



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday of Publican & Pharisee

February 1, 2015

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,  
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

## We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

*It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us* 2 Corinthians 4: 5 – 8.

## GLAD TIDINGS

+++ We are saddened to share with our faithful the death of our good parishioner, +Ann Sabo recently. Today, requested by Pani Lucas, at 9: 15 AM, we celebrate a Memorial Service for the repose of her soul praying the gracious Lord comforts her survivors and friends and creates for her a blessed repose and Eternal Memory! Please pray for the repose of her soul.

+++ The next Pirohi Sale will be Saturday, February 14.



+++ Monday is the solemn feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the temple. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 7:00 PM. Please join us in prayer and praise.

+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Father Thomas, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie and Andrea.

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$325.00; Candles, \$12.00; Parish Dues, \$50.00; Diocesan Dues, \$65.00; Energy, \$5.00; Kitchen, \$185.00; Holyday, \$20.00; Food Coupons, \$360.00, for a total of \$1022.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Bob Gorbich, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1819.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$5750 on this project to date!

+++ The Clothing Drive is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ A vestment closet is being installed at the right rear of the chapel.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.

# About Icons



An icon is an inspired painting on wood or other material which depicts our Lord, the all-holy Virgin, the saints or events in their lives. Icons are reproduced in all sizes, as appropriate, and may be portable or stationary, that is, painted on a wall or placed in an icon screen. The veneration offered an icon is to the person represented, not to the material itself.

Icons are a reminder to believers that the Church is the abode of Christ and his chosen saints. Icons are venerated and a candle lighted before them to remind us that Christ is the light of the world and believers are called to reflect that light in everyday life. It has been said and is entirely true that an Orthodox parish church is representative of God's eternal kingdom, the place where his glory dwells, so that He rightly and truly dwells there. Subsequently, appropriate behavior is called for when entering an Orthodox church. Because the parish church is the local part of the Kingdom it is appropriately filled with representations of the angels and glorified saints who serve Almighty God so well.

Orthodox churches are traditionally replete with icons and the immediate first action of any believer upon entering into the presence of God would be to venerate and acknowledge his presence by bowing in the direction of the altar table on which is enthroned the tabernacle containing in a golden vessel the Body and Blood of Christ. This is just beyond the Royal Doors of the icon screen and the sanctuary curtain. Then the presence of the Birthgiver of God and various saints are acknowledged by venerating their icons if available on the sacramental table or analogion stands. Afterwards a candle is lighted to burn as a remembrance of our continuing prayers in thanksgiving, intercession or for a special need or intention. Depicting saints on the walls of parish churches reflects the reality of the number of holy ones glorified already in paradise. The believer is comforted and encouraged he is surrounded by the saints and bodiless powers, citizens of the eternal kingdom.

The word icon, so badly misused, even abused in today's secular culture, simply mean "image." Icons are one of the most distinctive features of the Church and as representatives of individual piety and spirituality, go back to the earliest days of the Church. They are the only authentic Christian art form and are sometimes referred to as a "window into heaven" and are called at other times "doorways into stillness and



closeness with God." Whatever name one is ascribed to an icon, it stands for and represents something other than itself.

The icon is a spiritual representation of a holy person or event in salvation history and is designed to lead us to contemplate or imitate that person or the virtues of a sacred event. The icon uplifts and urges us to honor a sacred object while instructing us in the truths of faith. Icons arouse in us a blessed expectation and appreciation of the way in which our God works miracles in our lives. Icons resonate this truth: God is with us.

Icons can be painted images on wood, or as frescoes/mosaics on walls which bear witness to the reality of God's kingdom among us already here on earth. They proclaim the gospel message in visual and stimulating color. Using line, form and color, icons show sacred persons and events not as they appear to the physical eye, but as a reality which has been changed, transfigured and made holy by the powerful grace of God. They depict the spiritual eternal values and qualities of the soul. They show the workings of grace within an individual and manifest the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Icons are to be honored, respected and venerated for whom and what they depict, but never worshipped for that is reserved alone for God in the Holy Trinity. Here we attempt to present a practical study of the icon showing what the figures represent, how color, position and clothing can have a deep and significant meaning in understanding and interpreting this sacred art. Many unfortunately think icons are simply to be admired, but they have a zealous teaching vocation as well, as in times past when even the illiterate could prayerfully gaze upon an icon and be instructed profoundly in truths of faith. They are witnesses to the possibility of man being holy as the expectation of God anticipates.

Icons in a church are arranged primarily on an icon screen which is a large presentation stretching across the front of the nave. The icon screen has three doors. The middle set is commonly known as the "Holy Doors," "Royal Doors" although some call them the "Beautiful Gates." The side doors are called "Deacon's Doors" since through them typically pass the diaconal servers. The icon screen may be very elaborate with multiple tiers, or a simple arrangement according to local custom. In Slavic churches the icon screen oftentimes reaches the ceiling of the sanctuary.

On it are found icons of Christ, the Birthgiver of God and the saints. There can be up to four tiers of icons but the arrangement must follow a particular pattern from left to right.

In general presentation, there is an iconic ranking according to the place of the saints in God's plan of salvation. Their ranking begins, after Christ and the Birthgiver of God with St. John the Baptist, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. Peter the Apostle, St. Paul of Tarsus, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom, St. Nicholas of Myra, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. George the Martyr, St. Theodore, St. Demetrius the Martyr.

