (Psalm 66:13), Here he is speaking about the burnt offerings as pleural, but when Isaiah the prophet prophesized about the sacrifice of the new testament in Egypt he was very meticulous in his expression as he mentioned the sacrifice as single : " In that day there shall be an altar to the lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at its border to the lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness to the lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt, for they shall cry to the lord because of the oppressors, and He shall send them a deliverer, and a great one, and will deliver them. And the lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the lord in that day and **shall offer sacrifice and offering**; and vow a vow to the lord, and repay" (Isaiah 19:19)

The meaning of " in the midst of the land of Egypt is" the famous Monastery of the Virgin known as Al-Muharak, in Asuit) as it lies in the midst of the land of Egypt, whereas the stone on which the lord Christ sat and became an altar for the lord, the sentence "a pillar at its border for the lord" is the see of Saint Mark on the Egyptian northern border at Alexandria

Strangely he speaks about the whole people of Egypt saying they will offer a single sacrifice , logically on speaking about millions of people he should say that they will offer sacrifices, and not a single sacrifice ...what affirms that he speaks in pleural ,is his saying;" and the Egyptians shall know the lord " and also:" in that day five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan and swear to the lord of Hosts; one shall be called the City of Ruin" (Isaiah 19:18), the city of "Ruin" is "Heliopolis", so he speaks about the new testament as it was not allowed in the old testament to have an altar for the lord outside that altar which Moses built in the tabernacle of congregation , then it settled in Jerusalem in the temple of Solomon in the place the lord had chosen for David the prophet in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite (look in 1 chronicles 21:18)

Therefore till now the Jews following the canon of the Old Testament couldn't offer any sacrifices as the temple was destructed and demolished, and also the altar was demolished And the temple was not left within it one stone on another that was not being thrown down. So they couldn't offer any sacrifice for the lord..If the Jews would understand the prophecy of Isaiah about the founding of an altar in the midst of Egypt, then they should know that

worshiping was not confined to the Jewish temple (temple of Solomon).but it would spread and be available everywhere

We see in the speech of the Samaritan woman when she asked Him:" Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20), Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you shall neither worship the Father in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him" (John 4:21-23), so worshiping became offered everywhere in the world as long as it is offered in the name of the lord Christ , and the sacrifice of salvation is offered – the Eucharist- which we speak about now, therefore the sacrifice on the orthodox altars is only one sacrifice, it is an extension of the divine sacrifice of the cross surpassing the time and place

Q8: what is the emplacement of the sacrament of Eucharist in the Orthodox Church?

A8; the sacrament of Eucharist is the core of salvation in the church

-As in the sacrament of baptism, when we baptize the child we give the child the communion after the baptism

-In the sacrament of chrismation, we anoint the baptized by Myron, and let him partake by the end of the liturgy

-Also in the sacrament of confession, the person comes for confession to be absolved from his sins by the authority of the Holy Spirit from the mouth of the father priest, and to deserve partaking of the Holy sacraments

- In the sacrament of priesthood, when we ordain a deacon for priesthood, that's done during the holy liturgy and he partakes of the lord's body and blood in the same liturgy, and takes the breath of gift of forgiveness of sins by the spirit from the mouth of the bishop after the bishop partakes of the lord Christ 'blood

-Also in the sacrament of matrimony , it is done between the morning incense and the liturgy, and both of the bridegroom and bride partake by a single wrapper during the distribution of the sacraments by the end of liturgy , and get the blessing in front of the altar' gate

-When we do the unction of the sick sacrament it is done in the end of lent Friday between the morning incense and the liturgy, and if it is done at home we pray and ask the lord for curing the sick to be able to go to the church and partake with the congregation, and if he couldn't do that, it is possible for the priest to give him the communion at home

So the core of all the church sacraments is the sacrament of thanksgiving (sacrament of Eucharist), therefore when the priest incenses he goes around the altar by the incense , to affirm that the altar is the centre of the deed of salvation, which is the presence of the salvation sacrifice in the church

Q9: Did Judas partake of the lord's body and blood?

A9: Judas didn't partake of the new covenant supper, meaning the Eucharist

Jesus knew that Judas will betray Him, He said in the eve of the lord' supper:" behold, the hand of my betrayer is with me on the table" (Luke 22:21), that was before He gave them His body and blood, it was mentioned in the gospel of John about that matter:" Jesus answered, It is he to whom I shall give the morsel when I have dipped it. And dipping the morsel, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon"(John 13:26), the Lord Christ gave him the morsel of the Jewish Passover supper and not the lord' supper:" He then, having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night. Then when he had left, Jesus said, Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him" (John 13:30,31), it should be noticed that the gospel of Saint Matthew and Saint Mark mentioned the lord speech about betrayal of Judas before the lord gave His body and blood to His disciples , while the gospel of Saint Luke was not following the chronological order of events as he mentioned putting John the Baptist in prison before mentioning his baptizing of the lord Christ in the river of Jordan

Thereafter the lord Christ started to make the liturgy, as Judas didn't deserve to partake of the lord' body and blood, therefore during the earlier speech of the Christ about partaking of His body and blood:" Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? And one of you is a devil? "(John 6:70), as if He says:"I am speaking about my body , and you are my own people , I will give you my body , but one of them couldn't take it , and the lord fulfilled that promise

Q10: when the salvation was completed? Was it on the covenant Thursday or on the Great Friday?

