



The Transfiguration

Aim:

- ❖ To learn about the events and the nature of the transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ To know what kinds of bodies we will have when we depart from this world.

Memory Verse:

“Then human beings will be like angels of God in heaven” (Matthew 22:30)

References:

- ❖ Mark 9: 2-8, Luke 9: 30-32
- ❖ Orthodoxsermons.org/churchfeasts/transfiguration (by Deacon Raouf Ibrahim)

For the Servant:

The feast of the transfiguration is the feast of Glory.

It reveals to us:

- ❖ The glory of God as He is in Himself; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The glory of the Son of God Christ our Lord in His humanity and His Divinity.
- ❖ The Glory of each one of us; who are made in the image and likeness of God.
- ❖ The understanding to what our calling is in this life.

Introduction:

The Transfiguration, which is one of the Lord's feasts, and the Church celebrates it on the 13th of the Coptic month Misra, which is the 19th of August. The story of the Transfiguration is mentioned in the Holy Gospels of Mark and Luke (Mark 9: 2-8, Luke 9: 30-32).

As for His divinity, it is evident that in a moment He was transfigured to this illuminating bright-full aspect, whose brightness was magnificent... and about which it was said: “His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them” (Mark 6:2). The Lord willed to show to His disciples that He had put on this human body, simply out of His humility, and His self-abnegation.



Lesson Outline:

1) Graduation in the Transfiguration

The Lord Christ took steps in the revelation of His nature, even toward His saintly apostles. This Transfiguration on the mount of Tabor was the simplest image of His Transfiguration, in spite of its magnificence and its glory, in its light and in the testimony of the Father from the cloud.

Another kind of the Lord's transfiguration was in His resurrection and His ascension. That glorious Resurrection in which He rose with a glorious body and was able to come out of the tomb while it was closed, and was able to enter to the apostles while the doors were closed (John 20:19), in a calm way that would not terrify them.

His ascension to heaven with a body that is over the level of the earth's gravitation is like His transfiguration, "He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight ... while they looked steadfastly toward heaven" (Acts 1: 9-10). Our teacher the apostle saint Mark says about that: "So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

This transfiguration in the resurrection and the ascension, happened in a manner, which amazed them and made them feel His divinity, but it did not terrify them.

The last transfiguration will be in His second coming when "the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints" (Jude 14), "when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26), He "will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works" (Matthew 16:27), "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25: 31-32).

2) With Moses And Elijah

Application 1: who is witnessing to the Lord's divinity and humanity.

Moses and Elijah in their transfiguration symbolized the whole human nature. In the same way the Lord gave us His Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah, as a symbol of the transfiguration which the Lord will grant to all human beings in eternity.

1. Elijah represents the virgins (of either sex), and Moses represents the married. Rather Moses married more than once. He married Zipporah the daughter of the priest of Midian (Exodus 2: 19-22). He also married an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1), who was a symbol of the acceptance of the Gentiles. All this is a symbol, because the transfiguration will equally be the destiny of the virgins and the married.



2. Moses represented those who were dead. And Elijah represented the living who have not yet died. That would symbolize, in the second coming of Christ, the dead who will rise, and the living who will be lifted up to the clouds, as saint Paul said in (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

3. Elijah represents those who have lived a life of ascetism in the mountains, as he was himself on the mountain of Carmel; and Moses represents those who have lived in the world with their families in a social life.

4. One of them represents the life of monks, and the other represents the ministry and the guidance of crowds. One of them is in the style of Miriam, and the other is in the style of Martha, with the difference in measuring ... all of these two kinds will be transfigured with the Lord.

5. Moses represents meekness and Elijah represents the fiery jealousy. The one represents forgiveness, and the other represents punishment ... (Numbers 12:3, 2 Kings 1:10,12).

As if Christ our Lord says: “I shall assemble all of them to Me in the transfiguration”. Him who was married, and him who was a virgin; him who lived the life of meditation, and him who lived the life of service; him who was meek and calm, and him who was firm and strong; him who lived on the mountain, and him who lived in the city. The important thing is that they live a life of righteousness “who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Philippians 3:21).

