

**MALANKARA SYRIAN
ORTHODOX SUNDAY SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION OF
NORTH AMERICA**



TEXT BOOK CLASS – IX

2003

PREFACE

We are thankful to our Lord Almighty for helping us and guiding us through the work of preparing these Sunday school books. These books are the translations of the “Padamanjari” published by Malankara Jacobite Syrian Sunday School Association Head Quartered at Puthencruz, India.

These books are being published with the guidance of His Eminence Mor Ivanios Mathews, President M.S.O.S.A. and Archbishop of the Malankara Archdiocese of the Syrian Orthodox Church of North America under the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, His Holiness Moran Mor Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, the Supreme Head of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church.

A number of persons contributed to this noble cause. We take this opportunity to thank them all. Let God bless every person who contributed to make these books available to His children. We are happy to submit these books in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Syrian Orthodox Sunday School students all over the world.

Carteret, NJ
07-11-2003

Director
M.S.O.S.A. North America

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TEXT BOOK FOR CLASS IX

(English)

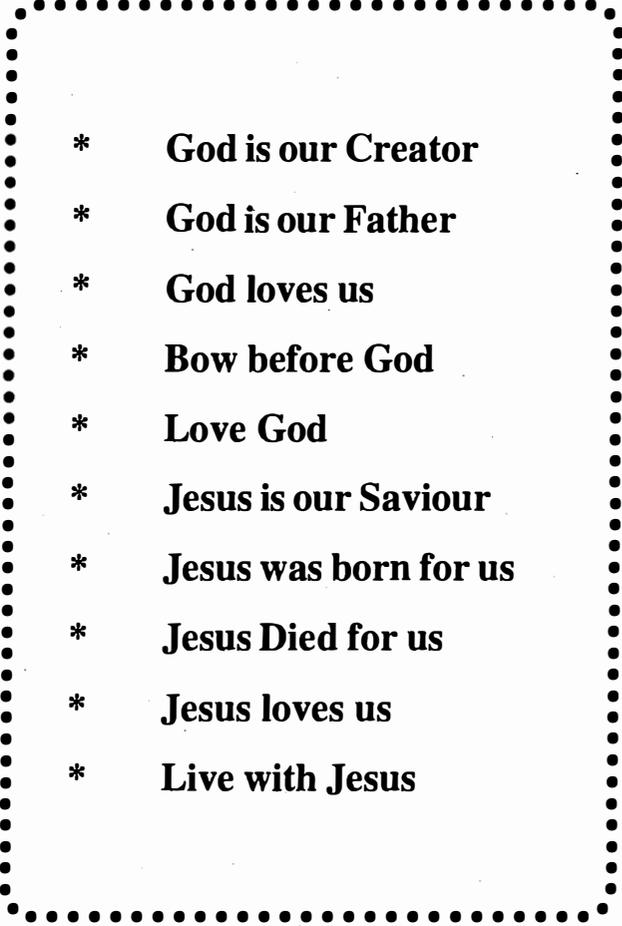
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- 
- * **God is our Creator**
 - * **God is our Father**
 - * **God loves us**
 - * **Bow before God**
 - * **Love God**
 - * **Jesus is our Saviour**
 - * **Jesus was born for us**
 - * **Jesus Died for us**
 - * **Jesus loves us**
 - * **Live with Jesus**

LESSON 1

PRAYER

Bed Time Prayer

Trisagion

Holy art Thou, O God;
Holy art Thou, Almighty;
Holy art Thou, Immortal,
+Crucified for us, have mercy on us; (Repeat three times)

Lord, have mercy upon us, Lord, be kind and have mercy, Lord, accept our prayers and worship and have mercy on us. Glory be to Thee, O God, Glory be to Thee, O creator

Glory be to Thee, O Christ, the King who does pity sinners, Thy servants. Barekmore.

PITHAVINUM PUTHRANUM PARISHUDHA RUHYKKUM STUTHI. AADHIMUTHAL ENNENNEKKUM THANNE, AMEN.

THANTE STUTHIKALAL AAKASHAVUM BHOOMIYUM NIRANJIRIKUNNA BALAVANAYA DHEIVAM THAMPURANPARISHUDHAN PARISHUDHAN PARISHUDHAN UYARANGALIL STHUTHI.

DHEIVAMAYA KARTHAVINTE THIRUNAMATHIL VANNAVANUM VARUVANIRI KKUNNAVANUM AAYAVAN VAZHTHAPETTAVANAKUNNU UYARANGALIL STHUTHI, BAREKMOR.

DHEIVAME NEE PARISHUDHANAKUNNU
BELAVANE NEE PARISHUDHANAKUNNU
MARANAM ILLATHAVANE NEE PARISHUDHAN AKUNNU
+NJANGALKU VENDI KURISHIKKA PETTAVANE, NJANGALODU KARUNA
UNDAKANAME. (REPEAT 3 TIMES)

NJANGALUDE KARTHAVE! NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME. NJANGALUDE KARTHAVE! KRIPAYUNDAYI NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME. NJANGALUDE KARTHAVE! NJANGALUDE. SHUSRUSHAYUM NAMASKARAVUM KAIKONDU NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME.

DHEIVAME! NINAKKU STHUTHI, SRISHTAVE! NINAKKU STHUTHI, PAPIKALAYA NINTE ADIYARODU KARUNA CHEYYUNNA MISHIHA RAJAVAY! NINAKU STHUTHI, BAREKMOR.

Lord's Prayer (St. Mathew 6:9-13)

Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Let us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

SWORGASTHANAYA NJANGALUDE PITHAVE! NINTE THIRUNAMAM
PARISHUDHAMAKA PEDANAME. NINTE RAJYAM VARENAME. NINTE THIRUVISHTAM
SWARGATHILEPOLE BHOOMIYILUM AKANAME. NJANGALKKU AVASHYAMULLA
APPAM ENNUM NJANGALKKU THRANAME. NJANGALUDE KADAKKARODU
NJANGAL KSHAMICHATHUPOLE NJANGALUDE KADANGALUM PAPANGALUM
NJANGALODU KSHAMIKKANAME. PAREEKSHAYIL NJANGALAY NEE PRAVESH
PPIKKARUTHE. PINNEYO DUSHTANIL NINNU NJANGALE RAKSHICHUKOLLENAME.
ENTHUKONDENNAL RAJYAVUM SHAKTHIYUM MAHATHWAVUM ENNEKKUM
NINAKKULLATHAKUNNU, AMEN.

Hail Mary (St. Luke 1: 28,42)

Hail Mary, full of grace, Our Lord is with Thee. Blessed art Thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, our Lord, Jesus Christ. O! Virgin Saint Mary, O Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen

HAIL MARY

KRIPA NIRANJA MARIYAME! NINAKKU SAMADHANAM. NJANGALUDE
KARTHAVU NINNODE KOODAY. NEE STHREEKALIL VAZHTHAPPETTAVALAKUNNU. NINTE
VAYATINTE BHALAMAYA NJANGALUDE KARTHAVEYESHU MESHIIHA VAZH
THA PPETTAVAN AKUNNU. SHUDHAMULLA KANYAKA MARTHA MARIYAME
THAMPURANTE AMME, PAPIKALAYA NJANGALKKU VENDI IPPOZHUM, EPPOZHUM
NJANGALUDE MARANA SAMAYATHUM DAIVAM THAMPURANODU APEKSHICHU
KOLLANAME, AMEN.

Prayer of Repentance

O Lord! teach us all Your commandments. By Your grace help us to live according to them. O God set guards to the open doors of our senses that the treasury of Your grace may not be detained from us. Barekmore.

O holy God, Your Holiness is adored by all saints. O Lord, cleanse our thoughts and make us worthy to glorify Your name like the seraphim who proclaim and glorify Your holiness. Moriyora melain nooadarain.

Supplication

O Lord, accept our worship and have mercy upon us.

Grant us compassion, mercy and forgiveness from your holy treasury.

O Lord, our deeds make You angry; but you never desire to be angry. You are merciful and Your tranquility is never disturbed.

Though our sins are abundant, they are like a drop of mud in Your ocean of mercy. A drop of mud in Your ocean of mercy. A drop of mud cannot soil the ocean.

O God who listens to prayers and grants supplications, be pleased in our prayers and grant our petitions in Your mercy.

The Hymn of Mor Ephraem the Syrian

Lord have mercy upon us

Kindly accept our prayers

Grant us mercy, redemption

From Thy treasury above.

Let me Lord, before Thee stand,

Wakeful my watch I'd keep,

Should I fall to slumber's hand,

Guard me from my sinful sleep.

If I do wrong while awake

Mercifully absolve me:

If I err in my sleep

In mercy, grant redemption.

By Thy cross of submission

Grant me, Lord, a restful sleep,

Forbid vain and evil dreams

O my Lord, from Thy servant.

Through the night conduct me, Lord,

Peaceful sleep give Thou to me,

Wroth and foul thoughts O Lord

May not govern me at all.

O Lord, Thy servant I am
Guard my body while I sleep
Keep Thy bright angel's guard
O my Lord, by my side.

Christ Thy life-abiding
Holy body that I ate
Keep away from my heart
Evil desires that destroy.

While I sleep in this night
May Thy holy blood guard me
Be Thou always redeemer
For I am Th-ine image.

Thy hand shaped me, O Lord
Shadow me with Thy right hand,
Let Thy mercy be a fortress
Shielding me- all around.

While my body silent lies,
May Thy power keep vigil;
Let my sleep in Thy presence
Be like the rising incense.

Thy mother who did bear Thee
By her prayers for me Lord
Let not evil touch my bed,
While I slumber in this night.

By Thy pleasing sacrifice
That absolved me from my distress
Forbid from me the wicked one
That keeps tro-ubling me.

By Thy kindness O my Lord
Thy promise in me fulfilled
By Thy holy cross, O Lord
Protect my li-fe perfect.

O Thou who pleased in me
Feeble and sinful servant I am
May I praise Thy mercy,
When I wake up from my sleep.

May Thy servant know Thy will
In Thy true loving kindness
Grant me O Lord Thy mercy
So that I may walk with thee.

Jesus Christ, O my Lord
Grant to us Thy servants
An evening filled with peace
And a night of graceful sleep.

True light Thou art O Lord
Praise we thy bright glory
We children of Thy light
Praise Thee for evermore.

O savior of mankind
Thy servants praise Thy mercy
As we do in this world
May it be in heav'n above.

Praise to Thee, O my Lord
Praise to Thee, O my savior
Praise a thousand thousand fold
Praise we Thou O Jesus Christ.

Thou who does receive our prayers
Thou who grants supplications
Heed Thy servants' prayers
Kindly grant our petitions.

Kurielaison.. Kurielaison.. Kurielaison.

THE HYMN OF MOR EPHRAEM THE SYRIAN

KARTHAVE KRIPA CHEYYANAME
PRATHANA NEE KAIKOLLANAME
NIN DAYAVUM NIN MOCHANAVUM
NINNARAYIL NINNEKANAME.

ENNUDAYONE SANNIDIYIL
NIDRA THELINJINNEEADIYAN
VANNU UNARVODE NILPATHINAYU
UNNATHANE NEE KRIPA CHEYKA.

PINNAYUMEENINNADIYAN
NJAN NIDRAYILUMENNAKILUME
ENTEYURAKKAM SANNIDIYIL
DHOSHAM KODATHAKANME.

THINMAKAL NJANUNARVIL CHEYTHAL
NANMAYODOKKE PPOKKUKA NEE.
NINDRAYIL NJANPIZHA CHEYTHENKIL
NIN DAYA MOCHICHEEDANAME.

THAZHMA YEZHUM NIN KURISHALE
NALLAYURAKKAM NALKENAME
MAYAKAL DUSWAPNADIKAL
NIN DASANU KANARAKARUTHE.

INNU SAMADHANAM NIRAYUM
NIDRAYODENNE KAKKUKA NEE.
ENNILASATHUM DURNNINAVUM
VANNADIKARAM CHEYYARUTHE.

NINNADIYAN NJANENNATHINAAL
ENNUDALINNUM KAAVALINAYI
NIN VELIVENTE DOODANE
NIYENNARIKATHA KKEEDANAME.

YESHUVU, JEEVANIRIKKUM NIN
DIVYA SHAREERAM THINNATHINAAL.
NASHAMUDIKKU NNAGRAHAMEN
CHITTHAMATHIL THONNEEDARUTHE.

RAVILURANGUMBOZHARIKIL
KAVALENIKKA THIRU RAKTHAM.
NINNUDE ROOPATHINU SADHA
NEE VIDUTHAL THANNEEDANAME.

NIN KAI MANANJORENNUDALIL
NIN VALANKAIYAKANAME
NIN KRIPA CHUTTUM KOTTAYATHAYI
KAVALATHAYUM THEERANAME.

ANGAMADANGUN NINDRAYIL
NINBALAMENNE KAKKANAME.
ENTEYURAKKAM NINNARIKIL
DOOPAM POLEYUMAKANAME.

ANPODU NINNE PRASAVICHO-
RAMMAYUDE NAL PRARTHANAYAL
EN SHAYANATHINMEL RAAVIL
DHUSHTAN ADUKKARAKARUTHE.

EN DURITHATHIN PARIHAARAM
NALKIYA NINTE BALIYALE
ENNE NJERUKKEEDATHE
MAHA DHUSHTANE NEE MATTEEDANAME.

NINNUDE VAAGDANAM KRIPAYAAL
ENKALAHO NEE NARAVETTI
NIN KURISHAALEN JEEVANE
NEE MANGALAMODUM KAKKANAME.

ERIYORENTE HEENATHAYIL
PREETHIYE NEE KANICHATHINAAL
NJANURAMBOL NIN KRIPAYE
ORTHU PUKAZHTHARAKANME.

NIN THIUUVIZHTAM NINNADIYAAN
AMBILARINJAYATHUPOLE
THANNE NADAPPAN NIN KUPAYAL
ENNIL NITHYAM KRIPA CHEYKA.

NANMA NIRANJORANTHIYAYUM
NANMA VILANGUM RAVINEYUM
EENNUDAYONAM MASIHAYE
NINNADIYANGAL KEKANAME.

SATYA VELICHAM NEE PARANE
NINTE MAHATHUAM VELIVILTHAN
NAL VELIVIL SATHYAMAYAVARUM
NIN MAHIMAKKAYI STHUTHIPADUM.

MANAVA RAKSHAKANE STHUTHI NAN
DHASARILENNU NIN KRIPAYE
EEYULAKIL NEE ENNATHU POL
AALOKATHILUMEKANAME.

ENNUDAYONE STHUTHY NALKEE-
DUNNU NINAKKEN RAKSHAKANE
AAYIRAMODATHU AAYIRAMAYI
YESUVE, NINNE STHUTHI PAADUM.

PRARTHANAYE KELKKUNNAVANE
YACHANAYE NALKUNNONE
PRATHANA KETTI DASARUDE
YACHANAYE NALKEEDANAME. KURIELAISON.. KURIELAISON.. KURIELAISON.

Psalms 91, 121

Barekhmore, Those who dwell in the secret place of the most high,
whoever abides under the shadow of the Almighty.

Barekhmore, I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my
God; in Him will I trust.

For He shall deliver you from the snare of stumbling, and from idle talk.

He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will be
safe: His truth shall be your armor.

You shall not be afraid of the terror by night; nor of the arrow that flies
by the day; nor for the plague that travels in the darkness; nor for the destruction
of the wind in the noon.

A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand.

But they shall not come near you, only with your eyes you shall behold
and see the reward of the wicked.

Because You are my Lord, my refuge, who has made His habitation in the
most high.

No evil shall come near you; no plague shall come near your dwelling.

For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.

For they shall bear you up in their hands so that your foot shall not dash against a stone.

You shall tread upon the lion and adder; and you shall trample the young lion and the dragon.

Because he has sought Me, I will deliver him and strengthen him; he shall call upon Me because he has known My name.

I will answer him and I will be with him in trouble. I will strengthen him and honor him.

I will satisfy him with long life and show him my salvation.

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where comes my helper?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot to tremble; he who keeps you will not slumber.

Behold, he that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord shall overshadow you with His right hand.

The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; he shall preserve your soul.

The Lord shall preserve your going and coming from henceforth and for ever more.

To you belongs the praise, O God. Barekmore.

PSALMS 91, 121

BAREKMORE, ATHYUNNATHANTE MARAVIL ERIKKUNNAVANUM DAIVA THINTE NIZHALIL MAHATHWAPEDUTHAVANUM AAYA MANUSHYA.

BAREKMORE, NEE KARTHAVINODU ENTE SHARANAVUM NJAN ASRAYI CHIRIKUNNA DHEIVAM ENTE SHARANAVUM ENTE SANKETHA STHALAVUM NJAN AASHRAYICHIRIKUNNA DAIVAVUM NEE AAKUNNU ENNU PARAYUKA.

ENTHANNAL AVEN VIRUDHATHINTE KANIYIL NINNUM VYRTHA SAMSAARATHIL NINNUM NINNE RAKSHIKKUM.

