

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



**TEXT BOOK CLASS - VII**

**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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**\* 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**

PRAYERS

I call upon you, Lord; hear me! Give heed to my words and answer me.

Let my prayer be like incense in your sight, my uplifted hands be like an evening sacrifice. Lord, set a guard at my mouth, a sentry at the door of my lips, that my heart may not turn to evil (matter) and indulge in the deeds of wickedness.

Let me not sit at the table of the wicked. Let the righteous man teach me, let him reprove me, but the oil of the wicked shall not anoint my head, my prayer is against their evil deeds. When their judges are thrown down in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

Their bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave like the plow that breaks the earth. I lift up my eyes to you, Lord. I put my trust in you, do not leave my soul destitute.

Keep me away from the hands of the proud who have laid snares for me. Let the wicked fall into their own traps, while I go unharmed.

While my soul was in agony, I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with all my voice I made supplication. I poured out my affliction before Him, I told Him all my troubles. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You know my path.

They have hidden snares for me in the way I have to walk. I looked to the right, but there was no one who knew me; no one cared for my soul. I cried unto You, O Lord! I said, You are my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend to my supplication; for I am in distress. Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than me. Lead me forth from prison that I may praise your name. The righteous shall wait for me because You will answer me.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. I have sworn and have determined to keep Your holy decrees. I am made to be low, Lord. Give me life - according to Your word. Lord, be pleased with the words of my lips and teach me Your decrees.

My life is always in Your hands, I do not forget Your laws. The wicked have set traps for me, but I have not strayed from your commands. I treasure up Your testimonies. Truly they are the joy of my heart. Incline my heart to keep Your commands, in truth, for ever.

Praise the Lord, all you nations. Praise Him, all you people. Great is His goodness for us. Truly, the Lord's goodness is for ever. To you belongs the praise, O God. Barekhmore.

KARTHAVE! NINNE NJAN VILICHU; ENNODU NEE UTHARAMARULI CHEYTHU, ENTE VACHANANGAL SRADHICHU KELKANAME.

ENTE PRARTHANA THIRUMUNPAKE DOOPAM POLEYUM, ENTE KAIKALILE KAZHCHA VAIKYUNNERATHE KAZHCHAPOLEYUM KAIKOLLENAME. ENTE HRUDAYAM DUSHKARYATHINU CHAAYUKAYUM, NJAN ANNAYA KRIYAKAL PRAVARTHİKAYUM CHEYYATHIRIPAN, ENTE VAIKU KAVALKARANAYUM ENTE ADHARANGALKU SOOKSHIPPUKARANAYUM NIYAMIKENAME.

DUSHTA MANUSHYARODUKOODE NJAN APPAM BHAKSHIKUMAARAKARUTHE. NEETHIMAN ENNE PADIPIKAYUM SHASIKAYUM CHEYATTE. DHUSTANMARUDE ENNA ENTE THALAYE KOZHUPPIKARUTHE. ENTHENNAL ENTE PRARTHANA AVARUDE DOSHAM NIMITHAM AKUNNU. AVARUDE NYAYADIPATHIMAR PAARAYAL THADAYAPETTU. IMPAMULLA ENTE VACHANANGAL AVAR KETTU.

BHOOMIYE KOZHU PILARNU CHITHARIKUNNAPOLE, PAATHALAVADUKAL AVARUDE ASTHIKAL CHITHARIKAYAPETTU. KARTHAVE! ENTE KANNUKALE NINKALEKKU NJAN UYARTHI, NINNIL SHARANAPETTU, ENTE ALMAVINE THALLIKALAYARUTHE.

ENNIKYAYI KENIKAL MARACHU VACHITULLA PRASHAMSAKARUDE KAIYIL NINNUM ENNE KAATHUKOLLENAME. NJAN KADANNU POKUMBOL ANNYAYAKAR ORUMICHU THANGALUDE VALAKALIL VEEZHUMARAKENAME.

ENTE SHABDATHIL KARTHAVINE NJAN VILICHU. ENTE SHABDATHIL KARTHAVINNODU NJAN APEKSHICHU. THIRUSANNIDHIYIL ENTE SANKADAM NJAN UYARTHUKKAYUM, THIRUMUNPIL ENTE NJERUKAM ARIYIKUKAYUM CHEYTHU. ENTE ALMAVU KUNDITHAPETTIRIKUMBOL NEE ENTE OODUVAZHİKAL ARIYUNNU.

ENTENADAPUKALUDE VAZHIYIL AVARENNIKYAYI KENIKAL MARACHU Vechu. NJAN VALATHOTTU NOKKI; ENNE ARIYUNNAVAN ILLENNU KANDU, SANKETHA STHALAM ENIKKILLATHE YAYI. ENNIKU VENDI APEKSHIKYUNNAVANUM ILLA. KARTHAVE! NJAN NINNODU NILAVILICHU. NEE ENTE ASRAYAVUM, JEEVANULLAVARUDE DESHATHU ENTE OHARIYUM AKUNNU ENNU NJAN PARANJU.

ENTE APEKSHA SRADICHU KELKENAME. ENTHENNAL NJAN ETTAM THAZHTHAPETTIRIKUNNU. ENNE PEEDIPIKUNNAVARIL NINNU ENNE VIDUVIKENAME. ENTHENNAL AVAR ENNEKAL BELLAM ULLAVARAI THEERNU. NJAN NINTE NAMATHE STHUTHIKENDATHINU ENTE ALMAVINE KARAGRAHATHIL NINNU PURAPEDUVIKKENAME. NEE ENIKU VENDI PAKARAM CHEYUMBOL, NINTE NEETHIMANMAR ENIKYAYI KATHIRIKUM.

NINTE VACHANAM ENTE KALUKALKU VILAKKUM, ENTE OODUVAZHICALKU PRAKASHAVUMAKUNNU. NINTE NEETHIYULLA VIDHIKAL PRAMANIKUNNATHINAI NJAN ANAYITTU NISCHAYICHU. NJAN ETTAM SHEENICHIRIKUNNU. KARTHAVE NINTE VACHANAPRAKARAM ENNE JEEVIPPIKENAME. KARTHAVE ENTE VAAYILE VACHANANGAL NEE ISHTAPETTU, NINTE PRAMANANGAL ENNE PADIPIKKENAME.

ENTE ALMAVU ELLAIPOZHUM NINTE KAIKALIL IRIKUNNU. NINTE NYAYAPRAMANAM NJAN MARANILLA, DUSHTANMAR ENIKYAYI KENIKAL Vechu. ENNALUM NJAN NINTE KALPANAKALIL NINNUM THETTIPOYILLA. NJAN NINTE SAKSHI ENNEKUMAYI AVAKASHAPEDUTHI. ENTHENNAL ATHENTE HRUDAYATHINTE ANANDAM AKUNNU. NINTE KALPANAKAL ENNEKUM SATHYATHODE CHEYVANAYITTU NJAN ENTE HRUDYAM THIRICHU.

SAKALA JATHIKALUME KARTHAVINE STHUTHIPEEN, SAKALA JANANGALUME AVANE STHUTHIPEEN. ENTHENNAL AVANTE KRUPA NAMMUDE MEL BELAPETTIRIKUNNU; AVAN SATHYAMAYITTU ENNEKUM KARTHAVAKUNNU.

DHEIVAME! STHUTHI NINAKKU YOGYAMAKUNNU - BAREKMOR.

## **Maneeso**

(of Mar Severius, Patriarch of Antioch, A .D. 460 -538)

By the prayers of Your Mother who brought forth you and that of all saints;

I will adore You O King, my Lord, the only begotten son, the word of the heavenly father, who are immortal, who by Your grace came for the life and salvation of all mankind, and did become incarnate of the holy and glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, who did become man, being God without change, and who was crucified for us.

O Christ, our Lord, who by Your death did trample our death and destroy it, who is one among the Holy Trinity and are worshipped and glorified in the unity of Your Father and Your living Holy spirit, have mercy upon us.

## **Maneeso**

(of Mar Severius, Patriarch of Antioch, A .D. 460 -538)

NINNE PRASAVICHA MATHAVINTEYUM NINTE PARISHUDHANMARELLAVAR  
UDEYUM PRARTHANAYAL.

SWABHAVA PRAKARM MARANAMILLATHAVANUM THANTE KRIPAYAL  
MANUSHYA VARGAM MUZHUVANTEYUM JEEVANUM RAKSHAKKUM VENDI VANNU.  
VISHUDHIYUM MAHATHWAVUM VEDIPPUMULLA DAIVAMATHAVAYA KANYAKA  
MARIYAMIL NINNU BHEDAM KODATHE MANUSHYANAYI THEERUKAYUM  
NJANGALKKUVENDI KURISHIL THARAKKAPEDUKAYUM CHEYTHAVANAYI SWARGEeya  
PITHAVINTE EKAPUTHRANUM VACHANAVUM AAYIRIKKUNNA RAJAVAYA ENTE  
KARTHAVE! NINNE NJAN PUKAZHTHUM.

THANTE MARANATHAL NJANGALUDE MARANATHE CHAVITTIKONNAVANUM  
VISHUDHA THRITHWATHIL EKANUM THANTE PITHAVINODUM JEEVANULLA THANTE  
VISHUDHA ROOHAYODUM KOODE ONNUPOLE VANNIKKAPETTU STHUTHIKKA  
PEDUNNAVANUMAYA NJANGALUDE MESHIHA THAMPURANE! NJANGALELLAVARODUM  
KRIPA CHEYYANME.



## Prayer of Repentance

I confess to God the Father Almighty, and to His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, in the presence of virgin Mary and all angels, prophets, seventy two emissaries, twelve apostles and four evangelists, and confess in the faith of the three holy synods of Nicea, Constantinople and Ephesus, trusting in the honorable priestly authority conferred upon you, priest, by which you bind and retain sins. I have sinned in thought, word and deed. I repent my sins. You are the master and I am the servant. Accept me as the prodigal son. I have sinned against heaven and against you. I believe that you have authority to bind and retain sins and that you are the mediator between God and me. And I pray that you deliver me from all my sins by your priestly authority that I may obtain forgiveness. I pray that you remember me before God, in your prayers and in the holy Qurbano. Amen.