The act of painting an icon is a definite experience of worship and service. Before beginning, an icon painter must fast for a specified time and involve himself in a period of prayer asking the Holy Spirit to guide his hand in manifesting God's glory. He or she is also bound to follow a definite and quite ancient pattern in painting, using a particular code of colors, positions and bodily gestures.

Icons do not attempt to realistically copy nature or produce a likely duplicate of creation. Instead of portraying the physical natural world which will eventually pass away, the iconographer shows the spiritual nature of God's creation and depicts a person who is now triumphant in the eternal kingdom of heaven; in other words, in a physical way depicting the spiritual values of the soul. Earthly time, space and emotion are meaningless in an icon. There is a definite sense of timelessness and spiritual truth portrayed in this art form, which has no equal in the secular world.

The following listing shows what various elements of icon painting signify and how the construction of an icon imparts a Godly sense of wisdom and truth to the believer.

Sadness on the face of the Birthgiver indicates future sorrow as she contemplates the passion and death of her Son and our Saviour.



Weeping angels indicate anticipation and participation in the passion of Christ.

The nimbus, corona or halo portrays holiness, sainthood.

Realistic gestures such as resting head on hand, or touching thumb to nose are simply human loving gestures.

A covered face means the saint experienced extreme sorrow for the love of Christ while on earth.

Raised hands indicate an attitude of prayer.

Frontal views indicate a high ranking in the listing of saints.

The imperial chair shows a kingly position. A saint who was earthly royalty or Christ as King is portrayed in glory upon a throne as is the Birthgiver with Christ child.

Early bishops are portrayed in their episcopal phelonions covered with crosses and stoles. In later years as episcopal vesture changed, they were shown in sakkos.

The crown is a symbol of martyrdom, but there is never any suffering depicted in an icon. Martyrdom means one sacrificed life for Christ which is victory.

Faces are emotionless to show an ascetic lifestyle since there can be no range of emotions in heaven where the fullness of love reigns supreme, thus completely satisfying the soul.

Wrinkles indicate earthly age and suffering.



Prophets are usually painted with white hair and brown and olive tunics. Occasionally dark hair is used if the prophet was of youthful age or escaped unusual suffering while on earth.

Overshadowed eyes are indicative of a person observing the world and its activities.

There are no shadows in iconography because shadows are the result of light from the world. Illumination or the experience of the Holy Spirit transcends all other light. Motion is seldom depicted for this indicates a journey from one place to another as well as the passage of time which has no place in eternity.

The Birthgiver of God often looks beyond the Christ child which indicates a vision of the forthcoming passion of our Lord. It is a sign of contemplation.

There are several types of Marian icons. The Birthgiver icons; the Mother of God at prayer with outstretched arms is called the Orans icon which means her in prayer. On the famous icon of the Sorrowful Mother, known in the west as "Perpetual Help" the Mother of God contemplates the passion with two angels in the upper corners holding the instruments of the passion. There are other types which depict the Birthgiver pointing to Jesus as the way of salvation.

The nose is elongated and thin since it is no longer needed for detecting earthly smells and the holy fragrance of sanctity satisfies beyond imagination. The mouth is small since there is no need for spoken language or physical nourishment. Communication is in spiritual language since we know everything there is to know through contemplation and prayer.

Eyes are depicted in iconography very large because they have experienced the ultimate reality which is the sight and vision of Almighty God.

Full or three quarter figures are portrayed as having a spiritual conversation with the world. They attempt to relate and witness to God's presence in our lives.

A large forehead indicates spiritual wisdom being shared by the Holy Spirit. Subdued colors are indicators of spiritual victory.

The stars on the veil of the Virgin are indicative of perpetual virginity and are sometimes found on the garments of a virgin or martyr.

The holy Virgin is attired in blue or dark red since she is both virgin (red) and mother (blue).

As a coloring system, green/brown represent earth and its vegetation while blue is a symbol of heaven and contemplation. Blue also has the value of fidelity.

Scarlet/red means strength or is symbolic of martyrdom. Deep red indicates the blood and passion of Christ and imperial status.

White indicates purity and the invisible presence of God who is a pure Spirit. It is the color of triumph and victory. Gold is used to represent royalty, magnificence, the Sun or divine energy.

Icons have three levels of meaning. First they remind us of the reality and truth of revealed texts and occasions in salvation history and the individuals whom they witness. Secondly, the icon represents the association of Almighty God with his chosen people and how He uses people to manifest his glory, love and power. Thirdly, salvation is available to those who pray and recognize God's unending love for mankind and that each of us is infinitely precious in the mind and eyes of the Creator.



Icons are windows into heaven since the holy ones depicted are already in the arms of the Saviour and are depicted in victory over the trials and temptations of earthly life, witnessing for us the never-ending joy of paradise for which created man is destined.

# WHO REALLY WROTE THE BIBLE?

This best-seller has greatly influenced our lives. Who penned and preserved these extraordinary books?

By all accounts the Bible is the most astonishing book the world has ever seen. This unique book:

Claims to foretell the future.  
Promises human beings can live forever.

Reveals the way to prosperity and happiness.

Explains why human beings suffer and the real purpose of life.

Shows how men and women can defeat every human weakness, problems and fear.

Proposes the revolutionary idea that a personal and living God created all things.

Announces that human beings are destined to join the family of God.

That its unique insights are applicable to all citizens of the

world; that all mankind benefits from its revelation.