A10:The salvation was completed when the lord Christ was crucified on the cross on the Great Friday, that was explained by Saint Gregory of Nisus in His explanation of the presence of the cross sacrifice on the great Thursday... but in unutterable mystery , and in invisible form –as the authority of God is above the time –He could make the cross sacrifice be present in a mysterious form in the mysterious supper on Thursday, and with the same authority that's above time He makes the sacrifice present in every liturgy , throughout time , and His promise is fulfilled : " I am with you all the days until the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20)

Q11:Is it sufficient to confess to God only?

A11: the protestant say why one doesn't confess secretly to himself –or during his prayer only with God?

To answer that we have two texts of the Holy Bible: first from the book of acts of apostles:" And many who believed came and confessed and showed their deeds" (Acts 19:18), and the second text from the epistle of James:" Confess faults to one another"(James 5:16), what is meant by "one" is the sick, and "another" are the church priests

Therefore John the apostle says in his first epistle: " If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9), so the sentence : "if we confess our sins "doesn't mean here just man's confession to Himself, as there is no single verse in the whole Holy Bible saying that man confesses to himself secretly, while many verses were mentioned denoting that confession is performed before the priest ..Therefore man in the Old Testament was confessing his sins, also the whole congregation was confessing their sins if it is a communal sin

In the book of proverbs, an advice was mentioned: " He who covers his sins shall not be blessed; but whoever confesses and leaves them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13), he didn't mention here that he confess secretly , but he says : " confesses and leaves it ", as confession is by telling frankly , or practicing the confession by mentioning the sins" whoever confesses and leaves them shall have mercy "so it is not enough to leave the sin but it is necessary to confess it

It was mentioned in the book of Joshua son of Sirach: " Be not ashamed to confess your sins" (Sirach 4:31), some protestant consider the book of Joshua Son of Sirach among the deutrocanon books , but none of them deny that such book carries very beneficial teachings , as when he says: " Be not ashamed to confess your sins "denotes the circumstances into which Joshua son of Sirach lived when he wrote that sentence , whether the protestant admit those books being among the first or second canonical books , that was the circumstance surrounding Joshua son of Sirach in the religious life at the time of writing of that book

Q12: Was there a confession in the Old Testament?

A12: it was in the Old Testament, if someone sins, he brings a sacrifice and lays his hand on the head of the sacrifice, and confesses his sins in front of the priest, the priest takes the sacrifice and slaughters it and sprinkles the blood for atonement of the sin, and thus an innocent soul dies instead of a sinful soul

That we find in the book of levities (4:30-33), (5:5, 6), (16:21) and in the book of numbers (5:5-7), and in the book of exodus (29:10)

The book of levities speaks about what should be done by anyone of sons of Israel when he sins and says: " And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it for a sin offering in the place where he kills the burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has sinned, and it shall be forgiven him" (Levities 4:33-35)," And it shall be when he is guilty in one of these, he shall confess that in which he has sinned. And he shall bring his trespass offering to Jehovah for his sin which he has sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a doe of the goats, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin"(Levities 5:5-6), so he lays his hand on the head of the sacrifice, and confess his sins, and the priest makes atonement for his sins

Also in the book of numbers , it was mentioned: " And the lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel: When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to

commit a trespass against the lord, and that person is guilty, then they shall confess their sin which they have done. And he shall make restitution for his guilt in full, and add to it one fifth of it, and give it to him against whom he has sinned", thus there must be confession of sins

Hence the idea of confession the sins emerges during offering of the sacrifice , to admit the sin or publically confess the sin and not to confess secretly to oneself , man was laying his hand on the head of the sacrifice and confess his sins , and the priest listens to his sins and offers the sacrifice

The book of Levites says: "**And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the sins of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat,** and shall send away by the hand of a chosen man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear on him all their sins to a land in which no one lives. And he shall let the goat go in the wilderness."(Levites 16:21-22)

Thus we see in the canons of the Old Testament the offering of the sacrifice was linked with confession , and man was laying his hands on the head of sacrifice so the sins transform from him to the sacrifice head , not only that but the high priest confesses all the people 'sins over the head of the people public sacrifice

There were two goats on the Day of Atonement, why two? One of them was slaughtered, and the other was sent away in the wilderness, as the goat that was slaughtered points to the Christ' death, and the other one points to His resurrection, so it was impossible after the first goat being slaughtered to rise again, so there must be the second goat...The lord Christ rose from dead and ascent to the heavens, so He is standing in front of the Father interceding for us all the time, thus he says:" And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation concerning our sins" (1 John 2:1,2), so the symbol in the Old Testament was not to bring a goat and slaughter it and that's all, as where is the life that symbolizes that the lord Christ is alive and risen from the dead interceding for us before the Father?

