



Bishop Youssef

My Beloved Youth,

In the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, one God, Amen

This issue of the Mighty Arrows (Vol. 7 No. 1) denotes the beginning of “present day” reading. “Present day” reading will incorporate much of the magazines’ focus on modern times and lessons applicable for youth today. While the last four years of publication have marked primarily “past day” reading in which the magazine was primarily focused on past history, past journeys and accomplishments, and past harmony and discord. The next four years of publication will build upon the “past day” foundation and include articles deemed essential for today’s experiences and teachings.

It has frequently been said that the world is God’s University. We are in the world as scholars learning lessons with a very brief time frame for human existence. Job wrote, **“Days should speak, and multitudes of years should teach wisdom.”** (32:7) Therefore life is too short to be slow learners particularly as it relates to personal responsibility of being well-educated Biblically. We do not question that a youth unlearned in Holy Scripture is not a well educated youth.

We are very specifically instructed to “give attention to reading.” This is a must for today’s youth. No one can live on bread alone. St. Timothy explains this saying the Holy Bible **“is profitable for doctrine (teaching), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...all good works.”** (II Timothy 3: 16-17). The mission of the Mighty Arrows is to provide a source in which to encourage learning and application of Biblical knowledge pertinent to the lives of youth. A youth can never advance more than the knowledge they know. Hosea said, **“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”** (4:6)

Along with knowledge the nature of today’s world calls for progress. It calls upon the youth to “learn and live” applying the knowledge and resources they have obtained. How can this be accomplished? Youth are challenged to know what they should do and then what is needed to make you do it. As complex as this may seem, youth have many resources in which to adhere to this. The Mighty Arrows is one such Biblically based resource specifically developed for youth. Solomon the Wise advised **“Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life.”** (Proverbs 4:13)

Many consider the cliché “the truth shall set you free” as simply a folk saying. But the truth of the matter is that St. John said, **“And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”** (John 8:32) Biblical knowledge is freedom, it releases youth from worldly captivity. Biblical knowledge though is only freedom if you choose to apply it to your lives. Therefore, application is the second half of knowledge. **“A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increases in strength.”** (Proverbs 24:5)

Upcoming Biblically centered, issues will address gender roles, genetic engineering, scientific confusion of thought, social and psychological issues, and war. Recognizing that any learning which includes God contains the most essential and practical component of knowledge. With God in the center, knowledge gives youth life. If you omit God from any learning, the more you learn the less happiness you obtain. Without God, knowledge takes life away from the youth.

“Knowledge is rewarding: it is to the soul what the honeycomb is to the taste.” (Proverbs 24: 13-14)

God bless you,
Bishop Youssef

Bishop, Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States