## Putting the Book Together

This book, the Bible, "had to be strangest publishing project of all time," one observer writes.

"No editor or publishing house was responsible to oversee 40 independent authors, representing 20 varied occupations, living in 10 countries during a 1,500 year span, working in three languages, with a cast of 2930 characters in 1,551 places."

"This massive volume covers every conceivable subject, expressed in all literary forms,



prose, poetry, romance, mystery, biography, science and history."

The authors of this incredible Book included kings, statesmen, fishermen, priests, seers, a physician, a tax collector, a farmer, a general, and a tent-making rabbi. Four books detail the life of a carpenter-turned teacher, who the Bible claims is actually God in human form.

How did these fascinating writings we call the Bible originate? Who really wrote its various books? How did the Bible manage to survive for thousands of years?

Today, there is still great disagreement about how and why the Bible was written, preserved and transmitted to our day. So we ask, Who really wrote the Bible and why was it put together?

Is this book we call the Bible inerrant, as some claim? Can it be trusted to contain no errors and be literally true? Is it infallible? Are its teachings perfect and unailing?

If you answered "yes" to these queries, you obviously believe

God directed the writing of this Book. If you answered "No" then you believe it is a compilation of human hands and minds.

The famed American Psychologist, Eric From said "I do not look at it (the Bible) as the "word of God." Yet, to me it is an extraordinary book...it expresses the genius of a people."

### **Which View is Correct?**

Disagreement about these two questions has torn apart more than one Protestant denomination. It has caused disagreement even among Catholic scholars and too many Orthodox observers still cannot come to understand its actual meaning, even from their own tradition. Some biblical scholars and authorities seriously question its accuracy and infallibility.

Many researchers are not sure which of the sayings attributed to Jesus are really spoken by him. The miraculous events mentioned in connection with the life of Jesus are often discounted.

Some scholars question whether Moses really wrote original

material found in such books as Exodus and Deuteronomy.

Not long ago a popular book claimed the first five books of the Hebrew Bible which Christians call the Old Testament, were the products of four authors and an editor who wove the works together. In this view, the idea of Moses as author is considered as nothing more than a religiously motivated "pious fraud"

Some Christian and Judaic scholars seem untroubled by this possibility, that the Bible could be just the work of mere human beings. How do you feel about the Bible? Is it divinely inspired or merely the creation of well-meaning but perhaps misguided individuals?

## **Two Choices on Inspiration**

The question of who is responsible for "writing" the Bible turns on a single issue. Either the entirety of the Bible is God-breathed truth or it is not. There is no middle ground.

Suppose human beings put pen to writing material and inked their own ideas, making empty claims

in someone they call Yahweh. Then the Bible has no real authority.

True, we might agree with some of the moral principles it offers. Then again, we might accept some of the great moral principles given by Mohammed or Buddha, Confucius or Plato, Abraham Lincoln, or Albert Schweitzer. This is not God authority, however.

On the other hand, if the Bible is the Word of a personal God, it must be living truth. It cannot contradict itself; it must be inerrant and infallible. But is it? How is one to know?

Let us look at the claims of biblical scholars that not only did God's Spirit inspire the writers of all the books of the Bible, but God also superintended the transmission of these writings and their collection. Can we prove this? Is the Bible truly stamped with the impression of God's authority? Did an eternal God guide the writing, preservation and transmission of his message to mankind? Does God actually speak to mortal man in the process? Many would think this



idea absurd. But other millions believe it. Who is right?

Almost everyone has expressed their opinion and judgment of the Bible. No less than Mark Twain said "The Bible has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables and some blood-drenched history and some good morals and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies."

Woodrow Wilson insisted, "When you have read the Bible you will know it is the Word of God."

The person who believes the Bible is inerrant and infallible must come to a staggering conclusion. That person will find himself or herself on the horns of a great dilemma, faced with making monumental judgments of fact and truth.

To illustrate the point, let us look at a few of the events said to have occurred in the life of Jesus among us. Either Jesus walked on the water or He did not. Either Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave or He did not. Either Jesus was raised from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father or He does not.

If these are not true, then Jesus and his apostles are charlatans.

At least the individuals who wrote the books in his name were such. The Bible then, would have no authority.

Let's view some events from the Hebrew Bible, The Old Testament. We are faced with the same bewildering choices.

Either the Red Sea parted and the Israelites crossed it with dry sandals or the sea did not part and there was no crossing. Either the earth ceased to rotate during the long day of Joshua or it did not. Either the walls of Jericho tumbled down or they did not. Either the Lord stooped down, grabbed a handful of clay and created man or He did not. If all these events happened, they could only have been caused by the hand of a supernatural being, God himself if you will, who controls everything in the universe.

Time and again the inspired individuals who wrote the text of the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, claimed they were merely dutiful scribes. They said

they were only recording the words of a personage called the Lord or God. They were all saying en masse: *God really spoke these words we are writing.*

So we have to be frank about it. Either they had been out in the Holy Land sun entirely too long or their claims were true. Either God spoke to them or they, or those writing in their name, were hallucinating, were willingly deceived or were outright lying.

Perhaps the Bible is really the Word of God ...*the Word of God*. Do we realize who its Author would be? Why, the very Person who created everything that exists! We would have to sit up and listen to what He is saying, alter our thinking, change our lives. Either position creates awesome consequences for our lives.