From those mentioned about the confession in the Old Testament also, the story of Achan, the son of Carmi, who took thing which was cursed, Joshua Son of Noun said to him:" My son, I pray you, give glory to the lord, the God of Israel, and make confession to Him. And tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me" (Joshua 7:19), so he asked him to confess to the lord and tell Him what he has done by telling Joshua

Also when David the king confesses his sins before Nathan the prophet, Nathan said to him:" the lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Samuel 12:13)

From all of that, it is obvious that practicing the confession was present in the Old Testament

Q13: what is the meaning of the sentence said by the lord Christ:" call no one your father on the earth"?

A13: the protestant don't profess the priesthood interpreting wrongly the verse said by the lord Christ to His twelve disciples:" call no one your father on the earth, for one is your Father in Heaven" (Matthew 23:9)

Let us read together the entire paragraph from the gospel of our teacher Matthew:" Then Jesus spoke to the crowd and to His disciples, saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, observe and do. But do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy and hard-to-carry burdens and lay them on men's shoulders. But they will not move them with one of their fingers. But they do all their works in order to be seen of men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. And they love the first couch at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the market-places, and to be called, Master! Master! by men. But you must not be called Master, for one is your teacher, Christ, and you are all brothers. And call no one your father on the earth, for one is your Father in Heaven. Nor be called teachers, for one is your Teacher, even Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he who shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23: 1-23)

Part of the speech of the lord Christ here is directed towards the crowd:" whatever they tell you to observe, observe and do "and another part pertains to the apostles fathers, as it is obvious from the text:" Jesus spoke to the crowd and to His disciples" therefore He said to the disciples (the apostles):" you must not be called master Nor be called teachers ", that means He banned them from asking people to call them Master, as He says that the scribes and Pharisees:" love greetings in the market-places, and to be called, Master! Master " therefore He says to them:" he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he who shall humble himself shall be exalted" here the lord Christ fights the arrogance, as the sentence:" you must not be called Master " means don't ask people to call you " Master ", as the respect emerges from the other, and not imposed on him ...also in the sentence "nor be called teachers", means don't compel someone to call you teacher

But is there a contradiction between that sayings with utterance of the Holy Bible itself when it says:" And God set some in the church, firstly, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers, then works of power, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, kinds of languages." (1Corinthians 12:28), so God set in the church teachers...They don't ask people to call them teachers but God gave them that..Therefore He says:" Then having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, if prophecy, according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, in the ministry; or he who teaches, in the teaching; or he who exhorts, in the encouragement; or he who shares, in simplicity; or he who takes the lead, in diligence; or he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness" (Romans 12:6-8), and also:" He gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and

teachers" (Ephesians 4:11), so God gave some to be teachers , so it is not wrong if someone is called teacher , as God Himself gave him that title!!!, but people shouldn't ask for that knowing that the Christ is the real teacher , therefore James the apostle said:" My brothers, do not be many teachers" (James 3:1), and the lord Christ Himself in His humbleness said:" My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me"(John 7:16)

But when the lord Christ said to His disciples:" you must not be called Master" He was speaking to them about humbleness , and not to ask people to call them so, as the pastor when he talks , he doesn't say I am your master, as he must feel internally that He doesn't deserve, but he is servant for all

In the Upper Egypt they call the grandfather:"Master" as he is father of the father, and the grandfather actually has a respected rank in the family, but he must deal with the others in humbleness

His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third says always that advice:" be a brother amongst your sons and a son amongst your brothers "don't exalt yourself

And concerning His saying" call no one your father on the earth" the lord specified the speech here for the apostles fathers whom are in the rank of patriarchs, and the patriarch is the chief of fathers, meaning the father of a nation , and there is no fatherhood on earth that exalts over the fatherhood of the patriarch , as he is father of the fathers , therefore the lord Christ said to the apostles fathers : call no one your father on the earth", and don't ascribe yourself as sons to anyone on the earth , as you are the fathers in the church, and every fatherhood thereafter comes descending from you

