



St. John the Beloved

The Evangelical Preacher

»»» — Written by A Mighty Arrow —>

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St. John is well known as the disciple whom the Lord Jesus Christ loved, who is depicted as reclining on the Lord Jesus' Christ bosom and the one disciple to whom He entrusted His beloved mother at our dear Lord's Holy Crucifixion at the foot of the Cross. St. John lived the longest among all the disciples (almost to the age of one hundred years); the grace prepared him to present the God of Glory to the church as he was the leading authority of Ephesus until the end of his ministry.

He was able to absorb the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit and to save these words in his heart as a priceless treasure. In his age old days St. John restored this treasure guided by the Holy Spirit which dwelled within him which allowed him to see the Lord and to write for us the Holy Book of Revelation.

St. John was the son of Zebedee (Luke 5:10) and he was a fisherman like his father. They were rich as they had hired servants (Mark 1:20). His mother was Salome, who was a pious woman who feared God. She followed the Lord Jesus Christ and served him and was one of the women present at the cross. Salome, the mother of St. John prepared spices and perfumes to anoint the Lord Jesus' body (Mark 16:1).

St. John was the brother of St. James the greater who was martyred during the reign of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:1,2).

St. John's name means "God is gracious", and with his brother James, they were partners with Simon.

Our beloved disciple, St. John wrote:

- 1- The fourth Gospel - the Gospel according to St. John. St. Clement of Alexandria likened this Holy Gospel "by the spirit" while the three other Holy Gospels represent "the body." Origen calls this Holy Gospel "the crown of all Holy Gospels".
- 2- The three Holy Epistles by St. John.
- 3- The Holy Book of Revelation.

St. John led a deep meditative life, he observed his Master's actions and behavior all the while listening to His teachings. He was filling his heart with all the love and teachings that he could. Being so close to his Master filled him with such a zeal that made him sometimes lose his contemplative silence to defend his Master and His teachings. He earned the title, "Son of Thunder."

According to tradition, St. John preached the Holy Bible in Asia Minor and also in Ephesus. So, the seven churches of Asia Minor enjoyed and were privileged to his love tending them. St. John was sincere in his preaching, and practiced the love he had from our Lord Jesus Christ.

One day the beloved disciple, St. John, was preaching in a city of Asia Minor, when he noticed that there was a young handsome and smart man in his audience. St. John called unto him and preached to him, then he left him in the care of the bishop of this city to teach him the Christian faith, and he returned back to Ephesus.





The bishop of the city took great care of that young man until he was able to baptize him and he could participate in the Holy Communion. The young man did not continue in the path of righteousness, and was attracted to a group of bad friends who taught him evil deeds, to the point that he became a thief, then into a leader of a gang.

Many years went by, and St. John came to visit this city once again. He asked the bishop about the young man whom he asked him to care for. The saddened bishop told St. John that he retreated back to worldly ways, and explained to him what happened to the young man. St. John was dismayed and asked for a horse and guidance to go speak to the young man.

When St. John reached near the place, the gang members captured him and took him to their leader (the young man). Upon looking at St. John, the young man recognized him and became ashamed and could not look upon the saint. He turned away, running from St. John. St. John ran after him exclaiming and shouting for him to come back and not to be afraid.

St. John- the old man- kept telling him that there is forgiveness and repentance if he chooses to come back. He was able by the grace of God, to convince the young man to repent and the young man wept bitterly in a loud voice and knelt down in front of St. John.

St. John took him back to the church and both kept praying and fasting until the young man was able to participate in the Holy Communion again. St. John loved sinners and cared for them which encouraged many to repent and return back to the church.

Our Coptic Church tradition, teaches us that the Roman Emperor Domitian, ordered him to be exiled to the Island of Patmos. It was here on such a small, rocky, almost uninhabited island, St. John received his Revelation of the last days.

When the Roman Emperor Nerva reigned the empire in the year of 96 A.D., he released St. John from exile. St. John returned to Ephesus and among his disciples was St. Polycarp, St. Papias and St. Ignatius of Antioch. St. Jerome wrote that St. John remained in Ephesus till he departed his earthly life during the reign of Trojan (98- 117 A.D.). Jerome also mentioned that St. John died peacefully (was not martyred) in the year 98 A.D.

St. John the Apostle, beloved of our Lord Jesus Christ, was the last of the disciples to live until the end of the first century.

Glory be to God forever. Amen.✠

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