

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The life to come and the coming of the Lord ‘*ερχομενος ο κυριος*’

Suzy Botrous, Shereen Azer and Michael Henein

The European Academy for Coptic Heritage – TEACH, London, UK

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يشكك الكثير من الناس في مفاهيم نهاية الزمان وقيامه الأموات والمجيء الثاني للرب يسوع. يقدم الكتاب المقدس إجابات على هذه الأسئلة، وتعالج الكنيسة هذا القلق في ترتيب عبادتها باقتباسات كتابية والحان مناسبة. علاوة على ذلك، فإن الكنيسة الجامعة، بغض النظر عن الطوائف المختلفة، ترنم 'مبارك الآتي باسم الرب' كترنيمه المجيء الأول للرب يسوع و'قدوس قدوس قدوس رب الجنود السماء والأرض مملوئتان من مجدك وكرامتك' كترنيمه مجيء الرب الثاني. يبحث هذا المقال في هذه القضية ويقدم المزيد من التفاصيل حول الممارسات الليتورجية القبطية في دعم وتعزيز المعتقدات المذكورة أعلاه

Dutch: Veel mensen hebben twijfels over de concepten van het einde der tijden, de opstanding van de doden en de tweede komst van de Heere Jezus.

De Heilige Bijbel biedt antwoorden op deze vragen en de kerk behandelt deze zorgen doormiddel het bidden met Bijbelse citaten en teksten van hymnen.

De universele kerk, ongeacht individuele denominaties, beoefenen 'Gezegend is Hij die komt in de naam des Heeres' als de hymne van de eerste komst van onze Heere Jezus en 'Heilig, Heilig, Heilig is de Heer der Heerscharen, hemel en aarde zijn vol van uw heilige glorie' als de hymne van de tweede komst van de Heer.

Dit artikel onderzoekt dit probleem en biedt meer details over de Koptische liturgische gewoontes in het ondersteunen en versterken van bovenstaande overtuigingen.

English: Many people doubt the concepts of the end of time, the resurrection of the dead and the second coming of Lord Jesus. The Holy Bible provides answers to these questions and the church treats such worry in her order of worship with specific biblical quotations and hymns lyrics. Moreover, the universal church, irrespective of individual denominations, practices the 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord' as the hymn of the first coming of Lord Jesus and 'Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of your honour and glory' as the hymn of the second coming of the Lord. This article searches such issue and provides more details on the Coptic liturgical practices in supporting and strengthening the above beliefs.

French: Beaucoup de gens doutent des concepts de fin des temps, de résurrection des morts et du second avènement du Seigneur Jésus. La Sainte Bible fournit des réponses à ces questions et l'Église traite ces inquiétudes dans son culte avec des citations bibliques spécifiques et des paroles d'hymnes. De plus, l'Église universelle, indépendamment des différentes dénominations, pratique le « Béni soit celui qui vient au nom du Seigneur » comme hymne lié à la première venue du Seigneur Jésus et « Saint Saint Saint est le Seigneur des armées, le ciel et la terre sont remplis de ton honneur et de ta gloire » comme hymne de la seconde venue du Seigneur. Cet article étudie cette question et fournit plus de détails sur les pratiques liturgiques coptes qui soutiennent et renforcent les croyances ci-dessus.

*Corresponding author. Email: henein@gmail.com

German: Viele Menschen bezweifeln die Konzepte des Weltendes, der Auferstehung der Toten und der Wiederkunft des Herrn Jesus. Die Heilige Bibel gibt Antworten auf diese Fragen, und die Kirche nimmt solche Sorgen in ihrer Gottesdienstordnung mit spezifischen biblischen Zitaten und Liedtexten auf. Darüber hinaus praktiziert die universelle Kirche, unabhängig von einzelnen Konfessionen, das Lied 'Gesegnet ist, der da kommt im Namen des Herrn' in Bezug auf die erste Ankunft des Herrn Jesus und 'Heilig, heilig, heilig ist der Herr der Heerscharen, Himmel und Erde sind voll von deiner Ehre und Herrlichkeit' als das Lied der zweiten Ankunft des Herrn. Dieser Artikel untersucht dieses Thema und bietet weitere Einzelheiten zu den koptischen liturgischen Praktiken, die die oben genannten Überzeugungen unterstützen und stärken.

