

Saint Abanoub

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Objectives:

- ✠ Know the story of St. Abanoub.
- ✠ Learn that godliness is not about age, but about faith, and that a person can follow God no matter what their age.

Key verses:

“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven’.” (Matt 18: 2, 3)

Lesson Outline:

[TAKE KIDS TO AN ICON OF SAINT ABANOUB, WHERE WE BEGIN THE LESSON]

Ask the kids what they see in the icon?

Ask the kids if they know the story of Saint Abanoub?

- Abanoub was born in a town called “Nehisa” in the [Nile Delta](#).
- Only son of good Christian parents who died when he was a young child.
- It is not known exactly when he was born, but it is thought some time around 290 A.D.
- At age twelve Abanoub entered the church to hear the priest asking the congregation to remain faithful during the persecutions provoked by [Diocletian](#), the Roman emperor (284-311 A.D).
- He received the Holy Sacraments, and then prayed to God to guide him to where he could confess his faith in [Jesus Christ](#). After he went out, and gave all his possessions to the needy. He then set off on foot to a city called “Samanoud”. While he was walking, he saw the [Archangel Michael](#) in celestial glory. The sight was so extraordinary that Abanoub fell to the ground, but the Archangel raised him up, and told him that he must suffer for three days in “Samanoud” and he would witness to Jesus Christ in other places also.

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- Once in Samanoud, Abanoub went to the Roman ruler and declared his faith openly. He also rejected the ruler's idols. The ruler was angry and gave orders to whip him on his belly. The soldiers beat Abanoub severely until his intestines fell out, but the Archangel Michael miraculously healed him. Then the ruler put him in jail with other Christians who were encouraged by his presence among them, and later were martyred for the name of Jesus Christ.

MIRACLE 1

- The following day, the ruler took Abanoub on a boat to a city called Atrib (in Egypt) and, as punishment, he hung Abanoub upside down from the sail of the boat. The soldiers, along with their ruler, started drinking and dancing and hitting Abanoub on the mouth. [AT THIS POINT – SHOW THE KIDS THE ICON AND THE IMAGE WHERE ABANOUB IS HUNG UPSIDE DOWN ON THE SAIL]. Abanoub's nose bled but then, unexpectedly, the soldiers became blind and the ruler became paralyzed. In their agony they cried to him and said, "Please Abanoub, pray to your God to heal us, for if we are cured, we will become Christians."

- St. Abanoub replied, "This will only happen in Atrib, so that everyone there should know that there is no other God but Christ." When they arrived in Atrib, they were all healed, and they cried with joy, "We are Christians. We believe in the God of Abanoub" Then they took off their uniforms and threw them on the ground in front of the ruler of Atrib. The governor was enraged, and ordered them to be killed.

MIRACLE 2

- In Atrib, Abanoub was tortured severely, sometimes by whipping, and sometimes by tying him to an iron bed and lighting a fire under him; [AT THIS POINT – SHOW THE KIDS THE ICON AND THE IMAGE WHERE SAINT ABANOUB IS ON THE IRON BED] but in all these tribulations, the Lord showed his power and Abanoub was saved. As a result of these miracles, many onlookers became Christians, and were martyred. The ruler then gave orders to cut off Abanoub's hands and feet. Suddenly the Angel of the Lord came down from heaven, put his hands and feet back in place, and healed him. Then Abanoub got up and walked in front of everybody. Hundreds of people became Christians as a result of that miracle.

MIRACLE 3

- Frustrated, the ruler called some of the best magicians in the country, and asked them to help him defeat Abanoub. They suggested that he should be thrown to poisonous snakes. "Those snakes have enough poison to kill two or three hundred men," they said. So they put Abanoub in a cell with the snakes [AT THIS POINT – SHOW THE KIDS THE ICON, AND THE IMAGE WHERE SAINT ABANOUB IS IN THE PIT WITH THE

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SNAKES], but God, who shut the mouths of the lions at the time of Daniel the prophet, tamed the snakes and they did not harm Abanoub. In the morning, and to everybody's astonishment, St Abanoub came out from the cell alive. Then suddenly one of the snakes crawled out of the cell and coiled itself around the ruler's neck. The man started shaking and he cried, "In the name of Jesus your God, be merciful on me and don't let the snake harm me." The saint who loved everyone - friend or enemy - just as the Gospel commands, prayed from the heart, and then ordered the snake to come down and not to hurt the ruler. On that day, many people who were present including the three magicians believed in Jesus our Lord.

MIRACLE 4

- Finally one of the ruler's advisers told him to behead the saint and put an end to that episode. So the ruler ordered the soldiers to kill St Abanoub by the sword. [AT THIS POINT – SHOW THE KIDS THE ICON, AND THE IMAGE WHERE SAINT ABANOUB IS BEHEADED] A faithful man called St. [Julius of Aqfahs \(El-Akfehasi\)](#) wrote the biography of St Abanoub, and wrapped his body in fine linen and sent him to his hometown Nehisa where he was buried. May his prayers and intercession be with us all.

Conclusion:

We can see that age did not matter to God. He worked through Saint Abanoub. This boy of 12 years old (younger than you guys), stood before the rulers of his day, and told them that he loved the Lord Jesus Christ. This was all that mattered.

Can you see that you can be holy? Can you see that you can follow God? Age is not a barrier, it is just a number.



Glory is to God, forever. Amen.