AVEN THANTE THOOVALUKAL KONDU NINNE REKSHIKKUM. AVENTE CHIRAKUKALUDE KEEZHIL NEE MARAYCKAPEDUM. AVENTE SATHYAM NINTE CHUTTILUM AYUDHAM AYIRICKUM.

NEE RATHRIYILATHE BHAYATHIL NINNUM, PAKAL PARAKUNNA ASTHRATHIL NINNUM, ERUTTIL SANCHARIKKUNNA VACHANATHIL NINNUM UCHAYIL OOTHUNNA KATTIL NINNUM BHAYAPEDUKAYILLA.

NINTE ORU BHAGATHU NINNU AYIRANGALUM, NINTE VALATHU BHAGATHU NINNU PATHINAYIRANGALUM VEEZHUM.

AVAR NINGALEKKU ADUKKUKAYILLA. ENNALO NINTE KANNUKAL KONDU THANNE KANUM. DUSHTANMARKULLA PRATHIBHALATHE NEE KANUM.

ENTHENNAL UYARANGALIL VASASTHALAMAKKIYA ENTE SARANAMAYA KARTHAVU NEEYAKUNNU.

DHOSHAM NINNODE ADUKKUKAYILLA. SHIKSHA NINTE KOODARATHINU SAMEEPIKKUKAYUMILLA.

ENTHANNAL NINTE SAKALA VAZHICALILUM NINNE KAKKENDATHINAYITTU AVEN THANTE MALAKHAMARODU NINNEKURICHU KALPICKUM.

NINTE KALIL NINAKKU EDARCHA UNDAKATHIRIKKANAYITTU AVER THANGALUDE BHUJANGALILN MEL NINNE VAHICKUM.

GORSO SARPATHEYUM, HORMANO SARPATHEYUM NEE CHAVITTUM. SIMHATHEYUM, PERUMPAMPINEYUM NEE METHIKKUM.

AVENENNE ANVESHICHATHUKONDU NJAN AVENE REKSHICHU BALAPEDUTHUM. AVAN ENTE NAMAM ARINJATHUKONDU ENNE VILIKKUM. NJAN AVANODU UTHARAM PARAYUM. NJERUKKATHIL NJAN AVENODU KOODE IRIKKUM. AVANE NJAN BALAPPEDUTHUKAYUM BAHUMANIKKUKAYUM CHEYYUM.

DHEERKHAYUS KONDU NJAN AVANE THRIPTHI PEDUTHUM. ENTE REKSHA AVANE NJAN KANIKKUKAYUM CHEYYUM, BAREKMOR.

NJAN PARVATHATHILEKKU ENTE KANNUKALE UYARTHUM. ENTE SAHAAYA KAREN EVIDE NINNU VARUM.

ENTE SAHAYAM AKASHAVUM BHOOMIYUM SRISHTICHA KARTH AVINTE SANNIDIYIL NINNAKUNNU.

AVEN NINTE KAAL ILAKUVAN SAMMATHIKKUKAYILLA. NINTE KAVAL KAREN URAKKAM THOONGUKAYILLA.

ENTHANNAL ISRAAYELINTE KAVAL KARAN URAKKAM THOONGUNNUMILLA URANGUNNUMILLA

NINTE KAVAL KARAN KARTHAVAKUNNU. KARTHAVU THANTE VALATHU KAI KONDU NINAKKU NIZHALIDUM.

PAKAL ADITHYAN ENKILUM, RATHRIYIL CHANDRAN ENKILUM NINNE UPADRAVIKKUKAYILLA.

KAARTHAVU SAKALA DHOSHANGALIL NINNUM NINNE KATHU KOLLUM. KARTHAVU NINTE ATHMAVINE KAATHUKOLLUM.

AVEN NINTE GAMANATHEYUM NINTE AGAMANATHEYUM INNU MUTHAL ENNEKUM KAATHU KOLLUM.

DAIVAME STHUTHI NINNAKKU YOGYAMAKUNNU, BAREKMOR.

Prayer of Mor Saverius (A.D. 460-538)

Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia, Men'olam vadhamol olam ol meenamen.

O Lord, who sits in the shadow of the most high, protect us under the wings of your mercy, and have compassion upon us.

O Lord who hearkens to all, by Your grace listen to the supplication of your servants.

O glorious King, our savior, give us peaceful evenings and sinless nights.

We set our eyes unto you; forgive our debts and sins, and be merciful to us in this world and in the world to come.

O Lord, may Your loving kindness shelter us and let your mercy guard us. May Your cross protect us from the evil one and his legion.

Let Your right hand enveil us all through the days of our lives.

Let your peace reign among us. Grant hope and salvation to all the souls who make supplication unto you.

By the prayers of St. Mary, who gave birth to you, and of all your saints; O God, forgive our debts and have mercy upon us.

PRAYER OF MOR SAVERIUS (A.D. 460-538)

HALLELUIA, HALLELUIA, HALLELUIA, MEN'OLAM VADHAMOL OLAM OL MEENAMEN.

MAHONNATHANTE MARAVIL IRIKUNNA VANAYA KARTHAVE! NINTE KARUNAYIN CHIRAKUKALUDE NIZHALIN KEEZHIL NJANGALE MARACHU NJANGALUDE MEL KARUNAYIN CHEYYANAME.

SAKALAVUM KELKKUNNAVANE! NINTE KARUNAYAL NINTE ADIYARUDE APEKSHA KELKKANAME.

MAHATHWAMULLA RAJAVUM NJANGALUDE RAKSHAKANUMAYA MISHIHA! NIRAPPU NIRANJIRIKUNNA SANDHYAYUM, PUNYAMULLA RAVUM NJANGALKKU THARANAME.

NJANGALUDE KANNUKAL NINGALEKKU NOKKI KONDIRIKKUNNU. NJANGALUDE KADANGALUM PAPANGALUM NEE PUNYA PEDUTHI EHAVUM PARAVUM AAYA RANDU LOKATHILUM NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME.

KARTHAVE! NINTE KARUNA NJANGALE MARACHU NINTE KRIPA
NJANGALUDE MUNPIL NILKANAME.

NINTE +SLEEBA DUSHTANIL NINNUM AVENTE SAINYANGALIL NINNUM
NJANGALE KATHU KOLLANAME.

NJANGAL JEEVANODIRIKKUNNA NALUKAL OKAYUM NINTE VALATHU
KAI NJANGALUDE MEL AVASIPICKENAMEY. NINTE SAMADANAM NJANGALUDE
EDAYIL VAZHUMARAKANAMEY. NINNODU APEKSHIKUNNA ATHMAKKALKKU
SHARANAVUM, REKSHYUM UNDAKANAME.

NINNE PRASAVICHA MARIYA MINTEYUM NINTE SAKALA PARISHUDHAN
MARUDEYUM PRARTHANAYAL DHEIVAME! NJANGALUDE KADANGALKU
PARIHARAM UNDAKKI NJANGALUDE MEL KARUNA CHEYYANAME, AMEN.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one True God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and of earth, and of all that are visible and invisible.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, who was begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, true God of true God; Begotten and not made; and being of one substance with His Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven + and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God. And He became man, and was crucified + for us under Pontius Pilate, and He suffered, died and was buried, and the third day He rose + according to His will, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of His Father; and He will come again with great glory to judge both the living and the dead; and His kingdom shall have no end.

And, we believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord, the Giver of life to all, who proceeds from the Father; Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the Prophets and Apostles.

And in one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the new life in the world to come. Amen.

Barekhor, Sthoumen kalos, kurielaison.

VISWASA PRAMANAM

SARVASHAKTHIYULLA PITHAVAYI AKASHATHINTEYUM BHOOMIYUDEYUM-KANAPPEDUNNAVAYUM KANAPPEDATHAVAYUMAYA SAKALATHINTEYUM SRUSHTAVAYA SATHYA EKA DHEIVATHIL NJANGAL VISHWASIKUNNU.

DHEIVATHINTE EKA PUTHRANUM SARVALOKANGALKU MUMBIL PITHAVIL NINNU JENICHAVANUM PRAKASHATHIL NINNULLAPRAKASHAVUM, SATHYA DHEIVATHIL NINNULLA SATHYADHEIVAVUM JENICHAVANUM SRUSHTI ALLATHAVANUM, SARAAMSHATHIL PITHAVINODU ONNAYIRIKUNN AVANUM, SAKALAVUM THAAN MUKHANDIRAMAYE NIRMICHAVANUM, MANUSHYARAYI NJANGALKUM NJANGALUDE REKSHAKKUM VENDI THIRUMANASSAYA PRAKARAM +SWARGATHIL NINNIRANGI, VISHUDHA ROOHA MOOLAM, DHEIVA MATHAVAYA VISHUDHA KANYA MARIYAMIL NINNUM, +SAREERIAYE THEERNNU MANUSHYANAYEE PONTIOS PILATHOSINTE DIVASANGALIL NJANGALKUVENDI + KURISHIL THARAKKAPPETTU, KASHTAM ANUBHAVICHU MARICHU ADAKKA PETTU, SWARGATHILEKKU KARERI THANTE PITHAAVINTE VALATHUBHAGATHU IRUNNAVANUM, JEEVANULLAVAREYUM MARICHAVAREYUM VIDHIPPAAN THANTE VALIYA MAHATHWATHODE INIYUM VARUVANIRIKKUNNAVANUM, THANTE RAJYA THINU AVASANAM ILLATHAVANUMAYA YESHUMESHIHA AAYA EKA KARTHAVILUM NJANGAL VISHWASIKUNNU.

SAKALATHEYUM JEEVIPPIKKUNNA KARTHAVUM, PITHAVIL NINNU PURAPPETTU, PITHAVINODUM, PUTHRANODUM KOODE VANNIKKAPPETTU STHUTHIKKAPPEDUNNAVANUM, NIBIYANMARUM SLEEHANMARUM MUKHANDARAM SAM SARICHAVANUMAYA JEEVANUM VISHUDHIYUMULLA EKA ROOHAYILUM KATHOLIKAVUM SLAIHEEKAVUMAYA EKA VISHUDHA SABHAYILUM NJANGAL VISHWASIKUNNU.

PAAPAMOCHANATHINU MAAMODEESA ONNU MATHRAM AAKUNNUENNU NJANGAL ETTUPARANJU, MARICHUPOYAVARUDE UYIRPPINUM, VARUVANIRIKKUNNA LOKATHILE PUTHIYA JEEVANUMAYI NJANGAL NOKKIPARKKUNNU - AMEN. BAREKHMORE.

Sthoumenkalos: Kurielaison, Kurielison, Kurielison, Lord have mercy upon us, Lord be kind and have mercy, Lord answer us and have mercy upon us. Glory be to You, our Lord; glory be to You, our Lord; glory to You, our hope for ever. Barekhmore.

Our Father who art in heaven...,

Hallowed be Thy...

Hail Mary, full of grace...

Our Lord is with...

LESSON 2

EZEKIEL

Objective: - To understand clearly that God is the source of life.

Prophet Ezekiel lived and worked among the captives during the Babylonian captivity period in the sixth century. B.C. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah and took the people as slaves to Babylon in 597. B.C.; Ezekiel was one among them. When Babylon again invaded Judah and destroyed it the slavery was complete. Jeremiah had foretold the people that the captivity would extend to seventy years and they should be prepared for it. (Jeremiah 29: 1-14) Some Jews considered the fall of Jerusalem as Yahweh's weakness and defeat. They were drawn to the Babylonian religious rites and ceremonies. But other sets of Jews, being steadfast in Yahweh, began to return to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices. The Jewish elders were worshipping Yahweh under the leadership of Ezekiel. It was crucial to bring back the right faith to the captives who parted from their native original faith and were immersed in other religious rites, worshipping idols and going the wrong way heeding the advice of false prophets. It is in this background that we have to understand the message of prophet Ezekiel. During the long period of captivity the prophet prepared the people and encouraged them to be faithful to Yahweh.

Ezekiel the son of Buzi in the lineage of priest Sadok was a priest and a prophet. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and the call to prophecy while living in Babylon. As priest, prophet (1:3), shepherd, guard (3:17), philosopher, visionary, he shined among the exiles. The word Ezekiel means 'God's strength, God be powerful'. In his book he emphasizes visions, experiences and details of worship. The 22 years from 593 to 571 B.C is considered as the period of his prophecy. He prophesied during the time of King Jehojachin. Ezekiel saw the visions of God while sitting on the banks of river Kebar in Babylon (1:1). The prophets gave more importance to righteousness and morality than worship in their prophecy. They protested against the hollowness of worshipful life neglecting righteousness. What makes him different from other prophets is the fact that Ezekiel combines in his message the two traditions - that of priest and that of prophet.

To the rebelling Israel (17:12) he prophesied about their destruction and to those who repented (18:32), and obeyed, the hope of salvation. He informed them of the reconstruction of Jerusalem, Yahweh's city and the Temple, His house, and about the importance of worship and the Law. (41-48). He informed the people that God resists and hates sins like infidelity, uncleanness, immorality, idol worship, shedding of blood, and that the sinning soul shall die (18:4). He declared that the righteous who hate sin will certainly live (18:9). God expects the cleansing of his children who had to suffer exile, caused by their sins. On the completion of the cleansing period the Lord gives them a new heart and soul, renews his covenant, redeems them for atonement and will reinstate them.

God, the Lord of history, used His chosen people to promote His will. We have to know God through the historic event that the Lord chose Babylon to punish Israel.

The prophet's message gave stress to the importance of individuals. The importance of personal living and personal religious commitment were also stressed in his book. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel too opposed the saying 'the fathers eating green grapes, caused the children sour teeth (18:2, Jer. 31:29). Everyone is responsible for his own iniquity and must bear the punishment, he prophesied. Over and above social sin and responsibility, his teaching emphasized righteous living, and thereby strengthened people's faith in God's justice. The prophet gave importance to the relationship between God and man. Those who rebel against God deserve punishment. There is no point in interceding on their behalf of them. Through repentance alone shall God accept them. The prophet exhorted the people to lead a righteous life in order to receive a new heart and soul.

He had the right conviction that God is the creator and man a creation. That is why the term 'Son of man' is often seen in his message. This indicates Lord Jesus Christ. The use of the term 'Son of man' is made 87 times in his book. He taught that the source of life is God. The lifeless matter, when God breathed into it, became a living soul (Gen: 2:7). The relationship with God is the basis of very life. To show that God is the source of life, he describes three visions: - (1) dry bones coming to life (37: 1-14) (2) the river starting from the House of God (47:1-12) and (3) the new city to be formed (48:30-35). All this is to show that God is powerful to pour new life into those in exile.

The prophet expressed the hope for the reconstruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. The prophet taught that the temple and religious rites are necessary to maintain active relationship with God. Righteousness and morality are the fruits of that relationship. The prophet's instructions and teachings about the temple facing toward the East, (47:1) the importance of the East, the arrangements in it, and the instructions about worship shows the priestly consciousness in the prophet. The prophet pointed out the authority of the Law (Law of Moses), the greatness of purity and glory and the importance of righteousness and morality. The book of Ezekiel begins with a warning to the people about the punishment for distancing themselves from the Holy Sovereign God. He ends with the description of a society that had a renewal with spirit and power of God and were saved; a people that submitted themselves to God and were living in happiness and joy.

The prophet had a high vision of God. He gave more importance to God's greatness (1:28), His power (1:4) and his holiness; Also indicated is the love of God. He had a deep sense of God's creative power. The prophet saw a God that interfered with history and has control over it (18:14, 25-32). God demands worship and righteousness equally. He knew God's omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, holiness, greatness, glory and lordship. Thus he had the combined divine visions of a priest and a prophet. Ezekiel fulfilled his mission by doing full justice to the priestly and prophetic righteousness.

Memory Verse: Ezekiel 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

Moral: The one who bears till the end will be saved.

Questions

1. What is the background of the prophecy of Ezekiel?
2. What are his main prophecies?
3. Which visions show that God is the source of life?
4. What term is used by Ezekiel to refer to Jesus Christ?

LESSON 2 a

HAGGAI

Objective: - To create interest in matters regarding the Lord's House.

In the year 538 B.C. when Cyrus the King of Persia conquered Babylon, it became a part of the Persian Empire. Then Palestine too was merged in that empire. Cyrus permitted the Jews in exile to return to their native land. He entrusted Palestine to Zerubabel. The Jews who returned lived under his leadership and of Jeshua, the priest. After they returned, their enthusiasm to build the temple and to worship the Lord faded. Instead their effort was to build good houses for themselves. But there was drought, famine, crop failure and economic depression in the land. Even by hard labor daily existence became difficult. In this difficult circumstance people had to be encouraged to build the temple? This is the background of the prophecy of Haggai.

Haggai was the one called for spreading the message among those who returned from exile. All the Minor Prophets depicted many parts of their prophecies in verse form. Haggai alone is different in his approach; his prophecy is entirely in prose. The essence of his prophecy can be condensed in one sentence 'But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you'. (Matthew 6:33) The prophet encouraged the people to rebuild the temple. He lived during the reign of the Persian King Darius. The period of his work was from 522 to 486 B.C. The word Haggai means 'my festival'. The book of Haggai contains mainly 4 prophecies.