Application 2: What is it then that will happen to that human body in the resurrection? The apostle says:

- ❖ “So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ... It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15: 42-44).
- ❖ “And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man” (1 Corinthians 15:49).
- ❖ “For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”. Death will then be transformed into victory, and we shall say: “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” (1 Corinthians 15: 52-55).

Then human beings will be “like angels of God in heaven” (Matthew 22:30), as the Lord has said. Our glorified body in the resurrection, will be a body that does not hunger nor thirst, nor get tired nor become ill, nor will die nor will be corrupted; but rather will be elevated upward in the transfiguration of the human nature. How will be the new nature of our bodies that will become spiritual heavenly bodies? Will they move as the angels who pass on from heaven to earth in the twinkle of an eye? Will they possess the spiritual perception instead of the ordinary vision?

3) Other Kinds Of Transfiguration

(this is a bit deep for some children, but I added this just in case, some servants would like to go deep with their children)

We mentioned before that the human nature obtains a kind of transfiguration in the general resurrection, when it will be clothed with spiritual heavenly incorruptible



bodies, and human beings will become like the angels of God in heaven. But there are some kinds of transfiguration which happen here in life on earth such as:

A. The transfiguration of thinking

Sometimes thinking is lucid and bright, bringing out extremely ravishing thoughts. That happens to a poet whose imagination and thinking becomes radiant in writing a poem of verse; or to a writer who composes a story or a novel while he is at the top of his creative capacity, in a state of transfiguration, in the depth of intelligence, and the depth of imagination.

B. Transfiguration in the fields of many arts and gifts

It happens to an artist, or a designer, or a sculptor, or a musician, or a poet, or a novelist. Any one of these gifted people presents a marvelous masterpiece whose author is then described as being in a state of transfiguration in his feelings and senses and thinking, during the production of his artistic work. All these cases may be for a moment, during the production and the fabrication, and may be representing a case of perpetual transfiguration of gifts, and may appear even in infancy.

Yes, undoubtedly, gifts are transfigurations that God grants to man. Because gifts are extraordinary capabilities that God gives, they are of many kinds, which the apostle St. Paul mentioned, in his first epistle to the Corinthians saying: “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills” (1 Corinthians 12: 7-11).

C. Transfiguration with regards to certain definite spiritual qualities

In humans, senses have singular characteristics with regards to their realization: in mercy for instance or tenderness or commiseration, or the forgiveness of offenders as we read about these

Sunday School Curriculum Grade 7

things in some stories about Anba Abram, the bishop of Fayoum, or Anba Sarabamoun, the bishop of Menoufiah, or Anba Rewiss.

This transfiguration may appear in the thoughts or the responses of some saints, as it was mentioned in the words of Anba Antonious or the sayings of many fathers, which were recorded in “the Paradise of the Monks” ... words at which, man stands amazed, and meditates upon their depth, and says: “Undoubtedly, this was a case of transfiguration in which the fathers pronounced what they said, so that the generations have preserved their words”.

D. Transfiguration as of the great works of grace in man

As the apostle St. Paul said: “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10). Extraordinary capabilities and gifts are transfigured in man as a result of the work of grace. His image is granted a form that amazes those who see him as a result of transfiguration. It was said about St. Stephan in the story of his martyrdom, that during his trial before the congregation of the Jews: “All who sat



in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel” (Acts 6:15).

Sometimes it happens during certain dreams that we see a person whom we know, in a wonderful image or in a shining form, although we did not see him like that in his earthly life. But he appears to us during the dream in a state of transfiguration.

Conclusion:

Jesus’ transfiguration was the first fruits of the transfiguration of our human nature. “Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Philippians 3:21).

Applications:

- ❖ Compare between re-incarnation and the appearance of Moses and Elijah with the Lord during the Transfiguration.
- ❖ Write about what our glorious bodies will be able to do that we cannot do with our present earthly bodies.