Greek: Πολλοί άνθρωποι αμφιβάλλουν για την έννοια του τέλους του χρόνου, της ανάστασης των νεκρών και της Δευτέρας παρουσίας του Κυρίου Ιησού. Η Αγία Γραφή παρέχει απαντήσεις σε αυτά τα ερωτήματα και η εκκλησία αντιμετωπίζει αυτήν την ανησυχία στην τάξη λατρείας της με συγκεκριμένα βιβλικά αποσπάσματα και στίχους ύμνων. Επιπλέον, η οικουμενική εκκλησία, ανεξάρτητα από τις μεμονωμένες εκδοχές, πρακτικά το 'Ευλογημένος ο ερχόμενος εν ονόματι Κυρίου' ως ύμνο της πρώτης παρουσίας του Κυρίου Ιησού και το 'Άγιος, Άγιος, Άγιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ο ουρανός και η γη της δόξης σου' ως ύμνο της δεύτερης παρουσίας του Κυρίου. Αυτό το άρθρο αναζητά αυτό το θέμα και παρέχει περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με τις λειτουργικές πρακτικές της Κοπτικής Εκκλησίας προκειμένου να τις υποστηρίξει και ενισχύσει.

The concepts of the end of time, the resurrection of the dead and the second coming of Lord Jesus remain questionable amongst different religions and denominations. The current rapidly advancing technological development has led many believers to question their faith, particularly if their belief depends only on what they hear rather than thinking and searching for the truth themselves.

In the Christian Creed, all believers declare their faith in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They also state their belief in the life to come 'we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age – **ΠΙΩΝΔ ἸΤΕ ΠΙΕΨΩΝ ΕΘΝΗΟΥ**'. In the Coptic church, the creed is recited in all liturgical services as is the Lord's prayer. Likewise, a suitable chapter from the holy gospel is chanted. The introduction of the gospel says **ἱςμαρωοττ Ἰξε φηεθνηοτ ζεν φραλ ἡπβοις** – Blesses is He who comes in the name of the Lord'. In fact, the words of both the creed declaration and the introduction of the gospel are based on the words uttered by the Lord Jesus Himself. Putting the two statements together, one should realise the relationship between the life to come and the coming of the Lord Jesus. Whilst this is an important cornerstone in the Christian faith, we should look critically at what was meant by the two declarations and what they exactly point to. It is not an incidental finding to see such consistency in the Coptic worship order. It is, in fact, designed to remind the congregation of their future and to bring them closer to the coming of the Lord **ερχομενος ο κυριος**' in Greek. This article explores the biblical references of the word 'coming – **ΕΘΝΗΟΥ - ο ερχομενος**' in the above context.

The concept of the coming Lord has been in the mind of the righteous and believers for a long time, particularly in the Old Testament, **האדונובא** -Hadonba. The psalm mentions the above phrase **'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD'**! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord. *Psalm 118:26*. Isaiah also saw the Lord coming in His might and prophesied about Him and said **'Behold, the Lord God shall come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him. Behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him'**. *Isaiah 40:10*. And in another place Isaiah declared the coming of the Lord to receive His passion, whilst He is the Omnipotent **'Who is this who comes from Edom'**, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is

glorious in His Apparel, travelling in greatness of His strength? ‘I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save’ *Isaiah 63:1*. Obviously, these prophecies point to the first coming of Lord Jesus and His journey on earth to complete the mission of the salvation of mankind with its various events.

At the beginning of the service of the Lord Jesus, the psalm 118’s prophecy was fulfilled and ascertained. When John the Baptist heard about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him ‘**Are You the Coming One** or do we look for another?’ *Math 11:3*. Also, in the royal entry of Lord Jesus to Jerusalem, few days before his crucifixion, the crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed and the children of the Hebrews shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ ‘**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**’ ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’ *Math 21:9*. The knowledge about the coming of the ‘Messiah’ was also profound amongst non-Jews. The Samaritan woman said to Lord Jesus, by Jacob’s well, ‘**I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming**. When he comes, he will explain everything to us’ *John 4:25*.

