



+St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America
Metropolitan Saba of New York and all North America
V. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Borzghol, Pastor
Dn. Nicholas Adranly

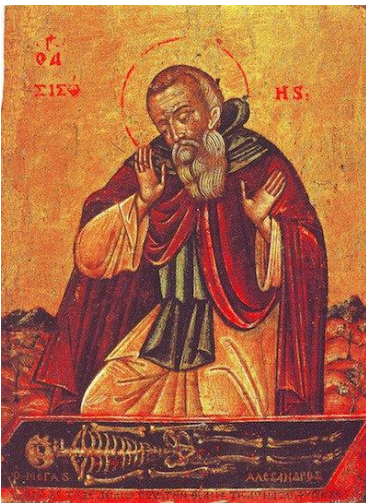
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SUNDAY, JULY 06, 2025

TONE 3 / EOTHINON 4

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & FOURTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

RIGHTEOUS FATHER SISOËS THE GREAT OF EGYPT;
APOSTLES ARCHIPPOS, PHILEMON AND ONESIMOS OF THE SEVENTY



On July 6 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate our Righteous Father Sisoës the Great of Egypt.

Sisoës was a disciple of St. Anthony the Great. Imposing difficult ascetic labors on himself in the wilderness for 60 years, Sisoës humbled himself so much that he became meek and guileless as a lamb. God endowed Sisoës with abundant grace so that he was able to heal the sick, drive out unclean spirits and resurrect the dead. Sisoës taught those who visited him: "Regardless in what way temptation comes to man, a man should give himself to the will of God and to recognize that temptation occurred because of his sins. If something good happens, it should be

said that it happened according to God's Providence." Sisoës died peacefully in extreme old age in 429. On this day, we also commemorate the Apostles Archippos, Philemon and Onesimos of the Seventy.

THE EPISTLE

*Sing praises to our God, sing praises.
Clap your hands all ye peoples.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (6:18-23)

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

رَتِّلُوا لِلَّهِنا رَتِّلُوا.

يا جميع الأمم صَقُّوا بِالْأَيْدِي.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ بُولُسِ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى أَهْلِ رُومِيَّة. (6:18-23)

أَقُولُ كَلَامًا بَشَرِيًّا مِنْ أَجْلِ ضَعْفِ أَجْسَادِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ يَا إِخْوَةُ، بَعْدَ أَنْ أُعْتِقْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَطِيئَةِ أَصَبَحْتُمْ عَبِيدًا لِلْبِرِّ. كَمَا جَعَلْتُمْ أَعْضَاءَكُمْ عَبِيدًا لِلنَّجَاسَةِ وَالْإِثْمِ لِلْإِثْمِ، كَذَلِكَ الْآنَ اجْعَلُوا أَعْضَاءَكُمْ عَبِيدًا لِلْبِرِّ لِلْقَدَاسَةِ. لِأَنَّكُمْ حِينَ كُنْتُمْ عَبِيدًا لِلْخَطِيئَةِ كُنْتُمْ أَحْرَارًا مِنَ الْبِرِّ. فَأَيُّ ثَمَرٍ حَصَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ الَّتِي تَسْتَحْيُونَ مِنْهَا الْآنَ، فَإِنَّمَا عَاقِبَتُهَا الْمَوْتُ. وَأَمَّا الْآنَ فَإِذْ قَدْ أُعْتِقْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَطِيئَةِ وَاسْتَعْبَدْتُمْ لِلَّهِ فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ ثَمَرَكُمْ الْقَدَاسَةَ، وَالْعَاقِبَةُ هِيَ الْحَيَاةُ الْأَبَدِيَّةُ. لِأَنَّ أَجْرَةَ الْخَطِيئَةِ مَوْتُ، وَمَوْهَبَةُ اللَّهِ حَيَاةٌ أَبَدِيَّةٌ فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ رَبِّنَا.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (8:5-13)

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching Him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered Him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, He marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ مَتَّى الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتِّلْمِيزِ الطَّاهِرِ. (8:5-13)

فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ، دَخَلَ يَسُوعُ كَفَرْنَاحُومَ، فَدَنَا إِلَيْهِ قَائِدُ مِئَةٍ، وَطَلَبَ إِلَيْهِ قَائِلًا: يَا رَبُّ إِنَّ فَتَايَ مُلْقَى فِي الْبَيْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُ يَسُوعُ: أَنَا آتِي وَأَشْفِيهِ. فَأَجَابَ قَائِدُ الْمِئَةِ قَائِلًا: يَا رَبُّ، لَسْتُ مُسْتَحِقًّا. مُخْلَعًا يُعَذِّبُ بِعَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ وَلِي جُنْدٌ تَحْتَ فَإِنِّي أَنَا إِنْسَانٌ تَحْتَ سُلْطَانٍ، أَنْ تَدْخُلَ تَحْتَ سَقْفِي، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ كَلِمَةً لَا غَيْرُ، فَيَبْرَأَ فَتَايَ فَلَمَّا سَمِعَ يَسُوعُ، يَدِي، أَقُولُ لِهَذَا "اذهَبْ"، فَيَذْهَبُ، وَلِلْآخِرِ "أَنْتِ"، فَيَأْتِي، وَلِعَبْدِي "اعْمَلْ هَذَا"، فَيَعْمَلُ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنَّ تَعَجَّبَ وَقَالَ لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَهُ: الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، إِنِّي لَمْ أَجِدْ إِيمَانًا بِمِقْدَارِ هَذَا وَلَا فِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَمَّا بَنُو كَثِيرِينَ سَيَأْتُونَ مِنَ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغَارِبِ وَيَتَكُونُونَ مَعَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَاسْحَقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ ثُمَّ قَالَ يَسُوعُ لِقَائِدِ الْمِئَةِ: اذهَبْ، الْمَلَكُوتِ فَيُلْقُونَ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ الْبَرَّانِيَّةِ. هُنَاكَ يَكُونُ الْبُكَاءُ وَصَرِيفُ الْأَسْنَانِ وَلِيَكُنْ لَكَ كَمَا آمَنْتَ. فَشَفِي فَتَاهُ فِي تِلْكَ السَّاعَةِ.

Krispy Kreme Fundraising Campaign

Another exciting fundraiser! Campaign is good until December 31.

How it works!

1. Order place an order using the link or QR code.

<https://www.groupraise.com/offer-campaigns/60225-st-john-church-krispy-kreme-digital-dozens>

2. Support 50% of each Original Glazed Dozen you order is donated back to the organization.

3. Enjoy Visit your local Krispy Kreme to pick up your Original Glazed Dozens!

Dave & Buster's Fundraising Campaign

We have something new and exciting!!

Dave & Buster's fundraising campaign will begin NOW until December 31, 2025. Get Your Power Cards through St. John link.

How it works!

1. Place an order using St. John fundraising link. Here is the link:

https://www.groupraise.com/offer-campaigns/59958-st-john-church-dave-busters-fundraising-campaigns?utm_source=sendgrid&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=o_offers_day_1

And/or ask: Rania Kashou

2. 50% of each Dave & Buster's Power Card purchased is donated back to the organization.

3. Visit any Dave & Buster's location to pick up your Power Card and start playing!

Awesome gift for kids, grand kids, parents, even yourself. Who doesn't like to play??

This link can be forwarded to friends, families, neighbors, coworkers, businesses, anyone!!

Upcoming Events

| | |
|--|--|
| September 20th-21st | St. John's annual Middle Eastern Food Festival |
|--|--|

Coffee Hour

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| July 6 | Sponsor needed |
| July 13 | Joseph and Lisbeth Rodrigues |
| July 20 | Sponsor needed |
| July 27 | Sponsor needed |

Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, Sam Nassab, Sandy Dudum Bennett, Fairouz Freij, Henriette Hilal and Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **George Adranly**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Fred Addas**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Najat Nicola**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Hala Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Norma Khalil**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Souhad Halaka**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **George Messih**. Many years!

Candles for the altar table and in front of the icons of Christ and the Theotokos offered by:

- † Ibrahim Fasheh in memory of Hanada Fasheh for one full year. May her memory be eternal!



