



The Morning Prayer

What is the Agpeya



The Origin of the word Agpeya:

The word *Agpeya*, is a Coptic (ancient Egyptian) word meaning “Book of Hours.” It is based on the Coptic root word, *ti agp*, which means “hour.”

The Agpeya:

The book of AGPEYA contains the seven canonical prayers which have been cherished and practiced by the faithful Copts of the Orthodox Church. The seven canonical prayers have their root in the Psalms. David said; “Seven times a day, do I praise you of your righteous Judgement” (Psalm 119:164).

What are the prayers of the Agpeya?

Hour	Commemoration	Time
Morning Prayer (First Hour)	This hour is prayed early in the morning, and commemorates the Resurrection of the Lord (Psalm 62:1)	6 a.m.
Third Hour	In this hour of the day, the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles as tongues of fire (Acts 2:15). At this hour also, Our Lord Jesus Christ was condemned.	9 a.m.
Sixth Hour	In this hour, Our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified (John 19:14).	12 p.m.
Ninth Hour	This hour commemorates the death of our Lord in the flesh upon the cross and the testimony of the thief at his right hand (Matthew 21:46).	3 p.m.
Vespers (Eleventh Hour)	Instituted to commemorate the removing of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ from the Cross. The wrapping of it in linen, and the anointing of it with sweet spices.	6 p.m.
Twelfth Hour	This hour commemorates the laying down of the body of Christ in the grave. It corresponds to the last hour of the day before retiring, since sleep is but a temporary death (Psalm 62:6).	9 p.m.
Midnight Prayer	This hour includes three services corresponding to the three times our Lord prayed in Gethsemane (Psalm 118:62).	12 am

The structure of the Hours

Every one of the Hours follows the same basic outline:

- ❖ Introduction, which includes the Lord's Prayer
- ❖ Prayer of Thanksgiving
- ❖ Psalm 51
- ❖ Various Psalms
- ❖ A reading from the Holy Gospel
- ❖ Short Litanies
- ❖ "Lord Have Mercy" is then chanted 41 times (this represents the 39 lashes Jesus Christ received before the crucifixion, plus one for the spear in His side, plus one for the *Crown of Thorns*)
- ❖ Conclusion
- ❖ Personal prayers

The aim of the Morning Prayer



- ❖ Morning Prayer is designed to be prayed early for the coming of the true Light which is our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ The Morning Prayer is mainly associated with the eternity of God, His incarnation, His resurrection from the dead.
- ❖ It is intended to offer thanks to Him for having risen us from the sleep, beseeching Him to shine upon us, enlighten our lives, and grant us the power of His resurrection.

Psalm 1

The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly

- ¹ Blessed *is* the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
- ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
- ³ He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.
- ⁴ The ungodly *are* not so,
But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.
- ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the
righteous.
- ⁶ For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
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Walking not in the counsel of the ungodly means refusing to follow any advice to behave as an unbeliever.

Nor standing in the way of sinners means not contemplating a level of involvement of with people of bad character.

Nor sitting in the seat of scoffers means not accepting a comfortable place among those who have no regard for what is right

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Lighting up the heart, soul and mind with divine inspiration, the law of the Lord brings refreshment and hope as it is contemplated and thoughtfully reflected upon continually.

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As a strong, upright tree, he is firmly positioned to endure hardships and produce evidence of God's sustenance, which is symbolised in the reference to rivers of water.

The closeness to God comes through studying His Word, following His Way, and obeying His Will.

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The life which has no root cannot absorb spiritual strength from God and is so dry and light that the wind of the Holy Spirit blows it away as worthless chaff.

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God's righteous judgement upon the ungodly will leave them in a state of collapse with no support and as unrepentant sinners they are refused any of the blessings that the godly, righteous saints of God enjoy together for eternity in God's presence.

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Here there are two types of people, the godly and the ungodly. Two different ways, of those who are saved and of those who perish; and the loving Lord Jesus Christ has intimate knowledge and everlasting affection for the right way, because He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

How can I pray the Psalms?

Before prayer:

- ❖ Think deeply of Christ so that He may come and help you.
- ❖ Begin with bowing and making the sign of the cross as you stand and prepare what to say.
- ❖ Prayer is NOT reading!
- ❖ You can begin by singing a hymn to help you start praying.
- ❖ Stand when you pray and raise your hands and eyes to God.
- ❖ Be assured that the Lord will listen to everything you say.

How can I pray the Psalms?

During prayer:

- ❖ Focus your attention on the words you are saying.
- ❖ Do not be in a hurry!
- ❖ When you find words that affect you, repeat them and contemplate on them.
- ❖ Do not end your prayer the moment you recite the Psalms because the aim of the Agpeya is to indulge completely in private prayers.

After prayer:

- ❖ Bow to the Lord and thank Him for His grace.
- ❖ Sit to read your Holy Bible or do a useful work (deed).

Why do we use the Psalms in prayers?

- ❖ Psalms were very important in the Old Testament; they were used in the worship of the Jews, and this custom was still kept in the days of the apostles (Acts 3:1 and 1 Corinthians 14:26).
- ❖ The Law of our fathers since the days of the apostles have mentioned the psalms and advised us to recite them.
- ❖ There are no other words better than the words of God to speak to God with. It's the same as the lawyer who uses the text of the Law when he speaks to the judge.
- ❖ Many of our private prayers are private requests, but the psalms open the domain of contemplation before us and teach us the prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

Conclusion

Prayer is considered our spiritual food that we need in order to grow spiritually. Every day, we eat multiple times and drink multiple times. Similarly, we need to pray multiple times every day to equivalently grow in the spirit as we do in the body.