**(4) The rite of infant baptism**

**an introduction**

These days there are questions about stable rituals in our Coptic Orthodox Church. Some think that certain rituals in which the Church was influenced by rituals taken from the Old Testament, that is, Jewish practices. Therefore, we found it our duty to explain the reason for the baptism of male children forty days after their birth, and for female children eighty days after their birth. And the connection of this ecclesiastical system to the doctrine of the inheritance of original sin, for which we issued a book prior to this book (No. 2).

The Lord preserves for our church its heritage and its proper Orthodox tradition, through the prayers of His Holiness Pope Anba Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark. May the Lord prolong his life.

Christmas fast

November 2016 AD

Bishoy

Metropolitan of Damietta, Kafr El-Sheikh and Al-Barari And the abbot of the monastery of Saint Demiana in Barari Belqas

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**Research study about**

**The period of forty days for the birth of a boy and the eighty days for the birth of a girl prior to baptism**

Church rites are a means of clarification of the Christian faith for the people. For example, the church moves its prayers during the Holy Week to the second choir in memory of Adam and Eve’s exit from Paradise and to indicate that we want to be with the Lord Christ, who bore our sins to atone for them outside the camp, as our teacher Paul the Apostle said, “So let us go out to Him outside the camp.” Heb 13:13). After the eleventh-hour prayers on Good Friday and with the beginning of the twelfth prayers, we open the door of the alter and enter it as a sign of Christ opening Paradise after his descent into Hell. The Church forbids kissing from the night of Wednesday from the Holy Pascha until the night of Easter, as a sign of rejecting the kiss of Judas, and also as a means of clarification that reconciliation was announced by the resurrection, and so many rituals with known connotations... An important example of this: one baptism with three dips in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit. Jerusalem with the recognition of belief in one God, Trinity.

God punished Adam and Eve for their sin thus:

He said to the woman, "The more often, the more labors you have to conceive. In pain you will bear children. And your longing shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. And he said to Adam, because you have listened to what your wife said, and you have eaten from the tree that I commanded you, saying: Do not die. With toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. And thistles and thistles it will grow for you, and you will eat the grass of the field. By the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread, until you return to the land from which you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:16-19).

This punishment still exists in its details despite the transfer of the souls of the righteous in the New Testament to Paradise and not to Hell. Without it, all of humanity would have forgotten the sin of Adam and Eve. God intended that there should remain death, fatigue and sweat, as well as the labors of pregnancy and the pain of childbirth, in order to remember the original sin and its consequences and the need to be saved from it in the stages of the New Testament. These are all means of clarification of God's work for humanity.

Therefore, the law in the Old Testament stipulated that the woman should be purified after forty days in the case of a male child, and eighty days in the case of a female child (see Leviticus 12:2-5). The matter has absolutely nothing to do with the health aspects of the woman who gives birth; Because is God ignorant of these matters in detail?? Of course not, no way...

But this was because God wanted from ancient times to remind every person that the child who would be born would bear the original sin, so a woman in the Old Testament law was considered unclean after his birth, forty days after the birth of a male and eighty after the birth of a female.

As for the difference in the number of days between the male and the female, it is as our teacher Paul the Apostle said, because “Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived, and she committed the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:14). Because it was said in the Book of Genesis: “The woman saw that the tree is good for eating, and that it is a glow of the eyes, and that the tree is a testimony of the look. Therefore, Eve carried her own guilt and the guilt of her husband, whom she seduced by disobedience. A double sin.

In the New Testament, we do not consider a woman unclean after giving birth, as was the case in the Old Testament. Rather, the forty days and the eighty days are only to remind that she was carrying a child to whom the original sin had passed. This is not considered a punishment but only a means of clarification. The mother with a kind of affiliation and moral responsibility because she bore a child carrying the original sin remains outside the camp as a reminder of what happened in this original sin. Therefore, if the child’s life is in danger and the church is forced to baptize him before the end of this period, the mother does not approach the holy sacraments until the specified period (40 days for a boy and 80 days for a girl) expires, so she completes the obligatory days.

This ritual, the Church picked up its concept and significance from the story of creation and the fall of Adam and Eve, and thus from the law that God set in the Old Testament, and it has maintained its adherence to it, but with a spiritual concept far from the concept of impurity. The Christian law kept forty days for a boy and eighty for a girl, and the mother would be like a child bearing the saying of our teacher, the Apostle Paul: “So let us go out to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach” (Hebrews 13:13). On the other hand, we should remember that the Virgin Mary was called the second heaven because she bore the Holy God, the Incarnate Word, and became higher than the cherubim and more exalted than the seraphim. As for the mother who bore the child, the inheritor of the original sin, she shares the waiting with her son or daughter, but she is not considered unclean and does not personally need purification after the redemption and reconciliation accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ. As for the baby boy or girl, each of them needs purification and new birth through baptism.

Historically, parents relied on infant baptism to prove the inheritance of original sin in their discussion of this serious issue, which is the inheritance of original sin, in proving the doctrine of redemption and its necessity.

Therefore, the Council of Cartagena decided in 418 AD in Law 2 (110) the following:

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If anyone says that newborn children do not need baptism, or that they should be baptized for the remission of sins, but that in them there is “no original sin inherited” from Adam, it must be washed with the bath of the new birth, and in this case the formula of baptism is not taken as “forgiveness.” Sins “literally, but symbolically, let him be accursed, because according to Romans 5:12 Adam’s sin passed on to all.”