



The Lord Jesus Christ
sitting on His Throne.
Church of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.
Al Damshiriah.
Old Cairo.
Note the one finger
probably representative
of the unity of the
natures of the Lord.
(defense of St. Dioscorius)





An urgent mission of protection...

Saint Dioscorus, 25th Pope of Alexandria

By: Katherine Abdou

St. Philopateer Coptic Orthodox Church, Dallas, TX

Saint Dioscorus is an important figure in the history of the Coptic Orthodox Church. The 25th Pope of Alexandria, Saint Dioscorus spurred a string of events that eventually led to the division between the churches of the East and the West in 1054 AD. During the reign of Emperor Marcianus, the Council of Chalcedon was summoned. When Dioscorus witnessed Leo, the Archbishop of Rome, teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ had “two natures and two wills” at the conference, he spoke to refute this belief.

Quoting Pope Cyril, he espoused the belief that “the union of the word of God with the flesh is like the union of the spirit with the body,” meaning that “even if they are of two different natures, by unity they became one.” He continued, “Our Lord Jesus Christ is one Messiah, one Nature, and one Will.”

None of those that were there dared contradict him, but they informed Emperor Marcianus that no one disobeyed his commands concerning the faith except for Dioscorus. The emperor summoned him along with some of the senior bishops of the council in order to debate the topic, but Saint Dioscorus would not deviate from his Orthodox belief. Because of his insubordination and defiance of the king, he was exiled to the island of Gagra, and the Council of Chalcedon resumed. When Saint Dioscorus arrived at the island, the Nestorian bishop and the people of the area



greeted him with contempt and disdain. Nevertheless, God performed through the hands of Saint Dioscorus so that they all obeyed him and magnified him.

Saint Dioscorus continued his life on the island until his departure, however his legacy continues until this day. The Orthodox Church established its independence, ensuing Saint

Dioscorus’ viewpoint that the Emperor and his beliefs “have nothing to do with the church.” This is a true story, moreover, that lives on as a source of confidence and strength. It sends the message that we, as Christians, with the help of God, can accomplish any feat and take on any battle. Just as Saint Dioscorus stood up against the emperor, and the world, because he knew that what they were preaching deviated from the words of the Holy Bible, we can stand up against what we know is wrong and not according to God’s will.

Saint Dioscorus, our 25th pope, departed this earthly existence and received the crown of eternal life on the seventh day of Tute in the year 451 A.D. He has been considered a great hero of Orthodoxy; preserving one of the beliefs that is at the core of the faith, the unity of the natures of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(His story can be found in the Coptic Synaxarium, Volume I)