- † Altar Servers:
Nathan Sweis, Clayton Morgan, Elias Freij, Angelo Freij, Andrew Freij, Mazyn Haddadin, James Dudum, John Dudum, David Evans, Evan Kavar, Mason Kavar, Jonathan Juha, Maron Juha and Zaiden Karanikola

***St. John Orthodox Church
501 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563***

You could use this QR code for your donation



Building Committee Update

It's punch list time! Believe it or not, we are nearing the finish line. The Building Committee and the architect have met with the contractor to review a preliminary punch list of items that need to be completed prior to the building inspection for occupancy. These items include things like acoustic wall panels, signage, HVAC grills, fire extinguishers, etc.

Additionally, outside the scope of the original contract with Petra, we have ordered the major kitchen equipment. Some equipment has been delivered, some is on order and custom countertops and workspaces are being fabricated.

We are looking at majority completion in just a few weeks, and then working with city and county officials for inspections. The timing of inspections is out of our complete control, but we are hoping to complete these soon to acquire occupancy certificates.

Of course there will still be some work to complete that has not yet been budgeted or contracted such as trellises and landscaping

**St. John Sunday Funday
Dave and Busters
2075 Diamond Blvd Ste.
H180, Concord, CA 94520
August 24th @ 1:30pm**



Support St. John Church with Krispy Kreme Digital Dozens



Price Per Dozen: \$15



Krispy Kreme Digital Dozens to Support St. John Church



grouprai.se/krispykreme60225o



\$15
per order



50%
donated back



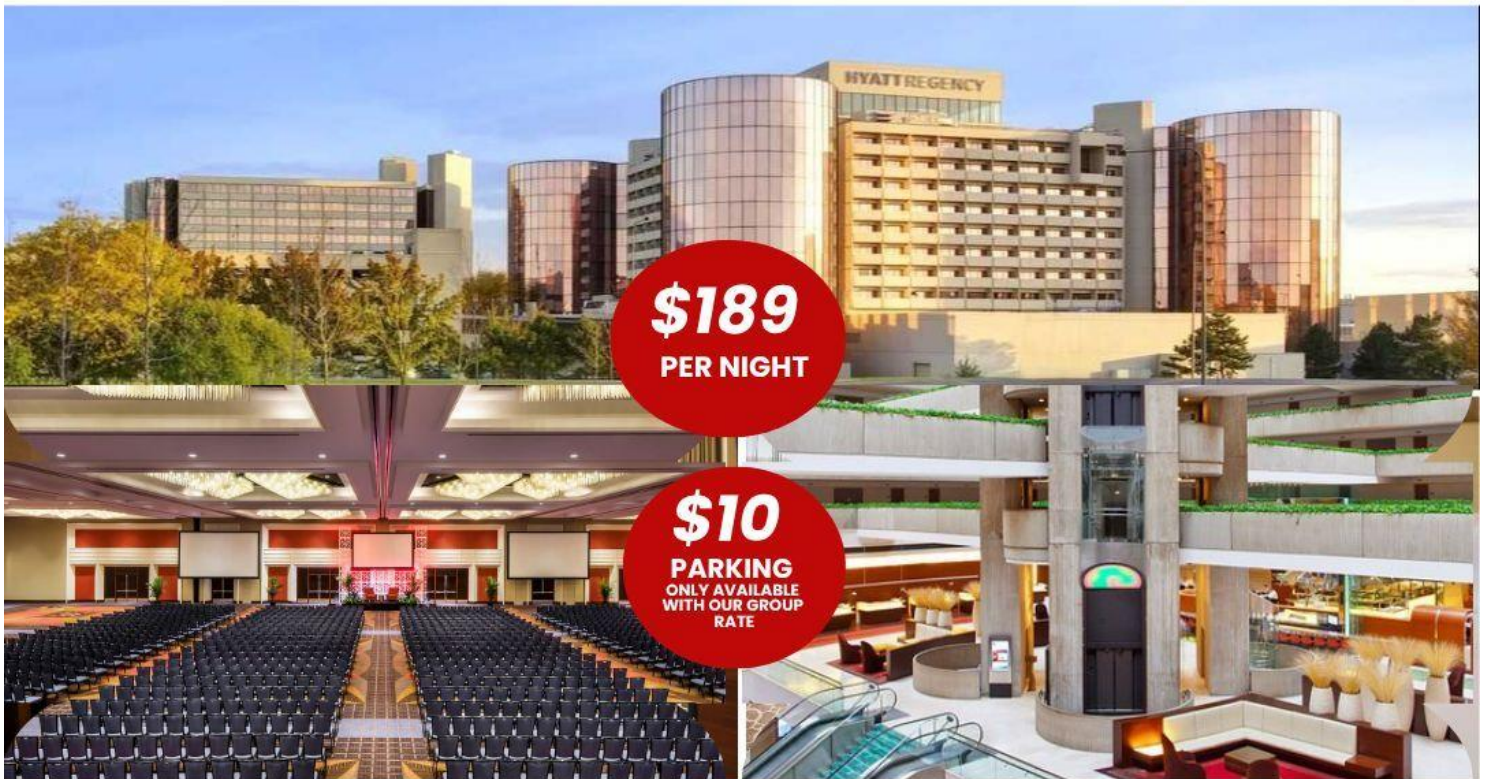
57TH BIENNIAL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
Archdiocese Convention

