



PERFECTION OF LOVE

A B L E S S U S A N E W S L E T T E R

Vol. 7 No. 8

Through Your Support...

A few month's ago, BLESS USA requested your support in collecting wedding dresses for the Brethren of the Lord in Egypt. Since then, we have felt your outpouring of love in response to this request and have been able to send several dresses to Egypt. May the Lord continue to touch your hearts that His Name may be glorified through this service.

A Word of Wisdom...

They used to say that, when on one occasion, abba Moses of Scete was going into Patara, he grew weary through the length of the road, and he was afraid and said, "How can I bring water for myself into this place?" And a voice was heard by him saying, "Go on, and fear not." Now one day a large number of the fathers came to him and he had there only one vessel of water, and having boiled some lentils the water came to an end; at this the old man was troubled, and went out and in, and prayed to God, and afterwards a great cloud came and poured down upon them much rain, and it filled all the vessels which he had with water. Then afterwards the fathers said unto him, "abba Moses, tell us why thou didst come in and out"; and he said unto them, "I entered into judgment with God, who brought me hither because there was want of water, and because I had no water for His servants to drink; therefore I came in and out."

The Paradise of The Holy Fathers

Thanksgiving...

Often we speak of the work of charity and giving, whether it be almsgiving or that of giving time and other materialistic possessions. However, we forget one very important thing, which is the giving of thanks to the Lord.

The giving of thanks is a fundamental requirement that a person needs in his or her relationship with God. Psalm 95:2 instructs us to "come before His presence with thanksgiving." It is mentioned in Psalms 106 many times as it says, "Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!" Also, in psalm 107 as it is written, "Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Giving thanks to God has no specific occasions but it is always. This teaching was explained in the first epistle of the Thessalonians, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks." (1 Thess 5:16-18). One of the important reasons for not giving thanks, is the igno-

rance of not knowing those things which are beneficial to us. Often, matters appear in a negative manner to our precisely planned lifestyles, however, in reality they have positive outcomes, or may sometimes lead to something that is beneficial without our full understanding.

Thoughts of modest thankfulness make clear the path of our approach to the Creator. We also should be thankful and convey our gratefulness to people around us and for those who have gone before us, all the while remembering that God is the source of all goodness and that thanksgiving is ultimately intended for Him.

The giving of thanks also obligates us to be familiar with our dependence on the beneficial nature of God. Thanksgiving will make us to understand the knowledge of being content and satisfied, given that it is not easy to give thanks without comprehending that everything we have is a gift from God.



Sayings of the Fathers

And for this reason the Lord declared, "When you make a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends, or your neighbors, or your kinsfolk, lest they ask you in return, and so repay you. But call the lame, the blind, and the poor, and you shall be blessed, since they cannot recompense you, but a recompense shall be made for you at the resurrection of the just." And again He says, "Whosoever shall have left lands, or houses, or parents, or brethren, or children because of Me, he shall receive in this world a hundred-fold, and in that to come he shall inherit eternal life." For what are the hundred-fold [rewards] in this world, ..and [what are] the suppers for which a return is made? These are [to take place] in the times of the kingdom, that is, upon the seventh day, which has been sanctified, in which God rested from all the works which He created, which is the true Sabbath of the righteous, which they shall not be engaged in any earthly occupation; but shall have a table at hand prepared for them by God, supplying them with all sorts of dishes.

**Irenaeus of Lyons.
Chapter XXXIII.-2**

Spiritual Message

Reverend Fathers and beloved brethren, friends of BLESS USA

The peace, love, and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all.

I would like to express my gratitude for the generosity and kindness of heart that you shown towards your less fortunate brothers and sisters in Egypt.

My beloved brethren let us continue to contemplate on:

The Blessings of Mercy to the Merciful

The Divine Inspiration mentions many blessings that are bestowed upon the lives of the merciful. In the last several newsletters, we contemplated on twenty-two of them. This time let us move on to the twenty-third blessing:

The Lord Delivers the merciful in times of trouble.

Our teacher David the Prophet and King, chanted and said, "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." (Ps. 41: 1). Also, Joshua the son of Sirach chanted saying, "Store up almsgiving in your treasury, and it will rescue you from every disaster." (Sirach 29: 12) This, my beloved, is a blessing that is clearly experienced by those who are merciful. Many times we face sudden and unpredictable situations and find ourselves in a very odd and evil circumstance, and at that time we also find God's kind Hands stretched out to deliver the merciful. Previously, we contemplated on this blessing and mentioned six examples of how God delivers the merciful in times of trouble:

Our teacher David the Prophet.

The Apostle St. Paul.

St. Abraam, the late bishop of Fayoum and Giza.

St. Sarabamon Abutarha, the late Bishop of El-Behera and El-Menoufyia.

The blessed sister S. M. from Cairo.

The blessed brother W. N. in Lebanon.

This time, my beloved, we are going to talk about a true story, which exemplifies exactly how the Lord delivers the merciful in times of trouble.

The Hands of the Lord Embraces a Bishop and his companions in a time of trouble:

In January 2000 one of the bishops traveled to El-Kosheh village in Upper Egypt with three priests and servants. This Bishop cares very much for the brethren of the Lord. At that time the circumstances were very tense in El-Kosheh. Unfortunately, the driver lost his way and ended up in a nearby village called "El-Balabeesh." The pedestrians gathered around their car wondering in anger "why are these Christian clergy here in our village?" The driver replied saying, "we wanted to go to El-Kosheh but we lost our way." Not believing the driver, the crowd ordered the Bishop and his companions to get out of the car and started to search it. They led the Bishop and his companions through the slums of the village to an unknown place. At this time the Bishop and his companions were troubled greatly, and that was when the Hands of the Lord stretched out and embraced them to deliver them. Suddenly, the Mayor of the village appeared and the Bishop started to explain to him what had happened. In a matter of minutes the person who was holding a rifle to the Bishop's head was serving the Bishop and his companions coffee and tea. Furthermore, the Mayor called the police to escort the Bishop and his companions to their destination. On the way the Bishop heard a whisper in his heart chanting and saying, "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." (Ps. 41: 1).

**"Blessed is he
who considers
the poor; The
Lord will
deliver him
in time
of
trouble."**

(Ps. 41: 1).

On the way the Bishop heard a whisper in his heart chanting and saying, "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." (Ps. 41: 1)

My beloved, this was the 23 rd blessing and in the next newsletter, we will contemplate on the 24 th blessing which will be, "the Lord keeps the merciful".

May our Lord compensate you with the incorruptible instead of the corruptible, the heavenly instead of the earthly and the eternal instead of the temporal.

Bishop Youannes

General Bishop and Secretary of H.H. Pope Shenouda III