### **Who Really Wrote the Book?**

Is the Bible God's mind in print?  
Is He speaking to us through its printed pages?

One Bible scholar and researcher counted more than 3,800 times when the writers of Scripture

used some variant of the formula, *The Word of the Lord came to me, saying...*

Now that seems to be an extravagant claim. Or is it? God, or the Lord, they stated with clear-headed authority had actually communicated his message personally to them.

Ezekiel said, *Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying...* Ezekiel 6: 1. Amos prefaces sections of his writings with, *Thus says the Lord....* Several books begin with the introductory statement, as does Micah, with these words, *The Word of the Lord came to me.*

Much of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers is said to be the actual words of God. Over and over, the phrase is used, *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying...* In Exodus 33: 11, we read with astonishment, *So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.*

Did this really happen? Is not this asking us to believe just a little too much? If your friend were to tell you, "I just spoke to God, and he said...." you would begin to



wonder about his or her sanity. Yet, virtually every writer in the Bible claimed he had communicated in some way with God.

The apostle Paul is considered one of the giants of Christianity. He said he saw and spoke with Jesus *after* his death and Resurrection. Paul and the other apostles claimed their message came directly from Jesus. If you will, from God, himself, from the Trinity.

Let's be honest. We are sophisticated people. Did Paul really talk with God?

What about the astounding biblical claim that perhaps as many as two and a half million men, women and children heard God talk to them from a mountain in the Sinai?

Did a personal Creator God really plant his feet on a Middle East mountain and thunder the Ten Commandments as the Book of Exodus claims? The thought seems preposterous to many.

But simply think. If the eternal God himself wrote the Ten

Commandments, then they are stamped with the greatest authority in the universe and are binding on all who live. If God really wrote those words we call the Ten Commandments, we would have to acknowledge they have authority in our lives.

Much of the Old Testament is said to be actual words that God spoke to humanity. Either this claim is true or the Bible is little more than a series of Hans Christian Anderson or Dr. Seuss fairy tales.

Consider the following claims. The last 27 chapters of the Hebrew Bible's book of Isaiah are written as though they were largely the actual word of God or the Lord. It is as if God sat down and wrote a long letter to anyone interested enough to read it.

In this "letter from God" we read an astounding claim. He makes time and again. Here are a few examples:

*I, even I, am the Lord and besides me there is no Saviour*  
Isaiah 43: 11.

*I am the First and I am the Last;  
besides me there is no God*  
Isaiah 44: 6.

*I am God, and there is no other; I  
am God and there is none like  
me, declaring the end from the*

*beginning and from ancient times  
things that are not yet done*  
Isaiah 46: 9, 10.

Are these the words of God  
powerful beyond all imagination  
and truth? Or was Isaiah merely  
using brilliant literary device?

### **Did God Walk the Earth?**

The Old Testament stories about  
God or the Lord as someone who  
walked with and spoke to human  
beings face to face.

The Lord spoke to Adam and Eve  
(Genesis 3) He spoke to the first  
murderer, Cain (Genesis 4: 5 -  
16). The Lord spoke to Noah  
(Genesis 6: 13 - 21). He talked  
and walked with his friend,  
Abraham and with Abraham's  
wife, Sarah (Genesis 18).

There should be no problem or  
surprise for Christians that the  
Hebrew Bible claims individuals  
saw God in human form. After all,  
that Hebrew or Old Testament  
God, the Lord, is the one the New  
Testament says emptied himself  
and became the man, Jesus.

For thirty three and a half years  
the Book claims God, yes, God  
walked this earth in human form  
eating, sleeping, drinking,  
laughing, crying, talking,  
touching, healing, teaching, and  
finally dying. Then this man Jesus  
was raised from the dead and  
returned to the Father.

At least that is what an epistle  
written by a follower of his, John,  
says happened. *In the beginning  
was the Word*, John wrote of  
Jesus, *and the Word was with  
God and the Word was God. He  
was in the beginning with God. All  
things were made through him  
and without him nothing was  
made that was made...and the  
Word became flesh and dwelt  
among us* John 1:1 - 3; 14.

Is there a personal God family?  
Did one of its members actually  
become human some 2,000 years  
ago? Did this same God in earlier



times actually talk with men and women of earth?

These are tough – and incredible – awesome questions we must answer. It's a quandary for our day, in particular. We must admit from a scientific 20<sup>th</sup> century vantage point, all this does sound rather like so much human myth.

### **Beyond Human Comprehension?**

Let us look again at our basic problem when deciding whether God is the real author of the Bible's thoughts. We are faced by a Book with *supernatural* claims and we are just human limited mortals.

How can we mere mortals possibly know whether this book we call the Bible is really the Word of God to the human race? We can only see of God as much as He permits himself to be understood, but we do know what we see, hear, feel and smell.

That is the way it is with the Bible. It talks about a Being and events none of us have seen, or heard or felt or tested or smelled. How can we possibly prove

whether the Bible is the inspired Word of God? That is, whether God really wrote the Bible through his human servants?

You and I did not see Jesus rise from the dead. We never saw a highway-sized trench open up in the Red Sea except perhaps, at the cinema. None of us has gaped at a grotesquely withered hand and deformed arm being made new. We have not seen God face to face. How do we know Moses did? Or Abraham? Or Jeremiah? Or Peter? Or Paul?

