



## What a Savior Needs to Be? By H.G. Bishop Raphael

Jessica is an open-minded, cultured girl, and she dearly loves her friend Sandy from school. Sandy is a nice, polite girl but she is not religious, she only knows a little bit about the Christian faith...on Christmas Eve, these two friends had a conversation about religion

**Jessica:** Merry Christmas!

**Sandy:** Merry Christmas to you too...actually I have some questions I wanted to ask you.

**Jessica:** Sure! I'm all ears.

**Sandy:** Why did God become human?

**Jessica:** To save and redeem us from death.

**Sandy:** What death are you talking about?

**Jessica:** As humans, our sins separate us from God thus, we are condemned to death.

**Sandy:** But how can this be? It seems that God created the problem, and now He is trying to solve it.

**Jessica:** What do you mean?

**Sandy:** God condemns us to death, yet He is also our Savior? It doesn't make sense. At the very beginning, God had the option to not condemn us.

**Jessica:** No, actually death was the normal penalty for sin and is also a divine consequence.

**Sandy:** I think God could have told Adam that if he ate from the tree, God would throw him out of Paradise. There would have been no need for death and redemption.

**Jessica:** Don't forget that sin is a separation of a human from God and God is the source of life...so the obvious consequence of being separated from God by our sins, is death.

**Sandy:** Oh! Like when a lamp is separated from an electrical current?

**Jessica:** Exactly!

**Sandy:** Well then, if the result of sin is death, why didn't God wipe out all mankind and start all over again? That way we wouldn't need redemption.

**Jessica:** Because God loves all humans.

**Sandy:** Then He should forgive them!

**Jessica:** If He forgave them without redemption, He would be negligible and unholy.

**Sandy:** I'm confused. It is impossible for mankind to perish because "God loves Mankind" but it is impossible to be forgiven because God is Holy. What can He do then?

**Jessica:** There needs to be an intercessor...someone must die for all humankind so that God can then save humankind through the sacrifice of this person.

**Sandy:** Was it possible for God to choose someone other than Himself?

**Jessica:** No, for the following reasons:

A Savior needs to be:

Unlimited so that His sacrifice can redeem everyone.

A Creator to recreate and renew mankind.

More powerful than death itself. That is, He must go through death and come through it victorious.

Holy of Holies, without blemish to wash away all sins.

A human who is able to die on behalf of the human race.

**Sandy:** So, no one else fits into these conditions?

**Jessica:** Well...let's try to apply the conditions to Archangel Michael.

**Sandy:** He is not a man but he could become flesh. He is without blemish and pure.

Unfortunately, he is limited because he is neither a creator nor victorious over death.

**Jessica:** Ok! Let us think of Abraham, father of all fathers, maybe Moses or Elijah...

**Sandy:** No, no. Neither of them work. Obviously no one could be our savior except Jesus Himself.

The Creator.

The Unlimited.

More powerful than death.

Holy.

Able to become flesh, and pass through death.

You know, one more thing. When Adam sinned, should Moses pay for it? This would not be fair at all, however when God accepts this upon Himself, He is free to do whatever He sees right.

**Jessica:** Did you notice the sequence of events?

First, sin has brought death upon us, since it is our separation from God.

Thus, man has to die, due to God's justice, Holiness and hatred towards evil.

But because of His love towards mankind, He wants to save him.

Therefore, there needs to be someone to replace man and die on his behalf, to save and redeem him.

That person is God Himself.

Yet, God can not die, that is why He has to become human and be willing to experience death.

**Sandy:** Yes, you are definitely right. Finally I'm convinced... Thank you very much.



## Social, Contemporary and General Issues

### Questions and Answers

**Is it wrong to tell my friends the wrong I've done instead of a priest?**

Your friend may have different views than you, and thus may mislead you in his advice. A priest, however, has wisdom and experience, and will never mislead you. Also, how can you guarantee that the friend you have today will still be your friend tomorrow, and will keep what you have told them in confidence? Therefore, please don't rush to tell secrets to your friends. A priest, will always respect your confidentiality. And finally, only the priest can give you absolution for your sins, not your friend.