Paul the apostle says to his disciple Timothy:" to Timothy, **my own son** in the faith. Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Timothy 1:2), also:" This charge I commit to you, **my son** Timothy" (1 Timothy 1:18), also he calls Titus:" to Titus, a **true child** according to our common faith" (1 Titus 1:4)

The lord Christ said , you must not be called Master, Nor be called teachers, meaning don't be proud of the authority or the teaching , but concerning the fatherhood , He didn't say to them don't call fathers , as fatherhood is something nice..Therefore Paul the apostle speaks to the people of Corinth and reminds them that he is their father saying:" For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for I have begotten you in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (1 Corinthians 4:15), so he said that they have ten thousand of instructors , but they don't have many fathers, as he have begotten them in Christ through the gospel , and says also to the believers:" **My children**, for whom I again travail until Christ should be formed in you" (Galatians 4:19), the travail happens when the woman delivers , so he agonizes and suffers in their service and continuous fostering till the Christ is formed into them, meaning till the image of the Christ reveals strongly into them, after they clothed themselves with th Christ in the baptism by the faith proclaimed to them by Paul the apostle

Also John the apostle used the word "My children" and the word "O children" frequently, he said: "My little children, I write these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1), and said also: "My children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18), and he repeated the word "children" in his first epistle several times" (1 John 2:12, 18, 28, 3:7, 5:21)

So who could fight the fatherhood in the church? Could the protestant not calling their natural fathers (O father)?, let us ask the protestant over the whole world if there is anyone among them who is not calling his father "O father"!! so if he calls his bodily father : "O father", is it difficult to call his spiritual father : "O father"? and how could they apply then the verse saying: "call no one your father on the earth"?

The lord Christ was called a father as the lord 'saying: "For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be on His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6), the fatherhood of the lord Christ is definitely apprehended thing for us, and the priest' fatherhood is a fatherhood extracted from the lord Christ 'fatherhood

Chapter seven

Miscellaneous Questions

Q1: Did the apparition of the Holy Spirit in a bodily shape, like a dove mean that the Holy Spirit was incarnated?

A1: the Apparition of the Holy Spirit in a bodily shape, like a dove didn't mean that the Holy Spirit was incarnated like the incarnation of the Son of God, as the apparition is something and the incarnation is something else, as the Christ Word of God appeared frequently in the Old Testament without being an incarnation at all

In that issue we mention the apparition of the lord Christ with two angels to Abraham in the oaks of Mamre in the form of three men, and Abraham spoke to Him and invited Him, and the lord gave him the promise of the birth of Isaac after a year from the apparition, then Abraham walked with the lord while the two angels went to Sodom and Gomorrah, then the lord spoke with Abraham about what He was planning to do to the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah that was escalating (Genesis 18:19)

We mention also the apparition of the lord to Jacob father of the fathers over the ford Jabbok as He appeared to him in the shape of a man and wrestled with Him until the breaking of the day, and finally He blessed him and gave him a new name, and Jacob called the name of that place Face of God saying:"for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Genesis 32:30)

The apparitions were not incarnation at all, but the lord appeared in a bodily shape exactly like man, but when He dwelt into the womb of the Virgin Mary, He took a real complete human nature without a sin, and made it in a real complete union with His divinity without mingling, or alternation.

The incarnation means that the lord took a real body similar to our nature in essence without a sin, a true body with a sane soul meaning a complete human nature, that human body or human nature He took has all the properties of the human nature, including the ability for

mourning, agony, hunger and death, also the joy and rest, and other similar things of the human matters, but without a sin

Thus we should realize the obvious difference between the apparition and incarnation:

The coming of Son of God in the flesh was not just an apparition, but a true incarnation, therefore the Holy Bible said:" And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), but surely the incarnation includes the apparition as well, as it is written:" God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16)

-While the apparition of the Holy Spirit on the river of Jordan was a unique apparition.. The Holy Spirit appeared there in a bodily shape like a dove to be a unique sign for His descending, and remaining upon the lord Christ, fulfilling the prophecies and declaring beginning of His sacerdotal, prophetic and royal missionary for the salvation of mankind, and God had given a sign for John the baptism that Upon whom he will see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

On that unique occasion the Holy Trinity appeared in the most obvious way, as the Father's voice from the open heaven , and the incarnate Son ascending from the Jordan water , and the Holy Spirit descending and remaining upon Him like a dove , therefore the church calls that day (the day of divine apparition), and celebrates it with that name

The Holy Spirit appeared again in the Pentecost day in the shape of tongues as of fire sat upon the heads of the congregants, accompanied with a sound as borne along by the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:1-3)

The shape of the tongues of fire was denoting the work of the Holy Spirit in purification and in God's love, and each of the disciples was like a lamp or a candle enflamed with fire, to enlighten the world from above the lampstand

Q2: Why did the lord Christ allow Satan to tempt Him?