Why should we accept countless miraculous happenings recorded in the Bible? Or the statement, *The Word of the Lord came to me?*

How can each of us know whether the Bible is inspired Word of God? The answer is in the Book. The Bible itself holds the key.

Jesus gave the formula for determining the value and truthfulness of biblical writings. He said *My doctrine is not my own, but his who sent me. If anyone wants to do his will, he shall know concerning the doctrine whether it is from God or whether*

*I speak on my own authority*  
John 7: 16, 17.

The revealed formula for proving the truth of God's revelation to us is simply to do what God says. *Each day they studied the scriptures to see whether these things were so...Many came to believe* Acts of the Apostles 17: 11, 12; Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the Lord of hosts; Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven, to pour down blessing upon you without measure Malachi 3: 10?

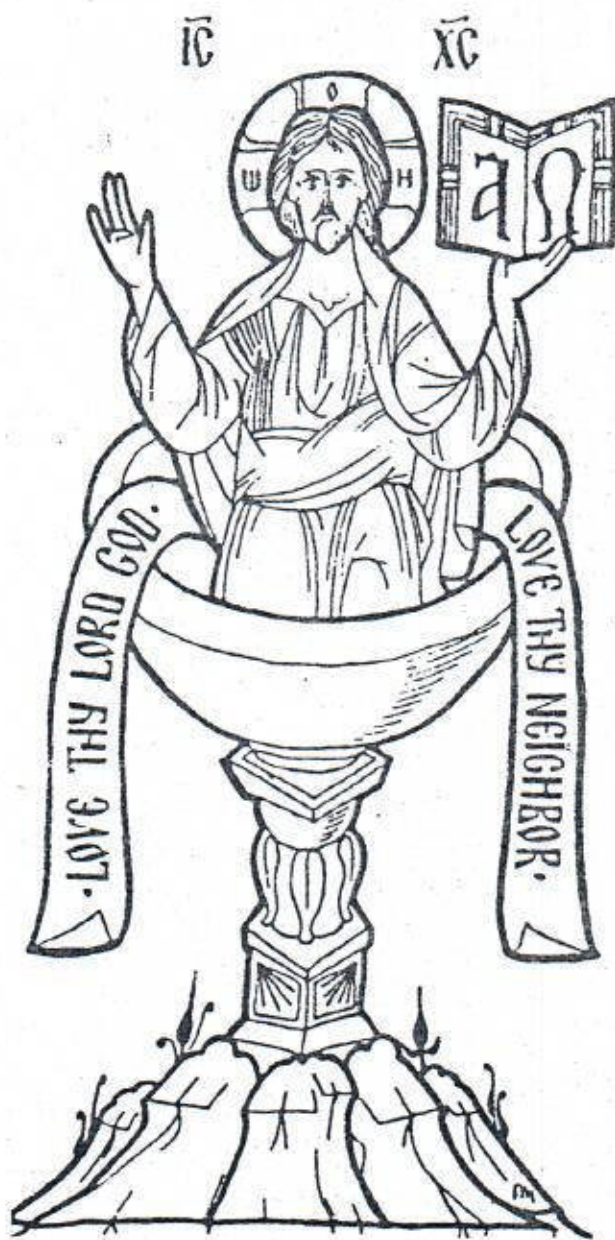
The proof of the pudding is in the eating, after all. *One proves the Bible only by living it.* There is no other way.

Obviously the answer to often asked question, "Who really wrote the Bible?" is that our heavenly Father, the God of heaven and earth is its real author. But we cannot prove it to ourselves unless we test it ourselves, unless we call upon its claims by obeying the commands from God contained in its pages.