July 20 – 27, 2025



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**Rates are only guaranteed through June 21!
Rooms are selling FAST don't wait!**



Book your room before it's too late!

Reserve now at:
www.ac2025chicago.org/hotel

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Prot. no.: 344/2025

July 1, 2025

Beloved in Christ,

I pray you had a blessed celebration of the patrons and protectors of our Holy See of Antioch, Saints Peter and Paul. Our group of pilgrims was blessed to celebrate this important occasion in our spiritual home this year at the Patriarchal Monastery of Balamand, Lebanon.

Since the terrorist bombing of our Prophet Elias Church in Dweilaa, Damascus, Syria a week ago, we have received many inquiries from people and organizations asking how they can help the survivors and the families of those who lost their lives.

We have set up a special charitable account at the Archdiocese Headquarters for this purpose. All the proceeds will be forwarded to His Beatitude Patriarch John X for distribution to the survivors and families. Needless to say, after this traumatic and life-changing event, they need counseling, medical help and the basic necessities of life as they will not be able to function for some time.

In many cases, the families who lost their loved ones lost their main financial providers. Others will need long-term financial support as they have sustained the loss of bodily parts, making them permanent dependents unable to work to sustain their families.

Here is how you can donate to help the survivors and surviving family members:

- Online through the “[2025 Prophet Elias Church of Damascus, Syria Relief Fund.](#)”
- By check, either personally or through your parish that will, in turn, send the collected funds to the Archdiocese Headquarters, P.O. Box 5238, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238. Make checks payable to the Antiochian Archdiocese with “Prophet Elias Church Relief Fund” in the memo.

Thank you for helping to alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Wishing you God’s every blessing, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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On the Interpretation of the Holy Bible, Part Four

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

I received several questions seeking clarification on what is meant by contemporary and new approaches to the Bible. I will try to answer by drawing on the words of Metropolitan Kallistos Ware [published in an interview with Mr. Kyriakos Markides in his book [*Gifts of the Desert*](#), chapter eight, "Converted" on pages 160-163].

The modern mind, stemming from its scientific rigor and analytical capabilities on the one hand, and the advancements in sciences as mentioned earlier¹ on the other, raises questions that were not previously posed with such intensity in the past. Among these questions are: How did the event happen? What exactly occurred? What explains the similarities between some stories, especially in the Old Testament, and the literary and cultural discoveries of ancient Babylonian, Assyrian, and other civilizations?

Using the language of the era in which we live to convey the Christian message is natural and indispensable. This is not an innovation or a deviation from the norm. However, when we preach ideas that contradict our faith and do not align with "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3), we fall into heresy. The matter is extremely delicate.