1. He informed that neglecting the temple was the cause of Israel's afflictions and miseries and that only by completing the reconstruction of the temple of God, they would get His blessings. The prophet's word was honored. Zerubabel, the priest Jeshua and the people were enlightened and they rose to the occasion and began the reconstruction of the House of the Lord. (Haggai 1: 1-15).
2. Haggai told those who had doubts about the beauty of the construction of the temple that the Lord God will give greater glory to the new temple than the old, and all tribes will come into it, (2:7-9) and exhorted them to complete the work.

3. The prophet referred to the spread of uncleanness also. He revealed that the holy will also become unclean if the latter mix with the former. People thought that an inclination to worship will make them holy. But the prophet told them that their wickedness and sin will make them filthy and they will need purification. The whole earth became unclean by the unclean acts of the priests so it does not produce fruit. God's blessings will be received from the day the work of the temple began (2:10-19). He proclaimed, the major mistake of the people is that, they are not repentant about their sins.
4. Another prophecy was a special message to Zerubbabel, "God will choose Zerubbabel and fulfill the redeeming works through him and his tribe (2:20 - 23) it is found as a concordance in the book of Revelation.

Four times it is said in this prophecy that the gentile tribes will be stirred. It is at that time all eyes will be raised to Messiah the lord of justice and peace. As we hope, the lord of peace will come. But we don't know when. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. In this book the Prophet presents a God who insists that more importance be given to the House of God, worship and service to God.

Memory Verse: Haggai 1:4 Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?

QUESTIONS:-

1. What is special about Haggai's prophecy among the minor prophecies?
2. What is the essence of this prophecy?
3. What is the Chief instruction Haggai gave to people.
4. What are the important aspects in this prophecy?

LESSON 3

ZECHARIAH

Objective: To be with hope and courage

The book of Zechariah can be divided into two parts: Chap. 1 to 8 is by Zechariah I - a contemporary of Haggai. The author of Chapters 9 to 14 is called Zechariah II.

Zechariah Part I

Zechariah was a prophet after the captivity period. Haggai and Zechariah worked together and had similar view points (Heb. 5:1). He lived during the time of King Darius. The period of his activity was between B.C. 521 and 519. He was the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo. Zechariah also introduced God's message through visions, like Ezekiel and Daniel. The eight visions the prophet had are presented in the form of revelation. They are:

1. Soldiers of God (1: 7-17),
2. Workers of God (1:18-21)
3. Men holding measuring line (2:1)
4. Joshua and Satan
5. Lamp and olive trees
6. Flying roll (5:1-4)
7. Ephah (5:4-8), and
8. Four chariots (6:1-8).

Zechariah means 'God remembered, or God's remembrance'.

The reconstruction work of the temple is the main theme. The reason for expediting work is due to the feeling of the beginning of the 'Messianic Age'. "In those days God will redeem His people and renew the covenant" (8:8). The prophet is spreading the message of hope and courage. He said that the Lord will build the temple again and bring back the people from exile (8:7-8), the

temple will be a special place of the Lord's presence (2:10), Zerubbabel will be the King and Joshua will be the ordained priest (6: 9 -13) peace and plenty will be there soon. The Lord will protect Jerusalem, the true city (2:4-5). In 5 years, the temple construction was completed in B.C. 516.

He advised that men should be righteous and merciful, caring for widows, orphans and foreigners. They shall not be thinking ill of each other but should love truth and peace. God will be pleased by virtues like truth, peace, righteousness, kindness, justice and mercy. He urged them to live in morality and truth through fasting (8:19). Reminding them of the punishment received by their ancestors for disobedience, he conveyed the message of repentance (1:4-6).

The prophet pointed out the necessity of being sinless. God will destroy uncleanness and iniquity (5:1-4). He told them about the glory of God they would achieve through change of attitude, repentance and purity of living (3:4-5). It is to remind priests and people of their iniquity that he had the vision of the priest with filthy clothes (3:3). The prophet's understanding of angels deserves special attention (1:9-11). He stated that the relation between God and people will last through faith. All peoples, including gentiles will have their share in the Kingdom of God (8:20-23). The redemption and joy of all men is the aim of the Messiah. Thus Zechariah's vision was of great inspiration to the early Church.

Zechariah Part II (9-14)

It is believed that this prophecy belongs to the time of Greek rule. Chapters 9 to 14 must have been written in the early 2nd century B.C. or in the beginning of the 3rd century. This was the time when Jews hated the heathens (gentiles) and wished for their destruction. Disgusted with the worldly government, the Israelites were anxiously waiting for the Messianic age (9: 9-10). Some consider him 'prophet of Revelation' as the style of his literature is similar to that of the Book of Revelation. He was one who had great hope of the Messiah and had Jewish religious (fervor) zeal. He tried to reveal the "Lord's Day", in the light of historic incidences.

The messages regarding the end of time (an age), The Messianic age and His reign, loyalty, the remnant and the right worship are seen in this part of the Prophecy. He taught, the Lord God is coming to judge the world and destroy

the evil and save the righteous. The prophet taught that the grace of God is not earthly richness and treasures. He strongly asserted that He will destroy the shepherds and leaders who are irresponsible to their duties of caring the sheep. "Alas! For the shepherds who abandon their sheep," he cried. (11:15-17). He spoke of Jerusalem's victory and God's glorious victory. The description of a servant of God who suffers beating at a friend's house is proof of the prophet's understanding about the significance of suffering.

The prophet had a clear insight of God. God is unique (14:9); He is creator (12:1), savior (9:8), giver of strength (13:8) purifier and giver of hope (9:9).

This is a book that had great influence on early Christians. From this book many usages are connected with Christ, and are incorporated in the New Testament. Christ's entry into Jerusalem (9:9-10) (Matt 21:4), Judas's betrayal (11: 12-13) (Matt 26:14-16). They shall look on to him whom they have pierced (12:10) (John 19:37), beaten at his friend's house (13:6, Luke 22: 46-47), strike the shepherd to scatter the sheep (13:7), are some of the examples. The foot steps of the Lord on Mount Olive, the splitting of the Mount Olive, etc., are things to happen at the glorious appearance of the Messiah as interpreted by some. This is a very valuable book for the Christian Church.

Memory Verse:

"On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity (13:1).

Questions

1. Who is the contemporary prophet of Zechariah?
2. How many visions did Zechariah have? Name them.
3. What is the meaning of the word Zechariah?
4. "It is the message of hope and courage that the prophet conveyed". Explain.
5. It is a very valuable book for the Christian church. Make clear with examples.

MALACHI

Objective: To learn that those who blasphemy God will be scorned.

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. It contains prophecies after the exile. Owing to the sufferings people underwent after return from exile they became doubtful of God's love (3:14-15). The priests moved away from God and (polluted) desecrated the temple (1:7, 8:14), neglected worship, worshipped other gods, Wickedness and disbelief increased (3:5) in the land. Injustice, immorality, exploitations and persecutions grew. Divorce and mixed marriage became common. Malachi's message is against this background. The unity of Jewish tribe, their honor and national awareness are highlighted in this prophecy.

Malachi is a Hebrew word meaning 'My messenger'. The prophet, with deep national spirit and religious fervor, must have been a priest. The prophecy was written during the Persian rule. Scholars are of the opinion that the book of Malachi was written between 516 and 515 BC. The prophet adopted question and answer style for his writing. 'You say' is repeated seven times. He used this style in order to stress an idea. The prophet's message was about topics like priests' mistakes, divorce, angel (messenger), tithe (donation of 1/10th) and the Messiah who is to come.

He raised his voice against blasphemy and neglect of worship and desecrating the temple, he declared that "they who dishonor God will be scorned" (1:6). When His own people dishonor him, the gentiles will honor God (1:11). The priests who insulted God shall receive insult.

He rebuked (reproached) those who doubted God's love, and those who lost their love of God, and respect for God. He proclaimed that God is full of love (1:1-5).

Another prophecy of his was against divorce, mixed marriage and worshipping other gods. Men divorced their wives and married more beautiful and younger gentile women and worshipped their gods. The prophet said that these actions were indicative of disloyalty to God and those indulging in such acts will pay the penalty for it.

Conveying the message of the 'Lords day', he declared that the 'Day of the Lord' would be the day judgement of (2:17). Other relevant themes of his prophecy are the following: Those who departed from God will have fear, despair and punishment (3:5). Those who revere God will have hope (4:2). In those days the right worship will be restored (3:3 -4). He advised them to return to God, give tithe and offerings to Lord and receive blessings (3.7-12). "You bring the whole tithe to the coffers to prepare food in My House" (3:10). This statement about tithes deserves attention.

The righteous will be honored, they will have their reward. Service to God will never be fruitless. They shall be assets of God, their names will be entered in the book of remembrance" (3:13-18). With these words he consoled the people.

'Prophet Elijah will come from God as a forerunner of the end of this age. An opportunity to repent will be given. All should obey the law of Moses (4:4). God will save those who live in peace with one another (4:5-6). Sin will cause the downfall of man. God is eager to forgive. So approach God. This is the essence of the prophecy.

The prophet has continued in him the principles of necessary for the religious, moral, social and economical relations of modern times. Its echo resounds in the Gospels. Jesus Christ has testified in Matt 11:14 that John the Baptist is that Elijah in Malachi's prophecy. Malachi gives the foreknowledge about the Messiah who comes after four centuries, and his forerunner John the Baptist. It is considered that Malachi paved the way for the acts of Nehemiah and Ezra.

Malachi had a universal view of God. God is the God of all. God is the creator and father of all (2:10). God is love (1:2) God scorns those who blaspheme Him (2: 9), does not accept the worship of those strayed away from Him (2:10), sends messengers as forerunners to prepare His way (3:1). God always gives an opportunity for repentance (4:5-6). God is the one who judges. He destroys evil and saves the righteous (4:1-2).

Memory Verse:

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Malachi 2:10).

Questions

1. What is the background of Malachi's prophecy?
2. What is the essence of his prophecies?
3. 'Malachi has a universal view of God' Explain
4. Fill up:-
 1. 'Lord's day' is the day of
 2. Malachi is the Hebrew word for.....

LESSON - 5

JOEL

Objective: God will protect those who wholeheartedly rely on Him.

This prophecy was written in the 4th century B.C. There is a hint about the Greek rule (3:6) Many think that Joel, son of Pethuvel was a priest and prophet. Joel means "Yahweh the God". The prophet took particular interest to draw people to God's presence. The message '*Come back*' is the essence of the prophecy.

During his time, locusts, caterpillar, cankerworm, - these destroyed the land and there was severe drought. Poverty and economic depression was experienced. The prophet refers to that terrible destruction in these words, "that which the palmer worm hath left, hath the locust eaten, that which the locust hath left, hath the canker worm eaten" (1:4). The meat offerings and the drink offerings were cut off for want of wheat and vine (1:9). Enemies attacked (1:6). Under these circumstances, this prophecy is to persuade everyone to turn to God.

In Joel's prophecy we can see three stages. People faced crop failure, drought and poverty due to their estrangement from God. Therefore, if all repent and turn to God, He will relent. This was the first message (1:8). He compelled them to repent because the Lord God is great and fearful and the unbearable day (2:11) was nearing. Everyone responded to the call, young and old alike.

The prophet had the notion that priests are bound to offer intercessionary prayers for the people and for themselves. Such a message was heard by the priests. He informed that God will show mercy if the people repent and priests intercede. (2:18 -17).

Another important point in the prophet's message was the idea about – the end of the age. He mentions about God's great and fearful (glorious) Day. That day will be unbearable. It will be the day of judgment (2:2-14). On that day God will pour out His spirit to all who know him (2:28-32). This happened on the day of Pentecost.

The prophecy promises cure, victory and forgiveness to God's people: The Lord God will dwell with those who lead pious life (3:3-6). God will destroy the enemies (3:10). Those leading holy life will receive living water that heals. "A fountain will originate from the house of the Lord." Zechariah has also testified about this fountain that is opened for the atonement of sin and uncleanness (Zech. 13:1). Ezekiel too prophesied (47:1-12) about the life-giving and healing fountain starting from the temple. Isaiah prophesied about the thirst-quenching water (55:1). We find the fulfillment of these prophecies (John 4:10-15) in Christ. By conveying such a message the prophet inspired the people to forget their current sufferings and find solace.

The consoling words of Joel's prophecy are that "*God will visit His people and heal them*". But along with giving the beautiful message of pouring out the Spirit, the prophet foresees a day of darkness and pillars of smoke (2:30-31). We can find that Mercy and judgment are going together side by side. It was after the Pentecost that Jerusalem was ruined. God's Holy Spirit showered blessings on Jerusalem in 30 AD. Jerusalem crucified and killed Christ. Redemption was not experienced by the pouring of Holy Spirit. Therefore, in 70 AD the dreadful and ruthless judgment came upon that city.

Prophet Joel envisioned a broad, noble and universal God. God punishes evil (1:5) and takes revenge (3:19). He shows the God who hears the cry (1:14) and the God who judges (2:11). The prophet confirms the faith of monotheism (3:17). God has mercy, long patience and great kindness. The Prophet envisions a God who pours out His spirit to all, irrespective of sex, age, or position (3:18) - a God who safeguards the holy, and forgives their sins (3:21).

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word Joel?
2. What is the essence of Joel's prophecy?
3. What are the three stages of his prophecy?
4. What happened on the day of Pentecost?
5. The fulfillment of these prophecies we see in Christ. Which prophecies are they referring to?
6. The prophet visions a day of Darkness and pillars of smoke. When did this verse take effect? How?

Memorize:

“Yet even now”, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning”.

LESSON 6

JONAH

Objective: Salvation is for all who listen to the word of God, repent and live in Him.

Jonah is a book written after the Babylonian exile. Son of Amittai, Jonah was born in the time of Jeroboam II. (2 Kings 14:25). He is a Contemporary of Prophet Amos who lived in the 8th century BC. It is during this period that Nineveh is seen as the capital of Assyria. Although on the basis of tradition Jonah and Nineveh indicate the 8th century, scholars say the book was written between 400 and 300 B.C.

Wickedness increased in the big city of Nineveh. Lord God ordered Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach repentance (1:1-2). Disobeying the order Jonah went to Joppa and boarded a ship to Tarsus. In this voyage, the sea became rough and the sailors threw him into the sea. The great fish, sent by God, swallowed Jonah. Three nights and days he lay in its belly (1:17) and cried. The fish vomited him on the land. Again on God's order he reached Nineveh and preached repentance. Hearing the message that if they did not repent,

Nineveh will be destroyed within forty days, the king, the people and the animals fasted and prayed for forty days. The Lord God heard the city repenting, and saved it (4:10-11).

This book of Jonah is an illustrated story intended to teach divine truth. This is an invaluable book of Old Testament.

We can see a protesting prophet, a prophet who prays, an elegantly speaking prophet, and a murmuring prophet in this book. He prayed, "Lord take my life, better to die than live" (4:3). The fourth chapter is full of humor and compassion. We see Jonah being childish. The word 'sympathy' is seen several times in this book. More than the doom of so many people, what caused sorrow to Jonah was the ruin of the castor. This sin is found in many Christians even today. Lord Jesus mentions twice about Jonah. He compares his crucifixion and burial to Jonah's stay inside the belly fish. Elsewhere the repentance of Ninevites is remembered (Matt. 12:39 - 42, Luke 11:29-30).

Some other messages in the book of Jonah are:

- (1) God will punish the people and the land when cruelty, iniquity and immorality grow;
- (2) God will give time to everyone to repent; if that time is not wasted, they get salvation;
- (3) No one can escape the call of God and His hold. Trying to escape from it will lead only to doom. If anyone tried to escape from the call of God, true repentance and return to God is crucial;
- (4) True repentance with sincere prayer and fasting will change the wrath of God, and they will attain eternal salvation; and
- (5) The purpose of this story is to correct the conservative thinking that salvation is only for the Jews. The same objective is seen in the book of Ruth, that all people belong to God. He wishes to give salvation to all.

Salvation is not limited to any special section. It is for all who hear the word of God, repent and live with God. If we direct our course towards God, we shall attain His blessings. This is one of the precious books on the vision of God in the Old Testament. It is written with an understanding of God's unequalled love and His willingness to save all creations. "I have other sheep's not included in my house" said the Lord. Jonah's prophecy will give us the ardent enthusiasm to seek those sheep.

Memory Verse:

“I will give offerings unto thee with the voice of thanks giving. I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation comes from the Lord” (2:9).

Questions:

Name:-

1. Jonah's father
2. Jonah's contemporary prophet

Answer:-

1. How was Nineveh saved from the imminent doom?
2. What are the messages in the book of Jonah?

NEW TESTAMENT

LESSON 7

EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES

Objective: To get a brief idea about St. James' epistle (Chapters 1 & 2).

Author

St. James, our Lord's brother, Head of the Church of Jerusalem and author of 'Qurbana Thaksa' (Anaphora of the Holy Eucharist) used by our Church, wrote this epistle. The early Church Fathers St. Jerome and St. Irenaeus, fully agree with this opinion. Although two others are seen with the name 'James' in the New Testament such as James, son of Alphaeus and James, son of Zebedee and brother of John, no one holds that they have written this epistle.

