

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Worshiping the Holy Trinity in The Saint Basil Liturgy: Part I: The raising of incense service

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تُبدي الكنائس بشكل عام، والكنيسة القبطية بشكل خاص، حرصًا شديدًا على ضمان الالتزام والمتابعة من أعضائها خلال الليتورجيا، في حضرة الله – الثالوث القدوس، الأب والابن والروح القدس. يظهر ذلك بوضوح عند الفحص الدقيق في النصوص الليتورجية التي يصليها الكاهن والشعب. تُقام الليتورجيات في الكنيسة، التي تُعرَف بـ "بيت الله". وتعمل هذه التسمية كتذكير بقدسية الكنيسة التي يتواجد فيها المؤمنون، وما ينبغي أن تتوجه إليه عقولهم أثناء الصلاة في الكنيسة، ويتم الاحتبار والإعتراف بحضور الثالوث القدوس من خلال هيكل ونظام الليتورجيا. تستعرض هذه المقالة النصوص والألحان المستخدمة خلال ليتورجيا القديس باسيليوس الكبير، وفقًا للطقوس القبطية، لتُظهر كيف تُوجَّه هذه النصوص نحو الثالوث القدوس

Dutch: Kerken in het algemeen, en in het bijzonder de Koptische Kerk, zijn vastberaden om de aanwezigheid en aandacht van diens leden te behouden tijdens de liturgie in de aanwezigheid van God—De Heilige Drie-Eenheid; de Vader, de Zoon en de Heilige Geest. Dit is duidelijk aantoonbaar bij nadere analyse van de liturgische teksten die gezongen worden door de priester en het volk. Liturgieën worden in de kerk gehouden, die beschreven wordt als het "Huis van God." Deze beschrijving dient als een herinnering voor de heiligheid van de kerk waar gelovigen staan en waar diens gedachten op gericht dienen te worden tijdens gebed. In de kerk wordt de aanwezigheid van de Heilige Drie-Eenheid erkend en ervaren via de structuur en de orde van de liturgie. Dit artikel bestudeert de teksten en de melodieën die gebruikt worden tijdens de liturgie van Sint Basilius volgens de Koptische traditie, om zo te demonstreren hoe deze gericht zijn naar de Heilige Drie-Eenheid.

English: Churches in general, and the Coptic Church in particular, are very keen to guarantee the abidance of their members, during the liturgy, in the presence of God—The Holy Trinity, the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is clearly evident upon close examination of the liturgical lyrics chanted by the priest and the congregation. Liturgies are held at the church, which is described as the "House of God." This description serves as a reminder of the sanctity of the church where the believers stand and what their minds should be focused on, during prayer. In the church, the presence of the Holy Trinity, is acknowledged and experienced through the structure and order of the liturgy. This article examines the lyrics and the melodies used during the St Basil liturgy, according to the Coptic tradition, to demonstrate how they are directed to the Holy Trinity.

French: Les églises en général, et en particulier l'Église copte, tiennent à garantir à leurs fidèles, pendant la liturgie, la présence de Dieu—la Sainte Trinité, le Père, le Fils et le Saint-Esprit. Cela est clairement évident lorsqu'on étudie de près les paroles liturgiques chantées par le prêtre et

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la congrégation. Les liturgies se déroulent à l'église, qui est décrite comme étant la « Maison de Dieu ». Cette description sert à rappeler la sainteté de l'église où les croyants se tiennent et sur quoi leur esprit doit se concentrer pendant la prière. Dans l'église, la présence de la Sainte Trinité est reconnue et vécue à travers la structure et l'ordre de la liturgie. Cet article examine les paroles et les mélodies utilisées pendant la liturgie de saint Basile, selon la tradition copte, pour montrer comment elles sont orientées vers la Sainte Trinité.

