

Dogmas

H.G Bishop Moussa

HG: This will fall under the God's orders. The Almighty Lord ordered Noah to build an ark and this ark will lead us to have some knowledge about God through the dogma. The first order mentioned here, the Almighty Lord ordered Noah to build an ark. Can you say something about this ark, what was the future of the people who built that ark? Did they perish or were they saved. What was their future?

Answer: Saved.

HG: Saved, the people who built it. Did they perish from the flood, or were they saved? How many souls were saved inside the ark?

Answer: Eight.

HG: So the builders of the ark were not included, right? Take care, while you are being a builder of the church of God, you must be a part of that church. Not outside, because each one who is outside the church will not be saved, OK? So this is Gods' wonderful deeds, Gods' order. Can you mention another order from the Almighty God in the Old Testament?

Answer: God told Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh?

HG: Very good, when Lord told Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh to save the people. What else?

Answer: When he told him to build the tabernacle?

HG: Yes, when he told him to build a tabernacle, good.

Answer: The ten Commandments?

HG: Commandments, yes. Another example of Gods' orders?

Answer: He told Adam not to eat from the fruit tree?

HG: Yes, when he told Adam not to eat from that tree, good.

From these orders we started to have the knowledge through the dogmas to know the almighty God. This leads us to Gods' interference. Can you mention an important incident in the Old Testament that our Lord interfered in and saved His people?

Answer: When God sent Moses to release the Israelites out of Egypt?

HG: Yes, after they crossed the Red Sea, good. God interfered and separated the Red Sea.

Answer: David and Goliath.

HG: Oh! very good. David and Goliath. This is a good example of Gods' interference. What about Gods' interference in the New Testament? When St. Peter started walking on the water and he started falling, God interfered in a suitable time and saved his life. What else?

Answer: When God came to save us.

HG: When God came to save us, good that was in the New Testament.

Answer: When the fishermen could not catch any fish?

HG: Yes, good. When they could not catch any fish and they obeyed the Lord. So from these interferences of God in the New and Old Testament we can say that we have the knowledge through the dogmas to know God.

Now we are going to point number four which is, God controlling the universe. We know that Earth is one of twelve planets and have the Sun, the moon, the stars and the universe. This universe is so detailed and complex that there can be no other controlling the universe than God. Imagine what would happen if the sun were to move a little closer or further from earth? Everything here on earth is dependent on the movement of another. Therefore, God only controls the universe through His wisdom which leads us to know our Lords' Dogma.

What about Gods' nations? Do not think that you are only nation that worship God. We are Coptic Orthodox, his Grace Bishop Suriel yesterday said that there are Syrian, Indian and Ethiopian Orthodox, its obviously then that we are all of the one group and through the work of God, other nations knowledge and dogmas we know God.

Our God has many nations to worship him. One day Elisha said to God, 'take my soul because I am the only man on the Earth who worships you'. What was Gods' answer to Elisha? 'No Elisha, do not say this there are seven thousand people who worship me and nobody knows them'.

So, we have to be humble while we are Coptic Orthodox, respecting our sister churches and brothers.

The last point is Gods' world. We also know God through His world. What is the world of God? His kingdom? In Gods' kingdom we have heavenly creatures, such as the angles, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, the powers,

the thrones and the dominions in which we pray for them in each mass. These heavenly creatures have a connect relationship with God and His kingdom.

By the way, where is the kingdom of God? Is it on Heaven or on Earth? The kingdom of God is actually inside us. Where? In our hearts. So you can let the Almighty God dwell there in your heart by having the kingdom of heaven inside using the heavenly creatures as an example by asking for the intercessions of your favorite saints.

In the word of God we can see the soul of many saints such as the soul of Saint Abraham, Saint Isaac, and Saint Anthony, Saint Anthanasious etc so if we are a holy people and depart to heaven we will see the souls of the saints, our beloved brothers, friends and parents.

Therefore we must be Holy because only a holy man can enter the kingdom of God who reunites you with Heavenly Creatures, Saints and brothers. This point number two is very important through the dogmas, the Orthodox dogmas to know God or to praise God.

Now we are going to point number three, truth and love. What is the meaning of truth? Truth means you have to be an open man.

For example we have the 'Jaharee Window', someone called Jaharee designed this window and he said that there are four kinds of information that lead to truth.

1. Openness
2. Feedback
3. Experience
4. Secrets

Therefore, if someone is not very open and has a many secrets through experience and feedback then this man can not express the truth even in confession. If you know and you do not tell your Father of confession your secrets, these secrets can lead you to sin. Your spiritual father of confession has heard it all before, there is no need for you to hide information.

It is very wrong for a man to not be open but rather should be open like the 'Jaharee Window'. From priests point of view and experience when trying to solve problems it helps to have these open people. Therefore, it is important for you to please be open to us by telling us the truth, what happened, what is going on.

My advice to you then is to please be open with very little secrets and give

feedback to the priest because they do not know unless you tell them and by not telling them it may lead you to committed a sin, this is my sin because I did not tell you.

Remember you open, frank and not be two faced. Do not be a divided man, do not be two men, you see the integrity here? We can find a man, one man, and we can find that this man is divided into with two faces. One face he is inside church and another outside church, one face inside for Holy Week and the other outside with friends. Please be a man of God who seeks the truth and be open, it is okay to hide certain things but if you are afraid of these secrets then please tell them to your father of confession.

Now in relation to truth and love. To have a good relationship someone you must be able to relate to them. If you separate yourself and people you want to get closer to you won't be able to relate and thus our relationships fail. We do this a lot with our families and this leads to family break downs because of the lack of communication in the family circle.

So what should we do? We have to blot out this distance and begin to be closer to one another. If I want to love my family, if the Bishop wants to complete a task, he must relate with the priest, if the priest wants to achieve a task, he must relate with the servants, if you want to achieve a task, you have to relate with your friends etc.

So you have to blot out this distance but this situation can be good and bad because it is a semi-attached situation.

However, the above situation is good because the three circles interfere with each other in this distance and call this a strategic fit.

What do we mean by strategic fit? The area which controls the sauciness of love. The more this area can be the more you succeed and this is a good situation Do not be a secret man concerning your love for God when completing a task because you break the circle and unfortunately you will not succeed.

We have to be united as three circles in the love of God to complete any task because we can not enter the kingdom of God alone. As his Holiness Pope Shenuda III said 'do not enter the kingdom of God alone'. Please relate with others in the love of Christ to get them to enter the kingdom of God with you.

The last point is renewal. Renewal through the Orthodox dogmas leads us to know practise our church traditions which lead us to find God. What is the meaning of renewal? Renewal means four very important tasks.

1. Growing spiritually. We have a spiritual father, spiritual discipline and spiritual atmospheres. If we have this, for sure we are going to grow in the

vertical direction. Up, means the vertical direction; towards Heaven, towards God.

2. Growing through love. Do not grow alone. Do not be selfish in Christianity. You have to look after people, your community, your family etc. Do not grow alone because this will lead you to the selfishness mentioned while everyone else will grow in the community, one family worshipping God.

3. Growing in numbers. By growing together through love we eventually grow in numbers as a people and church of God.

4. Out. What is the meaning of out? Out in service, so you have to serve God, as I mentioned before, you have to have a role in the church as a member and you must grow towards your role. When you grow up, just remember this, you have a role concerning the indigenous people, the people who do not know God, those who have no helper, those oppressed, serve people, give to the poor and visit the sick etc.

These are the four directions of the renewal of the human beings which lead to the dogmas that makes us have a good relation with God. Again, up together more out.

And Glory be to God forever. Amen.

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