Ananias, the High priest tried St. James before the Sanhedrin and sentenced him to death. Like St. Stephen, St. James became a martyr, praying to God for his murderers. The people of his native place used to call him 'James the righteous'.

Epistle written to whom?

The epistle was written for the Jews of the 12 tribes spread over the whole world (James 1:1). James wished that the Jews who accepted Christ as Savior and the Jews, who stood aloof, read his epistle.

Time when written

It is generally agreed that this epistle was written between 45 and 49 AD. Some scholars are of the opinion that this epistle was written around AD 60.

Main thoughts in the epistle

1. Indicts Jews of their sins, like lust for wealth, oppression of the poor etc.
- 2) God of Israel is the only one God.
- 3) Faith without good deeds is meaningless.
- 4) Kind deeds for the poor.
- 5) Christian character
- 6) About the last sacrament (anointing the sick with oil)
- 7) God accepts intercessionary prayer.

CHAPTER 1

MAIN TEACHINGS

1. Be glad when temptations come. It is for testing the stability of your faith. Pray to God with faith.
2. The rich should be humble. He who does not will wither away like the flowers of grass.
3. Blessed is the man who endures temptation. When tempted, never say he is tempted by God. 'When lust hath conceived, it bring forth sin and sin when it is full grown, bring forth death (1-15).
4. Sin is of two kinds. (a) Temptations from inside (b) temptations from outside

5. We must not be only listeners of the word of God but also doers.
6. Put a rein to your tongue. Hypocrisy is futile. Reach out to the orphans and widows and help them. These must be the rules of behavior of Christians.

Main topics of thoughts in Chapter 2

1. The children of God should not give undue importance to wealth, position and public respect. God makes the poor rich in faith and the heirs of His promised land (1:7).
2. As God is one, God's law too is one. If one of the laws is broken, it will be treated as breaking God's law (2:8-13).
3. 'Faith without deeds is dead' (2:17). This is not only the greatest idea in Chapter 2 but of the entire Epistle. St. Paul in Hebrews Chapter 11 has described at length, the subject 'Justification through faith'. But, accepting the importance of faith, St. James reveals to the world that 'faith without deeds is lifeless' (2:26)

Memory Verse:

'So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without actions is dead'. St. James 2:26

Questions:

1. Which James is the author of 'the epistle of James?'
2. Describe the last days of St. James?
3. What was the name his natives called St. James?
4. To whom was the epistle written?
5. What is the special reference about God in the epistle?
6. What are the main teachings in Chapter 1 of the Epistle?
7. What are the main ideas presented in Chapter 2?
8. Explain St. James' idea, 'faith without deeds is dead'.

LESSON 8

EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES - CHAPTERS 3 AND 4

CHAPTER 3 - MAIN IDEAS

1. Not many should aspire to be preachers. Preachers have great responsibility. Wrong teachings result in condemnation.
2. Controlling the tongue is crucial. Though a little organ, it is powerful enough to lead man to good or evil. People praise God and curse men with the same tongue. This is not worthy. As horse is controlled by the bridle and the ship by the rudder, the tongue is to be controlled.
3. True wisdom and false wisdom. True wisdom is given from above. Such people are humble, pure, and engage in kind and peaceful deeds. False wisdom is worldly. It is barbaric and devilish.
4. The makers of peace sow in peace and reap the fruit of righteousness.

CHAPTER - 4 MAIN TEACHINGS

1. Warning to those immersed in lusts and worldly pleasures. Those who go after worldly pleasures become enemies of God.
2. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit therefore to God and resist the devil.
3. 'Draw near to God and he will come near to you' (4:8).
4. He that speaks evil of his brother or judges him will be judged by God.

Warns those who are over zealous (eager) in amassing wealth without thought of God. He does not know whether he will live for the tomorrow. Boast not. 'Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin' (4:17).

Memory Verse:

'Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My Brothers, these things ought not so to be' St. James 3:10.

Questions

1. What advice does St. James give to preachers/teachers?
2. Why is it so important to control the tongue?
3. What advice does St. James give to the proud?
4. What is the warning St. James gives to him that speaks evil of his brother, and those who amass wealth without consideration of God.

LESSON 9

EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES - CHAPTER - 5

1. Warns about the imminent destruction of the wealthy who live and amass money unrighteously (5: 1-6).

The riches of the wicked and the wealthy will rust. Their gold and silver are cankered. If the reapers wages are held back, it will cry from there. That cry is heard by the mighty Lord.

2. St. James clearly states about the second coming of the Lord (5:7-11) He is advising us to await for the Lord's coming with patience and endurance. A reference is made about Job's endurance and the fortunes and blessings he received thereby.
3. Advises especially not to swear by anything. He insists, it must be a Christian principle (5:12).
4. The priests must be called for sick and prayers said for them, and they be anointed with oil. Thereby it is evident that the last sacrament of the Church, the anointing of sick, is in accordance with the Bible. Thus the sick are healed and their sins are forgiven. (5:13-18).
5. It is advised to confess sins and pray for one another for healing. This affirms that God will accept intercessory prayers (5:17-18).

The earnest prayer of the righteous has great effect. When Elijah prayed against rain, it did not rain for 3 years and 6 months. When he prayed again for rain, it rained.

If any one deviates from truth, others should try to bring him back to the right path. By doing so he will be saving the other from death. It is indeed a good deed. By doing good deeds their sins get lightened or forgiven. This idea is also seen in Daniel 4:27 and 1 Peter 4:8.

Memory Verse: St. James 5:14

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

QUESTIONS:

1. What happens to those who earn wealth by unjust means?
2. What is the consequence of keeping back the wages of reapers?
3. What should the sick do to get cured?
4. If, one prays for another for the remission of the sins of the other, there will be effect. Prove it using quotes from the epistle of St. James?
5. Based on St. James' Epistle the Intercessional prayer is in accordance with the Bible. Prove it?
6. What advantages do we gain by good deeds?

LESSON -10

EPISTLE OF ST. PETER - 1 PETER CHAPTERS 1 TO 3

Objective: To study the epistles of St. Peter in detail

Author

It is stated in Chap 1-1 itself that it is written by Peter, the Apostle of Jesus Christ to the believers and the devoted scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. The Christian writers who lived in the times of the Apostles fully agreed with this. It is believed that he wrote the epistle while in Rome, in the Greek language, and sent it through Silvanos.

General topics in 1 Peter 1 - 5 chapters.

1. The glory of the Christian Church (1: 3-12)
2. Obey the heavenly father and live the Christian way (1:13 to 2:10).
3. Christians should be faultless in the eyes of others. Honor the judges. Christ saved the world from sin by his crucifixion.
4. Husband - wife relationship (3: 1-13)
5. Happy are you if you suffer for righteousness sake, for Christ suffered for the unrighteous.
6. Reference to the entry into purgatory of spirits. (3: 19) "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison"
7. Fellowship with God, helping others, and getting persecuted for doing good deeds are desirable. Submit yourself into the hands of God.
8. The priests and others in the church must have devotion to God and right conduct. By being steadfast in faith, resist the evil. Have forbearance when in trouble; practise, diligence and hope. Sending through Silvanos. Mark salutes you.

EXPLANATION

CHAPTER 1

The epistle begins by saluting the people in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Those who oppose Trinity should read this well and understand the truth.

The devoted Christians are born again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Though there are many persecutions now, as gold is tested in fire, their faith is being tested, so these persecutions and afflictions will be pleasant to them. Men are saved by the precious blood of Jesus Christ the innocent and sinless lamb. Their faith and hope should be in God. This is the glory of the Christian Church.

Look at each other with your heart. They are born again by the living word of God. For all flesh is like grass and will wither away but the word of the Lord endures (1:25). Walk the Christian way, obeying the heavenly father.

The Apostle sees the Christian converts from the gentiles and the Jews alike. He addressed the Christians with the words 'those sprinkled by the blood of Christ', 'the devoted', 'and the born again'.

CHAPTER 2

Like infants, drink the milk that is the word of God, for salvation. Come unto Christ, the living Stone and you must be built up as living stones. As is said about, Christ that a corner stone noble and precious is laid in Zion, you be joined with it so as to build up the spiritual house, the Church (2: 4-5). You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and God's own people (2:9).

To be faultless before others the Apostle gives some instructions. Submit to law, obey the rulers and fear God. These are his moral instructions. Christ bore our sins in His own body on the cross that we being dead due to sins should live in righteousness. For the sins of the whole world He was crucified, He died and rose from the dead. Now, in heaven He is praying to God the father for mercy. This is the picture of Christ's crucifixion and the remission of the sins of the world.

CHAPTER -3

The Apostle deals in detail with husband - wife relationship. Wife should submit to husband. Wife must submit to the authority of the husband. Wives by their devotion and temperance in behavior can bring their husbands to the right path. It is not by gold ornaments or attractive clothes or other external beauty that you should be adorned but by the inner self that is in the heart, with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in God's sight. Husbands should respect their wives. They should live with wives giving due regards and honor, and so on.

Chap 3:12 'The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil! It is clear that, if we pray through the intercession of the righteous, God will hear it. The verse is similar to James 5:16.

If you have to suffer for doing good in the name of Christ, consider it as a blessing. Noah and family got into the ark and were saved through water. That is the pre-figuration of baptism. 3rd chapter also deals with the thought that we are saved by the resurrection of Christ.

Memory Verse:

1 Peter 2:17 Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God; honor the emperor.

QUESTIONS:

1. To whom did St. Peter write this epistle?
2. In which language was it written?
3. What are the main ideas expressed in the first epistle?
4. The troubles and tribulations of the faithful will make them happy. Why?
5. How are the faithful redeemed?
6. What will stand for ever?
7. By what names did Apostle Peter address Christians?
8. St. Peter compares the Church to a house. How?
9. Explain 'how Christ's crucifixion gave remission of sins to the world.'
10. What are St. Peter's instructions about husband-wife relationship?
11. What does Peter point out as the pre-figuration of baptism?

LESSON 11

EPISTLE OF ST. PETER - 1 PETER CHAPTERS 4 AND 5

Main ideas

Christ suffered for us in the flesh. So Christians should be partakers of those sufferings. Suffer while doing good. When you do this, remember that you are doing God's will.

Avoid living in licentiousness (debauchery), lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. That's why Christ preached the gospel to the dead. The end of all things is near.

Be most loving, Love will reduce the multitude of sins. Be hospitable. Serve God with the talents you have got. Glorify God the father through Jesus Christ. 'Amen' is a Hebrew word. Christ used this word when he explained certain subjects of importance to stress the idea. The meaning of it is 'truly'. St.Peter again reminds us not to feel ashamed of suffering as Christians. In verses 1-5 of chapter 5 we see the exhortation of Apostle Peter, the assistant priest to our Lord, and the witness to this Ministry, addressed to the priests of various parishes. They should spiritually feed and look after the flock of God entrusted to them. Not by compulsion or mean profit motives but with whole heart shall you tend them. You (priests) should be good examples to them. Then they will receive the crown of glory when the Chief shepherd arrives. The youth should submit to the elders. Be humble. God dislikes the proud but gives His grace to the humble. Thus in this chapter St. Peter is giving us some of the rules of conduct.

Satan, the adversary, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Therefore resist him standing firm in the faith. To God be the power for ever and ever, they are reminded. The letter was sent through the faithful brother Silvanos. It is specially mentioned that the Babylon Church and Mark wish them peace. Mark was Peter's constant companion and the author of the 'Gospel according to St.Mark'.

Memory Verse (1 Peter 4:16) "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf".

QUESTIONS

1. What is the exhortation of Peter the co-Kasheeso to the priests of the parishes?
2. What is Peter's advice to the youth and the proud?
3. How is Satan pictured by Apostle Peter?
4. Name the person through whom this epistle was sent?
5. Who is Mark referred in 1 Peter Chapter 5?

LESSON 12

SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER - CHAPTERS 1 TO 3

Similarity between St. Peter's 2nd Epistle and St. Jude's epistle.

Both epistles were written to help a certain unnamed church from its collapse of faith. It is clear that one is based on the other, but not a true copy of the other. Some hold the opinion that the second epistle of St. Peter was written basing on St. Jude's epistle.

2nd Epistle of St. Peter can be divided into 3 sections.

1. Introduction
2. Warning against those who give false advice.
3. Reply to those who do not believe in the Lord's second coming in glory.

CHAPTER 1

The epistle begins with salutations to the readers and then thanks them. Highlighting the glory and purity of Christian life, it is asserted that they will be worthy of the valuable promise.

The Apostle asks the people to make every effort to support their faith with goodness, knowledge, self control, endurance, godliness, mutual affection and love.

The Apostle states in definite terms that his death is near. During Emperor Nero's persecutions the Apostle achieved martyrdom in Rome by crucifixion upside down.

St. Peter Refers to Christ's transfiguration, as mentioned in St. Luke 8:35 St. Peter reiterates what they saw on the mount. "This is my beloved son; with whom I am well pleased", God the father called out. Thus it is clearly revealed that the dead continue to live after death and the departed saints are quite alive and active. (Moses and Elijah converse with Christ.) St. Peter also clarifies that prophecies never came by man's will. They are spoken by chosen men inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Apostle confirms this fact.

CHAPTER - 2

In chapter 2, the destruction that befalls false teachers is the main point. False teachers will receive judgment. As the angels who sinned against God were cast down into deepest darkness, as the ungodly people were destroyed by floods, as the sinful people of Sodom - Gomorrah were burned to ashes, so the false teachers will receive curse and damnation. But those who love God and live in Him will have miraculous salvation like Noah and family, and Lot and daughters, the apostle informed.

The false teachers and their followers are compared to wells without water and clouds driven by storm. The wicked who live in error and indulge in licentious desires of the flesh are compared with “The dog that turns back to its own vomit” and to “The pig that rolls in the mud after being washed”..

CHAPTER - 3

The facts about the Lord’s second coming in glory are discussed in this chapter. In 3:2 it is stated that “By these two epistles I remind you and rouse your true mind.

Thereby St. Peter is confirming his authorship of both these epistles.

About the second coming it is said that the day will come when the earth and the sky will be burned down. There will be no delay for the Lord’s coming. The Lord is extending it with long patience so that none will perish but all should come to repentance and be saved. This statement is in agreement with the idea in Matthew 24:14. The apostle continues his narration. The Lord’s Day will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a great noise, the elements will melt with fervent heat; the earth with everything therein shall disappear. Therefore lead a pure life and wait for the Lord’s Day. After that the new heaven and new earth will be there. Await that. We see this idea in Isaiah 65:17 as well. The duty of the Church today is to prepare those people well who are waiting for the second coming of the Lord.

Advising to grow in the grace and wisdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the epistle is concluded. ‘Grow in grace and wisdom’ is the main aim of Christian life.

Memory Verse

2 Peter 3:13 “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness dwells.”

QUESTIONS

1. What is the similarity between the 2nd Epistle of St. Peter and St. Jude's epistle?
2. How can we divide the second epistle?
3. How should the believers regulate their life?
4. Discuss the last days of St. Peter.
5. What is the damnation to false teachers?
6. What is the false teacher compared to?
7. Describe what Apostle Peter reminds us about the second coming of the Lord.
8. What is the chief aim of Christian life?

LESSON- 13

EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

Objective: To study the Epistles written by St. John.

Author:

It is generally accepted that St. John, the author of the Gospel himself wrote these epistles. The early writers Polycarpus, Therthulian, Iranius and Origen are of the same opinion.

Time of writing

It is believed that the epistles were written close to the time of writing of the gospel; between 80 and 90 AD, at Ephesus.

Written to whom

These epistles are not addressed to any particular Church. The author addresses the readers as 'Children, fathers and young men' Thus, it is to be considered that he wrote them to the various churches of Asia Minor, so as to be read by all.

Points of thoughts in the first Epistle

The main idea is the fellowship with God, fellowship with Father and Son. God is light, God is righteous, and God is love. The epistle is based on these three central points. The one who is born of God cannot sin. "Love one another", the 'Apostle of love' reiterates this as a commandment. (4:11-12). Warning is given against heretics. Advises to distance from, heretics who deny the Person (Knooma-Syriac) of Messiah. Those who believe that Jesus himself is the Messiah are all born of God. Obedience is based on faith. He who has obedience and faith is born of God.

A clarification of sin is given in 1 John Chap. 16-17. There are two kinds of sin, sin leading to death, and sin not leading to death. Do not think that it will be of significant use to pray for a brother who has committed a sin leading to death. But if a man prays for a brother who has committed a sin that is not leading to death, God will hear it and deliver him from the sin. The first epistle ends with an exhortation to keep away from idolatry.

The Second Epistle of St. John

Written to whom

We see in 2 John Chapter 1:1-2 it is written that 'The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth' To the chosen lady 'Kuria' and her children, I, the priest (Kashisso) write". So we can consider this epistle was written to Kuria and to all the faithful with her that comprised a Church. The specific name 'Kuria' is seen only in Peshita Syriac version of the Holy Bible.

This epistle contains only one chapter with only 13 verses. In the second epistle also he affirms the idea that we should remain in fellowship with Lord Messiah, the Son and through him with God the Father. The importance of truth and love is highlighted. St. John is very happy to know that the children of that Church follow truth. The truth is to believe that Jesus Christ came in that flesh. But many deceivers do not confess it is true. Any such person is a deceiver and is antichrist.

