

Sunday, March 13, 2016

## Discussion on Unifying The Dates of the Feasts (2)

**- Do you think that all people should understand the science of astronomy?!**

+ No, of course not, but having the foundation of the scientific proof is important to take a step in the right direction, but misinformation can clutter the mind and mislead people.

My friend smiled and said:

**- Can you tell us some of the misconceptions about this topic, and the accurate information that can be simply understood?**

+ Gladly...

First: There are three common misconceptions that are currently widespread in the church:

**1- Most Coptic immigrants want to celebrate Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup>.**

In reality most church members want to celebrate Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup> with the condition that all Coptic Churches, both in and out of Egypt celebrate Christmas on the same day. One of the priests in Canada surveyed the people in April 2015 about this issue without any explanation or advice on this topic. He found that 60% of the church members wanted to celebrate Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup> as long as all the Coptic churches around the world celebrated on the same day. In my opinion, if people are informed about this topic, more would be in agreement.

**- Allow me to interrupt you. Why, then is it said that the people in Canada refused to change the date of the celebration to December 25<sup>th</sup>?**

+ Because the question they were faced with was: "Do you want to celebrate Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup> regardless of when the churches in Egypt celebrate?" The answer was an absolute no, which is logical and sound I strongly support this opinion that the timing of the celebration should be on the same day inside and outside Egypt. We are one church and are committed to the Coptic calendar in all our feasts and our events.

**- Alright, but let me ask this question, which may seem naive... Why don't all the churches celebrate Christmas on January 1st, in order to put an end to this controversy?**

+ As a general principle any change cannot be accepted unless it was based on scientific grounds. So what are the scientific grounds that would make all churches celebrate January first? There are none. The modern world respects science so if we decided to properly modify any calendar, this amendment must be based on scientific rules and not just consensual choices. From the church's standpoint, the feasts are linked to calendars, so the calendars must be set in order to unify the feasts!

**- That makes sense. What is another misconception?**

**2. Adjusting the Coptic calendar and modifying the date of the celebration of Christmas will make us change all the books of the church and its rituals.** This is also completely false information. The characters from the church books and rituals will not change. We will continue to celebrate Christmas Day on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Kiahk as usual, and all the feasts will always be celebrated on their regular Coptic dates after adjusting the calendar. In all matters, once the calendar is adjusted, the 29<sup>th</sup> of Kiahk will be December 25<sup>th</sup> and not January 7<sup>th</sup>, and by the way, that was the situation before 1582 AD, and was changed when the Western calendar was adjusted.

**- I have a question: What do you mean by adjusting the Western calendar?**

(To be continued)

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