A2: **First:** the lord Christ came in the body to deputize for mankind in two basic things:

-**The first thing:** to conquer Satan in the body of our manhood for the account of mankind, presenting the ideal model to man in His perfect obedience for God the Father

-**The second thing:** to die on the cross in the place of all, to justify the divine justice its claim completely, thus to propitiate for the transgressions of all mankind who believe in Him and take Him as a redeemer and savior

Therefore it ought to deputize for us in fighting Satan, and conquer him for our sake

-**Second:** the lord Christ wished to hide his divinity from Satan, thus He allowed Satan to tempt Him like the rest of mankind, in the proper way and without sinning, and after that:" when the Devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him for a time" (Luke 4:13)

Q3: What about the correctness of the trinity icon present in some of the western countries?

A3: His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third pointed several times to the mistake emerged in the last centuries, adopted by some of the western artists, when they draw icon for the Holy Trinity and had been used by some churches in the west, showing the Father in the shape of elder man with a white beard, and on His right side the Son in the shape of young man with a black beard, and the Holy Spirit in the shape of a shining white dove

His Holiness explained that the Son is the image of the invisible God, so it is wrong to draw the Father in such shape, as No one has seen the Father at any time;"(John 1:18), we didn't see except His Son who is His image

Also the white beard for the Father, with a black beard for the Son, could give an impression that there is a time difference in existence between the Father and the Son, which was invented by Arius the heretic claiming that the sempiternity is for the Father only

While we see the Holy Bible mentioning such description for the lord Christ in the heavens in the revelation of John the theologian : " And in the midst of the seven lampstands I saw One like the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and tied around the breast with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And His eyes were like a flame of fire. And His feet were like burnished brass having been fired in a furnace. And His voice was like the sound of many waters. And He had seven stars in His right hand, and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. And His face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, do not fear, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and I became dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever, Amen. And I have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:13-18)

What had been seen by John was the lord Christ who died according to the body , and raised from the dead, and ascent to the heavens:"and received up into glory" (1 Timothy 3:16), John had seen the hair of the lord Christ head and his beard were white like wool, as white as snow, denoting that He is old in days and sempiternal exactly like the Father , as He is the Word of God who has the same essence of the Father , and begotten of the Father before all ages and times , and it is impossible for God to be present without the sempiternal wisdom , as He is : " the power of God and the wisdom of God"(1Corinthians 1:24), and : " He being God over all, blessed forever. Amen" (Romans 9:5)

The most beautiful icon for the trinity is that of baptism of the lord Christ whereas we see the heavens open , and the Holy Spirit coming upon the Lord Christ in the shape of a dove, and the Father testifying by His voice saying:" This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17)

Q4: Who are the sons of promise?

A4: The promise that God said to Abraham was that: "in you shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3), who is meant by that is the lord Jesus Christ, and the lord said in the Holy Bible: "Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:22), so the Israeli who believes in the lord Christ is considered among the people of God, while the Israeli who refuses the Christ is not counted among the people of God, and the gentile who accept the Christ is considered among the people of promise and he is the real Israeli, so the sons of promise are those who accept the Christ- regardless of their nationality- and those who follow the spiritual straight path, while the Israeli, the non believer is not counted among the sons of promise: "for not all those of Israel are Israel; nor because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children" (Romans 9:6,7)

Q5: Who is the one appeared to Moses in the Bush?

A5: Actually we as Christian when we read in the book of Exodus, we find that who appeared to Moses as a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush in the wilderness of Sinai, was He the Word of God or God the Word, He was a symbol for the incarnation (the bush enflamed with fire), whereas the divinity didn't burn the manhood, likewise the bush was not burned by the flame of fire within, and in the book of Exodus, the third chapter, it was mentioned that Moses: "**the Angel of the Lord** appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush" (Exodus 3:2) and said to him: "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham" (Exodus 3:15), and when Moses asked Him about His name, He said that His name is Jehovah" (Exodus 3:15)

It is impossible that the words "Angel of the lord" mentioned here denotes the Father, as the word "angel" in Hebrew language means "messenger", as the Father sent His son, also the word "angel" doesn't necessary mean the angels we know, as it is possible also to be given for bishop of the church as the lord Christ said: "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write" (Revelation 2:1), so the bishop is called "angel", and the ranks of the lord 'spiritual servants we call angels, also whom God sends is called angel, therefore that angel appeared to Moses and told him that: my name is "Jehovah" couldn't be considered the Father, but certainly He is the Son, sent from the Father, and He was the one who said to Moses: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows. And I am coming down to deliver them" (Exodus 3:7, 8), and He Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary and became man, And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate..., thus the Son hypostasis, His name is "Jehovah" exactly like the Father and the Holy Spirit

Q6: Why did the lord Christ ascend specifically forty days after His resurrection?