Let us start with the Gospel, where we find that all the parables of the Lord Jesus were agricultural, stemming from the cultural reality of Palestine at that time. He spoke of the mustard seed, the sower, and the shepherd, among others, because these were the language of the environment in which He lived, and these parables were understood by the people He addressed and sought to save at that time and place.

We are compelled to explain the historical context of the text to prepare for entering its meaning and intent. For example, today, we must explain the agricultural practices in the Middle East during the time of Christ's message before interpreting the parable of the sower. This helps people understand how seeds fell on rocky paths, among thorns, and on fertile soil.

Using earthly sciences as auxiliary tools in conveying the message is not new. This approach was adopted by the Apostle Paul when he preached Christ to the people of Athens. He began from their religious reality, which he observed in Athens (the

¹ [On the Interpretation of the Holy Bible, Part Three.](#)

altar to the unknown god), and cited some of their Greek poets: "For in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28), to bring them closer to what he wanted to preach.

Returning to the first question, we previously mentioned challenges to faith brought about by history, archaeology, and scientific advancement concerning many biblical texts, especially in the Old Testament. These challenges did not exist before the 18th century. These challenges compel the Church to engage in dialogue and provide faithful responses. As long as we believe in the active and living presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, we must believe in its continuous creativity and inspiration, enabling the Church to continue its mission to save the world.

It must be noted that the critical approach to studying the Bible is not a single school; its methods of interpretation vary greatly. Metropolitan Kallistos states:

As for the critical approach to studying the Bible, it must first be noted that the critical approach is not a single school; its methods of interpretation vary greatly. Metropolitan Kallistos states:

"God has given us a reasoning brain. And we should use this gift to the full. Therefore, the critical study of the New Testament, using all the resources of scholarship, is something that we Orthodox should approve. We do not serve Christ, who is the Truth, by simply shutting our ears and eyes and refusing to listen or look. So, there is certainly a place for the critical study of the Bible. We Orthodox may not always agree with the conclusions of the liberal theologians, but we do affirm the principle of free inquiry. Second, we Orthodox in our approach to the Bible are not adopting exactly the viewpoint of Protestants fundamentalist. Like them, we believe that the Bible is true. But we do not isolate each sentence, each word on its own. We look at the total message of the Bible. This has always been the Orthodox principle of scriptural interpretation: that we take the Bible as a whole and we understand one part of the Bible in the light of another. So, we do not isolate texts in the way some fundamentalists do. I would go further than that. We also need to say that there are many ways of expressing truth and that literal truth of a worldly factual type is not the only kind of truth.

"The true understanding of the scripture comes not just through historical inquiry about biblical origins, but through seeing how scripture has been lived and understood in the Church. This is the difficulty of the historical-critical approach, that it isolates the reasoning brain and is carried out in the scholar's study, whereas the true understanding of scripture comes through the total person, and we have many other ways of understanding as well as the reasoning brain. It comes not through sitting alone in a library, reading books. It comes also, and much more fundamentally, through worship, through sharing the life of the community, through praying together - praying with our understanding but also with our heart, which is something far deeper than just the emotions or reasoning brain. And so, the true understanding of scripture comes through participation in the worshiping life of the Church. The true interpreters of scripture are not so much the learned scholars, though we should listen to them. The true interpreters of scripture are the saints.

"There is a tendency to isolate the letter of scripture. But to truly understand scripture we have to understand it liturgically and experientially: through the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, through participation in the sacraments, through the preaching of the Church, through the lives of its spiritual fathers and mothers. All of this forms part of the total richness of the Church. This is the context we have for understanding scripture. We allow full scope to the witness of the saints. Let us remember what was said by a great Serbian bishop Nikolai Velimirovic, who is already regarded as a saint by the Serbian Church. He said: 'The opinions of the scholars may be marvelously clever and yet they may be completely wrong. Whereas,' he added, 'the words of the saints are often simple but always right.'

"We should not reject scholarship, but as I pointed out, we should recognize that alongside the use of reasoning brain, the *dianoia*, the truth is apprehended more profoundly through prayer, through a life of holiness, a life of living compassion. The true understanding of the Bible comes through God's revelation on this level to the heart, to the *nous*, to the spiritual vision, not just to the discursive reason."