**What should I do when I continue to fall into the same sins over and over again?**

Because we are not infallible, it is expected that we may commit the same sins again, especially during certain stages of life. But you must always struggle against this sin by nourishing yourself spiritually in order to be victorious, and you must confess your sins to the priest so that he may help you overcome this sin by praying for you and giving you guidance.

## Stress

By Dr. Magdy Girgis (Part 1)



Sam, Linda, and their 6 year old son Jimmy are a happy family. Linda doesn't quite remember what made her go and look out of the front window overlooking their front yard where Jimmy was playing with his red fire-engine. She felt joy and warmth, and then panic as she saw a delivery van speeding around the corner towards Jimmy. As the driver desperately tried to miss the boy he swerved the van and crushed into a light pole. As Linda watched the broken light pole fall onto Jimmy's leg she felt a knot in her stomach and her heart racing. In few seconds she was in the street holding her son, comforting him and keeping him from moving around too much. And with unbelievable strength that she had never experienced before, she was able to lift the pole a few inches above his bleeding leg and move it away. Jimmy was cold, shivering and breathing fast. She covered his body with her sweater and as he told her that he was thirsty she moistened his lips with the water the neighbors had brought. Miraculously everything necessary was done. The ambulance arrived and she rode with him to the university hospital. Few minutes later Sam arrived, and then there were terrible tense moments of waiting. Fortunately the damage was not so severe. Jimmy was hospitalized for two days. Linda spent most of the time with him and even after he went home it took Linda and Sam several weeks before they could sleep or eat well.

Now two years later everything is fine. Jimmy's leg healed perfectly and he still boasts to his friends about his accident and hospitalization. Linda is pleased with the 9 pounds she lost during the ordeal. Sam's recovery was somehow slower. The accident triggered him to change jobs which worked out great for him, leading to new skills, successes, and a promotion to a V.P. of a large division of a prestigious company. But everyone recognizes that what this family went through was **stress**. The word stress has become part of our daily vocabulary. There are so many events that we all correctly label as stress. As we continue to discuss the subject we will find out how stress affects our different body systems, in various stages of our life, and most importantly, how to handle stress and alter it from a harmful enemy to a harmless one. Or even better to a useful friend!

(To be Continued)



"I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out over the world and I said groaning, "What can get through from such snares?"  
Then I heard a voice saying to me, Humility"  
St. Anthony the Great

"Why do you trouble yourself in a house that is not your own?  
Let the sight of a dead man be a teacher for you concerning your  
departure from hence"  
Fr. Issac The Syrian

What the World is Teaching Us?  
By George Bassilios  
(Part 1)

**Fallacy #1: We need more self-esteem.**

In the book entitled *Self-Esteem*, Matthew McKay and Patrick Fanning state, "Self-esteem is essential for psychological survival." They believe that we need to quit judging ourselves and learn to accept ourselves as we are.

They provide a series of affirmations we need to tell ourselves in order to enhance our self-esteem. First, "I am worthwhile because I breathe and feel and am aware." Well, shouldn't that also apply to animals? And do I lose my self-esteem if I stop breathing? In a sense, this affirmation is a take off on Rene Descartes' statement, "I think, therefore I am." They seem to be saying "I am, therefore I am worthwhile."



Well, you can see the problem with pop psychology's discussion of self-esteem. Rarely is it defined, and when it is defined, it can easily lead to evil and all kinds of sin.

Our esteem as human beings has to do with the fact that we are created in God's image. Our worth never fluctuates because it is anchored in the fact that the Creator made us. Psalm 8 says: "You have made him [mankind] a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands, You have put all things under his feet."

So the good news is that we bear God's image, but the bad news is that all of these characteristics have been tainted by sin. Our worth should not be tied up in what we do, but in whom God made us to be and what He has done for us.