## Prayer of Repentance

PITHAVUM PUTHRANUM PARISHUDHA ROOHAYUMAYA SATHYAMULLA EKA  
DAIVATHINTE THIRUNAAMATHIL PAAPIYAYA NJAN SARVASHAKTHANAAYA  
DAIVATHODU ENTE KUTTANGALE ETTU PARAYUNNU. NITHYA KANYAKAYAKUNNA  
DAIVA MATHAVAYA MARTHAMARIYAMINODUM, MALALAKAMARUDE THALA  
VANMARAYA MAR MIGHAYELINODUM, MAR GABRIYELINODUM, SLEEHANMARUDE  
THALAVANMARAAYA MAR PATHROSINODUM MAR PAULOSINODUM, EZHUPATHI  
RANDU ARIYUIPPU KAARODUM, NIKYAYILUM, KUSTHANTHEENOPPILISILUM,  
EPHESUSILUM SABHA KOODIYA SATHYAVISWASIKALAYA PITHAKKANMARUDE  
MOONNU SUNNAHADOSUKALODUM NJAN ENTE KUTTANGALE ETTUPARAYUNNU.  
BAHUMANAPETTA ENTE AATHMEEYA PITHAVE! AVIDUNNU BHOOMIYIL  
KETTUNNATHOKKEYUM AAKASHATHILUM KETTAPETTIRIKKUMENNU BHOOMIYIL  
AZHIKUNNATHOKKEYUM AAKASHATHILUM AZHINJIRIKKUMENNU NJAN  
POORNAMAYI VISWASIKKUNNU. VICHARATHILUM VACHANATHILUM PRAVARTHIYILUM  
NJAN PAAPIYAKUNNU. NJAN MAHA PAAPI THANNE. ENTE MAHA PAAPANGAL VALARE  
AAKUNNU. ATHUKONDU AVIDUTHE MUNPAKE NJAN KUMBASARIKKUNNU.  
DAIVATHINUM ENIKKUM IDAYIL AVIDUNNU MADHYASTHANA AAKUNNU. AVIDUTHE  
MADHYASTHATHAYAAL KARUNAYUM PAAPAMOCHANVUM PRAAPIPPAN NJAN  
APEKSHIKKUNNU. AMEN.

# **OLD TESTAMENT**

## **LESSON 2**

### **CHRONICLES**

Objective: Those who seek Jehova will find him.

The Chronicles consist of two parts and come under the historical section of the Holy Bible. It is not clear as to who wrote this book, but it is sure that it was written by a firm worshipper of Jehova. This book contains many verses from the recognized prophetic books and many documents from the chronicles of previous kings. The relationship between crime and punishment, and about the mercy of Jehova to the people who obey his commandments are again and again brought out in this book. It is believed that this book was written between 330-300 BC.

This book was written after the Israelites returned from their exile in Babylon. By the time they returned, the middle part of the Promised Land, which was called Samaria, was under the control of Gentiles. The main aim of writing this book was to convince the people who returned from exile that they were the true descendants of King David and the whole land of Canaan was their Promised Land.

The books of Chronicles are largely a retelling of events recorded in the books of Samuel and Kings, but from a different point of view. More importance is given to the royal tribe of Judah and priestly tribe of the Levites than the other tribes. The writer of Chronicles gave more importance to the small southern province, especially the city of Jerusalem and its temple than to the larger Northern Province. This may be due to the prophesies in Isaiah 11:1 and Micah 5:2 that foretold the birth of the Messiah in the city and tribe of David. Jesus is called the Son of David by many. The writer of Chronicles has portrayed David as a great person because he was the predecessor of the Messiah who was to come, and the proud symbol of the Israelites. The flaws in David's life that were mentioned in other books are not recorded in this one. The kings and rulers in King David's dynasty have been mentioned in detail while those of the northern kingdom have been mentioned only briefly. The author of Chronicles liked to portray Israel as a God-fearing society led by Jehova rather than as a nation. The author has given a message to the contemporary society,

which is, “The Lord is with you as long as you are with him. If you look for him, he will let you find him, but if you turn away, he will abandon you.” (2 Chronicles 15:2)

The contents of this book can be summarized as below:

Part 1 1 Chronicle 1-10 Genealogies from Adam to Saul

Part 2 1 Chronicle 11-29 The reign of David

Part 3 2 Chronicles 1-9 The reign of Solomon

Part 4 2 Chronicles 10-36 The divided nation, exile in Babylon, Cyrus allows the Jews to return

### **Questions:**

1. When was the Chronicles written?
2. What was the main aim of writing these books?
3. What was the main message given to the people by this book?
4. The historical facts explained in the books of Samuel and the Kings were repeated in Chronicles. How do Chronicles differ from them?

## **LESSON 3**

### **CHRONICLES- PART I**

**Objective:** God will forsake those who forsake him.

The book of Chronicles starts with a lengthy chain of genealogy. This genealogy proves that the people who returned from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem are the true successors of all Israel and are under the protective ring of God. It also indicates that everyone, starting from the first man and all Israel are subject to judgment from God. God’s grace and love for the restored community did not begin with David or the conquest or the Exodus – but with the creation of man. In the genealogy, great importance is given to the tribes of Levites, Judah and Benjamin, and to the descendants of David.

After the genealogy, the narration goes straight to the death of King Saul. The three sons of Saul were killed by Philistines on mount Gilboa, and on

seeing that, Saul fell on his sword and died. When all the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard of everything the Philistines had done to Saul, all their valiant men went and took the bodies of Saul and his sons and brought them to Jabesh. Then they buried their bones under the great trees in Jabesh and they fasted for seven days. After copying the whole chapter from 1 Samuel 31 in 1 Chronicles 10, the author of Chronicles writes three reasons for this disaster that befell Saul: "Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord. He disobeyed the Lord's commands; and even tried to find guidance by consulting the spirits of the dead instead of consulting the Lord. So the Lord killed him and gave control of the kingdom to David son of Jesse."

### **Questions:**

1. Why is the lengthy genealogy mentioned in the beginning of Chronicles?
2. What were the reasons for the tragedy that happened to Saul?
3. Who buried the bodies of Saul and his sons?

## **LESSON 4**

### **BOOK OF CHRONICLES - PART 2 PERIOD OF DAVID**

**Objective:** We should surrender completely to the will of God.

This part starts with the explanation of how King David in Hebron whose rule was initially confined to Judah only, had become the ruler of all the tribes of Israel. King David conquered the city of Jubus and renamed it as Jerusalem. King David then endorsed the city of Jerusalem into a place of permanent worship for Israel. Therefore he called a meeting of all Levy tribe and priests in Jerusalem. They decided to bring the Ark of God to Jerusalem. While bringing the Ark of God to Jerusalem the bullocks dragging the cart balked and the Ark was about to tilt over from the cart. A non Levy tribe man by name Uzza who was not of the tribe of levy tried to stop the Ark from falling from the bullock-cart and held the Ark in his hands. Uzza died instantaneously. Fearing the wrath of God, King David then decided to leave the Ark in the house of Obed-edorn for three months.

King David wished to build a House for God in Jerusalem. Through the

prophet Nathan, God informed David that the Temple will be built by his son and not by David. However, during his lifetime David gathered gold, silver, copper, wood, etc... for the purpose of building Gods Temple.

In the meantime, David conquered the surrounding nations and attached them to his kingdom, thereby eliminating almost all the enemies of Israel. Joab was the commander of his army in all these battles.

When peace was established in the country, the King ordered a census of all the Israelites. Joab conducted the enumeration work and estimated the number of all the Israelites. However, this was not done as per the will of God and it displeased him. David then prayed to God not to punish the Israelites for his transgression. Then God conveyed three modes of punishment to choose from, through the prophet Gad and they were:

(1) Three years of famine (2) Three months of attack by enemies (3) Three days of Plague in the land. David saying that the mercy of God is great chose the third alternative. On the third day of Plague, God stopped the ordeal and seeing the Angel over the threshing floor of ornan, David purchased that land and made an altar there and offered burnt offerings saying “This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel” (1 Chronicles 22:1) . The Temple of God was built there later.

David instructed his son Solomon to build a Temple of God and had arranged with his knights and elders to extend necessary cooperation for building the House of the Lord. He had also divided the tribe of Levy into 24 groups for various jobs in the house of the Lord and entrusted them with the different jobs prior to the building of the Temple.

King David during his last days arranged with the priest Saduk and Prophet Nathan, to anoint Solomon as the king of Israel at Geehan. The people of Israel approved it happily and when David died, Solomon became the King of Israel.

### **Questions:**

1. What is the old name of Jerusalem?
2. Why was the Ark of God kept in the house of Obed-edorn without bringing it to Jerusalem?

3. What were the punishments mentioned by God for David to chose from for his sin of counting the Israelites.
4. Name the following.
  1. The commander of David's Army.
  2. The prophet who conveyed to David that he should not build the House of Lord.
  3. The place at which Solomon was anointed
  4. The earlier owner of the threshing floor where David sacrificed the burnt Offerings to God.

## LESSON 5

### CHRONICLES - PART 3 PERIOD OF SOLOMON

Solomon was enthroned by the Israelites and there was peace during this period. The Almighty God appeared before Solomon and said to him "Ask what I shall give thee". Solomon replied to God. "Give me now wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people that is so great?" (2 ch. -10) God was well pleased with the answer and filled him with wealth, riches and honor in addition to wisdom and knowledge.

Solomon built a temple for God in the field of Ornan the Jebusite, which David had purchased. King Hiram had helped him with cedar, fir, and algum wood from Lebanon. In addition, he had also sent an expert in carpentry and artisan work. In seven years time the construction of the house of Lord God was completed. The Ark of God located in a tent in Jerusalem, was brought to its newly built home, the most Holy place of the temple. In the ark, there were only two blocks of rock on which God had written the covenant handed over to Moses (2 chronicles 5-10). All the Israelites along with priests praised the Lord God with harp and other musical instruments. The glory of Lord filled the house. Solomon prayed to the Lord and gave him offerings of oxen and goat, which was accepted by the Lord with fire sent from heaven (2 chronicles 7:1)

Solomon conducted many wars and enlarged his Kingdom. He established trade and commercial ties with many of the foreign countries through sea route. The Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, and came to Jerusalem to see him with spices and gold. King Solomon presented her with many gifts at her return. She returned satisfied.

Solomon died after ruling over Israel for forty years. His son Rehoboam was enthroned as King in his place.

**Questions:**

1. Where did the Lord God appear to Solomon?
2. What boon did Solomon ask the Lord?
3. What was inside when the Ark of God was placed in the most Holy place of the temple?
4. Why did the Queen of Sheba come to Jerusalem?

**LESSON 6**

**CHRONICLES - PART 4  
DIVIDED KINGDOMS**

*Objective:* The great Lord God is with us and saves us from all evil things.

All the Israelites gathered together at Shekhem to enthrone Rehoboam, who was the son of Nebath. The Israelites requested him to reduce the taxes levied by Solomon. The young king forsaking the counsel of the old counselors of his father disregarded the requests of the people. King Rehoboam replied to them harshly. Therefore, the majority of the people rebelled against the King and they accepted Jeroboam as their king. The people in the cities of Judah remained loyal to Rehoboam along with the people of Jerusalem. Thus the kingdom of David had been divided into two and the southern part came to be known as Judah and the northern part as Israel.

Rehoboam ruled the southern part, Judah, for 17 years. During this time, he had forsaken the word of Lord God and the King of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and took away the valuables. When Rehoboam died his son Abijah became the King of Judah.