في تفسير الكتاب المقدس، الجزء الرابع

الميتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

وردتني عدة أسئلة تستوضح المقصود بمقاربة الكتاب المقدس المعاصرة والجديدة. سأحاول الإجابة مستعينا بكلام الميتروبوليت كاليستوس وير [المنشور في مقابلة له مع السيد كيرياكو ماركيدي في كتابه: عطايا البرية، الفصل الثامن بعنوان: مهتدون، ص ١٦٠-١٦٣].

يطرح العقل المعاصر، انطلاقاً من علميته ودقته في قراءة الأمور وقدرته على التحليل من جهة، وتقدم العلوم كما ذكرنا سابقاً، من جهة ثانية، أسئلة ما كان يطرحها بحدة في الماضي. من هذه الأسئلة كيف صار الحدث؟ ما الذي جرى بالضبط؟ ما تفسير بعض أوجه الشبه بين الوارد في بعض القصص، في العهد القديم بخاصة، والمكتشفات الأدبية الثقافية البابلية والآشورية وغيرها القديمة؟

أن تستخدم لغة العصر الذي تعيش فيه لتنقل البشارة المسيحية أمر طبيعي ولا غنى عنه. هذا ليس ابتداءً أو مروقاً عن المألوف. لكن عندما تبشر بأفكار تتناقض وإيمانك ولا تتوافق مع "الإيمان المسلم للقديسين مرة" (يهوذا ١: ٣) فأنت تقع في البدع. الأمر غاية في الدقة.

لننطلق من الإنجيل حيث نجد أن جميع أمثال الرب يسوع كانت زراعية ومن واقع فلسطين الثقافي آنذاك. تكلم بحبة الخردل والزارع والراعي وما إلى ذلك لأنها لغة البيئة التي عاش فيها آنذاك، وهي الأمثال التي يفهمها الشعب الذي خاطبه الرب وسعى إلى خلاصه آنذاك.

أنت مضطر إلى شرح الإطار التاريخي للنص استعداداً للدخول في معناه وقصده. فعلى سبيل المثال، في زمننا الحالي نضطر إلى شرح كيفية الزراعة في الشرق الأوسط زمن بشارة المسيح قبل البدء بتفسير مثل الزارع. وذلك حتى يفهم الناس كيف وقع الحب على الصخر الطريق وبين الشوك وفي الأرض الجيدة.

^١ في تفسير الكتاب المقدس، الجزء الثالث.

أن تستخدم علوم الدنيا كأمر مساعد في إيصال البشارة، ليس أمراً جديداً. اتبع هذا الأمر بولس الرسول عندما بشر أهل أثينا بالمسيح؛ فقد انطلق من واقعهم الديني الذي رآه في أثينا (مذبح الإله المجهول)، واستشهد ببعض شعرائهم اليونان "به نتحيا ونتحرك ونوجد" (أع ١٧: ٢٨) ليقرب إليهم ما يود تبشيرهم به.

بالعودة إلى السؤال الأول، ذكرنا سابقاً تحديات إيمانية أوجدها علم التاريخ والآثار والتطور العلمي بخصوص نصوص كثيرة في الكتاب المقدس، العهد القديم منه بخاصة. لم تكن توجد قبل القرن الثامن عشر وما تلاه. تحتم هذه التحديات على الكنيسة أن تسعى إلى الحوار معها وتقديم الجواب الإيماني الأمين. طالما أننا نؤمن بحضور الروح القدس الفاعل والحي في الكنيسة، فيجب أن نؤمن بقدرته على الخلق الدائم والإلهام الدائم حتى تستطيع الكنيسة الاستمرار في العمل على خلاص العالم.