**Are you good with numbers?**

- Adding up to 1000:  
Using the digit "8" 8 times (and no other digits), add numbers together to reach a sum of 1000.
- What number am I?  
I am a three digit number. My second digit is four times more than my third digit. My first digit is seven less than my second digit.
- Arrange- And- Add Number Puzzle:
- Using just one digit in each, place the digits 1 through 9 in the squares in such a way that each vertical, horizontal and diagonal line adds up to 15.


**Answers from last issue:**

- 1- It contains the numbers one to nine, in alphabetical order.
- 2-  $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+(8 \times 9) = 100$
- 3- Meat
- 4- The other coin is a quarter.
- 5- Tip both timers over at the same time. When the 2 minute timer runs out, drop the eggs in and cook them until the 5 minute timer runs out!



**SMS** fellowship was blessed with wonderful speakers who came from all over the nation this past month; also we took the blessing of the month of Kiahk praises which was followed by a liturgy every Saturday morning. This month with the grace of God, **SMS** fellowship will be blessed by the speakers who are scheduled as follows:

- 1/4 Fr. Isaac Milad Androus (St. George Church in Bellflower ,CA)
- 1/11 Fr. Bishoy Androus (St. Mark in Washington DC)
- 1/18 Fr. Joseph Boules (St. Mary & St. Verena Church in Anaheim, CA)
- 1/25 Fr. Boules Baky Asaad (St. Verena and Three Holy Youth Church in Orange)

- 6:30 – 7:30 pm Agape
- 7:30 – 8:00 pm Praises & Songs
- 8:00 – 9:00 pm Lecture – Q&A

**Feasts of the Month:**

- Jan 4-6 Nativity Paramouni
- Jan 7 Feast of the Nativity
- Jan 13 Departure of St John the Evangelist
- Jan 15 Feast of the Circumcision
- Jan 20 Feast of the Epiphany
- Jan 31 Departure of St Anthony the Great

## Saint Moses the Strong Fellowship

**إذ كان كل شئ يتم بإرادة الله، ولا شئ يحدث علي وجه الأرض إلا بأمره وحده، إذن فلماذا لا يمنع الله الشر قبل أن يقع؟**

لقداسة البابا شنودة الثالث

قبل الإجابة، ننبه علي ان في سؤالك بعض الأخطاء، فمن الخطأ أن نقول إنه لا يحدث شئ علي الأرض إلا بأمره. فعلي الأرض تحدث أحياناً أخطاء وشرور، وجرائم ومظالم، فهل هذه كلها بأمره؟ حاشا.. علي الأرض يحدث قتل وزني وسرقة وغش وكذب.. فهل أمر الله بكل هذا؟ كلا طبعاً. وهل يريد الله هذا؟ كلا طبعاً.. إذن عبارة "كل شئ يتم بإرادة الله" هي عبارة خاطئة لاهوتياً. لأن "كل شئ" تشمل الشرور أيضاً. والشرور لا يمكن أن تتم بإرادة الله، فالله لا يريد الشر. الله لا يريد إلا الخير. "يريد أن الجميع يخلصون، وإلي معرفة الحق يقبلون". فكل الخير الذي يتم علي الأرض، للناس، أو من الناس، إنما يتم بإرادة الله. أما الشر فلا. فما هو موقف الشر إذن من إرادة الله؟ الله الذي أعطى الإنسان حرية إرادة، يسمح له بأن يفعل ما يشاء، خيراً كان أم شراً، وإلا صار مسيراً. فالخير الذي يفعله، يفعله بإرادة الله. والشر الذي يعمله، إنما يكون بسماح من الله، وليس بإرادته. وهناك فرق بين إرادة الله وسماحه. إرادته كلها خير. أما السماح فيتفق مع حرية الإرادة

التي وهبها الله لبعض مخلوقاته



### كلمات منفعة

إن كان واحداً من أولادك يريد أن يكون قوياً لا تحطم فيه هذه الرغبة إنما وجهها توجيهاً سليماً بأن يكون قوياً في روحياته ، في إرادته في إنتصاره على الخطية ، في خدمته في قوة أقدانه للغير وفي محبته وبذله.

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