The King Abijah and then his son Asa became Kings of Judah. They obeyed the law of the Lord and the Chief Priest Azar taught them the law of the Lord God and emphasized that so long as they remain with God, the Lord will be amidst them and if they forsake him, he will forsake them (2 Chronicles 15:2). King Asa gathered all the people of Judah and Benjamin and made them to take an oath that they will serve only Lord God. He had also proclaimed that all the people who do not worship the Lord God would be executed (2 Chronicles 15:13).

The son of Asa, Jehoshaphat became king and he also pleased god by following His laws. He engaged priests and Lords to go to the countryside to teach the law of God to the people and to teach them to abide by these laws. During this period, the king of Moab and Syria set out for a war with Jerusalem. The King of Judah and the people cried to the Lord for help. The Lord God saved them and the enemies fought among themselves and died. The people of Judah and Benjamin came out and collected the valuables of their enemies for three days.

When Jehoshaphat died, his son, Jehoram became the king. He killed all his brothers and displeased the Lord God. He married the daughter of Ahab, the evil King of Israel and practiced idolatry. Hence he had a great disease in the stomach, which burst out, and he died.

In the place of Jehoram, his son Ahaziah became king. He followed in his father's footsteps. He practiced idolatry according to his mother's advice. He was killed in a battle at Samaria. His mother Athaliah began to rule. She killed the sons of Ahaziah and other sons in the royal family but for the one year old Joash. Under the supervision of the priest Jehoidah, Joash grew up. The people killed Queen Athaliah and Joash was made the king thereafter.

Joash was anointed as king when he was seven and the priest Jahoida advised him to remove all the idols from the countryside and to kill the priests of Baal. He established a chest in the temple of God where all the people coming to worship the Lord God could put their offerings. This was used for repairs and maintenance of the house of the Lord.

On the demise of priest Jahoida, his son Zachariah had become the priest in the house of the Lord. When many people turned to idolatry he condemned such acts and warned the people. King Joash became angry at this and ordered



him to be stoned to death. The people stoned him inside the house of the Lord. The Lord was displeased at this. The army of Syrians invaded Jerusalem. Many people in Jerusalem were killed and valuables were taken away. King Joash was killed by his own servants while he was bed ridden.

Amaziah, the son of Joash became king. He lived in ways pleasing to the Lord in the initial years but slowly shifted into idolatry. As a result the nation was conquered by enemies. Amaziah escaped to Samaria but was slain there.

Then Uzziah, the son of Amaziah was enthroned as King by the people. He made a number of reforms to help the country and the people. He removed idolatry from the land and worshipped the Lord God. However, when he became strong, he transgressed against the Lord and came into the House of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar. The priest warned him that burning of incense on the altar is the duty of priests and the King should not do it. The King insisted and the Lord God smote him with leprosy. He remained afflicted until his death. His son Jotham had to carry out the duties of the king.

Jotham became King after the death of his father Uzziah and ruled in accordance with God's wishes. However, during his lifetime he never went to the House of Lord because he had seen the punishment given to his father. He made castles and forts in many parts of the country. Ahaz, the son of Jotham became king on his father's death. He turned out to be an idolater and closed the door of the House of Lord in Jerusalem and stopped the sacrifices. The King of Israel and King of Assyria attacked Judah and carried away valuables and men from there. However, Ahaz did not turn to God even during his period of troubles.

After the death of Ahaz, his son Hezekiah became the King. He opened the House of the Lord and carried out all maintenance work. The usual worship and sacrifices began again at the Temple of the Lord God. He also made arrangements to observe, the festival of Passover and sent out letters to all Israel and Judah inviting the whole congregation. The King of Assyria, Sennacherib came to Jerusalem with a large army and seized the city. Seeing the siege by the great army of Assyria the people of Judah and Israel were afraid. Hezekiah, a firm believer and worshiper of Almighty said to the people "do not be afraid of the multitude of the Army of Assyria because there is more with us than with them. With them is an army of flesh but with us the Lord

our God is there to help us and to fight the battle for us” (2 Chronicles 32:7). Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah prayed to God. God sent an angel who killed the Army of Assyria. The King of Assyria went back with shame. Hezekiah became sick and the prophet announced that he would die in his bed. The King with great sorrow prayed to God for extending his life and quick recovery from the disease, as he had done so many good things to please God and to keep the faith of his people. The Lord heard his prayer and gave him an extension of fifteen more years of life.

**Questions:**

1. What were the major reasons for division of Israel after King Solomon?
2. Why did the King Uzziah become a Leper?
3. Name the following:
  - a) The woman who reigned in Judah.
  - b) The priest who was killed in the house of the Lord
  - c) The person who had become king at the age of seven.
  - d) The king who established a chest in the house of the Lord.
  - e) The King whose life had been extended by 15 years.
  - f) The king who closed the doors of the house of the Lord and stopped worship.

## LESSON 7

### BOOKS OF CHRONICLES - PART IV DIVIDED KINGDOMS (CONTINUATION)

*Objective:* Whoever forsakes Lord, the lord will also forsake them.

Hezekiah passed away and his son Manasseh became king at the age of 12. He ruled Jerusalem for 55 years and was the king who ruled Jerusalem for the longest period. He did not please the Lord God. He turned to idolatry and witchcraft. He made altars for various Gods in the House of Lord and made his sons to pass through fire. All these activities enraged the Lord and he caused the Assyrian Army to invade Judah and Jerusalem. Manasseh was put in chain and was taken to Babylon. He humbled himself and prayed to the Lord for freedom. His supplications were heard and the king of Assyria freed him from captivity. Now Manasseh understood the Lord is Almighty. He ordered the removal of all the idols and alters of other Gods from the House of Lord. However, the people continued sacrifices outside and raised platforms for other Gods.

At the death of Manasseh, his son Amon became the King. He was an idolater and the servants of the king themselves killed him.

The son of Amon, Josiah at the age of 8 was made the king. He ordered the Levites to cleanse the House of the Lord. While doing this the book containing the law of the Lord was discovered. When it was read to him he humbled himself and became repentant. He sought the directions of the Lord through Haldah a prophetess of the Lord. She informed them about the destruction that was to come to Jerusalem and its inhabitants. She also said that the king will not have to witness it because of his repentance. The people and the king made a covenant that during his period of life they will only serve the Lord God of Israel.

When he died, his son Jehoahaz was made king. Necho the king of Egypt dethroned him and Jehoahaz was taken away to Egypt Eliakim the brother of Jehoahaz was made the king with the name Jehoakin. Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon invaded Jerusalem and took away Jehoakin to Babylon along with the vessels and valuables of the House of the Lord.

The son of Jehoakin, Johoachim was made the King in place of his father. He displaced the Lord God of Israel. He was also taken away prisoner by the Babylonians. His brother Zedekia was enthroned in his place. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and the Lord. Therefore the Babylonians attacked Jerusalem, took the king and all the lords' priests to Babylon and set fire to Jerusalem and the House of Lord God. They also destroyed the boundary wall of Jerusalem and the important buildings and the city as such. They also kept watchmen instructing that nobody should be allowed to rebuild the house of God and the city. Thus Jerusalem remained desolate for 70 years. When King Cyrus conquered Babylon, he permitted the Jews to go to Jerusalem and build the house of the Lord.

**Questions:**

1. Name the following
  - a) The prophetess who conveyed the message of Lord to King Josiah.
  - b) The King who reigned the longest period in Jerusalem.
  - c) The person who became king at the age of 8.
  - d) The king who permitted the Jews to go back to Jerusalem from Babylon.
  - e) The king who was taken to Egypt as captive.
2. How did Manasseh become the ruler of Jerusalem again after his captivity in Babylon?
3. What were the destructive activities carried out by the Chaldeans during the period of Zedekiah in Jerusalem?

## LESSON 8

### THE HISTORY OF MACABIANS

Objective: Departure from Almighty causes destruction.

The reign of David and Solomon were during B.C. 1002-922. In the history of Israel, this was the Golden Age. During the reign of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, the Nation of Jews were bifurcated into Israel and Judah. They were fighting each other as well as with the neighboring states thereby reducing their economic and social stability and strength. They were captured by the Kings of Assyria, Greece and Persia during different periods.

During the period of 10 centuries between Solomon's death and the destruction of Jerusalem (922.BC - 70 AD), the Jews remained as a free and united nation only for about 100 years during the time of the Macabian rulers. Let us study what this reign was like.

The Jews were under the rule of the Greeks for sometime. At the death of Alexander. The Great, the vast Kingdom was shared between the commanders of Alexander. The area including Syria came under the reign of Seleucus Nikator. He made Antioch as his capital during BC 300. During this period, Israel was under the control of the commander Ptolomias. Ptolomias ruled from Alexandria. During this period, Acho, one of the sea ports in Israel had been renamed as Ptolomias. During B.C. 198, the Selucide tribe ruler of Antioch, Antiochus captured Israel from the Ptolomy tribe. However the Romans became powerful during this period. Antiochus of Antioch was defeated by them. He accepted the Roman overlordship. The youngest son of Antiochus, Eppipanus along with Syrian nobles had to become hostages Romans and remained in Rome for 15 years. After the death of Antiochus and his elder son, the Romans released Eppipanus and made him the ruler in Antioch under the Roman suzerainty. Thus, during B.C. 175, Eppipanus had become the ruler in Antioch and the Israelites were under his control.

Antiochus Eppipanus on becoming the ruler of Antioch restricted the freedom of worship of the Jews. The Jews were put into great difficulty during his reign as enumerated below.

1. Antiochus Eppipanus had plundered the House of the Lord in Jerusalem and stopped the sacrifices with the help of his Army.

2. He had set up an idol of Jupiter a Greek God at the most Holy place of the Lord God and thus desecrated the temple.
3. He set fire to the holy books of Jews and stopped the circumcision of Jews and their Sabbath practices on Saturdays.
4. He forced the Jews to make sacrifices of pig flesh to the idols. He put to death the Jews who did not obey his orders.

These unprecedented atrocities forced the Jews into rebellion against the rulers. This led to the Macabian revolution.

### **Questions:**

1. What was the main reason for Macabian revolts in Israel?
2. What were the cruelties the Jews suffered during Antiochus Eppipanus's reign?
3. What was the importance of Macabian reign?