Based on the above, it is clear that the verse **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD** points to the Lord Jesus’ first coming to the world. This is further confirmed when, He looked at Jerusalem and its temple before accomplishing his mission on the cross and said ‘See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly’, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!**’ *Luke 13:35*. In this strong statement, The Lord rebukes all those who saw and heard Him yet did not believe in Him. So, He stripped off all relationship between Himself and the temple and prophesied about the time to come when they will realise His first coming and say ‘**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord**’. The latter crystallises further the thought about the meaning of verse of Psalm 118, being related to the first coming of the Son of God and not His second coming. In the first coming of the Lord, He came in the name of God the Father and to do the work of the Father having said ‘Who has seen me has seen the Father’, I am in the Father and the Father is in me,....Father, I pray that the ones you have given me be one in me as I am one in you....etc. The Lord Jesus also confirmed His coming in the name of the Father when he said to the Jews ‘**I have come in My Father’s name**, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive’ *John 5:43*. In the second coming of Lord Jesus, He will come glorified and declaring His divine nature as He said, ‘When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory’ *Matt 25:31*. This powerful announcement, by the Lord Himself, draws the line of difference between the two comings of the Son of God. It makes it clear that the Psalm 118 verse is related to the first coming. As for the second coming, the biblical hymns which we can learn is ‘blessed, honour, glory and power be unto Him who sits on the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever, amen, Alleluia’. *Revelation 5:13* and ‘Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of hosts heaven and earth are full of Your honour and glory’. *Isaiah 6:3*

The church went on to apply the above analysis in her practices. The psalm 118 verse has become the main hymn for the feast of the entry into Jerusalem and the Coptic church kept it in its original Greek language for the believers to understand and enjoy chanting it ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord – **εὐλογούμενος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου**’. This tradition is almost universal, despite the language the hymn is chanted in. Also, the Coptic church made the same verse the first congregational hymn of the Sunday liturgy to celebrate the entry of the lamb to the sanctuary. Likewise, the church made the hymn ‘Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of glory and honour’ an essential response

in all liturgies before celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the sacrament. The other hymn of ‘blessed, honour, glory and power be unto Him who sits on the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever, amen, Alleluia’ has become the Resurrection (Light) Saturday vigil hymn in the Coptic church as the congregation read the book of revelation, contemplating on the glorified Lord Jesus and His second coming.

One of the other unique practices of the ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord – **ΕΥΛΟΓΙΣΜΕΝΟΣ Ο ΕΡΧΟΜΕΝΟΣ ΕΝ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ**’ is when receiving the head of the Coptic church, the Patriarch, as he symbolically represents the anointed servant. Also, at the end of the liturgy as the priest waives the pattern and say ‘The Holies are for the holies – **ΤΑ ΑΣΙΑ ΤΙΣ ΑΣΙΗΣ**’ the congregation responds and say **ἘΜΑΡΩΝΤ ἸΝΧΕ ΦΗΘΗΝΟΥ ΔΕΝ ΞΡΑΝ ἸΠΘΟΙΣ** - Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’, reflecting on being united with the Lord in our bodies when we partake of the holy sacrament.

In conclusion, the church tradition adorns the concept of the resurrection and the coming of the Lord Jesus in its liturgical practices with specific clear biblical quotations, to help the believers to live a life of future waiting. According to the Coptic tradition, the hymn of the first coming of the Lord ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’ is chanted at the beginning of the liturgy, before the gospel and also before receiving the holy sacrament. The hymn ‘Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of hosts, heaven and earth are full of His glory and honour’ is chanted in all liturgies, in all churches. As for the second coming ‘blessed, honour, glory and power be unto Him who sits on the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever, amen, Alleluia’ it is chanted during the Revelation celebration. Thus, it can be seen that during the first and second centuries, the early church focused in her liturgy on establishing the importance of the holy sacrament which she received from the Lord ‘Do this in remembrance of me’. Later on, the church emphasised the concept of the coming of the Lord **ἔρχομενος ο κυριος**’ by inserting its relevant hymns in the daily liturgical practices.