A6: Our teacher Luke the evangelist wrote in the book of the acts of Apostles about the apparitions of the lord Christ to His disciples after the resurrection: "to whom He also presented Himself living after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them through forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3),

the lord Christ didn't ascent immediately after His resurrection to the heavens, but stayed on earth for forty days , appearing to His disciples , for the church to rejoice with its heavenly bridegroom in His glorious resurrection and for the resurrection to be a true fact in the conscious of the church and its memory ..As the resurrection is the source of strength and hope and the subject of testimony in the life of the church, till the coming of the lord in His second coming and the proclamation of the kingdom of God

That number (forty) has a deep denotation – beside the necessity for the risen Christ to stay for several days to prove His resurrection for the disciples – and that's obvious from the following things:

-The lord Christ fasted for forty days, as Moses the prophet fasted for forty days, also Elijah the prophet fasted for forty days

-The Israeli people stayed for forty years in the wilderness of Sinai, from their exit from the land of Egypt till they entered into the land of Canaan

- " And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years. He reigned seven years in Hebron, and he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem" (1 kings 2:11)

- "Moses was forty years old when he fled to the wilderness"(Acts 7:23), and stayed for forty years shepherding the sheep"(Acts 7:30), then the lord called Him and He became leader and a prophet for the people of Israel for a third forty years , so the whole years of Moses were a hundred and twenty years"(Deuteronomy 34:10)

-And in Jonah's calling of the city of Nineveh for repentance threatening:" Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown! "(Jonah 3:4), Jonah was a symbol for the lord Christ in His calling of the world for believing and repentance and accepting the salvation of God by the redemption

-In the days of Noah the lord brought forth a flood on earth because of the multitude of transgressions of people and their sins, and He renewed the life on earth once again by Noah and his sons:"And the rain was upon the earth **forty days and forty nights**.(Genesis 7:12)

“And the flood was upon the earth forty days. And the waters increased and bore up the ark, **and it was lifted up above the earth.**" (Genesis 7:17), thus the glories of resurrection covered the earth for forty days till the lifting of the true ark – the body of our lord Jesus Christ –who became salvation for the whole world and a renewal of life on earth once again

The number forty numerically is the number ten repeated four times, or the number four repeated ten times, or multiplied by ten, so the explanation is as follows:

-the number four points to the four directions of the earth; the west, the east, the north and south..Also it denotes the cross of our lord Jesus Christ composed of four arms (+)

- It denotes also the throne of God whereas the four non- incarnate living creatures, for the first one the shape of a man (denoting the incarnation), and the second has the shape of a calf or ox (denoting the salvation sacrifice), and the third has the shape of a lion (denoting the resurrection), and the fourth has the shape of an eagle (denoting the ascension), and the lord Christ after His ascension, sat on the right side of the throne of God

-Also it points to the four gospels that the lord arranged writing them for the sake of preaching the gospel in the four corners of the world , if we go back to the throne of God and the four non -incarnate living creatures :that one with the face of man points to the gospel of Matthew, and that one with the face of calf points to the gospel of Luke, and that one with the face of lion points to the gospel of Mark , and that one with the face of eagle points to the gospel of John

-And the number ten points to the complete number, and among the multiplies of the number ten all the big numbers are formed like hundred ,thousand, ten thousand, hundred thousand, and million etc

-So the number forty points to the perfect work of the Christ for the sake of many and throughout the whole world

-As in His forty days fasting, He fasted for the whole world

-And on the cross, the priest and sacrifice was nailed for the life of the whole world

-And in His staying for forty days on earth after the resurrection, He stayed for the sake of the whole world

-And all that done by the lord Christ of His incarnation, and His propitiatory death and His resurrection and ascension, were for the sake of the world' life and salvation of the whole world, not for the Jews only but for the gentiles also..For whoever accepts His love, and believes on Him, and obeys His commandments, he will have the eternal life

Q7: Why the Holy Spirit dwelt unto the disciples specifically ten days after the ascension of the lord Christ?