## **LESSON 9**

### **HISTORY OF MACABIANS (CONTD)**

**Objective:** Almighty God protects his people from whatever mishaps that may occur.

There was a small village called Modeen 28 kilometers away to the North West of Jerusalem. There lived an old priest called Mathias (Mathias = Gods gift). He was a just and God fearing man and was respected by all the villagers. He had five sons called John, Simon, Judas, Eliaser and Jonathan. During the period of the cruel reign of Antiochus Eppipanus, a Syrian centurion reached this village and sought the co-operation of the old priest Mathias, in sacrificing to an idol. Not only did Mathias not cooperate with him in sacrificing to the idol, but he killed the servants of Antiochus as well. Knowing the nature of the king and his army, Mathias and sons organized and trained a number of Israelites to resist the King's brutalities. This was in B.C. 167. Many who were afraid of the law of God and who had faith in Him, joined with Mathias and his guerrilla warfare. Mathias died the next year. The revolting crowd elected Judas, the third son of Mathias as their leader. He had taken a surname as Maccabias,

meaning hammer. The Syrian army was concentrated in the city of Jerusalem and the villages were under Maccabias. With the co-operation of all God fearing people in various villages the Maccabians drove out the Syrian army and freed Jerusalem. They assembled at the house of God and conducted sacrifices regularly. They rededicated the House of the Lord for regular worship. The day of re-dedication was being celebrated as a festival in Jerusalem every year as mentioned in the Gospels (John 10:22). Judas Maccabias had led the people with courage and in memory of his valiant fight against a strong trained army, this period came to be known as the reign of Maccabians.

After six years of successful reign in Judah, he was killed in a war at Elasa. His younger brother Jonathan was made leader and his reign continued for 18 years. He also acted as a priest in Jerusalem and had spread his boundaries. In B.C 142 at Ptolomias he was killed. His brother Simon took over the leadership and priesthood of Jerusalem and ruled for eight years. He had been a valiant warrior and good administrator. He overpowered the Syrian rulers and reclaimed the entire area of Judah. During B.C.134, his son killed him in Ptolomias, but the son could not take over the regime. The other sons of Mathias namely John and Eliaser were killed earlier in different encounters and hence the first generation of Maccabians came to an end with the death of Simon.

**Question:**

1. How did the Maccabians come to be known as such?
2. Who had taken over the Governance and priesthood together at first?
3. The dedication festival is celebrated in memory of what?

## HISTORY OF MACCABIANS (CONTD)

Objective: The hunger for power and infighting therefor causes destruction.

After the period of Simon, his son John Hircanus I took over the reign in B.C.134. He was a warrior and fought with Syria and captured Samaria in the North and Idumia in the south and annexed them to Judah. People had to pay escalated tax in order to meet the expenses of war. This displeased the population. However, he had ruled for thirty years up to B.C. 104 and the country had become prosperous by the time he died.

During 104 B.C. the elder son of Hircanus, Aristobulos I became the ruler of Judah. In the history of Maccabians, he was called the King. He died after a year. His brother Alexander Junius became the next king. He annexed many areas from the south and north and the areas on the eastern side of River Jordan, expanding the boundaries of his kingdom. He was ruler of Judah for 27 years.

During this period internal strife within the population worsened. The Pharisees and Saduccians among the Jews had differing views and this had developed into confrontation between these groups in the country. The Pharisees sought help from the Syrians. However, Alexander Junius suppressed them. He died during BC 76.

On the death of Alexander Junius the Queen Salomy Alexandra became the ruler of Judah in BC 76 and ruled for nine years. She made her elder son Hirecanus second as Chief priest of the house of Lord. When she died during 67 BC, there was a dispute for succession between the elder son, the chief priest Hircanus second and the younger son Aristobulus second. Initially Hirecanus second captured the reign. Aristobulus second captured the throne after that. Hirecanus second sought the help of Arabs through Anthipether a commander of the Army of Eden as his negotiator but could not succeed. (The King Herod who had been the ruler of Jerusalem during the period of Jesus was the son of this Anthipether).

The Roman General Pompei had taken over Antioch (Damascus) during his victorious attack in B.C. 63. Both the Jewish Kings who were fighting for rights over the throne, approached for his help to resolve the dispute. Pompei did not assist either the brothers but took over Jerusalem for himself.



Thus, the internal fight between the younger generations of Maccabians had resulted in destruction of the house of the Lord and the reign was taken over by the Roman Empire. The Maccabian reign ended after 104 years, and along with it, the freedom of Israel also ended.

**Questions:**

1. Why did his own people become displeased with John Hircanus?
2. What were the reasons for failure of Maccabians?
3. Who was Anthipether? What do you know about him?
4. What is the name of the Queen who ruled Judah during the Maccabian reign?
5. Who was recognized as the first King amongst the Maccabians?

# **NEW TESTAMENT**

## **LESSON 11**

### **THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL**

Objective: To acquire general knowledge about the epistles of St. Paul.

St. Paul's epistles are a great treasure for the whole of the Christian church. These letters were written many years before the gospels were written. We get knowledge about the real situation regarding rituals and faith of the early church from these epistles. It is clear from these epistles that they were written by a person who had deep feelings regarding the problems of different churches. (2 Cor 11:28)

He has repeatedly written in several letters that he has been authorized to make decisions and was made an apostle by Jesus Christ and whatever he wrote was not merely his opinions. In some letters to certain churches, importance is given to their particular problems but generally they are useful to all churches. Moreover, St. Paul wished that the churches that received these letters should exchange them between themselves and make it useful to each other. Accordingly towards the end of the 2nd century people collected these letters written to different churches and assembled them. St. Peter also mentioned the letters of St. Paul. (2 Peter 3:16) in his epistle.

We have received 14 epistles that are written by St. Paul. There is a difference of opinion among the theologians about the authorship of these letters. The style and language used in these letters denote that they are written by St. Paul. The churches that received these letters were from different traditions and moral backgrounds. Their problems were also different. Some letters were written in extremely difficult and busy circumstances but some were written while the apostle was in prison and had lot of free time. In certain churches, matters of faith were the main problem where-as in some other churches; the problem was their severe immorality. Most of the letters were written to Christians who were converted from Gentiles. But the letter to Hebrews written to Christians converted from Jews emphasized different ideas and has a different tone. We must remember that he had written to churches that were established due to his evangelical work. The letters to Romans and Colossians are to people that he had never visited before. We must take into

account all these differences before we question the authorship of St. Paul with regards to language and style. Our Holy church traditionally believes that all these 14 letters were written by St. Paul

For the sake of convenience, we can divide these 14 epistles into 5 groups.

### **Early letters**

This group consists of 2 letters to Thessalonica. These letters were written much before the others to an infant church in Thessalonica.

### **Evangelical epistles**

This group consists of a letter to Romans, 2 letters to Corinthians and a letter to Galatians. It is because of their importance that these letters are put in the first section of St. Paul's letters.

### **Captivity epistles**

This consists of letters to Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. These letters were written when he was languishing in prison.

### **Pastoral Epistles**

This consists of 2 letters written to Timothy and one to Titus. Here, St. Paul writes to his faithful disciples whom he made the heads of the churches that he himself established.

### **Epistle to Hebrews**

This epistle is different from the other letters in several aspects. Whatever may be the controversies regarding the authorship of this epistle, the Orthodox churches traditionally believe that the epistle to Hebrews was written by none other than St. Paul.

### **Questions:**

1. Why are some letters of St. Paul called Pastoral Epistles?
2. Which are the Captivity Epistles?
3. Which are the most important epistles of St. Paul?
4. Explain why some of the the letters of St. Paul are different in language and style.

**THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS**

**Objective:** To understand the relevance and importance of the epistle to the Romans.

After the death of Alexander the great, the powerful Greek Empire disintegrated. The Roman Empire grew as a world power and took the place of the Greek Empire. This empire had much more land area and military power. The capital of this empire was Rome and was later known as the 'Eternal City'. The Christian church and its message reached Rome in its early stages and spread as a powerful force. Many people including Jews who came to Jerusalem witnessed the miracle of the tongues, obtained through the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of the Pentecost. As time passed, Rome was considered to be one of the three main centers of universal Christendom (other centers were Antioch and Alexandria). The fact that St. Peter and St. Paul were martyred in Rome was another reason for Rome's importance. Both of them preached the gospel in Rome but even before that, there were a considerable number of Christians in Rome.

St. Paul thought that his activities in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, Asia and Eastern Europe were completed with his third missionary journey. He set his next journey to Spain in Western Europe and he wished to visit Rome on his way (Romans 15:24). It is natural for him to have wished to visit Rome because he was a Roman citizen. But before that, he wanted to give the money collected by the Greeks to the poor Christians in Jerusalem. Because of this financial help, the gentile Christians, who gave the money and the Jewish Christians who received the money became more intimate and came closer.

Even though he had not visited Rome before, he had heard about the strong faith of the church members there. Being very happy about this, he was setting the stage to meet them personally. During his journey to Jerusalem in a place called Miletos, he had spoken about the hardship he was going to face in Jerusalem (Acts 20:22 - 23). St. Paul stayed in Greece for three months before traveling to Jerusalem (Acts 20:3). During this period in A.D. 57 in Corinth, he wrote this epistle to Romans and sent it to Rome through a lady named Phoebe who was a servant of the church in Cenchreae (Romans 16:1-2).

The epistle to Romans is the longest one amongst the letters of St. Paul. God's plan of grace, which lifts man from his state of sin that he cannot get rid of by himself, is explained in this epistle.

The main subject the writer of this letter is emphasizing upon is the universality of sin. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. All have turned aside together; they have gone wrong; there is none that doeth good, no, not one". (Romans 3:10-12) The Jew who received the Law of the Lord shall be judged according to the Law. The Gentiles who are outside the commandments shall be judged according to their conscience. Law of the Lord is the road that leads to Christ.

If one lives according to the Law of the Lord salvation is possible by means of one's deeds. But all saints starting from Abraham were deemed righteous not by deeds but by faith. Grace is the gift from God. We receive this Grace freely due to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrected Christ acts as intermediary for us. If God be for us, who can be against us? (Rom 8:31) But to attain this salvation we have to do two things on our part. That is thou shalt confess with thy lips that Jesus is Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Rom 10:9)

In the beginning the Israelites received the word of the Lord. But they did not believe. But this was temporary. They will also come to salvation through Christ. The Apostle advises "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:21). The last chapters contain many advices about maintenance of moral guidelines and greetings to the faithful. He also explains how to lead exemplary lives in different phases of life. The Apostle takes time to explain how a saved person should lead his life. He exhorts them to lead Christian life interacting with co-believers, governments and other people.

### **Questions:**

1. Narrate the circumstances in which St. Paul wrote this Epistle?
2. How was the epistle to Romans sent to Rome?
3. What is the main subject in this Epistle?

## EPISTLES TO CORINTHIANS

Objective: To learn more about faith, hope and love through the Epistles to Corinthians.

During the period of the New Testament, the city of Corinth was a major commercial center and a great seaport. It was also a venue for a world famous university. But along with increasing economic activity, this city became more and more morally depraved. Julius Caesar had renovated this city and made it the new head quarters of Roman Empire in Greece. During his second Missionary journey, St. Paul reached this prosperous port city and stayed there for about one and half years. He visited this city during his third Missionary journey too.

In the Holy Bible we have obtained two epistles of St. Paul written to Corinthians. But in the first epistle we get the information that St. Paul had written to them at an earlier date. (1 Corinthians 5:9) Unfortunately that letter was lost to the Christian church.