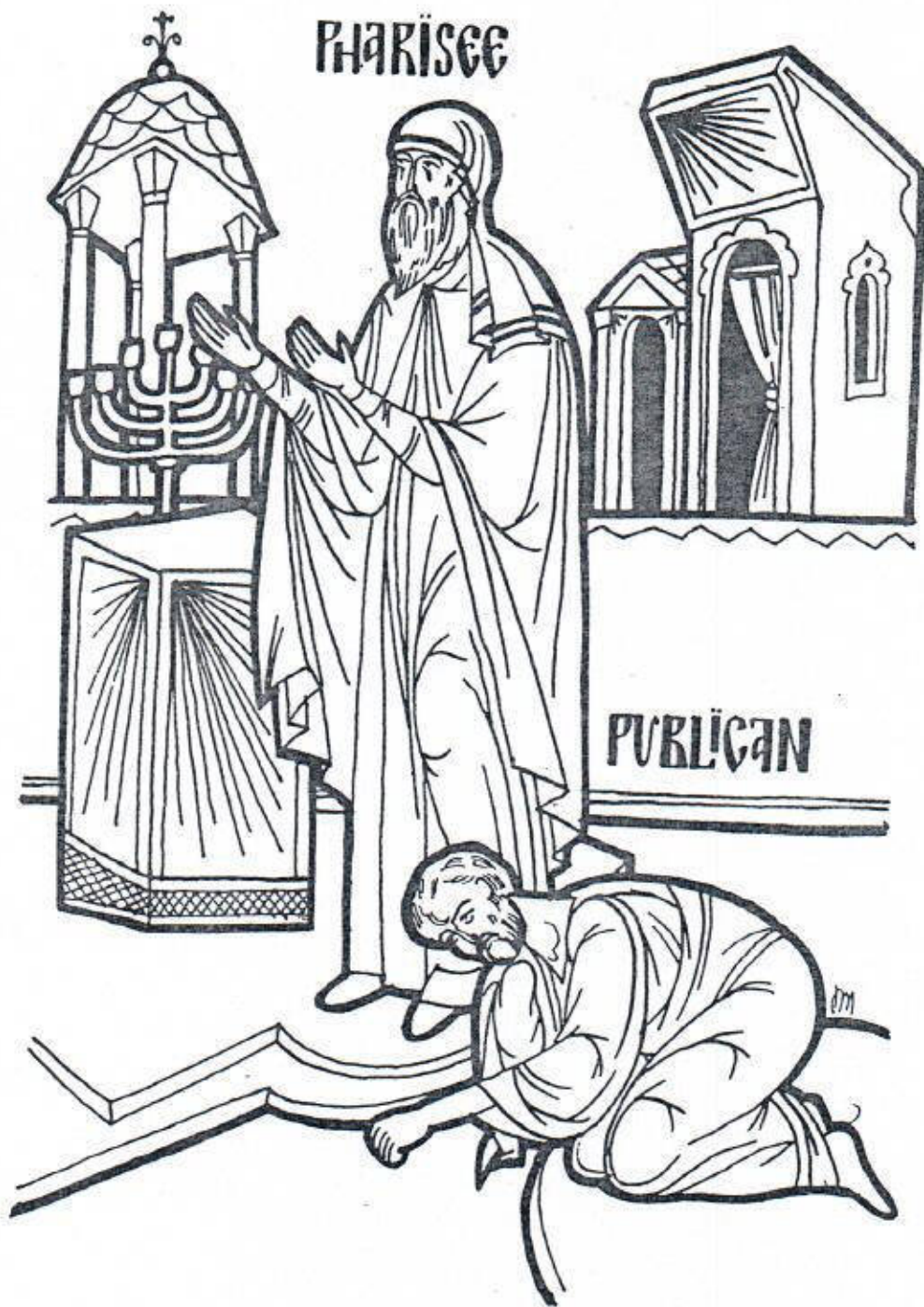
If a person puts the biblical claims to a test by obeying its instruction, that person puts him or herself in a position to discover the Bible really is the Word of God.