A7: During those ten days that the church lived awaiting the promise of the Holy Spirit, the church tested the heavenly longings, the joys of ascension were working within the church heart shaking it tremendously, that the church was totally prepared for the blowing of the wind of God and His holy fire that filled it with the supernatural talents, and poured within it the springs of the living water

-It was not possible for the Holy Spirit to overflow the church by that way except after finishing those complete days from its longing for the spring of the living water, and those days were the number ten, so days were completed and the promise was fulfilled, as the number ten is the number of numerical completeness

-The awaiting of God promises needs patience, faith and hope, like the bible' saying:" let patience have its perfect work" (James 1:4), as what man hopes, he waits for it with patience. And faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."(Hebrews 11:1)

-There was a frank promise from the lord Christ, that He Himself called promise of the Father by dwelling of the Holy Spirit unto the church..The promise of God for Abraham was by the salvation or redemption, and He fulfilled His promise, also the lord' promise was

sending the Holy Spirit, and the promise was fulfilled, as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness., likewise the sons of Abraham (the Christ' church) believed and their faith was counted to them for righteousness and they gained the promise which was given to them by the Father

The day of Pentecost was the beginning of the eighth week after resurrection (the seven weeks equal forty nine days), and the resurrection happened on Sunday in the beginning of the new week ,meaning on the eighth day from the beginning of the passion week , thus the church we born on the beginning of the eighth week after the glorious resurrection, so the number eight denotes always the new life in the concept of the Holy Bible , as the Bible says about Noah who renewed the life on earth once again:"He saved Noah the eighth one, a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5), and there were in the ark eight people saved by water from the flood

Hoping that the lord gives us to live in the newness of life by the power of His resurrection, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit

Q8: Why did the lord Christ choose twelve disciples specifically to be His twelve apostles?

A8: The lord Christ said to His twelve apostles:" when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28)

So obviously, the lord Christ chose His disciples by the same number of the tribes of Israel, or the sons of Jacob the twelve, as from twelve tribes the Old Testament' church was formed in a limited fashion, and by twelve apostles the New Testament' church was formed in the entire world

-But why the number twelve specifically?

First: it is known that the year is composed of twelve months, meaning that the time is completed on earth by twelve months, like the lord' saying to Abraham when He appeared to him on the oaks of Mamre:" I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and, Sarah your wife shall have a son" (Genesis 18:10), here it means that she will have a son on the same time of the following year

-In one year, meaning in twelve months ,the earth completes a full round around the sun , all seasons of the year are completed with all the changes within , the completeness of the year by twelve months points to the fulfillment of time as the lord Christ said:" The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draws near. Repent, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15), truly the sun of righteousness – our Lord Jesus Christ – had arisen in the fulfillment of time, according to the lord' promise:" the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be on His wings" (Malachi 4:2), there is no sun with wings except our lord Jesus Christ who stretched His outstretched hands on the cross to embrace all the repentants

-Second: We notice also that the day is composed of twelve hours, as the lord Christ said: " Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of the world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because there is no light in him" (John 11:9,10), the lord Christ is the light of the world ...preaching the gospel is the light of the world , therefore the twelve disciples carried that light , and spread it to the whole world for enlightening it

-They were twelve to carry the lights of the twelve hours of the day, to each of them an hour of the day was pointing at , like the lord 'saying about John the baptism : " He was a burning and shining light, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light" (John 5:35)

-Third: the number twelve is three multiplied by the number four ($3 \times 4 = 12$)

-the number three points to the Holy Trinity and its work in salvation of mankind

-while the number four points to the four directions of the world, or points to the Bible or the four gospels

-Thus the number twelve is denotation of the work of the Holy Trinity in salvation of mankind, in the four directions of the world from the sunrise to sunset, and from the north to south

Therefore the lord Christ said to His disciples: " Go into all the world, proclaim the gospel to all the creation" (Mark 16:15), " go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you" (Matthew 28:19,20), indeed it was mentioned about the apostles fathers: " Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world" (Psalm 19:4)

-From the people history anciently when the people of Israel exited from the land of Egypt , and on the beginning of their departure in the wilderness of Sinai, after their crossing the red sea , they: " came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees. And they camped there by the waters" (Exodus 15:27), in that an obvious denotation for the twelve disciples and the seventy apostles assigned by the lord Christ Himself

-One of the nice things is that the Coptic Church celebrates the feast of the apostles' fathers on the twelfth day of the seventh month of the Gregorian year

-Fourth: in the speech of the lord Christ about the legions of angels, He said to Peter the apostle: " Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? "(Matthew 26:53)

-Fifth: in the book of Revelation, Saint John saw around the throne in heaven twenty-four elders, on their hands golden vials full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Revelation 5:8), it is noticed here that the number 24 is double of 12 as the day on earth is twelve hours, while in heavens there is no day and night, but continuous day pointed to by the number 24" (Revelation 21:24)

-Sixth: the hundred and forty-four thousands who were not defiled (Revelation 14: 3, 4), who appeared in the heavenly scene following the lamb (the Christ) whenever He goes, they are $12 \times 12 = 144$ times 1000, those lived a lightened undefiled life (12 hours into the day light), and the light within it is according to the apostolic faith (x12 apostles), it is difficult to count them as they are so numerous (thousands), that might remind us with the repentance of the people of Nineveh, about whom God said: "they are hundred and twenty thousands, which is the number $12 \times 10 \times 1000$, they symbolize those living the life of enlightening in groups difficult to count (ten thousands)

-Here it comes to the mind the following question:

Did God arrange for the day to be twelve hours, and the year to be twelve months, to choose twelve disciples?, or He chose twelve disciples as the day is twelve hours, and the year is twelve months?