The church in Corinth was a large one having many members and there were many problems involving these members. While St. Paul was staying in Ephesus, a nearby city, he came to know of these problems personally from many sources. The Christians in Corinth organised different groups in the name of their leaders without the knowledge of these leaders and quarreled with each other. Besides, there was obvious discrimination between the rich and the poor. There were disputes between believers pending in the Roman judicial courts. All these have saddened him greatly (1 Corinthians 6:17) The rampant immorality prevalent among the Christians (1 Corinthians 6:17), the eating of things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols (1 Corinthians 8:1-13), doubts about the grace of God (Corinthians 12:4-12), irregularities regarding the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:18-22) etc. were matters that disturbed the Apostle. Besides, there were people who even questioned the authority of St. Paul as an apostle as he was not one amongst the 12 Apostles of Christ. Because of these disputes and differences of opinions, he had dealt elaborately on the three cornerstones of Christianity i.e. Faith, Hope and Love in chapter 13. He also strongly condemns their doubts about the resurrection of the dead (Chapter 15).

The first Epistle is believed to have been written in AD 57 from Ephesus and the second from Macedonia in the same or next year. Both these epistles start with the declaration “Paul the Apostle of Jesus by the will of God”, emphasizing that he had been selected as apostle by Jesus so that they should not nurture any doubts about his apostleship. After the initial salutation, he expresses deep sorrow at their disagreement. He continues that even though they had prospered in worldly matters they were still children in spiritual matters and advises them accordingly.

The Apostle emphasizes the importance of purity in family life. He does not agree with the view that the gift of foreign tongues is superior to other gifts of the Holy Spirit. He confirms the resurrection of the dead in no unequivocal terms. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). When he asked God to get rid of the thorn in the flesh, he got the reply “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” He happily accepts this reply. (2 Corinthians 12: 7-9). He longed for the everlasting happiness in the coming world rather than the short life in this world and its little pleasures. (2 Corinthians 5: 1-10)

While closing his second Epistle, he bids farewell in the name of Holy Trinity, where as in other Epistles he bids farewell in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Questions:**

1. What was the background behind writing the Epistle to Corinthians?
2. What were the major problems faced by the Church in Corinth?
3. Bidding farewell in the name of Holy Trinity is seen only in one Epistle. Which one?

**EPISTLE TO GALATIANS**

Objective: To learn that Epistle to Galatians is also called the Gospel of Grace.

Galatia is a large area located in the northeastern side of Asia Minor (the present day Turkey). St. Paul had visited Dorba, Lustra, Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia, which were in the southern side of Galatia during his three missionary journeys. It is clear that he had written this epistle to those people whom he had visited during his previous missionary journeys. “And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus” (Gal 4:14). There is general consensus among the theologians that this Epistle was written by St. Paul in A.D. 58 from the city of Corinth.

This epistle is important on many counts. The Apostle gives detailed autobiographical information regarding his early life and evangelical mission. (Gala 1:1-24). It can be presumed that this gospel is meant for those people who had questioned his position as an Apostle. At the commencement of the Epistle he says that he was the Apostle selected by the resurrected Jesus Christ and God the Father. He was born as a Jew and brought up as a Pharisee and it was while traveling to Damascus to persecute Christians that he was called to be an Apostle. But he claims that he was selected from birth by God “But when it pleased God, who prepared me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace” (Gal 1-15).

In the Galatians community the converted Jews were insisting that all the converts from Gentiles should follow the practices as followed by Jews including circumcision. This is one of the disputes St. Paul refers to in this Epistle. He could not tolerate the heresies in the church he nurtured with his own sufferings in the case of the stoning he had to suffer in Lustra. St. Paul could not accept this argument even though he himself was a Jew. Hence he had emphatically refuted the arguments of the Jews and made it very clear to the congregation that even if an angel from heaven conveyed a message other than what was conveyed by him, he should not be heeded to and such one should be treated as a cursed one. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”. (Gal: 1:8) This message is conveyed during our Holy Qurbana in the song “Paulose Sleeha Dhanyan cholkattenithevum”.



St. Paul rightfully claims that the Gospel he was preaching was not of human origin but straight from Jesus Christ when he had his revelation at the gates of Damascus. (Galatians 1:11-12) He had again and again categorically made it clear that salvation is attained through God's Grace alone and not by practicing the Law of Moses. This is the reason why theologians call this Epistle "the Gospel of Grace". He reiterates that Abraham was justified by faith and not by practicing the Lord's Laws.

Even though he had many worldly reasons to glorify himself about, he says that "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (Galatians 6:14)

### Questions:

1. What is the evidence to show that the epistle was meant for the southern region of Galatia?
2. St. Paul starts the epistle emphasizing his status as an Apostle. Why?
3. According to St. Paul, when did God select him?
4. What do we proclaim by singing the song "Paulose Sreeha Dhanyan" during the Holy Qurbana?

## LESSON 15

### EPISTLE TO EPHESIANS

**Objective:** To emphasize the strong relationship between Christ and the Church.

Ephesus was the biggest city in Asia Minor and was closely linked to the missionary work of St. Paul. The Apostle had visited Ephesus during his second and third missionary journeys. Moreover, during his second visit he stayed there for two years and did magnificent work there. During this period many miracles were shown through him. His clothes were used to cure many people and to drive away evil spirits. (Acts 19:10-12) Themotheos, the dear disciple of St. Paul had been made the Bishop of Ephesus. In the book of Revelation, the first church mentioned by name among the churches in Asia Minor is the church of Ephesus. The Apostle had written this epistle from the prison in Rome in A.D. 62 and sent through Tychicus.

Many of the other epistles were written to rectify the bad practices of the Christian church and to discipline the members with the intention of teaching the true principles of Christian faith. In this epistle he had preached the necessity of maintaining union and harmony between the converted Jews and Gentiles as one body in Christ.

The major points covered in this epistle can be summarized as follows:

1. The Christian church is the product of God's redemption plan. Christ is the head of the church and the believers are the body (1:2-3).
2. The church is the house of the Lord and Christ is the corner stone of it (2:21)
3. Christ is the husband and the church is the wife (5:23).
4. The sacrifice of Christ is valid not only in this world but in heaven also (1:10, 2:7, 3:10).
5. The work of The Holy Spirit in the church 1:17, 2:18, 3:16, 4:30.
6. The importance of keeping harmony among the Church members. Members of church should be in complete harmony (4:1-7, 25- 32).
7. The duties in Christian family life (5:22, 6:9).
8. The Christian is compared to a warrior and mentions the spiritual armory that he should keep with him 6:10-18).

The epistle to Ephesians and Colossians were composed during the same period. The epistle to Colossians was written first and thereafter, the ideas were further refined in the epistle to Ephesians.

### **Questions:**

1. What were the miracles that happened in Ephesus through St. Paul?
2. What are the differences found in the epistle to Ephesus compared to other epistles?
3. Narrate the important advices in the epistle to Ephesians?

## EPISTLE TO PHILIPPIANS

Objective: We learn from the epistle to Philippians that Christians should keep their hope under all circumstances.

King Philip, the father of Alexander the Great had built the city of Philippi. Naopolis was the port city of Philippi and it was here that Apostle Paul landed for the first time in Europe. After the death of Alexander the Great, Philippi was annexed to the Roman Empire and they had extended all the rights of a Roman Citizen to the inhabitants of Philippi.

When St. Paul landed at Philippi during his second missionary journey, he had with him Silas, Timothy and Luke (Phili 2:19) (Acts 16:16). St. Paul and Silas were beaten and jailed without trial and when the authorities came to know that they were Roman citizens, they begged for their pardon and set them free.

The first to embrace Christianity in Philippi were Lydia and her family and she belonged to Asia Minor but were of Jewish origin. Next it was a Greek slave woman who embraced Christianity. When St. Paul and Silas were praising God and singing hymns in the prison, the prison locks opened and seeing this the chief of the jail wardens also embraced Christianity. Thus the initial converts were from various communities representing different groups of people. Although Paul had to suffer torture and hardships in Philippi, he was happy and satisfied as he could convert a number of people to the faith.

Unlike other Epistles to various churches he had not criticized the Philippians but had made several remarks praising them. Therefore, the church in Philippi was well founded in faith and fellowship. They were firm in their faith during their persecution (1:29-30), and were obedient to St. Paul (2:12). They were generous and helpful towards other churches and never became victims of heresy (4:15). They were also not influenced by the conflicting Jewish ideology. As the Jewish community was strong and influential, it was possible that they will try to create unnecessary problems and hence St. Paul has requested two women Euodias and Syntyche to carefully follow the Gospel.

This epistle was one of the Prison Epistles written in AD 63 while in Rome and dispatched through Epaphroditus who was "companion in labor, and fellow soldier" of St. Paul (2:25). This man had taken the financial help of

Philippians to Paul and served him in the prison and became sick in Rome. When he had recovered, the epistle was sent through him.

St. Paul has mentioned that his confinement in prison was not a waste as he could write a few valuable Epistles from there and he had encouraged the people who were free to be more fruitful and put in more effort to spread the Gospel. He had also thanked them for the pecuniary help and congratulated them for coming forward to spread the Gospel. He implores them to leave aside the false prestige of Jewish traditions and to come to the way of the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Paul had also brought out many of his scholastic thoughts in this Epistle. The are for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (1:21)

- ☞ For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: (1:23)
- ☞ I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (3:14)
- ☞ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (4:7)

These verses indicate St. Paul's deep faith and hope and conveys to us the comfort of his blessings.

During his first visit to Philippi, St. Paul was imprisoned and tortured. While in the prison, during the night he praised the Lord singing songs. (Acts 16:25) While in prison in Rome also, when writing to the Philippines, he repeatedly asks them to rejoice. (Phili 2:17-18, 3:1, 4:4)

And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much bolder to speak the word without fear. (Phili 1:16). All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar's household. (Phili 4:22) These verses confirm that this epistle was written from a prison in Rome.

### **Questions:**

1. Who were with St. Paul when he reached Philippi for the first time?
2. The first Christian converts in Philippi were the representatives of three different communities. Explain.
3. Narrate the circumstances in which St. Paul wrote the epistle to Philippians.
4. What were the virtues St. Paul noticed in the church of Philippi?

## EPISTLE TO COLOSSIANS

Objective: To understand the uniqueness of Christ, the Son of God.

Colossia was a small town near Laodicia in the Phrygia province in Asia Minor. St. Paul had not visited this place at the time of his writing as is evident from verse 2:1. It was his dear disciple Epuphras who belonged to Colossia that had preached the Gospel in Colossia. (Verse 4:12) It is generally accepted that St. Paul had written this Epistle from the prison in AD 62 along with the epistle to Ephesians. The elegant usage of words, the theology and ideology etc are similar. It seems that this was written first and the epistle to Ephesians followed. Philomon to whom St. Paul had written an epistle was also a native of Colossia.