German: Kirchen im Allgemeinen, und die koptische Kirche im Besonderen, legen großen Wert darauf, dass ihre Mitglieder während der Liturgie in der Gegenwart Gottes—der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit, des Vaters, des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes—verweilen. Dies wird bei genauer Betrachtung der liturgischen Texte, die vom Priester und der Gemeinde gesungen werden, deutlich. Die Liturgien finden in der Kirche statt, die als „Haus Gottes“ beschrieben wird. Diese Beschreibung erinnert an die Heiligkeit der Kirche, wo die Gläubigen stehen und worauf ihre Gedanken während des Gebets gerichtet sein sollten. In der Kirche wird die Gegenwart der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit durch die Struktur und Ordnung der Liturgie anerkannt und erlebt. Dieser Artikel untersucht die Texte und Melodien, die in der Basilius-Liturgie nach koptischer Tradition verwendet werden, um zu zeigen, wie sie auf die Heilige Dreifaltigkeit ausgerichtet sind.

Greek: Οι εκκλησίες γενικά, και η Κοπτική Εκκλησία ειδικότερα, είναι πολύ πρόθυμες να εγγυηθούν την παρακολούθηση των μελών τους, κατά τη διάρκεια της λειτουργίας, στην παρουσία του Θεού—της Αγίας Τριάδας, του Πατέρα, του Υιού και του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Αυτό είναι σαφώς εμφανές κατά την προσεκτική μελέτη των λειτουργικών αποσπασμάτων που ψάλλονται από τον ιερέα και το ποίμνιο. Οι λειτουργίες πραγματοποιούνται στην εκκλησία, η οποία περιγράφεται ως ο «οίκος του Θεού». Αυτή η περιγραφή χρησιμεύει ως υπενθύμιση της ιερότητας της εκκλησίας, όπου στέκονται οι πιστοί και σε τι πρέπει να είναι επικεντρωμένο το μυαλό τους, κατά τη διάρκεια της προσευχής. Στην εκκλησία, η παρουσία της Αγίας Τριάδας, αναγνωρίζεται και βιώνεται μέσω της διαμόρφωσης και της ιεραρχίας της λειτουργίας. Αυτό το άρθρο εξετάζει τους στίχους και τις μελωδίες που χρησιμοποιούνται κατά τη λειτουργία του Αγίου Βασιλείου, σύμφωνα με την κοπτική παράδοση, για να παρουσιάσει πώς απευθύνονται στην Αγία Τριάδα.

Swedish: Kyrkor i allmänhet, och den koptiska kyrkan i synnerhet, är mycket angelägna om att säkerställa sina medlemmars följsamhet under liturgin, i Guds närvaro – den Heliga Treenigheten, Fadern, Sonen och den Helige Ande. Detta blir tydligt vid en noggrann granskning av de liturgiska texter som sjungs av prästen och församlingen. Liturgier hålls i kyrkan, som beskrivs som ”Guds hus”. Denna beskrivning fungerar som en påminnelse om kyrkans helighet, där de troende står och vad deras tankar bör fokusera på under bönen. I kyrkan erkänns och upplevs den Heliga Treenighetens närvaro genom liturgins struktur och ordning. Denna artikel undersöker texterna och melodierna som används under St. Basileios den store liturgi enligt den koptiska traditionen, för att belysa hur de riktas mot den Heliga Treenigheten.

After the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, God gave Moses a series of commandments and instructions. Among these was the command to construct an altar for incense and place it in front of the veil before the tabernacle. God instructed Aaron to raise pure incense upon it every morning and every evening (*Exodus 30:1–8*). This special ordinance reflects the love of God to His people whom He delivered out of Egypt and honoured as His kingdom, His priests and His Holy nation (*Exodus 19:6*).

It is worth noting that the custom of raising of incense was already known and practised by various cultures including the Egyptians, Indians and Chinese. Despite the Israelites' prior experience with raising of incense in Egypt, God's commandment to them to raise incense before the tabernacle was unique. It symbolised their direct communication with God, encouraging them to present themselves before Him, raising their voices and hands in prayer and praise. This call was echoed later by David

in the Psalms: “Let my prayer set like incense before you and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice” (*Psalm 141:2*).

