

Lesson No. 1

Saint Theodore of Shoteb

References:

Notes For Servants:

- 1.
- 2.

Objectives:

General: Love is the fulfilment of Christianity.

Specific:

1. Understand what keeps us from loving others.
2. Read the Bible regularly to learn about means that help us attain love.
3. Work on one item at a time; love does not come overnight!

Instructions:

1. Church occasion (the Coptic New Year)
2. Talk about his life before the priesthood.
3. Explain the important role he played as a priest and a bishop.
4. Tell the story of his martyrdom.
5. Talk about his gifts and contribution to the Church.

Bible Verse:

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law"

Rom. 13:8

Lesson:

Saint Theodore of Shoteb

The Roman king Nomarios sent his general Anastasius to Upper Egypt to gather strong men, to fight the war against the Persians. He arrived at Shoteb (a small town beside Asiut in Upper Egypt) and was highly impressed by Youhanna (John) of Shoteb and took him back to Antioch.

In Antioch God gave him grace and found favour at the king and was not permitted to go to war. Anastasius the general took him to his house and Youhanna married the general's daughter Acini and they had Theodore. (Which means the sacrifice of God).

Acini asked Youhanna to pay homage to her idols. He refused and said to her that when Theodore would grow up he would take him to Egypt and baptize him and make him live as a good Christian.

Acini got scared to loose her son and began threatening Youhanna. Jesus Christ appeared to

Youhanna and relieved him from his fears and asked him to return to Egypt and God will take care of his son.

Theodore grew up. He learned from his neighbours that his father is not dead as his mother made him believe and that he is a Christian from Shoteb in Egypt. He faced his mother with these facts and crushed the idols in the palace, this made the devils furious and threatened him. He then left the palace and got baptized, at the age of 16.

He was appointed a general officer. During one of his regiment's patrols he saw a deer and between his horns a lamb in a circle of light telling him **A**Theodore, I am the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world, I am the God of your father Youhanna. @ Theodore tried to catch the deer, so he said to him -Do not try to catch me my beloved Theodore, it is me who catches you by the net of my divinity. Go see your father Youhanna in Egypt before you get martyred on my name.

He appointed a friend of his in command to the army in his absence and went to Shoteb looking for his father. He found him five days before his death and Theodore ordered that his body would be buried beside his father. He then returned back to the command of the army.

War rose between the Romans and the Persians. Diocletian gathered his armies and conquered the Persians. In this war St. Theodore of Shoteb met St. Theodore the Oriental.

The governor of Euchaita died and Diocletian appointed St. Theodore of Shoteb in his place. A dragon used to attack the city often and the town=s people would offer him some boys to appease him. It happened at that time a widow arrived to town with her two sons, they kidnapped her sons and tied them to a siris tree as offerings for the dragon. The widow appealed for the aid of St. Theodore. He killed the dragon and saved her sons. The town people believed in Jesus Christ, and St. Theodore destroyed the pagan=s temple. When the priests of the idols saw their gods destroyed they complained to Diocletian.

Diocletian sent for St. Theodore. He was not scared and confessed his faith in Christ. The emperor tortured him severely. He died four times, in three times the Lord raised him and in the fourth he obtained the garland of martyrdom on, Abib 20,36 A.M - July 27, 320 A.D.

May the blessings of this great martyr be with us and glory be to God forever Amen.

Conclusion:

Love is the fulfilment of Christianity.

1. Understand what keeps us from loving others.
2. Read the Bible regularly to learn about means that help us attain love.
3. Work on one item at a time; love does not come overnight!