St. Paul came to know about some false teachings in the church of Colossia. Some people there had given more importance to the angels than to the Son of God. In order to dismiss this revision, and to emphasise the uniqueness of Christ he had written this Epistle. He has proclaimed in the epistle. "Christ is the image of the invisible God, Christ is the redeemer of sins, the creator of all, consists in all things, the head of the body, the church; the reconciliatory to God of every thing present, past and future. He made it clear that he is beyond comparison. (1:14-20).

Some Colossians were teaching that living the life of a hermit forsaking all worldly pleasures is the most acceptable way of life to God. St. Paul repudiated this school of thought (2:21-23). He had also laid down the model relationship between various members in a family, in a society, amongst the rulers and ruled, masters and slaves (3-18, 4-1).

"The gospel keeps bringing blessings and is spreading throughout the world just as it has among you ever since the day you first heard about the grace of God and came to know it as it really is"(1:6). His information about Colossians prompted the Apostle to write to them. St. Paul is appreciating the Colossians as they were "rooted deeply in Christ Jesus, established in faith and were growing abundantly" (2:7).

### **Questions:**

1. What were the major heresies spread among the Colossians?
2. What was the reason for writing this epistle to the church, which he had not seen?
3. Which is the other epistle written in the same circumstances?

## **LESSON 18**

### **EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS**

***Objective:*** To learn about the good advises of St. Paul like, 'Live up to the God who has called you and don't get tired of doing good deeds'.

Thessalonica is a beautiful town in Macedonia. At present it is known as Salonica. There were many Jewish settlers in this town. When the Romans captured Macedonia from the Greeks, they made Thessalonica the center of administration of the Macedonia province.

St. Paul visited Thessalonica during his second missionary tour. He stayed there for a few weeks, preaching the Gospel. Many Jews and Greeks became believers in Christ Jesus. However, some influential Jews revolted against the faith St. Paul was advocating and made commotion. This forced the rulers and law enforcement authorities to intervene and St. Paul along with Timothy and Silas went to Berea from Thessalonica. Timothy was sent back to Thessalonica for preaching the Gospel when St. Paul and party reached Athens. St. Paul went back to Corinth from Athens and stayed there for about 1½ years working and preaching the gospel. Timothy returned to Corinth from Thessalonica and explained in detail about the condition of the church in Thessalonica. It was in the light of these explanations that St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Thessalonians in 52 AD. Later in the same year the second Epistle was written. Both these Epistles come under the 'earlier Epistles of St. Paul'. Circumstances prevalent in the church were nearly the same while the two epistles were written. In the beginning of both these Epistles the names of Silas and Timothy have been mentioned as co-writers along with St. Paul.

In these two epistles, St. Paul gives good advice about the church in affectionate language.

## **First Epistle**

He was happy about the growth of the church in Thessalonica within a short period of time and congratulates them on being a role model to other churches. He also remembers the problems and difficulties they have undergone for the church and wishes to see them again (1:7-9) (2:13-20). In the 3rd chapter he praises Timothy on being a mediator between St. Paul and the church in Thessalonica. Then he gives a set of code of conduct to be followed (4:1-12). He assures them that the dead ones will be resurrected along with Christ (4:13-18). It seems that St. Paul had some notions about the second coming of Jesus Christ when he was writing the epistles. It mentions that the second coming of Christ could be in the same generation (4:17) However, this thinking is not reflected in any of the other epistles but he advises the church to wait for his second coming with alertness (5:1-11). The first Epistle ends with some useful guidance on the arrangements in the church, and greetings.

## **Second Epistle**

We notice that the second epistle was written without much delay after the first one. There was some misunderstanding in the church regarding his teachings about the second coming of Jesus Christ. So some people lived disorganized lives and others circulated letters falsely putting the Apostle's name on it. All these prompted the Apostle to write the second letter so soon.

In the second epistle also he praises them for their steadfastness in faith and tells them that those who persecuted them will be punished soon (1:3-12). He also advises them to clear the confusion about the second coming of Jesus Christ caused by his first letter (2:1-12). He requests the Thessalonians to pray for him (3:1-2). He also instructs them to work and earn a living (3:1-12). He ends the epistle with greetings and blessings.

### **Questions:**

1. In these Epistles who are the other co-writers mentioned by St. Paul?
2. Who was the mediator between the Thessalonians' church and the Apostle?
3. St. Paul wrote the first epistle, soon followed by the second one. Why?

**EPISTLES TO TIMOTHY**

Objective: To stand steadfast in the holy and true beliefs and practices of the church

Timothy was born in Lystra (in modern Turkey) as the son of a Greek citizen and a Jewish Christian woman. In his first Missionary journey, St. Paul converted many Jews and Gentiles into Christianity including the whole family of Timothy. His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois were firm believers, a fact stated by the Apostle (2 Timothy 1:5). St. Paul describes Timothy as 'My true son in the faith' (1 Timothy 1: 2), 'Man of God' (1 Timothy 6:11), 'My dear son' (2 Timothy 1: 2), and 'My own dear and faithful son in the Christian life (1 Corinthians 4:17). When he was entrusted with church responsibilities, he was very young (1 Timothy 4:12) and in poor health (1 Timothy 5:23) but St. Paul had the full confidence that he was capable of leading the believers in the church.

Timothy was with St. Paul for a long time helping him in his ministry. He served his teacher faithfully during good times and during difficult times too. He was imprisoned along with St. Paul in Rome and after his release, continued to stay with him as a good disciple and helper. As an Episcopa, he led the believers in Ephesus for a long time and established many regulations in the church as instructed by St. Paul. He became a martyr when the Roman Emperor Domitian persecuted the Christians in Rome.

These epistles are considered to be the first pastoral letters in Christian church history, written by a church Dignitary to his subordinates explaining the articles of faith in the church. In this context, these letters are of great significance.

The two epistles to Timothy and the one to Titus are known as the pastoral writings. Thomas Aquinas who lived in 13th Century called these as "Pastoral letters" and all the theological scholars accepted the name in the later years. These three epistles were interrelated and were written to the two episcopos of the ancient churches, giving guidance and encouragement. So these epistles are really pastoral letters.



In the first epistle there is warning against false teaching in the church and the necessity to keep the people of Ephesus in the true faith. St. Paul makes it clear that Jesus Christ came to this world to save the sinners and that he is the only mediator between man and God. This belief is more important than the laws. (1 Tim.2: 5). Later he gives detailed guidance about the basic qualification and qualities we should look for in Bishops and priests. (1 Tim. 3:1)

In the second epistle he states the synopsis of all his teachings in one sentence, Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David as preached in my Gospel, the Gospel for I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. (2 Tim. 2:9.10)

While writing these, the Apostle was aware of his last days and courageously confirms his faith as he writes, 2 Tim. 4: 6 to 8 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.

Towards the end of the epistle, apart from the usual greetings St. Paul requests Timothy to come and stay with him during his final days in the world. The first Epistle was written in AD 64 from Macedonia and the second in AD 65 from Rome.

### **Questions:**

1. What are the adjectives used by St. Paul to describe Timothy?
2. Who was the ruler when Timothy became a Martyr?
3. Who named the epistles to Timothy and Titus as pastoral letters?
4. The second epistle to Timothy is the last of St. Paul's epistles. What is the proof for this as found in the epistle?

## EPISTLE TO TITUS

Objective: To learn about the general principles to keep the purity of family life.

Titus, who is well known through the Acts of Apostles and the epistles of St. Paul, was a Greek citizen. He accompanied St. Paul while he toured Corinth. He collected money from the Macedonian churches for the poor Christians in Judea (2 Corinthians 8:4-5). When they returned to Rome, Titus went to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10). It is believed that Titus was appointed as the Episcopa of Crete and continued there until his death. Titus was sent to Crete to regularize the matters that St. Paul could not complete during his visit, and to appoint elders in different towns where the faithful required their services. The Apostle salutes him as 'my brother' and 'my true son in the common faith' (Titus 1: 4). Titus was zealous in the matter of preaching the Gospel (2 Corinthians 8:17-18).

The epistle to Titus is one of the pastoral letters. The kind of character and qualities necessary for church leaders is elaborated in this epistle. There were quite a number of Jewish settlers in Crete and many of them had become Christians. The Apostle advises Titus on how to teach the various groups in the church, namely the older men, the older women (who are, in turn, to teach the younger women), the young men and the slaves.

The Apostle also instructs Titus to be cautious in his dealings with people of Crete as majority of the Christians were from the Jews and he himself was a Gentile, and to be gentle, kind, lovable, friendly and righteous. Titus should set an example for the faithful and not give any occasion for criticism. This epistle was probably written from Macedonia in AD 64.

### Questions:

1. What were the intentions of the Apostle when he wrote the epistle to Titus?
2. Besides being the Episcopa of Crete, what were the other activities of Titus?

## LESSON 21

### EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

Objective: To understand how to deal with a co-believer.

The Epistle was written from the prison in Rome during AD 62. Actually this is a personal letter of the Apostle to Philemon and is the smallest of the epistles. Though there are no theological or moral thoughts in this, since the Apostle wrote it, it is included in the Bible. Philemon was a Colossian who became a believer because of St. Paul and rose to the position of Episcopa of Colossia. It is believed that later he became a martyr. St. Paul considers him as a friend and co-worker (Philemon1: 1) and calls himself an ambassador of Christ and a prisoner for his sake (Philemon1: 9). Philemon was a young man when St. Paul converted him to Christianity.

A slave of Philemon, called Onesimus had run away from his master. He came into contact with St. Paul in prison and became a Christian. Paul's letter to Philemon is an appeal to Philemon to reconcile with his slave, whom Paul is sending back to him, and to welcome him not only as a forgiven slave but also as a Christian brother.

#### Questions:

1. What is the main content of this epistle?
2. What are the adjectives used by the apostle to describe Philemon?
3. Who is Onesimus?

## EPISTLE TO HEBREWS

Objective: To learn about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the High Priest, the result and what each Christian should do.

The epistle to the Hebrews is different in many aspects from the other epistles in the New Testament. There is no mention of the name of the writer or the congregation to which it is addressed. The initial greetings are also missing. However, at the end of the epistle, it refers to certain individuals and gives the usual blessings and greetings. Hence many call it a speech, which ends like an epistle.

There are different opinions amongst the theologians about the author of this epistle. However, the Syrian Christian tradition is to believe that St. Paul wrote this epistle during AD 63 from Rome. It is difficult to say to whom this epistle was written. In the Bible names such as Israelites, Jews and Hebrews mean the same group of people. It is believed that this epistle is meant for the Christians who were converted from the Jews. Many references to and ideas from the Old Testament, and describing Jesus as greater than messengers and Moses, and emphasizing the uniqueness of the Ministry of Jesus prove this argument.