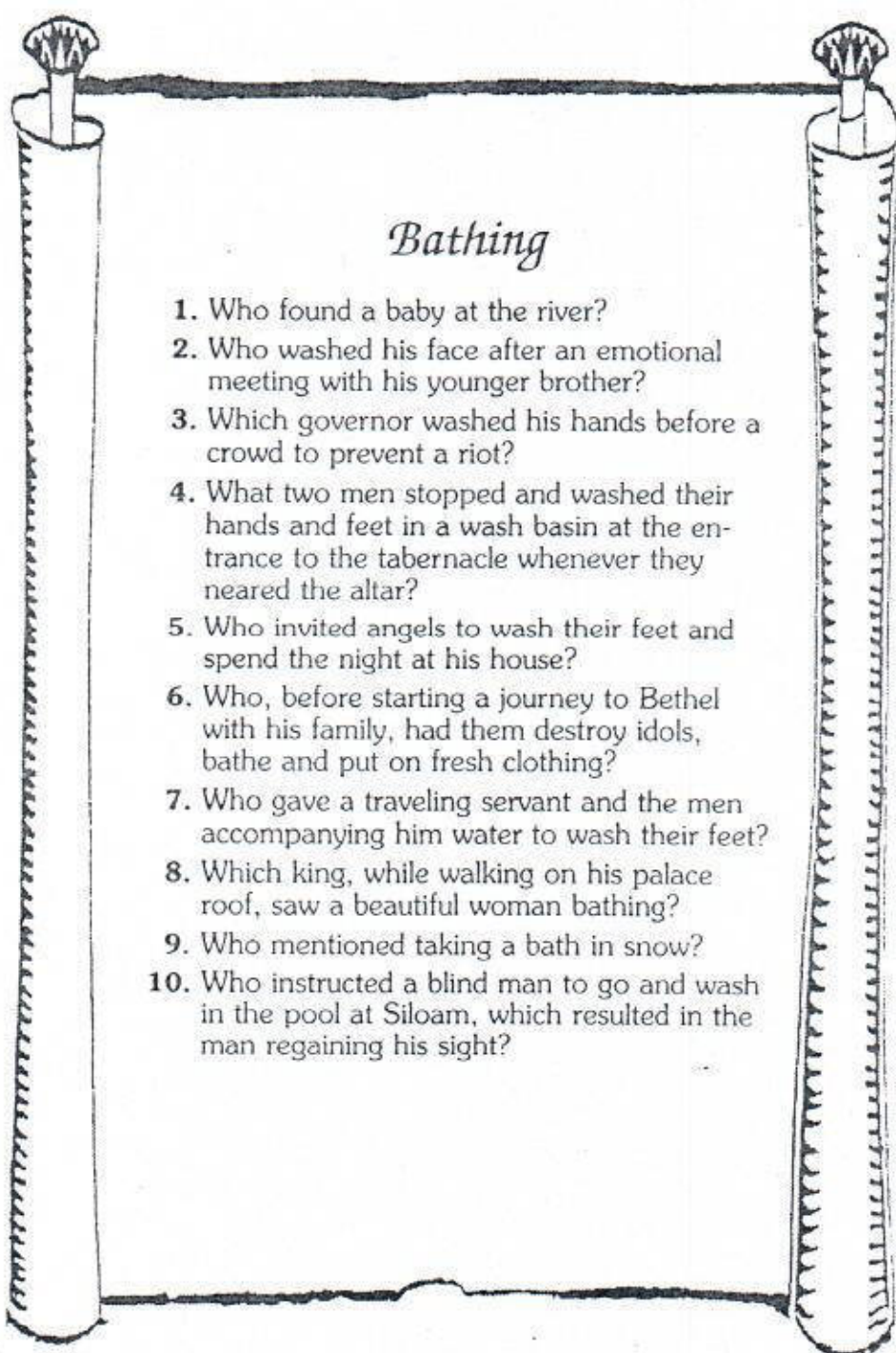


PHARISEE



PUBLICAN



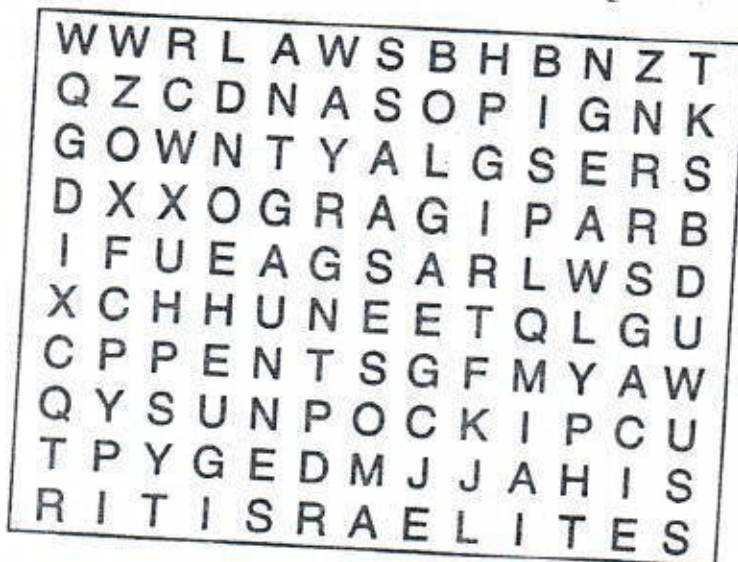


## *Bathing*

1. Who found a baby at the river?
2. Who washed his face after an emotional meeting with his younger brother?
3. Which governor washed his hands before a crowd to prevent a riot?
4. What two men stopped and washed their hands and feet in a wash basin at the entrance to the tabernacle whenever they neared the altar?
5. Who invited angels to wash their feet and spend the night at his house?
6. Who, before starting a journey to Bethel with his family, had them destroy idols, bathe and put on fresh clothing?
7. Who gave a traveling servant and the men accompanying him water to wash their feet?
8. Which king, while walking on his palace roof, saw a beautiful woman bathing?
9. Who mentioned taking a bath in snow?
10. Who instructed a blind man to go and wash in the pool at Siloam, which resulted in the man regaining his sight?

# THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Find the hidden words.



MOSES

PHARAOH

SERPENT

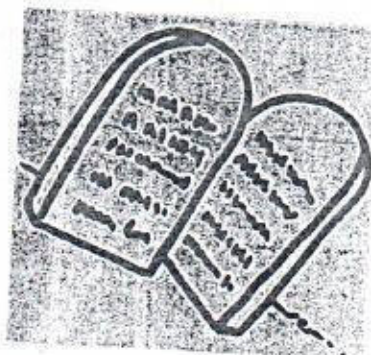
PLAGUES

ISRAELITES

EGYPT

LAWS

ARK



**Bathing**

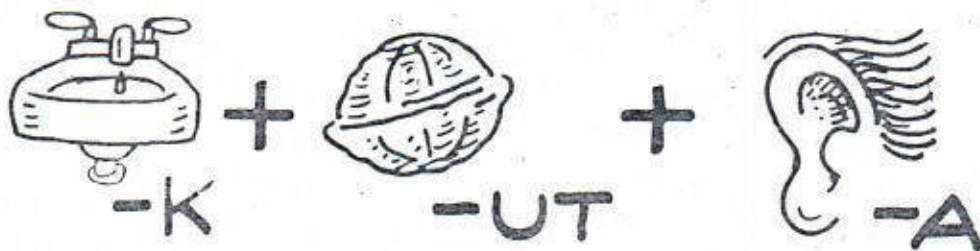
1. Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:5-6)
2. Joseph (Gen. 43:29-31)
3. Pilate (Matt. 27:24)
4. Moses & Aaron (Exod. 40:30-32)
5. Lot (Gen. 19:1-2)
6. Jacob (Gen. 35:1-3)
7. Laban (Gen. 24:29-32)
8. David (2 Sam. 11:2)
9. Job (Job 9:30)
10. Jesus (John 9:1, 7:11)



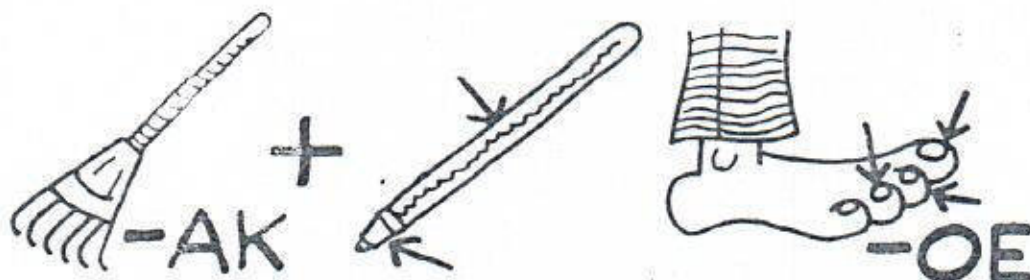
# Repent!