To answer that we say: the basic meaning for the number 12 is indication of the Holy trinity, and its work for the sake of salvation of mankind in the four directions of the world, on that basis the other matters are arranged

Truly, it's amazing all of your arrangements O lord!, all you have done with wisdom, ... we stand only to contemplate and comprehend, How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!, we are only standing to contemplate, comprehend and wander and there are still a lot to know about you 'O our Holy God

Q9: Could man see the fullness of God's glory and when?

A9: Saint Athanasius the Apostle says: the only Begotten Son is the one who views face of the heavenly Father with full vision, but the angels couldn't stare on Him, but conceal their faces from brilliance of the magnificence of His glory, concerning men the saints they could see the Christ in His glory when they cloth with the spiritual body of resurrection by which they enter into the eternal life, as saint John the apostle says: "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when He shall be revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2), but we should understand that the lord Christ reveals His glory on stages and according to the tolerance of the viewers, therefore His glory by which He will be revealed in His second coming doesn't reach to fullness of the glory of His divinity, that we don't know how would be looking at it in the eternity after He will sit on His eternal throne in His kingdom and the kingdom of His Father

-And when Saint John says: "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth" (John 1:14), He was speaking about a kind of glory or a ray of the glory, but the fullness of His glory no man could ever tolerate seeing it, and when Moses the prophet said to the lord Christ when he spoke to Him on the mountain of

Sinai :” let me see Your glory”(Exodus 33:18), the lord answered Moses saying:” You cannot see My face. For there no man can see Me and live”(Exodus 33:20), He meant that man with the present corruptible body couldn’t see the perfect Glory of God as his nature couldn’t tolerate that until man cloths with the glorified resurrection body, and He completed saying:” Behold! There is a place by me, and you shall stand upon a rock. And it will be, while my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. And I will take away my hand, and you shall see My back parts. But My face shall not be seen” (Exodus 33:20 -23), meaning that he couldn’t see Him in the fullness of His glory

-And when Saul of tarsus was going to Damascus, the lord Christ appeared to Him on the way in His glory by a certain degree of the glory, the result was that he was blinded and that was a stage of the death stages, therefore when he was baptized by the baptism of salvation , some scales comes out of his eyes , meaning that God created for him a new cornea in the place of that burnt when he saw the lord Christ with a degree of the glory , so if the degree is more intensified the whole eye or probably the whole skull with all within and the whole human subsistence would be demolished , meaning that his bodily subsistence could not persist, as if a man is subjected to a 12 volt electric current, it is possible to feel some numbness , but if he is subjected to a 110 volt current he will be convulsing with all His body, and if it persists for a long time he might die, but if he touches 220 volts the convulsion will be stronger and the probability of death is greater , but if he is subjected to the high voltage of 11 thousands volt for example he might be shocked at once, but if it is 500 thousands volt like that of the high dam electricity , if man just passes beneath it close to the electric cables he will instantly dies , so it should be enough distance between him and the cable , enough distance to be protected from being burnt if he passes beneath the cable , so it is forbidden that the high voltage cables pass through areas with high hills or high buildings , or they should dig beneath those cables or remove those hills , for anyone who passes close to it , might not die

Q10:Did the lord Christ change His will when He answered the request of the Virgin Lady in the wedding of Cana of Galilee by transforming the water into wine?

A10:Definetly no...as the lord Christ being the Son of God the incarnate Logos is knowing all things , He knew by His prior sempiternal knowledge that the Virgin Mary will request from Him to make such miracle, so that matter was preexistent in the divine plan and in the divine procurement, and not a new thing for Son of God the logos in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge , thus there was no change in the will of the lord Christ when He answered the request of the Virgin Lady , exactly like when God threatened the people of Nineveh anciently by demise of the city after forty days, and He knew that they will repent so He will lift His wrath upon them

The lord Christ wished in the miracle of transforming the wine in the wedding of Cana of Galilee to show the dignity of the Virgin Mary and her pleading intercession for Him , and This was beginning of miracles Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. And it revealed His glory. And

His disciples believed on Him”(John 2:11), He revealed His divine glory as a creator And His disciples believed on Him, thus the church will remain indebted to the intercession of the lady Virgin ,the mother of God Saint Mary, the entrusted intercessor in front of our lord Jesus Christ , her intercession be with us , Amen

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