The epistle was not meant for all the Jewish Christians settled in various parts of the world but to a certain congregation whose name is not mentioned any where in the epistle. They have not seen Jesus Christ in person but had heard about him and his teachings (5:12). They also faced persecution after their conversion (10:32). However, none of them were martyrs for their faith (12:4) and with passage of time their faith decreased (6:5).

In the beginning of the epistle there is a comparison between Jesus Christ and those prophets in the Old Testament to whom God had revealed himself. Some people considered Moses more important than Jesus since God revealed himself to Moses at Mount Sinai. The writer refutes this contention and projects Moses as a servant of God and stresses that Jesus is the Son of God who has inherited all rights and powers of the Almighty (3:1-6). Besides Moses, God had anointed Aaron as High Priest. To those who argued that the High Priest was authorized to conduct sacrifice for the sinners, the composer writes that

Jesus himself is the High Priest anointed by God, and he sacrificed himself knowing all the weaknesses in the human beings (4:11 – 5:10).

In the second part, the author proves that Jesus sacrificed himself, died, was resurrected and became High Priest. Jesus is the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, the King of Salem and as such is greater than Aaron. Abraham respected Melchizedek and gave him tithe. (7:1-10). Jesus was made a priest, not by human rules and regulations but through the power of the Eternal life. The priest of Old testaments had to repeat the sacrifices several times but Christ offered himself once and that is effective forever (10:11-12) and is complete in all respects (10:18).

“To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see”(11:1). With the above definition of faith, the author utilizes the rest of the chapter to stress on faith in spiritual life. Pointing out the Old Testament saints he writes, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” Heb 12:1. So let us also say with courage, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”(13:6)

In the end the composer writes about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and what a Christian should do. He gives advice as to how to be steadfast in faith. He praises their earlier faith and talks about the punishment for those who ignore. He continues to write about the godly love which shines in the midst of difficulties, how to fight against sin and about the eternal life and happiness which awaits the faithful ones (13:1-25).

### **Questions:**

1. What are the major differences between the epistle to Hebrews and other Epistles?
2. Jesus is greater than many prophets mentioned in the Old Testament. Who are those prophets?
3. What is faith?

# ***THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH***

## **LESSON 23**

### **MATHEWS MOR ATHANESIOUS**

***Objective:*** To teach the strenuous efforts made by Mathews Mor Athenasius to preserve the Church in the true faith.

The praiseworthy and well-commemorated personality Mathews was born as the first son of Mathachan, the elder brother of Abraham Malpan of Palakkunnath family of the parish of Maramon diocese in A.D. 1818. When he was eleven, his parents sent him to the Seminary at Kottayam to learn Syriac. Abraham Malpan was a tutor in the Seminary. Seeing his brilliance as a student, Philipose Mor Dianasius of Cheppattu family (Dianasius IV) ordained him as deacon at the age of thirteen. The deacon continued his studies in the Seminary.

The true intention of the C.M.S. Missionaries who were very active in the affairs of the Seminary and who pretended to help the Syrian Church began to be revealed soon. The CMS Missionaries tried to introduce the protestant ideas and practices. They were really trying to introduce protestant ideas into our church the same way the Catholics tried with the help of the Portuguese in the past. As the missionaries found that the old generation of priests who had good memories of the past were resisting this, they began to impose the new concepts and ideas on the young students in the Seminary. The objection raised by the bishop resulted in conflict between the missionaries and himself. As the conflict grew the missionaries were compelled to leave the premises of the Seminary in 1835. As retaliation, the CMS missionaries established a new seminary on the hill where the famous CMS College is situated. Since then the original seminary situated at Kottayam began to be known as the 'Old Seminary'. The supporters of the new preaching and the followers of the CMS missionaries sent their children to the new seminary. Since the tutors in the new seminary had been teaching heresy, the bishop declared that the students of the new seminary would not be ordained as priests or deacons.

Since deacon Mathews and Deacon George Mathan of Puthen Kavil Kizhakkeveetil were found to be exceptionally brilliant in their studies, they were chosen from the students of the new seminary for higher studies. The missionaries sent them to Madras for higher studies at the expense of the

mission. Out of the two deacons sent to Madras for higher studies George Mathan joined the CMS church and became their first priest. He was famous as a good grammarian of Malayalam language. Later he became famous with the name Rev. George Mathan Padri.

When Abraham Malpan understood that the declaration made by the bishop of the Syrian Orthodox Church that those who had completed their studies in the New theological Seminary would not be ordained as priests stood in the way of getting a properly ordained priest to his side, he invented a short cut to get priests ordained from among the supporters of the side. It was a time; delegations and entreaties were sent to H.H. The Patriarch of Antioch to get a properly ordained bishop from there to the Church in Malankara. Abraham Malpan sent Rev. Deacon Mathews without any information about this to the Church. The deacon who was the son of his brother and had deep knowledge in Syriac and English was sent to Mardeen where the Patriarchate of Antioch was situated then. The deacon reached Mardeen in A.D. 1840. The Patriarch at that time was H.H. Moran Mor Elias II. After winning the heart of the Patriarch through his excellent abilities in handling Syriac, his excellent skill in oratory and his humility, the deacon stayed in the palace of the Patriarch for two years. Without seeking the opinion of the Church in Malankara or that of the bishop who had been ruling the Church then, the Patriarch ordained Deacon Mathews as a bishop with the name Athanesius in 1842 and issued the STATHIKON assigning the right to be the ruler of the Church in Malankara. In the STATHIKON it is said, "Our beloved son Father Mathai has peacefully reached us". From this we can presume that the deacon who reached the Patriarch might have misled him by claiming that he was a priest sent by the Church in Malankara to be ordained as bishop and thus got ordained as a bishop. He might have produced some fake documents in support of his argument. That might be the reason for ordaining a person who was only 24 years of age without making proper inquiry about the person. Since there were no bishops in the church in Moosal, the Patriarch appointed him as the bishop of that Church after his ordination. The appointment was temporary and Mathews Mor Athanesius ruled the Church for a few months.

By this time the news of the ordination of the bishop reached Malankara. The complaints from the leaders of the Church in Malankara stating the facts that nobody had elected Deacon Mathews to be ordained as bishop, and had not been ordained as priest because the deacon had already left the path of the true

belief of the Church and hence the matter should be treated seriously compelled the Patriarch to ask the bishop to reach the Palace of the latter to discuss the matter. Realizing the fact that his explanations before the Patriarch would cause his excommunication, the bishop sent a letter to the Patriarch stating that since he had to reach his homeland immediately, he could not reach Mardeen. He left Moosal without any delay. He set out to Malankara and reached Cochin in 1843. Many priests and laymen of the Church had reached there to receive him. From the discussions he made with the people who reached there to receive him at Cochin, he realized that the ideas of reformers had no support of the mass. Perceiving the reality that if he used the THAKSA made by the reformers, the lions share of the believers would denounce him, he took the THAKSA recognized and used in the Syrian Church and offered the Mass in the church in Mattamcherry.

The arrival of the new bishop was a cause for rejoicing for Abraham Malpan. But this joy did not last long. The use of the THAKSA of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Mass offered by the new bishop disappointed the leader of the reformers. The advice of the Malpan that "it was better for him to be the bishop of his parish at Maramon only than to be the bishop of the Church in Malankara in which the reformist ideas has no roof was not acceptable to the new bishop". (Among the leading Churches in Malankara, only the church at Maramon, the parish church of the new bishop and the Malpan, had accepted the reformist ideas. That is why the Malpan asked the bishop to be the bishop of the Maraman church only). The decision of the new bishop made the Malpan who was already sick and feeble, sorrowful and disappointed. He died at the age of 49 in 1845.

The arrival of the bishop gave cause for rejoicing to the missionaries who had been waiting eagerly to attack the Syrian Church. By using the influence of the missionaries, Mathews Mor Athanasius managed to win the heart of the British Resident General Kallan. Through the resident general, the bishop secured the recognition of the government of Travancore as the legal ruler of the Syrian Church in Malankara and to this effect an edict was issued by the king in 1852. Diwan Sir C. Madhavarao issued a circular in 1863 ascertaining the clauses in the royal edict.

Thus Mathews Mor Athanasius became the exclusive ruler of the Syrian Church in Malankara till his death. The below stated factors helped him to be the exclusive ruler.



1. The Patriarch of Antioch who is the supreme head of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church had ordained him as bishop and issued the STATHIKON stating that he would be ruler of the Church in Malankara.
2. The favorable edict of the king favoring the bishop.
3. He got immense help from the missionaries and the British Resident.

Though these were the conditions and circumstances, he never denounced the supremacy of Antioch or violated the rites and rituals of the Syrian Church. He strictly asked those who were ordained by him to be subjugated completely to the Throne of Antioch and himself.

In 1869 he ordained Rev. Fr. Thomas, the son of the late Abraham Malpan, bishop in the name Thomas Athanasius and appointed him as his assistant. He transferred his powers as the head of the Church in Malankara and all the physical properties of the Church in Malankara to him by a will. Mathews Mor Athanasius died in 1877 and was buried in the church at Maramon. After his death, Thomas Mor Athanasius became the head of the Church at Malankara.

### **Questions:**

1. What were the factors that helped Mathews Mor Athanasius to rule the Church in Malankara till his death?
2. Why was Abraham Malpan unhappy even after he got the son of his brother ordained as bishop?

### **MENTION THE NAME**

- a) Who ordained Mathew MOR Athanasius?
- b) Who was the bishop who ruled the Church in Malankara when the new bishop arrived in Malankara?
- c) Which was the first diocese ruled by Mathews Mor Athanasius?
- d) Who was ordained as his heir?

**BISHOP YUAKKEEM MOR KOORIOSE**

*Objective:* To help the students to understand the place of Yuakkeem Mor Koorilose in the history of the Church in Malankara.

Bishop Philipose Mor Dianasius officially informed H.H. the Patriarch of Antioch the fact that bishop Mathews Mor Athanasius who was ordained at Mardeen was not a person eligible to become a priest in the Church in Malankara as he had turned to be a follower of the Protestant beliefs by denouncing the true faith of the Church. In order to inquire into the allegations leveled against the bishop in detail and to inspect the authenticity of the complaints that reached the Patriarchate against Mathews Mor Athanasius, H.H. Elias II, the Patriarch of Antioch sent Yuakkim Mor Koorilose as his delegate to Malankara with the KALPANA to excommunicate the bishop from the position of being a bishop of the Church, if the averments were proved to be right. He reached Malankara in 1864. The laymen of the Church who were confused at the arrival of Mathews Mor Athanasius from Antioch (Mardeen) welcomed the delegate of the Patriarch with enthusiasm. For the safety and protection of the Church bishop Dianasius IV handed over his administrative rights and powers to the delegate. From the enquiry made by Yuakkim Mor Koorilose, he realized the reality that the averments against Mathews Mor Athanasius were true and also realized that he reached Mardeen as a nominee to be ordained as bishop through illicit ways. But the royal support, and privileges granted were favorable to Mathews Mor Athanasius. In order to find out whether Mor Dianasius IV or Mor Athanasius was to be given control of the Church properties a PANCHAYATH was convened in accordance with the recommendations of the British resident. There were four members in the PANCHAYATH consisting of two Europeans and two local delegates. The PANCHAYATH unanimously decreed that since Mathews Mor Athanasius was ordained by the Patriarch of Antioch, he was to control the properties .

