

# THE GREAT MIRACLE OF ORTHODOXY THROUGH THE CENTURIES

TRUE ORTHODOXY, HOW MUCH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST LOVES YOU, TO SENT HIS HOLY LIGHT AND BLAZE DOWN OUR HEARTS WITH HEAVENLY JUBILATION, LIGHT UP OUR MINDS AND RAISE OUR HOPE?

Every Holy Saturday (Saturday of the Holy Week) at noon in the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem recurs the GREAT MIRACLE OF THE HOLY LIGHT that stirs, affects rejoices and gives delight and faith to those who have the honor and blessing to be there for the ceremony of the Holy Light.

## **Description of the miracle**

**1. PREPARATION OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER:** In the morning of the Holy Saturday, before the ceremony of the Holy Light takes place a very thorough check of the tomb and after that they seal it with a mixture of honey and wax that was prepared in the morning. This check takes place so that everyone is ascertain that there is nothing in the Holy Sepulcher that can cause a fire. After the tomb is sealed the authorities affix the wax with their seals. All the other doctrines who have rights in the Holy Sepulcher show great interest in this procedure. This interest is by no means accidental. If for one year the miracle of the Holy Light doesn't happen when the Greek Orthodox Patriarch performs the ceremony the other doctrines will try to undertake the precedence in the Holy Sepulcher.

The checking begins at 10:00 and finishes at 11:00. While this takes place orthodox Arabs demonstrate in the church for the orthodox rights. It must be recorded that this pedantic check of the Holy Sepulcher watch representatives of the Armenians and of the other doctrines.

**2. THE CEREMONY OF THE HOLY LIGHT:** The ceremony of the Holy Light takes place at 12:00 and constitutes of three stages: a. The Litany, b. The entry of the Patriarch in the Holy Sepulcher and c. The prayers of the Patriarch in order for the Holy Light to come out.

Following the tradition, at noon of the Holy Saturday the Greek Orthodox Patriarch with his escort - archpriests, priests and deacons and the Armenian Patriarch - enter the Holy Sepulcher, while the bells strike mournfully. Before the entry of the Patriarch the keeper of the Sacristy of the Holy Temple carries the unsleeping oil lamp, (it is put out that day in order to turn on with the Holy Light). From the interior entry of the Temple of Apostle Jacob the Patriarch enters in the sanctuary and seats on the Patriarchal throne. Then the representatives of the Armenians, the Arabs, the Copts and others pass and kiss the hand of the Patriarch so that they will have the right to receive the Holy Light. According to the privileges if they don't kiss the hand of the Orthodox Patriarch they do not have the right to receive the Holy Light from his hands. Immediately afterwards begins the Holy Litany that goes three times around the Holy Sepulcher and then it stops in front of the Holy Sepulcher where the officials stand.

After the litany the Holy Sepulcher is unsealed and the Patriarch takes off his pontifical vestments and remains only with his white priest's tunic. Then the governor of Jerusalem and the police director examine the Patriarch in front of everybody so that everybody is assured that he doesn't carry anything that can transmit light (fire).

After this his Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem takes the (extinct) torches and enters the Holy Ciborium with the Armenian draguman. All the lamps are off and nothing is on in the Holy Temple and the Holy Sepulcher.

**3. HOW THE HOLY LIGHT COMES OUT:** Inside the Holy Sepulcher the Patriarch prays kneeling and reading the special wishes requesting our Lord Jesus Christ to send His Holy Light as a gift of sanctification for the people. And in the absolute quietness at the hour when the patriarch prays a wheeze is heard and almost simultaneously blue and white lightning's of Holy Light penetrate from everywhere, as though millions of photographic flashes turn on embracing the walls and all the lamps light up miraculously. In the Holy Sepulcher the torches the Patriarch holds while he prays turn on also by the Holy Light. The crowd bursts out in cheers while teardrops of joy and faith run from the eyes of the people.

For a few minutes the Holy Light doesn't have the attributes of fire. This happens the first minutes after the patriarch comes out of the Holy Sepulcher and gives the Light to the people. Anyone can touch the fire of the 33 candles and he doesn't burn. After 33 minutes the flame is normal.

## **IN GENERAL FOR THE HOLY LIGHT**

Only the Greek Orthodox Patriarch has the privilege the honor and the power to make this ceremony. Attempts from the other doctrines to perform this miracle were made but it was impossible. For example in 1549 AD according to historical recordings, the Armenians bribed Sultan Mourat in order to give them permission to go in the church of the Holy Sepulcher and perform the ceremony. Indeed the sultan gave the authorization and the Armenians entered the Temple and locked out the orthodox. The Orthodox Patriarch full with despair when he saw the Armenians in the church kneeled and prayed out of the church's entry near one of the columns. Suddenly the column was torn and the light came out that way, lighting the patriarch's torches. The Agarino's Emir was watching from the minaret across the street. When he saw these events he cried out: "The faith of the Christians is great! One is the real God, the God of Christians! I believe in Christ the resurrected from the dead. I kneel to him as my God". After his consent he jumped from the minaret but he wasn't hurt. The Muslims captured him and decapitated him. His relic is kept until today in the Monastery of the Great Virgin in Jerusalem.

The Holy Light symbolizes and reminds us in a miraculous way the Resurrection of Christ. It is a Godsend miracle through centuries from the light of the world, and this light is Christ for the world. Science cannot explain this great miracle and this time in its honor science never tried to explain it not even theoretically. Besides how can anyone explain a genuine miracle?

Many people every year watch the Holy Light and feel intensely the presence of God between them. This Light should light humanity for a better tomorrow.