It is advised not to receive false teachers in your homes nor converse with them. (1:10)

Though there is much to write, he wishes to see them face to face so that their joy may be complete. Indicating this, the epistle is concluded.

THIRD EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

Written to whom?

John the apostle wrote this epistle to Gaius whom he truly loved. Gaius was very hospitable. Hospitality to pilgrims was considered as a Christian service. So St. John prays for Gaius, his well-being, and happiness. The name Gaius is mentioned 4 times in the New Testament: Acts.19:29, 20:4. Rom 16:23, 1 Cori. 1:15.

One Diotrophes tried to have pre eminence in the church of which Gaius was a member. Not only did he refuse to receive St. John and those brethren sent by him but also opposed them and forbade them. It is mentioned in the epistle, that such evil doers have not seen God. In verse 12 there is a mention of Demetrius. John gives true testimony about him. Nothing more about Demetrius is known. The church workers of those days received no help from pagans.

As in the second epistle, informing that he wishes to see them shortly and speak face to face, he concludes the epistle which contains only one chapter with fifteen verses.

Memory Verse:

1 John 3:9 “No one born of God commits sin; for God’s seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”.

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the author of these epistles?
2. To whom was the first epistle written?
3. What are the main ideas in the first epistle of St. John?
4. What is the directive about behavior towards heretics?
5. To whom was the second epistle of St. John written?
6. Who is antichrist?
7. To whom was the third epistle of St. John written?
8. Who is Diotrophes? What is St. John’s opinion about him?

EPISTLE OF JUDE

Objective: - A detailed study of Jude's epistle.

Author

Jude, servant of Jesus and brother of James, has written this epistle. We can see 5 people by name Jude in the Bible. (1) Judas Iscariot, (2) Jude son of Jacob, (3) Judas of Galilee (Acts 5:37) (4) Judas of Damascus (Acts 9:11) (5) Jude who wrote the epistle - brother of James who is the brother of our Lord. An account is given earlier about the relation between St. Jude's epistle and the second epistle of St. Peter.

Topics

1. Salutation (1:1- 2),
2. Reference about heretics who pervert the teachings about our Lord (1:3-4)
3. The punishment meted out to angels and Israelites (1: 5, 7)
4. Iniquity, teachings and blasphemy of false teachers and the punishment (1:8-16)
5. Do not be confused by the actions of false teachers. Christians should engage themselves in devotion, prayer and thinking of the Lord's coming.
6. Pray specially for those falling into sin (1:24, 25).

The epistle contains only one chapter of 25 verses. It is based on the fall of faith in a certain Church due to their immoral life. The epistle is written to make people conscious against sin. The Apostle reminds them to fight for the faith which was once delivered unto saints. Some ungodly men who deny our Lord Jesus, the Messiah have crept into this church and they will have the condemnation, the epistle warns.

The doom of these men is described later. God saved the Israelites from Egypt but destroyed them that disbelieved. The angels who rebelled against God were pushed down into the darkness. Likewise Sodom and Gomorrah that

abandoned God and lived a very immoral life were punished and destroyed by eternal fire. The same punishments will be given to these people who defile their body and defy the Lord, the writer warns.

The Disciple compared these people to Cain who murdered his own brother, and to the treacherous, greedy Balaam. He calls these people who pollute their body and defile the Lord's name, clouds without rain, trees without fruits and uprooted, raging waves of the sea and wandering stars.

The writer addresses the ungodly teachers who are grumblers, fault finders and after their own lusts as 'ungodly sinners'. But he advises the believers to obey the words of the apostles and live accordingly. He exhorts the people not to create divisions like barbarians but, like true believers, keep praying, progressing in the Holy Spirit and looking for the mercy of Lord Jesus. Besides, he advises them to be anxiously waiting for the second coming of our Lord.

At the end of the epistle the Disciple wants them to pray especially for those falling into sin, so that some of them will be saved from the eternal fire. The epistle ends by wishing glory, honor and majesty through our Lord Jesus, to those who walk in truth for ever and ever.

Memory Verse

St. Jude 1: 17 'But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ'

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the author of this epistle?
2. Who are the others with the name Jude, besides the brother of our Lord, mentioned in the Bible?
3. What are the main topics of Jude's epistle?
4. What are the punishments to the false teachers who deny Jesus, the Messiah?
5. What are those who pollute the body and defy the name of the Lord, compared to?
6. What should the believers do for those who have fallen into sin?

BOOK OF REVELATION

Objective: To learn about the Revelation, Apostle John had from Lord Jesus Christ.

Introduction

Revelation is a philosophical book. At the same time it is also a book of prophecy. Revelation to John from Christ, written to seven Churches of Asia that were being subjected to persecution. But it is to be considered that the epistle was written for all Churches that existed, and were to come into existence till the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The book is a prophecy about the plan of redemption centered on Christ, given by God through Christ and will be fulfilled by the second coming of the Lord.

“Behold, I am coming soon’ this is the most hopeful promise in this book. The book, having 22 chapters ends with a beautiful and consoling picture of humanity regaining the eternal paradise and the tree of Life, which was lost to man as illustrated in the book of Genesis.

In chapter 1:3 it is stated that the one who reads the words of this prophecy and take it to heart is blessed. So no one should hold back from reading and understanding this prophecy even though it is hard to interpret or due to the differences between the existing interpretations.

The author, place and date

St. John, the apostle, the author of a Gospel and three epistles, was exiled to the island of Patmos. When he was living there alone, Jesus Christ showed him this revelation from heaven. The Apostle wrote down the revelation in a book as it unfolded. The early Bible Scholars are of the opinion that it was revealed to him between 95 and 96 AD. In 96 AD he was released from Patmos and he reached Ephesus from where it was sent to the seven Churches of Asia, including the Church of Ephesus. The book had been canonically approved as a part of the New Testament since the second century.

The language of the Book

Language is of two kinds: language of letters, and symbolic language. The former is understanding the literal sense of what is written. The latter means picturing one as the symbol of another. The book of Revelation is written mostly in symbolic language. The book of Revelation is closely related to the prophetic books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah.

In Joel 3:18 we read, 'the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk'. This usage symbolizes prosperity and wealth. Likewise we have to understand the symbolisms in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation is rooted in other Holy Scriptures. It is in concordance with several books beginning with Genesis. **All things that were to be revealed to man have been fulfilled through the book of Revelation.**

The following are some of the concordances:

Topic	Revelation	Old Testament
1. Tree of Life	2:7, 22:2	Genesis 2:9, 22
2. Throne of God	1:4, 4:2	Isaiah 6:1, Ezekiel. 1:26, 10:1
3. Lamb	5:6	Isaiah 53:7
4. Woman, child and the great dragon	12: 1-5	Genesis 33:15

Therefore, while interpreting the book of Revelation, mostly written in symbolic style, the interpretations of parallel Biblical verses must be compared. Of the 22 chapters of the book of revelation the first three and the last three chapters deliberate about the Church. Sixteen chapters contain general prophecies. The prophecy of Daniel is also known as the Old Testament Revelation.

Memory Verse:

Revelation 1:8 'I am the Alpha and the Omega', the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty'.

QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote the book of Revelation and from where?
2. For whom was the book of Revelation written?
3. What is the literary form of the book of Revelation?
4. Give examples to show the concordance of the book of Revelation with other holy scriptures.
5. What is the most hope giving promise in this book?
6. Which are the Old Testament books that are very similar to this book?

LESSON 16

BOOK OF REVELATION I

The division of the book of Revelation and the unity of diverse topics

John's Revelation is a book of seven main topics inseparably linked together. If only we read it completely from beginning to end can we get a clear picture of its contents.

In Chapter 1 a brilliant picture of the Lord is shown in the midst of seven churches symbolized by seven golden lamp stands. In the last chapters (Ch 20-22) Satan who appeared in Eden being pushed into eternal fire and death being removed for ever, are described. The book ends with the beautiful picture of man, who was pushed out from the garden of Eden, to avoid eating the fruit of the tree of Life, being taken into the new heaven and earth and being given that fruit to eat.

Division of the book

1. Seeing someone 'like the son of Man' in the midst of seven golden lamp stands (seven churches) and his divine words to the Churches (Ch. 1 to 3).
2. The Lamb receiving the scroll sealed with seven seals from the One sitting on the throne of Heaven and then the opening of the seals (Ch. 4 to 7).

3. Sounding of the seven trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
4. The Great dragon persecuting the Woman and her Son and the remnants of her seed (Ch 12-14).
5. Pouring out the vials of the wrath of God (Ch 15-16).
6. The destruction of Babylon the great, mother of harlots and the two beasts (Ch. 17 to 19).
7. Defeat of Satan, the victory of God's people and new creation (Ch 20-22).

Daniel's prophecy too can be divided into 7 parts. Number 7 has great significance among the Israelites. Seven stands for perfection. In the book of Revelation the number 7 is mentioned 54 times.

Note: All of these 7 parts begin with the mention of the birth of Jesus Christ or the first coming, and the liberation of man enslaved by Satan, and Satan's eternal doom in the lake of burning sulfur at the second glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Satan will be imprisoned for ever at his second coming.

Memory Verse

Revelation 2:11 'He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death'

QUESTIONS

1. How can we divide the book of Revelation?
2. Which are the seven parts of the book Revelation? List the included chapters in each part.
3. What is the beautiful picture at the conclusion of the book?

BOOK OF REVELATION II

Our Lord's first coming - the period of churches. Second coming-judgment, the great blessings of the redeemed.

Objective: To understand that God's redeemed people will dwell with the lamb.

Part 1

The message being send by John to the seven churches in Asia through their messengers on the basis of what was disclosed to him by the one who is symbolised by the son of man standing in the midst of the seven lighted candles that signify churches.

“I am with you always, unto the end of the age” (Matt 28:20). We are reminded of the above verse when we see the golden lampstands symbolizing the Churches that give spiritual light to the world that is immersed in darkness. The seven churches are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. Each church has a special angel (messenger). It is instructed to send the epistles through these angels, symbolized as 7 stars.

Lord Jesus Christ, through his blood, cleansed our sins and elevated us to the royal priesthood. As a result man got entry into the New Heaven and earth. There he is given the right to eat the fruit of the tree of Life. The new city of Jerusalem descending from Heaven, the many rewards to the victors and events waiting to happen after the end of the world, are described in part 1. Chapters 1 to 3 come under Part 1. In short, first coming of Jesus Christ, shedding of His blood to save the world and many things during the period of the Churches, His second coming, and events after the end of the world are all included in Part 1.

Part 2

The scroll with seven seals in the hands of He Who sits on the throne and the Lamb are the main subjects of this part. This part comprises of Chapters 4 to 7.

John finds the door of heaven open and he is allowed to go up in to heaven. He sees God the Father seated on the throne and the slain Lamb that is Jesus Christ, the 7 blazing lamps which are the 7 spirits of God, and around the throne 24 other thrones with 24 elders wearing golden crowns seated on them. John also saw four living creatures having six wings, around the throne. Day and night these creatures without cessation all day and night was saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come". While these four creatures were glorifying God, the 24 elders prostrated before the throne and worshipped Him. Also, they were laying their gold crowns before the throne while praising God (4: 10-11).

John saw in the right hand of Him Who sat on the throne a scroll sealed with 7 seals. A mighty angel proclaimed in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scrolls?" No one came forward. But the slain Lamb that is Jesus Christ came forward and broke the seals one by one and opened the scroll. Then all the elders fell before the Lamb and prayed. Thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of angels said in a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

When each seal was opened, one of the creatures said to John in a voice like thunder "Come and see". When the first seal was broken a white horse appeared and its rider was given a crown and the power to conquer. Likewise, when the second seal was broken a fiery red horse appeared. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. While opening the third seal a black horse appeared. Breaking of the fourth seal brought out a pale horse, whose rider was named Death. He was given the power to destroy a fourth of the earth. When the 5th seal was opened, he saw under the altar, the souls of the saints who were slain for the Lamb.

When the 6th seal was broken, there was a great earthquake. The sun darkened, the moon turned blood-red, a tempest blew, stars fell down to earth, and the Kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the, rich, the mighty, every

slave and every free man cried out to the mountains and rocks, “fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the great wrath of the Lamb”. The complete destruction of the universe and the Day of wrath are pictured here.

In the 7th chapter, we see that before the destruction of the universe, the angel putting the seal of the living God on the forehead of God’s servants. God redeemed them from the wrath. Thus the number of people that were sealed was 12000 from each tribe. The total number was 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. After that John saw a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb wearing a white robe. The great community mentioned, comprises of the great and vast community of redeemed Christians including the Jewish Christians and those who are from outside the 12 tribes of Israel and the Christians converted and purified through the blood of Christ that is from the gentiles of various castes, races and languages. Every one of us must be able to partake of this happiness. This great multitude was saying in loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb”. And they fell down on their faces before the throne saying “Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”

These are saints that suffered tribulations and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and were purified. So they will sit in the House of God and serve Him day and night. Never again will they hunger or thirst. The Lamb on the throne will feed them and lead them to the living fountains of water. And God will wipe away their tears from their eyes.

In this part the Lord’s first coming and the Lamb being slain (crucifixion) for the salvation of the world are indicated. Also described are the second coming of our Lord, and the end of the world. The eternal happiness thereafter is also narrated in detail. Thus the second part concludes in perfection.

PART 3

Chapters 8 to 11 are grouped together as Part 3. Blowing the seven trumpets is the main subject.

The Lamb opens the 7th seal. John saw seven angels standing in the presence of God. They received seven trumpets. Another angel appears with a

golden censer and incense and he offered incense at the golden altar before the throne. Along with the prayers of the saints the smoke of incense went up before God. Those Christian sections that criticize the use of censer should read this part and learn. The angel filled the censer with fire from the altar and hurled it on the earth. At once there was thunder, lightning, and earth quake.

The angels blew the trumpets one by one. When the first trumpet sounded, hail and fire mingled with blood was hurled down upon the earth and one third of the earth was burned up. When the second trumpet was sounded, one like a huge burning mountain was cast into the sea and one third of the sea turned into blood. A third of the creatures of the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. When the third angel sounded the trumpet, a great star blazing like a torch fell on earth. The name of the star was Wormwood. A third of the water in the rivers and fountains turned bitter. Many people died from the waters that had become bitter. When the 4th trumpet sounded, a third of the sun, moon and stars were smitten, so that a third of them turned dark. A vulture (eagle in some versions, angel, in King James) flew up, and called out in a loud voice: "Woe! woe! Woe unto all inhabitants of earth" when the next three trumpets are blown.

Then the 5th trumpet sounded. The tribulations to those who do not have God's seal on their forehead are now revealed. Locusts with the power of scorpions came up from bottomless pit (abyss) and tormented those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. Bottomless pit means the dark dungeons where Satan and his messengers are imprisoned. It is the same abyss that is mentioned in chapter 11:7, from which the beasts came up attacking the witnesses of God.

When the 6th trumpet sounded, there came a voice from the horns of the golden altar. Voice from the horns of the golden altar is interpreted as the prayers of saints. The voice said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet to release the four angels who were bound at the great river Euphrates. These four angels were released and these angels destroy all the wicked people who were fighting against the Christian world. A war using all kinds of modern weaponry is described here. A great number of people will be destroyed by this. By the sounding of the 6th trumpet God destroys the wicked. Seeing this, the rest of the mankind should repent and come closer to God. This is God's will. Read chapter 9 for details.

Further, John saw a mighty angel standing with his right foot on the sea and left foot on the land. In his hand was a small open scroll. This book was given to the Apostle to eat. The book can rightly be considered as the word of God. The mighty angel then declared, "There will be no more delay!" When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished. It is unequivocally revealed that the second coming of our Lord and the end of the world and the last judgment and new creation of everything and other mysteries of God will take place along with the blowing of the 7th trumpet. Before the 7th trumpet blows, the word of God is again preached to the wicked people of the world. John, the apostle and prophet is told to prophesy the word of God to many peoples, nations, languages and kings, and give them time to repent and attain salvation. It is to be understood that this is the duty to be fulfilled by the Holy Church today.

At the end of the third part in chapter 11 it is said that a reed, like a measuring rod was given to John. He was asked to measure the Temple of God and the altar excluding the outer court. That which was measured belongs to God, the New Jerusalem, Israel the bride of the Lamb, which is the Holy Church. This is a symbolic picture of God specially separating and protecting His children who rely upon Him.

In chapter 11 two witnesses of God are mentioned, and they will prophesy for 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth. There have been various interpretations about these witnesses. As they prophesy in sackcloth, it is apt to consider that they will preach about repentance and redemption of sin. It is believed that these two witnesses are Hanoch and Elijah. Another interpretation is that they are Moses and Elijah. Yet others say that they are Joshua and Zerubbabel, who are compared to Olive tree in Zechariah. Ch. 4. From detailed study we can infer that they are the representatives of the Holy Church preaching repentance and redemption through their combined missionary works. The beast that came up from the Abyss attacks them, overpowers and kills them. Their bodies lay in the city street for three and a half days, to be seen by all. Later, they will get up and ascend to heaven, it is said. Gospel of God will be preached all over the world. For some time (three and a half days) close to the Lords second coming, there will be persecution and death to the people of God and missionaries by Satan, but at the Lords second coming the dead saints will rise up first and then the living will be taken up on the clouds with them, to meet the Lord in the

Heavens. It is worthwhile to think that the above prophecy (1 Thes. 4:16-17) will in fact happen at the second coming of our Lord.