Read Luke 15:4-7. Work the rebus to fill in the blanks and complete the verse about repentance.

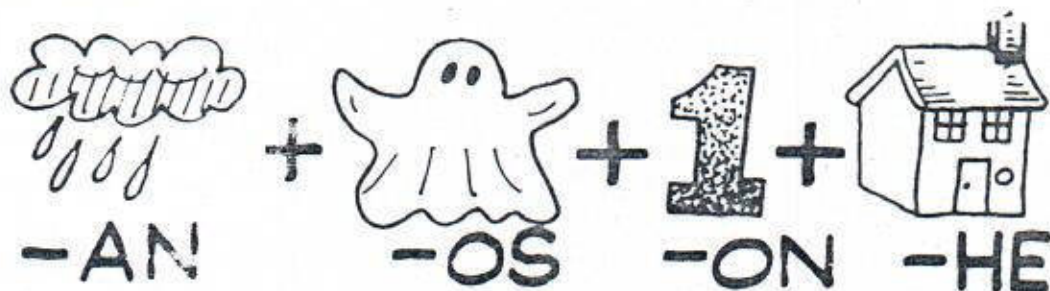
There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one



who



than over ninety-nine



persons who do not need to repent.



Birthday  
Wishes!

We are pleased to greet those of our faithful communicants who celebrate their birthday this month. Our Lord has offered these souls yet another year of blessed life. The most obvious way He blesses us and participates in our life is by sharing his divine life with us in the Eucharist at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Thus we gather together and offer thanks for yet another year of life blessed by his most gracious hands. Today, we prayerfully remember in the Divine Liturgy the following souls who celebrate their birthday during this month:

February 7 Robin Pasquino  
February 14 Sarah Anna Harrison  
February 14 Tatyana Lucas Harrison  
February 21 Joan Henry  
February 24 George Idromenos  
February 27 Marilyn J. Korba  
February 28 Joseph F. Choti

With a prayerful heart and grateful soul, our parish faith community asks the Lord to continue to bless these birthday celebrants with good spiritual and physical health for the coming year. We invite all to add their personal intercessory prayers so that with one voice and one heart we may also participate in the grace and joy of their celebration. As we wish them a happy and blessed celebration of their birthday, our ardent prayer resounds that the Lord our God will continue to bless them for

**Many and Blessed Years!**





## WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

The Byzantine Fathers of the Church were wont to emphasize how ancient and how venerable marriage is in the sight of our God because it was established yet in paradise before the fall of Adam and Eve and brought to blessed perfection by Christ in Cana of Galilee. Its grace survived the sin of our first parents and it remains a sign of the presence of the Holy Trinity in our midst. It is a living symbol of the deep and abiding love between Christ and His Bride, our blessed Church. It is characterized in the liturgical life of the Church as a happy martyrdom. And it is precisely for this reason the sacramental Mystery of Marriage is such a joyous event. On the third Sunday of this month, we honor those of our good parishioners who observe their marriage anniversaries this month. They are specially remembered in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and subsequently receive an individual and personal blessing of the Lord at its conclusion. Celebrating this month are:

**FEBRUARY 13 Nikita & Angeliki Tsokris**

We gratefully give thanks to the Blessed Trinity for having guided and strengthened the marriages of these believers, and their cooperation with sacramental grace to remain faithful to one another over the years. Like all who are faithful to Christ, they recognize the presence and necessity of the Holy Spirit not only in the marriage, but in subsequent family life as well. As we praise our God for their witness in our midst, let us also join them with our prayers and thanksgiving before the throne of the Lord. May they continue to praise His Holy Name by their love and devotion to one another for

**Many and Blessed Years**

## A SHEPHERD BOY BECOMES A "LAMB" OF GOD

**T**HE HOLY MARTYR TRYPHON was born in the third century during the reign of the Emperor Gordianus. A poor shepherd boy with no formal education, Tryphon was, nonetheless, touched by the grace of God. Even as a youngster, he was blessed with the gift of healing.

The Emperor had a daughter whom he loved dearly. When she fell ill, all of the royal physicians were unable to cure her. The desperate Emperor had heard of the powers of Tryphon, and he had him summoned to Rome from his home in Phrygia. Tryphon came and kept vigil at the bedside of the Emperor's daughter. In a few days, she was completely cured of her malady!

The grateful Gordianus lavished Tryphon with gifts and treasures, but the young herdsman gave everything to the poor upon returning to his home. After the death of Gordianus, Decius was chosen to be Emperor. Not having the same tolerance for Christianity as his predecessor, Decius ordered all Christians to renounce their Lord or suffer the consequences. Tryphon was one of those arrested and tortured in an attempt to shake their faith. Tryphon endured all suffering with these words: "OH, WHEN SHALL I BECOME WORTHY TO MAKE AN END FOR THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST?" He was finally beheaded in 250 A.D. Tryphon is viewed as the patron saint of those who labor in the fields. This third-century shepherd symbolizes the loving calmness one can receive from a proximity to the Lord.