The service of the raising of incense, comprising Vespers and Matins, begins with the priest opening the door of the sanctuary and saying “**εΛΕΗσον ΗΜΑΣ... ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑ ΤΡΙΑΣ ΕΛΕΗσον ΗΜΑΣ—Have mercy on us O God... O Holy Trinity have mercy on us.**” The priest then bows before the altar, worshipping the Holy Trinity and silently says “we worship You O Christ with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit for You have come and saved us. Standing at the gate of the sanctuary, the priest proceeds to chant the “Thanksgiving Prayer” which is offered to God the Father. However, this prayer concludes by offering the due glory and honour to the Holy Trinity: “**Through Whom the glory, the honour, the dominion, and the worship are due to You, with Him, and the Holy Spirit, the Life-Giver, Who is of One Essence with You, now, and at all times, and unto the age of all ages. Amen.**” To avoid repetition, this phrase will henceforth be referred to as the “**Δοξα—Dhoxa—Gloria.**” It is worth noting that the “Gloria” is always recited silently by the priest.

While the Priest prays the Gloria at the end of the Thanksgiving Prayer, the congregation chants a beautiful hymn for the Holy Trinity known as “Verses of the Cymbal.” During “Watos” days (Wednesday–Saturday) the hymn begins with the verse ‘**τενορωπτ ἄφρωτ νεμ Πωρη νεμ πι Πνευμα εσοταβ—we worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**’. During the ‘Adam’ days (Sunday–Tuesday) it commences with the verse **Αμωινη μαρενορωπτ ηττριας εσοταβ ετε Φρωτ νεμ Πωρη νεμ πι Πνευμα εσοταβ—Let us worship the Holy Trinity, who is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**’. After extending the spiritual greetings to the church saints, this hymn concludes by addressing Lord Jesus and offering praise to the Holy Trinity **Εορενηωσ εροκ νεμ πεκρωτ ηαγαθος νεμ πι ηνευμα εσοταβ—We praise You with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit...**’ This coincides with the priest raising of the incense at the sanctuary door as he prays “we worship you Our Lord Christ with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit for you have come to save us.”

The opening melody of this hymn remains consistent across the Adam and Watos days. Interestingly, it matches precisely the melody chanted at the beginning of the pre-vespers praises psalm 118, **Δοξα ci Θεος ΗΜΟΝ. ΝΙΕΘΝΟΣ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΣΜΟΥ ΠΒΟΙΣ—Glory be to our God. All you nations praise the Lord...**’. This musical resemblance reinforces the connection between the start of the two hymns, emphasising the worship offered to the Holy Trinity, with the first giving Him the due Glory and the second calling the believers to worship Him at the time of raising of incense. Of note, the Psalm 118 hymn concludes by glorifying the Holy Trinity **Δοξα Πατρι κε Υιω κε Δσιω Πνευματι. Κε ντην κε ‘α’ι κε ιστουτς ε ωνασ των ε ωνων αμην—Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and the age of ages Amen** Allylouia.

Following the hymn of the Holy Trinity, the priest prays the “Litany of the Departed” during Vespers, or the “Litany of the Sick” followed by the “Litany of the Travellers” during Matins. Alternatively, he may elect to pray the “Litany of the Oblations” instead of the latter in Matins, particularly during the feasts’ services. Each of these three litanies concludes by the “**Δοξα—Dhoxa—Gloria**” while the congregation prays the evening and the morning prayers silently, culminating by the Great Dhoxology “**Holy God Holy Mighty Holy Immortal...**” These prayers are followed by the “doxologies of the saints” which are chanted by the deacons and the congregation, after which the church recites the “Christian Creed” openly affirming their belief in the **Holy Trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

his focus to the primary purpose of the service which is “the glorification of the Holy Trinity.”

Furthermore, the congregational chants of worship and glorification of the Holy Trinity are uniquely sung in the musical maqams “Huzam or Geharka” which are known for their cheerful tunes that bring happiness and peace to the praying soul. Equally important, these melodies not only enhance the spiritual atmosphere but also encourage the congregation to savour the blessing of praising the Holy Trinity in Whose presence they stand throughout the raising of incense service.

With this understanding, Coptic believers should be able to focus on the purpose of attending and participating in the raising of incense with concentration and devotion.