Thus the third part of the Revelation describes important aspects of the Lord's first coming up to the second coming, and also the eternal life that follows.

Part 4

The great dragon and his helpers tormenting the woman and her child and remnant of her seed, is the topic of the fourth part of Revelation. Chapters 12 to 14 are grouped under this part. The birth of Christ and the woman (Virgin Mary, mother of God) whose offspring (Jesus Christ) born to crush the head of Satan, is being tormented by Satan is described in this section. In 12:1 mention is made of a woman clothed with the sun. In a wider sense we can understand that the 'woman' personifies Israel. Israel is mentioned as a virgin in Jeremiah. 31: 4-21. From Israel, Christ, their savior was born. Satan tried to prevent it. The incident like killing of all the male children occurred (Matthew 2:16). The devil being unable to eat up the Son born of the woman tempted Jesus Christ. The Jewish people, particularly the Pharisees worked against Christ. The priests and people conspired against Jesus Christ and crucified him. But Jesus rose on the third day. The risen Christ ascended to heaven and is sitting on the right hand side of His Father. This is the defeat of Satan.

Satan sends some agents (beasts) to destroy God's people. They are thus facing Satan's temptations at all times till the end of the world, which are described here. Next John saw the Son of Man seated on the clouds and is getting ready for the harvest, and we see the harvest in progress. The sickle is for reaping and other sharp sickle is for cutting the bunches of grapes. (14: 14-16). Another picture of trampling grapes in the winepress symbolizes the wrath of God, wherefrom blood flowed for a distance of 1600 stadia (183.9 miles: One stadium = 606'9").

The first harvest symbolizes the Lord's second coming in the clouds, and the faithful among the dead and living being redeemed and taken to the clouds in the sky. Then just as the bunch of grapes are put in the winepress and crushed, the wicked people will be subjected to God's wrath and judged to be thrown into the fiery hell.

In part 4 also the Lord's first coming, Satan's temptations and the persecution to God's people are described. Then a voice from heaven ordered John to write the following: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on'. "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on forehead or on his hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury", an angel said in a loud voice.

In the beginning of Chapter 14 the beautiful picture of God's redeemed people, chosen saints sealed with God's seal on the foreheads, living on Mount Zion with the Lamb is shown. Thus Part 4 also deals with Christ's first coming, the period of the Church, as well as the second coming, the Judgment and the great blessing to the redeemed people.

Memory Verse

Revelation 7:17 'For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes'

QUESTIONS

1. Which chapters are included in Part I. What are the main subjects described in it (This question may be asked for all the seven parts).
2. Who is worthy to break the seals of the scroll in God's hand?
3. Who was seen under the altar when the 5th seal was broken?
4. What happened when the 6th seal was broken?
5. What did God's angel do before the complete destruction of the universe?
6. What is salvation?
7. Who are those in pure white robes that stand near God's throne and glorify Him?
8. State briefly what happened when each of the seven trumpets blew?
9. What is the sign of the chosen Saints of God?
10. Who are the ones having the seal of beast? What will happen to them?
11. What is the beautiful illustration about, in the beginning of chapter 14?

BOOK OF REVELATION III

PART 5

Chapters 15 and 16

Doom of Satan and the greatest victory of the people of God.

Objective: · To learn about the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption

Chapters 15 and 16: Pouring out the 7 Vials of the Wrath of God on the earth is the main subject.

Like the 7 trumpets, 7 angels pour out 7 vials of God's wrath, one by one upon the wicked people of the earth, who killed the prophets, shed the blood of believers who suffered for Christ. God's wrath came upon them.

When the first vial was poured out, the wicked people with the seal of beast were infected with grievous sores. The second vial was poured on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died. The third vial was poured on rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Thus God gave blood for drinking, to the wicked people who shed the blood of saints and prophets.

The 4th angel poured the vial on the sun and power was given unto him to scorch people with fire. Men were scorched with intense heat. But the wicked people did not repent but cursed the name of God who had control over these plagues. The fifth angel poured his vial on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged in darkness. The sixth angel poured out his vial on the great river Euphrates. The water in that river was dried up to pave the way for the King's coming from east. Then three unclean spirits looking like frogs came out of the mouths of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They were spirits of demons performing miracles. They went about the earth and gathered kings and got ready for the war on the great day of God Almighty. The unclean evil spirits united them at a place called Armageddon in Hebrew. But Armageddon is not mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament. There is reference to a place 'Megiddo' in the Old Testament, and some think it is that place. In general, we may have to conclude that the battle of Armageddon is the final struggle of Satan against the Church.

The 7th vial was poured in the sky. 'It is done came a voice from the throne out of the temple then.' There came thunder, lightning and earthquake. The earthquake was so tremendous, and with its impact the great city split into three. Cities of the nations collapsed. God did not fail to remember to give his wrath to the great Babylon. Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. From the sky huge hailstorms of about a hundred pounds each fell on wicked men. Even then the wicked people cursed God on account of the terrible plague of hail.

This is a picture of God pouring his wrath on the wicked that persecute God's people. In 16: 17. It is stated, "All finished". We can infer from the above narration that what we see above is a description of the end of the world.

Part- 6

Chapters 17 to 19

Destruction of Babylon the great, the beast and the false prophet is the main subject matter of Part 6. The subject dealt here is different from those of the 5 previous parts. A woman sits upon a scarlet beast having 7 heads and 10 horns. She is adorned with ornaments and is holding a golden cup which is filled with the filth and uncleanness of her adultery. This title was written on her forehead: 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, and THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH'. The seven heads of the beast are 7 mountains. These mountains indicate Rome. The city of Rome and the Roman Empire that massacred the believers and drew people into adultery and other vices during the time of Apostle John are thus symbolized as a great prostitute.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God was incarnated during the period of Roman Empire. Ancient Rome was very wealthy. By the trade with other countries it amassed worldly riches. Along with it grew all vices and wickedness. Christians were subjected to persecutions. They were immersed in sin due to bloodshed of saints. They received punishment from God for their sins. Rome was destroyed.

In this part, the destruction of the beast, false prophet, and all the wicked enemies of Christ and God's people, is described. Chapter 19, verses 7-10 refer to the wedding feast of the Lamb. Here is a beautiful picture of those redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, attaining the fulfillment of the promises to them.

Thus the first coming of Jesus Christ, incidents during the Church period, matters related to the second coming of the Lord, His descending from heaven with angels, and the wicked being punished at the last judgment, are all described in part 6.

Part – 7

Chapters 20 and 22

Chapters 20 and 22 are included in this part. Satan's doom and the great victory of God's people are revealed in this part.

The destruction of Satan, the first enemy of God's people and his angels, the beast, and the mother of harlots and the worshippers of the beast, are described earlier. In this part the complete destruction of their leader, the great dragon, that is Satan, is narrated. It is this deceitful Satan who was instrumental in committing the original sin, and subsequent ouster of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden; thus losing eternal life and God's companionship.

Along with the complete destruction of Satan, the picture of man regaining all that he lost is also found in this section. The earth that was cursed as a result of man's sin, at the instigation of the old serpent, is redeemed and reinstated, along with the ultimate destruction of that serpent (Satan). The wages of sin, death, tears, sorrow and lamentation, and all the sufferings will be no more.

He who was seated on the throne says, "Here, I make everything new". Again in 21:6 he says "It is done. I am Alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is thirsty of the fountain of the water of life freely".

In chapter 20: 2-5 it is stated that Satan was chained for a thousand years. It is the opinion of some interpreters that the binding and sealing of Satan for thousand years, and the reign of Christ on earth for that period (20: 2-5) is to happen after the second coming of our Lord. It is hard to accept this according to Bible study. This idea is originally based on the early Jewish version of the 'Messianic age'. In reality Satan is chained when Christ ascended to heaven. So it is to be assumed that the 'church period' is the 'Thousand years of Reign'.

Satan was defeated by the resurrection of the slain Lamb, Christ, and His ascension to Heaven. It is also considered that the 'Thousand years Reign' is nothing but the Church period. Besides, it is the martyrs who were beheaded for Christ who are to reign with Christ, and they are believed to be reigning with Christ at present. Though the various interpretations of the 'thousand year reign' greatly vary and contradict each other the triumph of the good over the evil is substantiated in them.

Part 7 begins by describing the defeat of the great dragon, which is Satan, by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. After describing the happenings related to the first coming of the Lord, he says about the things to happen just before the second coming. At the second coming of the Lord, Satan, along with his accomplices are pushed into the fiery hell and thus receive the ultimate judgment. After first heaven and earth had passed away, John saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem descending from heaven. God's people are admitted into the eternal life, and those who are not God's people are pushed into the fiery lake of sulfur. Describing New Jerusalem, the holy city as the inheritance of God's people, the book of Revelation comes to an end. Due to the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption, we see perfect completion in all these seven parts.

Besides the scroll sealed with seven seals, there is a reference to a small scroll that John was asked to eat, which is the scroll of Life. In the scroll of Life, the names of all believers having God's seal on them are inscribed. All those people whose names are written in this book shall be saved. They will have their tears wiped and will dwell in heaven in eternal happiness. This will take place at the second coming of the Lord.

In Chapter 21, St. John sees the new heaven and the new earth. The Apostle saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband' Revelation 21:2. From the throne of Heaven, there was a loud voice saying "Here, God's tabernacle is with men, and He will live with them" Rev. 21:3. This symbolizes the Lord's second coming and the blissful life to all redeemed saints. As God, the Father and Jesus Christ, the slain Lamb is seated on the thrones of this holy city there is brilliant light from the glory of God. There will be no night in the holy city.

St. John witnesses the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. On each bank of the river stood the tree of life. This is a beautiful picture of the glorious God dwelling with the redeemed believers and his angels. On the 12 towers at the gate are written the names of 12 tribes and 12 Apostles. Therefore, it is considered that the 24 elders seen near the throne of heaven, mentioned throughout the book of Revelation are the 12 tribal fathers and 12 Apostles. But some interpreters are of the opinion that the twenty four elders are the representatives of those that are sanctified and bodily taken to Heaven by God. It is believed that the 4 creatures with 6 wings each, seen in the midst of the throne and around, are cherubs. In 1 Samuel 4:4 we see: 'The Lord of hosts dwelling in the midst of cherubim's'.. Also in Ezekiel 1:5 we can see the mention about cherubs.

Memory Verse:

22:17 And the spirit and the Bride say, "Come! And let him who hears say "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the water of life freely".

QUESTIONS:

1. What happens when each vial of wrath is poured out?
2. "Babylon, the Mother of Harlots". Who is pictured by this? Why?
3. Describe the fall of the great dragon (Satan) and the redemption of God's people, as depicted in the book of revelation.
4. What is written in the scroll of Life?
5. Give a brief description of the beautiful city - the New Jerusalem?
6. Give a brief account of the eternal life that the redeemed believers received?

REVELATION – HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE

Objective: To understand the teachings of Revelation based on the course of history.

The Lessons 9, 10 & 11 helped us to understand the basics in the book of Revelation. Only the interpretations of very important symbolic usages were included in those lessons.

One who attempts to study the book of Revelation should at least know the following points:-

1. The book of Revelation has to be studied in 7 parts. Each part Deals with the first coming of Christ, his life in this world, the crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension to heaven, second coming, and the plan of Redemption.
2. The Israelites consider the number '7' as a complete (perfect) number and gives due importance to seven. 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 vials of wrath etc, can be seen in Revelation.
3. Satan who was pushed down from heaven for opposing God is always working against God and against man. Satan, who prevented man from the happiness of Eden, and from eating the fruit of the tree of Life, is finally defeated.
4. 'Babylon, the Mother of Harlots', symbolizes the Roman Empire. The Empire and its Emperors who persecuted Jesus Christ and the Apostles, who killed many a male child, and who shed the blood of thousands of saints, were subjected to God's wrath and punished.
5. Before the wrath of God falls upon the wicked people and destroys them, the angel of God puts God's seal on the foreheads of the believers and separates them. At the same time Satan puts the beast's seal on his followers. Those marked with the seal of the beast will be subjected to God's wrath. The names of those with God's seal on their foreheads shall be written in the book of life. They will enjoy eternal happiness at the final judgment.

6. Around God's throne in heaven, 24 elders sit and praise God. Those who were beheaded for Christ dwell under the altar near the throne, praising God. A great multitude wearing white robes washed and purified in the blood of Christ, enjoy the presence of God. In the midst of God's throne, dwell 4 creatures with 6 wings each - the Cherubs.
7. 11:8-9: "The beast ascending from the bottomless pit, fighting and killing the two witnesses of God, their dead bodies lying on the city streets for three and a half days and later ascending to heaven". The Lamb's wedding mentioned in 19:7-8, the Armageddon battle mentioned in 20:8, the last judgment stated in 20:11-13, the redeemed believers around the throne of God, enjoying heavenly bliss and the Lamb in New Jerusalem, the holy city mentioned in 21:21-23; among other things deserve special study.
8. The angel flying high in the sky mentioned in 4: 6-7 shows that before the second coming of Christ, even when the church is persecuted, God's gospel will be preached throughout the world.
- 9.. The Lords second coming, the judgment, the redemption to God's people and the redeemed children of the Church enjoying eternal bliss with God in New Jerusalem are undisputed things. The Church should constantly proclaim the gospel about repentance and remission of sins. The Church should take up the mission of the 'flying angel'. Because the second coming of Jesus Christ is at hand, we should, await to receive Him, with prayer and repentance. Everyone must have these thoughts while studying the book of Revelation.

Memory Verse:

Revelations 22:20" He Which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus"

CHURCH HISTORY

LESSON 20

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD OF MALANKARA CHURCH

Objective: To learn history of the Church from 6th century to 16th century based on historical records.

In Grades 3 to 5, we studied a brief history of the Christian Church from the early period to the 6th century, and a detailed history from the 16th century till date, in Grades 6, 7 and 8. But the history of the long period of nine centuries between these two periods has not been the subject of study till now. Clear historical records to know the happenings of these times are very few. The travelogues of some western travelers, a few rock inscriptions and books, besides the opinions and inferences of modern historians from their studies etc., help us to understand the history of the middle period to some extent. So let us follow that track.

In the 6th century, Cosmos, a Christian traveler belonging to Alexandria in Egypt, visited Kerala during his world travel. Though a trader at first, he later became an ascetic (monk). In his book "Universal Christian Topography", he has recorded that the Christian Church in Kerala during his visit, had progressed well. In every reference to St. Mary in that book, 'Mother of God' is the term used. As this is quite contrary to Nestorian, he has written that he saw here a well established Church having many priests and deacons and good churches in addition to a Metropolitan who came from Persia.

Although there were true believers and Nestorian heretics in Persia in those days, it was the Catholicos of Selucia under the Patriarch of Antioch who was sending Metropolitans to Malankara. Therefore it is clear that the Malankara church was connected to the throne of Antioch.

The inscriptions on the Persian granite crosses seen in Kottayam Valia Palli, and other ancient churches in other places, made in 7th and 8th centuries, clearly show that the Malankara Church was under the throne of Antioch, and had not accepted the heresy of Nestorians. The inscription 'Jesus Christ, the true God died on the Cross' on the granite Cross strongly opposes the Nestorian heresy.

The second Christian migration of 822 A.D. is an important milestone in the history of Malankara Church. Under the leadership of Saphore Easo, a

Syrian trader, a company of Syrians including two Bishops, Mar Sabore and Mar Afroth arrived at Kollam, one of the main harbor towns on the Kerala coast. As they received several concessions from the local ruler, they settled in Kollam and the neighboring places, carried on trade and progressed; established churches and remained in the true faith.

In the 10th century, the Malankara Christians who had risen into prominence economically and otherwise, ordained one of them as their king in a region near Kochi. After his time, that family ruled for some more years. They were known 'as villiar vattom', the only Christian royal family that ruled in Kerala. Having no children, this royal family gradually ended. The regions they ruled were annexed to the kingdom of Kochi. The 'Chenkol' (Royal Rod) that was the symbol of kingly power of the villiar vattom kings, in later years was presented by Malankara Christians to Vasco da gama, the Portuguese navigator who came to Calicut. As there are records about this in Portuguese history, we can believe the facts about this royal family are historical truths.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, the Antiochean Church (Jacobite Syrian Church) was prospering. There were 103 Bishops and 20 Metropolitans ruling the Church. At the same time, the Nestorian church weakened in Persia, at their centre of power and strong-hold. By the 13th century, the Antiochean Church was also weakened due to Muslim invasion. Because of this neither the Patriarch of Antioch nor the Catholicos under him could send Bishops continuously to Malankara. The Coptic Church too could not help Malankara. Utilizing this opportunity, at different times from the close of 15th century, some Nestorian Bishops came and worked in Malankara. As their dress, language and mode of worship were like that of the Jacobite Bishops, people, not knowing their real faith, accepted them. Thus the 16th century can be called the Nestorian era.