أما بخصوص استعمال المقاربة النقدية في دراسة الكتاب المقدس. نقول بدءاً أن المقاربة النقدية ليست مدرسة واحدة وتتفاوت مدارسها كثيراً في طرق التفسير. يقول المطران كاليستوس:

"علينا كأرثوذكس أن نوافق على دراسة العهد الجديد نقدياً واستعمال كل مصادر البحث. نحن لا نخدم المسيح الذي هو الحقيقة إذا أغلقنا آذاننا ورفضنا الإصغاء أو النظر. يوجد مكان بالتأكيد للدراسة النقدية للكتاب المقدس. نحن الأرثوذكس نؤكد على مبدأ البحث الحر، ولكن لا نوافق دائماً على نتائج اللاهوتيين الليبراليين. ثانياً، نحن الأرثوذكس، في مقاربتنا للكتاب المقدس، لا نتبنى بالضبط وجهات نظر البروتستانت الأصوليين. فنحن نؤمن، مثلهم، بأن الكتاب المقدس صحيح، لكننا لا نعزل كل جملة، كل كلمة بحد ذاتها، بل ننظر إلى مجمل رسالة الكتاب. لطالما كان هذا مبدأ أرثوذكسي للتفسير الكتابي: أي نأخذ الكتاب ككل ونفهم جزء منه على ضوء الجزء الآخر. وهكذا لا نعزل نصوصاً كما يفعل الأصوليون. أذهب إلى أبعد من ذلك، نحتاج أيضاً إلى القول بوجود طرق كثيرة للتعبير عن الحقيقة وإلى القول بأن الحرفية ليست هي النوع الوحيد للتعبير عن الحقيقة.

"إن الفهم الصحيح للكتاب لا يأتي فقط من البحث التاريخي في الأصول الببيلية بل من خلال النظر في كيف عيش الكتاب وفُهم في الكنيسة. تكمن صعوبة المقاربة التاريخية – النقدية في أنها تكتفي بالعقل المفكر بمعزل عن الشخص بكيته، فتفهم الكتاب المقدس من خلال أعمال العقل فقط في دراسة الباحث. في حين أن الفهم السليم للكتاب المقدس يأتي من خلال الشخص بكيته. فإلى جانب العقل المفكر، ثمة طرق أخرى كثيرة للفهم. لا يتم الأمر بالجلوس وحيدا في المكتبة وقراءة الكتب، بل، وبالأساس، بواسطة العبادة، بواسطة مشاركة حياة الجماعة الكنسية، بواسطة الصلاة سوياً- الصلاة بفهم قلبي أيضاً، وهي أعمق بكثير من مجرد عواطف أو دماغ مفكر. إذن يأتينا الفهم الصحيح للكتاب بواسطة حياة العبادة في الكنيسة. مفسرو الكتاب الحقيقيون ليسوا هم البحاثة العلماء، مع أنه يجب الإصغاء لهم. مفسرو الكتاب الحقيقيون هم القديسون.

"هناك ميل لاتباع الحزفية في فهم الكتاب المقدس. لكن كي نفهم هذا الكتاب المقدس يجب أن نفهمه ليتورجياً واختبارياً: من خلال الاحتفال بالقداس الإلهي، من خلال الاشتراك في الأسرار، من خلال الكنيسة، حياة آبائنا وأمهااتها الروحيين. تشكل هذه كلها جزءاً من غنى الكنيسة الإجمالي. هذا هو السياق الذي عندنا لفهم الكتاب المقدس. إننا نسمح لشهادة القديسين بكل المدى. لنتذكر ما قاله الأسقف نيقولا فيليميوفيتش وهو قديس من الكنيسة الصربية، قال: "قد تكون آراء البحاثة مدهشة الذكاء ولكن قد تكون خاطئة تماماً." وأضاف: 'بينما كلمات القديسين غالباً ما تكون بسيطة، ولكن صحيحة دوماً.'

"يجب ألا نرفض البحث لكن كما أشرت، يجب أن نميز أنه إلى جانب استخدام الدماغ الذكي، Dianoia، إلا أن الحقيقة تُدرك بشكل أقوى بالصلاة، بحياة القداسة، بالتحنن الإلهي. يأتينا الفهم الصحيح للكتاب المقدس بواسطة إعلان الله، على هذا المستوى، للقلب، للنوس، للرؤيا الروحية، لا للعقل الاستطراذي فقط."