



Called upon to evangelize meant suffering the prejudice of his Jewish birth heritage, imprisonment, and decapitation for this holy saint....

St. Sarapamon, Bishop of Niku

ΦΗΕΘΟΥΑΒ ΣΑΡΑΠΑΜΩΝ ΠΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΤΕ ΝΙΚΟΥ

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St. Sarapamon, Bishop of Niku (Nakiyos) was raised as a Jew in Jerusalem. When his father passed away, St. Sarapamon desired to become a Christian. The Lord, hearing the cry of His lost sheep, sent an angel to St. Sarapamon that commanded him to go to Abba John, Bishop of Jerusalem, who then taught St. Sarapamon the mystery of the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Sarapamon was then ready for the sacrament of baptism, but he feared the Jews. The Virgin Mary appeared to him and told him to go to the city, Alexandria. As St. Sarapamon embarked on his journey, the Lord sent him an angel in the form of a man for guidance. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own" (John 10:14). Like a good



**St. Sarapamon (4th Century).
Church of St. Mena, Fum Al'Khalig**

shepherd who can hear the cry of a stray sheep, which desires to be a part of the flock, the Lord heard St. Sarapamon's prayers and guided him to Christianity.

Likewise, as a sheep that knows its shepherd, St. Sarapamon recognized the Lord's voice and followed His commands. In order to recognize God's voice and to see His messengers, one must come with a pure heart that is open to God's will and be ready to carry your cross; journeying through the

path that God has chosen. After St. Sarapamon was baptized, he became a monk and was later ordained by His Holiness Pope Peter as Bishop of Niku.

During his service, St. Sarapamon performed many miracles in the Lord Jesus Christ's Holy Name and eventually paganism was eradicated from his dio-



cese. The Lord Jesus Christ, speaking to His disciples, said, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you” (John 15:16). As a Christian, one is a chosen child of God, who must bear fruit and by doing so glorify God. In order to bear fruit, one must make his request known through prayer and have faith that the Lord hears and answers these prayers.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised, “Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive” (Matthew 21:22). Paganism was not eradicated in one day, but rather, St. Sarapamon persistently pleaded with the Lord to show His glory and destroy the pagan temples. St. Sarapamon offered his request up to the Lord with certainty that the Lord would answer his prayer. The people of Niku saw the glory of God through the works of St. Sarapamon, but the Emperor Diocletian denied the Lord Jesus Christ and seeing the effect of St. Sarapamon on the people, ordered the imprisonment of the saint.

When Pope Peter and fellow clergymen went to visit St. Sarapamon in prison, they stated that the saint’s face was like that of an angel while he carried his cross. How can a human, a simple man who has been brutally tortured and thrown into prison have a face that is full of illumination? The Second Holy Book of Corinthians (3:17-18) states: “Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the spirit of the Lord.”

Although St. Sarapamon was trapped in prison, his spirit was free because it was with the Lord. One

of God’s many glories is that He provides peace in circumstances that man alone would crumble in. It is this inner peace that allows St. Sarapamon’s face to illuminate and reflect the glory of God. St. Sarapamon was decapitated because he refused to deny the Lord Jesus Christ regardless of how severely he was tortured. St. Sarapamon received his crown of martyrdom and his body was buried in his diocese.

St. Sarapamon not only lived by the Lord Jesus Christ’s Word and shared in the glory of God’s works, but also died for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ and experienced suffering as the Lord Jesus Christ had. St. Paul in the Holy Book of Romans (8:16-17) states: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

One’s trials and tribulations are, therefore, a blessing, which strengthens our unity with the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Sarapamon was a monk, a bishop, a severely beaten prisoner; the people rejoiced in him and the Emperor tortured him; the one aspect that never faltered was his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and his willingness to listen to God’s voice and take the journey and bear the cross that God set aside for him.

(The Story of the blessed St. Sarapamon can be found in the Coptic Synaxarium, Volume I, on the Twenty-Eighth Day of the Blessed Month of Hatur)