But even though the Bishops who came to Malankara during this period were Nestorians, people did not accept their heresy and their teachings. There was a manuscript copy of the old ancient Syriac Bible that was in use before this period in Malankara which escaped from the hands of the Goan Bishop Menesiz who destroyed all the great Syriac books. This book was saved and kept in the Ranni church. This manuscript copy was later presented to the CMS missionary Dr. Claudius Buchanan by the Metropolitan Mar Dionysius I. In many parts of that book there are portions marked to be read on the various festivals in the name of St. Mary which would have been unacceptable to the Nestorians. Thereby it is clear that the people of Malankara Church stood firm in the Jacobite faith itself even during the period when the Nestorian Bishops ruled here.

It was in the beginning of the 14th century that a Roman Catholic Bishop John de Monte Carvino, who started from Rome to China, accidentally reached Kerala. The Christian Church that existed in Kerala or India from the time of St. Thomas had no connection whatsoever with the Roman Catholic Church. In pursuance of this visit, various monastic congregation members and other church workers began to come to Kerala continuously. It was at Kollam they first concentrated. From the time Vasco da Gama came to Calicut in 1498, the activities of the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala gained strength. It was when Vasco da Gama came the second time (in 1502) that the Rod of Villiar Vattom royal family was presented (Chenkol) to him, as mentioned before.

From 1539, the Bishop of Goa, John de Albuquerque with the assistance of native kings, began an organized persecution of Malankara Christians who did not join the Roman Catholic church. They added to their side many people through bribes, giving free education with free boarding to students in the Catholic seminaries and the like.

The centre of these activities was Kodungalloor and the surrounding places. Following the advent of Menesiz as the Arch Bishop in Goa, the persecutions against the Syrian Church aggravated. The Udayamperoor Synod (1599) and the Koonankurisu Oath (declaration) (1653) are the consequences of that persecution. Though at the Udayamperoor Synod, the Malankara Church was brought under the Roman yoke, by using of military might, at Koonankurisu, the majority of people threw away the Roman yoke, and returned to the fold of the mother Church.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was the Christian traveler that visited Kerala in the 6th century? What is the name of the book he wrote?
2. How can you prove that Cosmos was not a Nestorian?
3. Malankara Church was under the holy throne of Antioch. Give evidence?
4. When was the second Syrian migration? Who was the leader? Who were the Bishops that came?
5. Which is the sole Christian royal family that ruled in Kerala? To whom was the 'rod' of that royal family presented?

ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Objective: To know the origin, growth, faith and rites etc. of various Orthodox Churches.

The origin of the various Orthodox Churches throughout the world was in the Middle East. Therefore, they are generally called as Oriental Churches or Eastern Churches. (During the early centuries only the Roman Church was known as Western Church). But in the matter of faith, Oriental Churches stand divided as two main sections. The first section is '**the Oriental Orthodox Churches**' which includes the Jacobite church. The second section is the '**Eastern Orthodox Churches**' which includes the Church with headquarters in Constantinople. The main Churches of the first section are: the Syrian Orthodox Church (Jacobite Church) founded with headquarters in Antioch, the Egyptian or Coptic church with its Headquarters in Alexandria in Egypt and the Armenian Church which lies between the Black sea and the Caspian sea at the South East part of Europe.

There are some fundamental differences regarding faith between the Oriental Orthodox Churches (which includes our church) and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

1. The Oriental Orthodox Churches recognize only the three synods of Nicea, Constantinople and Ephesus as universal Synods. They do not accept the four synods Chalcedon and the others.
2. The Oriental churches reject the doctrine of the 'dual nature' of the Messiah that is accepted by the Churches of Rome and Constantinople.
3. The Oriental Churches do not agree to make any change in the Nicene Creed.
4. For the above reasons none of the Oriental Churches has the 'unity of Holy Eucharist' with the Eastern Churches, while there is unity in Holy Eucharist among the various Oriental Churches. There is communion among the various Oriental churches.

The promoters of the dual nature doctrine persecuted the Syrian Orthodox Church with royal support. However they stood by their true faith and offered resistance. Following this, many Bishops of the true faith were put to death in large number and the remaining ones were imprisoned. A critical stage approached when the source of ordaining priests and Bishops of the true faith came to be in jeopardy. It was then that Jacob Burdana's undaunted activities and sufferings saved the Church and the continuous succession of priesthood was maintained without any break. The intolerant enemies insultingly called the members of the faithful Antiochean Church by the name 'Jacobites' meaning "those who followed Jacob". But the true believers, who witnessed the great services of Jacob Burdana, accepted this 'insulting' title as an honor. Thus it was from the 6th century that the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch came to be known as the Jacobite Church also. Hiding this historic fact, some Catholic writers have tried to twist history by stating that the Jacobite Church is a new Church that originated in the 6th century. It was many years after establishing the Throne of Antioch in AD 37 that St. Peter first arrived in Rome. This is a historical fact that no one denies. Therefore it is indisputable that the throne of Antioch is more ancient than that of Rome.

The Russian, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Greek and other Orthodox churches are all national churches that are within the boundaries of each country. But the Syrian, Orthodox Church is not a national Church of Syria alone but is an International (Universal) church that uses Syriac as official language. The early Headquarters of the Church namely Antioch, Diar Bucker (Diarbaker), Mardeen were all in Turkey. From the 6th century onwards members of the church came under attack from other religious fundamentalists. The main regions of activity of the Church namely Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq came under strong attacks from Islam religion. The rulers of those countries who were religious fundamentalists forcibly converted so many members of the church to their religion, and killed many who refused to be converted. Only very few people escaped. Therefore, even today only a small percentage of the population is Christian in the regions of the origin of the Church. In the midst of these difficulties, the Antiochean Church that was entrusted with the responsibility of the administration of all the east, constantly rendered necessary help and cooperation to the Church in India by sending Bishops. Thereby a considerable section of the Indian church founded by St. Thomas still stand firm in the true faith.

The 20th century is a period of great development with respect to the Syrian Orthodox Church. In the beginning of this century the Church had worked substantially only in West Asia and India. But as a result of the development and growth in this century, dioceses were formed and permanent Metropolitans were ordained and appointed in the United States and Canada in North America, Brazil in South America, Netherlands in Western Europe, Sweden in Northern Europe and Australia. Therefore the Church has had a global expansion.

The Egyptian or Coptic Church

While the churches of Antioch and Rome feel proud of having been founded by St. Peter, the Egyptian Church believes that St. Mark, the chief disciple of the Apostle St. Peter and gospel writer, is the founder of their Church. It was universally recognized from the first century that the cities of Antioch, Rome and Alexandria were church capitals of equal status. In the earlier centuries the Church spread only into a small part of the African continent. That was in the countries on the Mediterranean coast and the North Eastern part of Africa. When Muslims grew in power, the Churches in the North African countries from Libya westwards, became weaker. Only in Egypt and Ethiopia did the Church remain. According to the decision of Nicene synod they were under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Alexandria. Following the title of 'Pope' taken by the Patriarch of Rome, some historians often referred to the Patriarch of Alexandria as the 'Alexandrian Pope' ..

Till the 20th century Egyptians were ordained and sent as the Bishops of Ethiopia by the Alexandrian patriarch. After the first world war in 1929, the Alexandrian Patriarch ordained a number of Ethiopian priests as Bishops as per the request of the Ethiopian Emperor who was a member of the Coptic Church. Again in 1951, by Ethiopian pressure for national church, the Patriarch ordained an Ethiopian Bishop as Archbishop (Metropolitan) (Aboona) with the official name Basselios and gave him power to ordain Bishop for Ethiopia. Following this, in 1959, the Alexandrian Patriarch gave recognition to the title of Patriarch itself to the Aboona of Ethiopia subject to some conditions.

Conditions mutually agreed to:

1. The Alexandrian patriarch himself continued as the Supreme Head of the Universal Coptic Church which includes Ethiopia.

2. The authority to ordain the patriarch of Ethiopia will vest with the Alexandrian patriarch.
3. The right to call together the universal Coptic synod and to preside over it shall belong to the Patriarch of Alexandria.
4. When the Bishops assume position in Ethiopian church, they shall declare their obedience to the Alexandrian Patriarch as well as to their Patriarch.
5. The Ethiopian Church shall mention and remember the names of both the Patriarchs in the 'Thubden'..

In spite of making such mutual agreements, the second patriarch of Ethiopia was ordained even without informing the Alexandrian Patriarch.

The Armenian Church

We have no clear information about the origin of the Armenian Church. Till the 5th century, the Bishops of Armenia were under the administration of the Arch Bishop of Caesarea who was under the Patriarch of Antioch. At that time the language of worship there was Syriac. Therefore we can legitimately think that the Armenian Church originated by the missionary activities of the Syrian Orthodox Church. In the 5th century the Persian Empire conquered the Armenian region; As a result of the Caesarian administration the use of Syriac language in worship ended. Thereafter they became a national and autocephalous Church using the Armenian language in worship. Nevertheless they did not make any alterations in the faith and rites. Thereby, even today, it is a Church that has unity in the Holy Eucharist with the Antiochean Church and the Coptic Church. Although it was continuing for several decades as a Republic in the Communist state of the Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.) the true faith and the Church there did not become extinct. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Armenia is now an independent Republic. The Headquarters of the Catholicos - the Head of the church - is in Echmiadry, the Armenian city.

Eastern Orthodox Churches

These are churches which were under the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Constantinople church can be treated as the Mother church of the various Eastern Orthodox churches of today. Antioch, Rome, Alexandria - only these three ancient Patriarchal capitals existed at the time (325) of the Synod of

Nicea.. According to the decision of the universal Synod of Constantinople (381) the city was raised to a Patriarchal capital on par with the other three cities as a political consideration because it was the capital of the empire. The other thrones accepted this decision. Nevertheless, in 518, the then Patriarch of Constantinople took for himself the title 'Ecumenical Patriarch', may be he thought his position had a lesser ancestry than the other Patriarchs. His successors also continue using this title.

Gradually the Roman Empire became weak. Different nations with Christian majority took form in its place. The Churches of the nations which thus became free, in course of time, ignored the supremacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Each one of the Bishops of the capital cities of each country, at different times, declared himself the Patriarch of his country. More than a dozen countries in Europe claimed autocephaly, and the Eastern Orthodox National Churches came into existence. Although the Ecumenical patriarchs refused to recognize these independent churches then and there, gradually, the National churches of Greece, Russia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Cyprus etc, became a reality. Because the origin of the church of Constantinople was not from Apostolic heredity but in the name of political significance, gradually Constantinople had to recognize the churches that gained freedom, under the same consideration. Though, each of these churches are independent in internal administrative affairs, the Ecumenical Patriarch has been given the approval by the other churches to call together the General Synod of the Eastern Orthodox churches and to preside over it.

The Eastern Orthodox Churches accept the dual nature doctrine and recognize the decisions of the synods of Chalcedon and they have unity in Holy Eucharist, they do not have this relation with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Thus the Eastern Orthodox churches has communion between them but not with the Oriental Orthodox churches..

QUESTIONS

1. Which are the churches that come under the section 'Oriental Orthodox Churches'?
2. What are the existing fundamental differences between Oriental Orthodox churches and the Eastern Orthodox churches?

3. The true believers accepted this insulting name as an honor. Which insulting name? Why?
4. How can we prove that the throne of Antioch is more ancient than that of Rome?
5. The Jacobite Syrian church is considered as an international (universal) church, today. Why?
6. Who is the founder of the Egyptian church?
7. Who gave recognition to the patriarchal status to the Aboona of Ethiopia? When? What are the conditions mutually agreed upon?
8. Who took the title honor 'Ecumenical Patriarch' for himself? When and why?

LESSON - 22

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

Objective: To know about the origin, growth and present status of Malankara Orthodox church.

In its early days the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church was called 'Methran faction' (bishop's faction). Currently often by context they themselves refer to them by different names such as Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Orthodox Syrian Church, Indian Orthodox church and Orthodox church.

At Jerusalem, in 1908 His Holiness the Patriarch Ignatius Abdulla (Abdedaloho) ordained Kochuparambil Paulose Rambaan and Vattasseril Ghee Varghese Rambaan with the official title Koorilos (Cyril) and Dionysius respectively, for the Malankara church. They assumed the office and came back to Malankara. A few months later Dionysius V passed away on July 11, 1909 at the age of 76 and was laid to rest in the 'Old Seminary'. This part of the history was studied from the lesson 'Mar Dionysuis V' in 7th Grade. To understand the continuing history well, some old portions of history have to be learned.

Following the demise of H.H. Patriarch Peter III who had come and stayed in Malankara and saved the church from the danger of protestant reformist doctrine, Abdul Messiah II assumed office as the Patriarch of Antioch in 1895. In the course of a few years of administration, he was the object of strong opposition and contempt of the church due to his incessant heinous activities. They continued complaining to the Metropolitans about this, whereby in 1904, the Universal Synod of the church was assembled. And a detailed enquiry was conducted and it was found that the complaints are true.. So Abdul Messiah II was dethroned from the position of Patriarch. Following this, the Head of Turkey (where the throne of Antioch was situated), the Sultan withdrew the 'firman' (an Arabic term for the document for conducting the rule) that had been given to H.H Abdul Messiah. Thereafter Abdul Messiah II withdrew from all church matters and led a life of rest.

The holy Synod, without electing and ordaining another person as patriarch, temporarily entrusted Mor Behanan Metropolitan of Moosal parish to do the daily administrative affairs, barring the Patriarchal powers like performing consecration of Mooron () and ordaining Metropolitans. Two years passed without a Patriarch and then in 1906 the Holy Synod elected and ordained Abdulla (Abdedaloho-servant of God) Mor Gregorius Metropolitan as the Patriarch. The Malankara Metropolitan was being informed of all these particulars then and there. He in turn, passed on the information to the parishes through official orders. News was published in the official magazine of the church 'The Malankara Idavaka Pathrika'. We shall now return to the Malankara Church history.

Following the demise of Mar Dionysius V Vattasseril Ghee Varghese Mar Dionysius (Dionysius VI) assumed the position of Malankara Metropolitan. Before long he had differences of opinion with the joint trustees. While the Patriarch Peter III was in Malankara, he had made the arrangement that the church properties should be governed by a body of three trustees - a Metropolitan, a priest (Kathanar) and a layman. Dionysius claimed that the priest trustee and the layman trustee were only helpers of the Metropolitan trustee and that in urgent cases he had the authority to take decisions alone. This claim of authority was not acceptable to the other trustees.

In 1909 Patriarch Abdulla came to Malankara and stayed here till 1911. Dionysius VI not only refused to sign the normal agreement recognizing the superiority of the Patriarch but also steered a great propaganda that the Patriarch, a foreigner, was trying to rob the temporal powers in Malankara. Besides non-cooperation with the Patriarch, he encouraged his colleagues to propagate hateful pamphlets against His Holiness. Because of these, on May 31, 1911 Patriarch Abdulla suspended Dionysius VI (Vattassery Mar Dionysius), based on three charges namely disobedience to superior, creating discord and fight among members of the church, and maladministration of church properties. The following month, in the general body meeting of the Representatives from each individual parish church held at Alwaye under the president ship of the Patriarch, Paulose Mar Kurilos Metropolitan was elected and appointed as the Malankara Metropolitan. Another general body meeting of representatives from individual parishes was held at Kottayam on Aug 17, 1911 under the president ship of Dionysius VI defied his suspension by a resolution passed. They also abandoned the supremacy of the Patriarch through another resolution passed in the meeting. Following this, the majority of the people of the Southern Dioceses of Niranom, Kollam and Thumpamon stood by Dionysius VI Metropolitan. Therefore they were known as 'Metran faction'. The vast majority of the people of the northern Dioceses namely Angamaly, Kochi, Kandanad stood by the Patriarch. They were known as 'Bava faction' in the middle region, the Kottayam Diocese, both the parties got almost equal support.

Subsequent to the suspension of Dionysius VI the Metran faction brought Mar Abdal Messiah, the deposed Patriarch to Malankara in 1912. Murimattom Paulose Mar Ivanios, Metropolitan of Kandanad Diocese, being old and deaf, had been exempted from the Diocesan rule by Abdulla Patriarch during his stay in Malankara. As per the request of the Metran faction Murimattom Paulose Mar Ivanios who had retired from Diocesan rule, agreed to accept the position of Catholicos from the deposed Patriarch Abdal Messiah. On Sept. 10, 1912 Abdal Messiah ordained Kallasseril Punnoose (Gheevarghese) Rabaan with the official title Gregorios and Paulose Mar Ivanios with the title Baselios Catholicos. Although Mar Dionysius was at the helm of the Ordination ceremony, he did not directly take part in it knowing that it was not canonically proper, for deposed former Patriarch to give a position and title; of catholicose, he trickily evaded the scene in the name of eye disease. Abdal Messiah was the Chief High priest at the ordinations of Kandanad Karottuveetil Yooyakim Mar Ivanios and Vakathanam Karuchira Ghevarghese Mar Philaxinos in Feb 1913.

The first Catholicos who received the title from Abdal Messiah passed away after a few months and was entombed at Pampakuda Cheria Pally. No one was ordained to the position immediately. For 13 years the position of Catholicos was vacant. On April 30, 1926 Vakathanam Karuchira Gheevarghese Mar Philexinos was ordained as the second Catholicos by Dionysius VI and Gheevarghese Mar Gregorios (only two Bishops). The next day the new Catholicos ordained Fr.P.T.Gheevarghese as Bishop with the name Ivanios. On Dec. 19, 1928 the second Catholicos passed away and was entombed at Pallikkattu Church.

On Feb 14, 1929, Dionysius VI and Mar Ivanios together ordained Kallisseril Gheevarghese Mar Gregorius Metropolitan as the third Catholicos at Kottayam, Mar Elias Chapel. In 1930 Mar Theophilos who was ordained by the third Catholicos in 1929 together with Mar Ivanios Metropolitan abandoned the Mother church and joined the Roman Catholic church; Joseph Mar Sevarios who was ordained as Bishop in 1932 also embraced the Roman Catholic church in 1937.

Although two Bishops ordained by the third Catholicos left the church four other Metropolitans served the church for long. They are Mar Gregorius (Kottayam 1929), Mar Philexinos (Thumpamon 1930), Mar Thevadosios (Kollam 1938) and Mar Dionysius (Niranam 1940). In 1953 he ordained five Bishops at one time. He also performed consecration of Mooron in 1931. In March 1931, H.H. Elias III, the Patriarch of Antioch visited Malankara. Dionysius VI who was under suspension, met the Patriarch and requested him that the suspension be revoked and open the way to peace. But because of the obstinacy of Dionysius in pressing the Patriarch to unconditionally accept the Catholicos they ordained, peace negotiations did not progress. Unfortunately the Patriarch Elias III passed away at Manjinikara on Feb 13, 1932 and was entombed there itself.

Mar Dionysius VI passed away on Feb 23, 1934, and was entombed at the old Seminary. Following this a meeting of the representatives of the churches assembled at Kottayam same year, and elected the third Catholicos as the Malankara Metropolitan and passed a Constitution of the church. Geevarghese Mar Themotheus, Metropolitan of Kandanad Diocese who was ordained as Bishop by H.H. Mar Elias III and stood firm on the Patriarchal side, crossed over to the opposite side in 1942.

H.H. Patriarch Yacub III, who came to Malankara in 1958, received all the Bishops of the Orthodox Syrian Church (Metran party) to the Syrian Orthodox church, and by the mutual acceptance of H.H.Patriarch Yacub III and the catholicos Gheevarghese II, both parties united and became one church. On Jan. 3, 1963 Catholicos Gheevarghese II died and was entombed in the Devalokam Palace Church, Kottayam.

On May 22, 1964 Patriarch Yakub III came to Malankara and ordained Ougen Mar Themotheus Metropolitan as Catholicos of the East, at Kottayam. In continuation of this the union of 1958 was complete. The Sunday School organizations which were working separately till then joined together and became a single organization.

Not long after Ougen Catholicos assumed power, unfortunately new problems began. He put forward the arguments that Malankara church is an autocephalous church, and he was seated on the throne of St. Thomas, and the Catholicos was equal to the Patriarch, and so on. The former Metran party followers repeated these. The Patriarch Yakub III tried to lead Ougen Catholicos to the true faith but the latter held fast to his own opinion. Following this, in 1975 the Synod of the Universal Syrian Church held in Damascus, suspended Ougen Catholicos and the Metropolitans who took his side, from the Holy Syrian Orthodox Church.

During the reign of Ougen Catholicos itself a successor was elected to the post of Catholicos called 'Catholicos designate', against the tradition of the Syrian church. Even before Ougen Bava died, the successor - elect, Vattakunnel Mathews Mar Athanasius ascended the throne as Catholicos. In order to confirm the Mar Thoma throne argument, he added to his title the name 'Mar Thoma' also. He ordained more than a dozen Bishops and appointed one of them to the new Dioceses in America. Although there were material gains during his reign, spiritually it was a period of darkness because of the many litigations he started against the Patriarchal side and the dissidents on his own side.

History repeated itself during the period of Mar Thoma Mathews I Catholicos. Mathews Mar Koorilos Metropolitan who was the elected successor, forced Mathews I to vacate the post of catholicos and took charge

as catholicos. He too used the title 'Mar Thoma' like his predecessor. Not long after his assuming the position, Thomas Mar Themotheus Metropolitan was elected as his successor. Besides, the Catholicos who is ruling now, his predecessor and the Nominated catholicos, his successor are alive simultaneously.

This section of the church has now grown into a great power with twelve Diocesan centers inside Kerala and other centers in the great Indian cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, and Madras and in America, besides numerous educational and other institutions like hospitals and homes for the old, orphanages etc. But the tendency of continually hurting the Patriarchal side by litigations is still increasing incessantly. We do not have any other example in the history of the Christian Churches where an independent church was formed for reasons other than faith. The Orthodox Syrian section which was a part of the Universal Syrian Orthodox church changed into an independent church for reasons not of faith.

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the Patriarch that saved the Malankara Church from the danger of protestant reformists?
2. How was Abdal Messiah II Patriarch deposed?
3. This claim of right was not acceptable to the other Trustees. Which claim of right?
4. When did H.H. Patriarch Elias III come to Malankara and why? How did he open the way to peace?
5. When did the two factions unite and become one church? How?
6. Who ordained Ougen Mar Themoteus Metropolitan as the Catholicos of the East? When?
7. This section of the church has now grown to be a great power? How?

DOCTRINES OF FAITH

LESSON 23

THE HOLY CHURCH

Objective: To learn what is meant by 'The Church', duties of 'The church' and the qualities of 'The church'.

The church is a community of the faithful (believers). The Head of the church is Christ (Eph. 1:22). The church is the body which is connected to the head, which is Christ. The church can be divided into two, namely, the New Testament church and the Old Testament Church. Jesus Christ, the Son of God came into the world and saved mankind from Satan's bondage by shedding his blood. He preached the gospel through his Apostles. The community of believers which Christ founded and the Apostles looked after is called 'New Testament church'. God's people beginning with Abraham, the father of Believers, David, Israelites and all who believed in God before the coming of Christ are called the 'Old Testament Church'. In the holy Bible the Church is compared to three things.

1. The bride of Christ, the bridegroom (Mat 9:15, 25:1, Rev. 19:7)
2. The Church is the body of Christ. (Rom 12:5, Eph. 1:23)
3. The Church is a house of God (Mat 16:18, 1 Pet 2:5)

EXPLANATION

1. The Church is Christ's bride.

The relation between Christ and Church is pictured as the relation between a bridegroom and his bride. As the bridegroom and bride love each other, live and grow together joyfully, the church, a community of believers should dedicate everything to Christ the bridegroom, live together in joy and sorrow and attain eternal happiness. 'As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride so shall your God rejoice over you' says Isaiah 62:5.

2. The church is the body of Christ.

Christ is the head and church, the body. Without the head nothing can be done in the body. There are many organs in the body that function jointly with the head. Each member of the church is an organ of the body that is the church.

3. The holy church is likened to a house.

The members of the church are the stones joined to the corner stone, that is Christ, of the spiritual house. The church is a beautiful house built like this. It is built upon the rock, which is Peter. Mat 16:18 “you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The same idea is given in 1 Pet 2:5 “You also as living stones, are built up a spiritual house”.

The church founded by Christ remains today surviving all crises. The church will exist till the advent of Christ. The reason for its existence is that the way of Christ needs to be preached always. The Lord will redeem the church on His second coming. The redeemed members of the church shall live with God in eternal happiness.

Duties of the church

1. **Preaching the gospel.** The most important duty of the church is preaching the gospel. “And he said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark. 16:15).
2. **Christian service is the duty of Christians or the Church.** “If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet” (John 13:14). The members of the Church are bound to love one another and help one another.
3. **To grow in the power of God is the duty of the Church.** The Church should be able to grow in the power of God (Col 2: 6-7).
4. **It is the duty of the Church to give alms with charity and mind the strangers (guests).** Freely you get; freely you give (Mat 10:18). “Beloved thou doest to the brethren and to strangers which have borne witness of thy charity before the church” (3 John 1:5-6). Help one another especially the poor and this is the duty of the Church

The qualities or signs of the Church.

1. The Church is Universal
2. The Church is Apostolic
3. The Church is (only) One

4. The Church is Holy.

Universal means the Church is spread all over the universe. The Apostles have brought into practice many regulations and modes of worship. It is traditionally being followed by the church. So the church is said to be Apostolic. The Church is one. As God is one, God's people - the Church - is also one. The Church is holy. Christ is the head of the Church. The Church is the body of Christ. So the Church is holy.

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by Church?
2. Which things is the Church compared to?
3. 'The Church is a house' Explain?
4. What are the duties of the Church?
5. What are the qualities (signs) of the Church?

LESSON - 24

GOD

Objective: To see the true God who incarnated to witness the truth.

God is Almighty, Creator of all, all pervading, real truth and full of love. It is said in the creed "Almighty Father, the creator of heaven and earth, all that is visible and invisible, true and one God, we believe in"

As God is truth, God is love. So also He is one. There is only one God. Monotheism faith is a very important and widely accepted concept.

Man's search for the omnipresent and omnipotent God is like one who stands at the shore and wishes to study about the ocean. He see's the pearl oysters, colored sand particles and some beings washed ashore by the huge waves. Man's understanding about the omnipresent God is like that of a man who takes a decision based on these about the great ocean. Man searched for God from the beginning of the world.

The search continues now also. But when the Messiah, the Son of God incarnated into the world, God revealed Himself to the world. Nevertheless, all people could not understand God. Some people still think that God is the forces of the universe. Some others worship certain mighty persons or beings as God. We can believe that the search for God will ultimately reach the true and one God.

God is omnipresent. God exists everywhere, in everything, and at all times. Nobody can do anything, hiding from God.

God has no beginning or end. In God, there is no beginning or end. (Isaiah 41:4)

God is spirit. Because God has no beginning, He has no body. One who has body will have to be controlled in body, space and time. God cannot be contained. "God is a spirit." John 4:24:

God is only one. There is only one God, the one true God. Although many people searching for God have reached many Gods, they must be able to find out the real God. That is the one true God.

God is truth, God is love. That which is truth is God. In John 18:37-38 Jesus Christ replies to Pilate's question thus "I am King and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth." Pilate asks Christ "What is truth?" "God is love, full of mercy Because God loved the world, and He sent His son to the world for man's salvation. God is waiting with mercy, for the salvation of all mankind.

QUESTIONS

1. Who is God?
2. 'God is one'. What do you understand from this?
3. 'God has no beginning or end' Explain?
4. 'God is truth', 'God is love'. Explain?

HOLY TRINITY

Objective: To understand the doctrine of Trinity.

There are three personalities or Knumas in God. Father Son and Holy Ghost (spirit). These three 'Knumas' join in God; that is the Holy Trinity.

The doctrine of trinity is an important faith like the monotheistic faith. The term 'Knuma' does not mean 'having special body' but it mean's 'having mind', 'power of decision', 'thinking power', ability to work'. We do not consider that a corpse has a personality even though it has a body.

We shall examine the verses referring to trinity in the Bible. "Then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gene. 1:26).. Jesus Christ directs his disciples. "Therefore you go and baptize in the name of father, son and Holy Ghost, and all that I ordered you....." 'At the time of the baptism and came out of water, the heavens were opened unto him and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And a voice from heaven saying 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Mat 3: 16-17). Thus it happened, it is written. This part gives the clearest evidence about Trinity. "And I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16). It is clear from these Bible verses that the doctrine of Trinity is according to the Bible. (Biblical)

There is no difference in status, size or power among the three 'Knumas' father, son and Holy ghost. These three personalities have one essence (meaning) one Kingship, one nature, one will, one thinking and one power.

From saying 'father' one need not think there was a time when the son was not there. Like the father, the son too has neither beginning nor end. The Holy ghost proceeds from the father and is taken from the son. Jesus says to his disciples, "He, who hath seen me, hath seen the father", he asserts. Thus there is trinity in unity and unity in trinity. This is the true faith.

By saying 'son', we can say he is born. By saying 'father', we can think he is the 'generator' also. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and is taken from the son. Viewed thus, we can understand that the 'Knumas' Father, Son and Holy Ghost have one nature and different qualities. That is fatherhood, birth, and proceeding.

‘Unity in Trinity’. To fully understand this supernatural mystery, a divine revelation is needed. God cannot be compared to another. Still, to understand the mystery of trinity two examples are given below.

God is light. So God can be likened to the sun. Where there is Sun, there is Sun’s ray or light. Where there is sunlight there is heat. Heat and light are different qualities. But all these are contained in the sun.

Similarly, God can be compared to a full circuit we know there is energy in a battery. But to be convinced of it, the two poles of the battery should be connected to a bulb. Then the bulb will glow and give light. The circle of battery and bulb forms the circuit. This circuit can be likened to God. Battery represents God the father, wire, God the son, and bulb the Holy Ghost.. There are three factors here. When the three unite it works as a power circuit having only one factor. But they all together show one God.

God is only one God.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the Holy Trinity?
2. Prove that the doctrine of Trinity is in accordance with the Bible.
3. Trinity in unity, unity in Trinity. What is meant by this? Explain.
4. ‘Knuma’ or personality. What do we understand by this?

LESSON – 26

IMPORTANT RESPONSES TO TAKE PART IN THE HOLY MASS (QURBANA)

Objective: To teach important responses those believers who take part in the Holy Mass (Qurbana) should utter to complete their participation.

Believers who participate in the Holy Qurbana have to utter all the responses at appropriate times and take part in the worship actively and with devotion and faith.

1. After the public celebration of Holy Qurbana begins the sexton (reader) stands on the step of the ‘Madbaha at the northern side, facing west and says, “from the book of Acts of the Apostles - Barekmor”.

What is the response of the people then?

“Glory be to the Lord of the Apostles and his mercy (blessings) be upon us for ever.”

2. Standing on the step of ‘Madbaha’ at the southern side and facing west, the reader says, ‘from the epistle of St.Paul.....Barekmor.
What is the response by the people then?

“Glory be to the Lord of the Apostles and His mercy be upon us for ever”.

3. Before the reading of the Holy Gospel, the priest says, from.....Apostle, that preaches life and salvation to the world.”
What is the response?

“Blessed is He who has come and is to come. Praise be to Him who sent him for our salvation and His mercy be upon us all for ever.

4. Following, the priest says, “At the time of the ministry of Jesus Messiah our God and savior, it happened thus.”
What is the response then?

People “Thus we believe and confess.”

5. After the priest has finished the ‘sedra’, what should be the response of the people?

People - “Amen. May the Lord accept your ministration and help us by your prayers.”

6. When the priest says “Peace be to you all” and gives peace what should people say?

People: “And be with your spirit also”

7. When the sexton says “Let us give peace to one another, everyone to his neighbor by holy and divine embrace.” what is the response of people.

People: “O Lord God, make us worthy of this peace all the days of our lives”.

8. Before the blessing of the bread and wine by the priest, the sexton/deacon calls out, “The priest offers this living sacrifice to God the father the Lord of all things on behalf of us all, in peace and reconciliation”, what is the response then?

People: “This Qurbana (anaphora) is mercy, peace, sacrifice and thanks giving”

9. When the priest, waving his hands over the holy qurbana, says, “Let us praise the Lord with fear” what is the people’s response?

People: “It is right and just to do so” (Praising the Lord with fear)

10. Following that, the Priest says a prayer. After that what is the response?
People: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty by whose glory, the heaven and earth.....are filled, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the name of the Lord God. Glory be to Him in the highest.
11. After blessing the wine the Priest again says, "And He commanded, do this for my remembrance." What is the response at this time?
People: "We commemorate Thy death, O Lord, and we confess Thy resurrection and await thy second coming. May thy blessings be upon us all."
12. When the sexton/deacon says "How momentous is this time ! wherein the Holy spirit comes down and hovers upon this Eucharist - stand ye still in reverence and pray," what is the response?
People: "Peace be with us and good will be to us all."
13. "Answer me O Lord !" calling out thus three times, the Priest invokes the Holy spirit. What is the people's response then?
People: "Kurielaison Kurielaison Kurielaison."
14. When the Priest raises the 'peelasa' and consecrates, what is the people's response?
People: "None is Holy save the one holy Father, the one holy Son and the one holy Spirit Amen,
15. When the Priest raises the 'Kasa' and consecrates, what is the response?
People: "Glory be to the father, and to the son and to the living Holy spirit, one God for ever and ever, Amen. "
16. Just before the Priest, holding the Kasa and Peelasa turns to the west, the sexton says "Let us all say aloud" what is the response?
People: "Praised and adored are the father, son and Holy ghost. To Him be praise from the beginning, for generations to generations." Haleloo-yyaah"
17. Just before the Qurbana ends the Priest turns to the west and blesses the people. Before the curtain closes what is the response of people?
People: "Amen - May the Lord accept your Qurbana and help us by your prayers".

Study Prayers and all the Songs of the Holy Qurbana.