When the Patriarch of the time H.H. Yakkub II came to know the circumstances prevailing and the decision of the panchayath, the Patriarch sent Bishop Stephanos Mor Athanasius to Malankara. Though he reached Malankara without any delay, he could not do anything there because Yuakkim Mor Koorilose and Stephanos Mor Athanasios and were prohibited by the government from entering and working in the states of Cochin and Travancore

as a result of the influence and instructions of the British resident. So both of them stayed in the church in Fort Cochin, which was not under the domain of the two local Rajas but was under the British domain. After some time, Stephanos Mor Athanasius reached England. He met and spoke to the officials of the East India Company in London, and conveyed to them the real situation existing in the Church in Malankara. As a result Bishop Yuakkim Mor Koorilose was given freedom to enter and work in the states of Travancore and Cochin. He was allowed to enter into the Syrian churches and travel freely in those states. Since the royal edict permitted Mathews Mor Athanasius to be the custodian of the properties of the Church, they were under his control.

As a net result of the keen interest shown by Mor Koorilose, Rev. Fr. Joseph of Pulikkottil family was sent before H.H. the Patriarch with reccomendation showing him as having been duly elected to be ordained as a bishop for the Church in Malankara. In accordance with the recommendations and requests made by the Church, the Patriarch ordained him bishop in the name Dianasius V.

It was Yuakkim Mor Koorilose who ordained Rev. Dn. Ghee Varghese Chathuruthil (who later became famous as the bishop of Parumala) as full deacon, priest (Kaseeso) and COREPISCOPA.

Yuakkim Mor Koorilose was taken to eternal rest in the Lord on 2nd September 1874. At St Thomas Church in Mulamthuruthy, he is entombed in a specially built chamber near the Sanctum Sanctorum (MADBAHA) of the Church. In the inscriptions written on his tomb, it is seen that he was sent to Malankara as the REESH BISHOP OF INDIA.

### **Questions:**

1. Why did bishop Yuakkim Mor Koorilose come to the Church in Malankara?
2. To which position did Mor Koorilose come to India?
3. Where is Mor Koorilose entombed?

## MOR DIANASIUS THE FIFTH

Objective: To understand the services rendered by Dianasius V to the Church in Malankara.

Mor Dianasius V or Joseph Mor Dianasius of the Pulikkottil family was one of the most prominent rulers of the Church in Malankara. Joseph Mor Dianasius (Ittoop) who put up the old Seminary was a member of this family.

With the support of the royal edict (proclamation), Mathews Mor Athanasius ruled the Church in Malankara as the chief bishop. It is already mentioned that since the supreme head of the Syrian Orthodox Church ordained the bishop, the Panchayath committee also took decisions in favor of him. During this time it came to the generally accepted in the church that if a person with administrative capability and firm faith in the tradition of our church could be ordained by H.H. Patriarch, it would be possible to contain the damage done by Mor Athanasius. They took a unanimous decision accordingly. They found that Fr. Joseph Pulikkottil, the secretary of Yooakkim Mor Koorilose, was young and enthusiastic as well as energetic. His election also was unanimous. Fr. Joseph reached Diarbekker, where the Patriarchate was located at that time. He reached there with the letter of recommendation from Mor Coorilose. Mor Yakkoob II, the Patriarch of the time ordained the priest as bishop with the title name Mor Dianasius. The ordination took place in 1865. Though the newly ordained bishop reached the Church in Malankara soon, the reins of the Church rested in the hands of Mor Athanasius. In the next chapter we will discuss the arrival of H.H. Pathrose III, the Patriarch in Malankara in accordance with the plea and requests of Dianasius V and the things that were accomplished.

The six bishops ordained by the Patriarch during his stay in Malankara were administratively by under the dominion of Dianasius V, the Malankara Metropolita. Ghee Varghese Mor Gregorious of Chathuruthil family was one among the six bishops ordained by the Patriarch. He was a strong supporter and a true helper to the Bishop Mor Dianasius V.

The Royal Court of Cochin issued its decree in favor of the bishop Mor Dianasius V, in the Seminary case and in the case of the church at Arthat in quick succession. After the successful completion of these cases, the bishop

concentrated his attention on the administrative aspects of the Church. During this period, he established the M.D. Seminary high school at Kottayam, and a seminary at Parumala. He also established a church in Trivandrum during this period. Mr. E.M. Philip of Edavazhikkal family, the famous historian of the Church in Malankara and a leading personality of the time was an intimate friend and advisor of the bishop.

The bishop assisted in the ordination ceremonies at Kottayam of Fr. Alvaris, the priest of Roman Catholic Church who joined Syrian Orthodox Church at Kottayam, and at Colombo of Fr. Rene Vilathi. The Church in Malankara held a grand celebration of the golden jubilee of the ordination of the Bishop in 1901.

Moran Mor Ignatius Abdulla the Patriarch of Antioch ordained Paulose Ramban of Kochuparambil family in the ordination name Mor Koorilose and Varghese Ramban of Vattasseril family in the ordination name Mor Dianasius as Metropolitan of Malankara Church on 31st May 1908 at Jerusalem. The newly ordained bishops reached the Malankara soon after the ordination. After a few months of their arrival, Mor Dianasius V passed away on 11th July 1909 at the age of 76 and is entombed in the Old Seminary.

**Questions:**

1. Which are the public institutions established by Dianasius V?
2. Who ordained Rev. Fr. Joseph Pulikkottil as bishop Dianasius V and at which place?
3. How many other bishops were ordained for the Malankara Church during the period of Dianasius V and who were they?

**PATRIARCH H. H. MORAN MAR IGNATIUS PETER – III**

*Objective:* To learn about the memorable services rendered by H.H.the Patriarch Ignatius Peter III to make Malankara church a strong and steadfast one.

H.H. Patriarch Ignatius Peter III of blessed memory was on the throne of Antioch for 22 years from AD 1872 to 1894. The details of his mission in Malankara during the most troublesome period in the Church history and his efforts to sustain the church are to be recorded in golden letters. H.G.Mathews Mar Athanasius, after being consecrated by H.H. Patriarch Ignatius Elias-II took over the church administration on the strength of the royal proclamations. His grace Dionysus-IV who administered the church before the arrival of H.G.Mathews Mar Athanasius and H.G Euachim could not succeed in their mission. Even H.G.Stephen Mar Athanasius, who was sent by H.H. the Patriarch, had to leave the country in a short time. Though H.G.Joseph Mar Dionysus-V returned to Malankara duly consecrated by H.H the Patriarch, his attempts to get recognition as Malankara metropolitan was also not successful owing to the influence of Mar Athanasius. The condition had come to such a pitch that The Diwan could not render justice without the permission of the British Resident and the court could do nothing because of the royal proclamations. Because of the above circumstances H.G. Dionysus-V approached the Patriarch of Antioch Moran Mar Ignatius Peter-III for help.

The Patriarch who was consecrated just 2 years earlier decided to do all that is possible for the sustenance of the Malankara church. H.H. went directly to London in 1874 and met the secretary of state for Indian affairs and explained all that is being done by the British Resident and the C.M.S. missionaries against the church and its present condition. The Patriarch went to see her majesty the Queen Victoria and explained to her the difficulties faced by the church due to the unjust interference of the British Resident. H.H was able to get the help of the queen, even against the objections raised by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Patriarch returned from London to Madras with a recommendation letter to the Governor of Madras and from there he traveled to Malankara. Consequently, the royal court proclamation issued in favor of H.G. Mathews Mar Athanasius became invalid and a new proclamation was issued on the 4th March 1876. It was clearly stated in the above proclamation that Travancore

government has no authority either to appoint or to dismiss any Metropolitan of the Syrian church, and if any disputes arise, it should be decided by a court of law. Thus with this proclamation, the Patriarch fulfilled his first mission regarding the Malankara church.

After reinstating the authority of the Patriarch over the Malankara church, H.H. took strong steps to consolidate the church administration in a democratic setup. A synod was convened at Mulanthurithy in July 1876, with the representations of all the Syrian churches (parishes). The details of the said synod are mentioned in the next lesson.

In the same year the Patriarch also conducted the Mooron Koodasa at Mulanthurithy. H.H. felt that the spiritual needs of the Christian community, which exceeded 3 lakhs, now scattered in Travancore and Cochin states cannot be served by a single Metropolitan, especially at a time when traveling facilities were inadequate. Accordingly the Patriarch established 7 Dioceses including Kottayam, the seat of Malankara Metropolitan, 3 to the north of Kottayam and 3 to the south of Kottayam. The Dioceses are Angamaly, Cochin and Kandanad on the north and Quilon, Niranam and Thumpamon on the south. H.H. the Patriarch also consecrated 6 more Metropolitans for these Dioceses.

The following were the new dioceses and the Metropolitans in charge.

- 1) Angamaly -H.G.Gheeverghese Mar Koorilose, Ambattu
- 2) Kochi -H.G.Simon Mar Dionysus, Karottu Veetil
- 3) Kandanadu -H.G.Paulose Mar Ivanios, Murimattom
- 4) Quilon -H.G.Paulose Mar Athanasius, Kadavil
- 5) Niranam -H.G.Gheeverghese Mar Gregorios, Chathuruthil
- 6) Thumbamon - H.G.Gheevarghese Mar Julius, Konattu

The administration of the Kottayam Diocese was given to the Malankara Metropolitan H.G. Joseph Mar Dionysus. Later considering the heavy schedule of the Malankara Metropolitan, the Patriarch gave the administration of Kottayam Diocese to H.G. Paulose-Mar Athanasius of Kadavil and that of Quilon to H.G. Joseph Mar Dionysus of Pulikkottil.

The Malankara Association was formed giving representations to all churches in Malankara and managing committee was constituted with 24 members (8 priests and 16 laymen). It was the firm determination of the Patriarch to save the church from the reformist movements and the Malankara church will always remember H.H for this. After organizing the church matters, H.H returned to the Holy throne in 1877.

**Questions:**

1. What were the actions taken by the H.H. the Patriarch before his arrival in Malankara to make his mission successful?
2. What was the first action that was sanctioned by the H.H. the Patriarch?
3. Write a short note on the achievements of H.H. Ignatius Peter III then Patriarch during his visit to Malankara.

**LESSON 27**

**THE MULAMTHURITHY SYNOD (1876)**

**Objective:** To learn how the church became strong and established as per the plan of the Holy Spirit.

H.H the Patriarch Peter-III of Antioch, while he was in Malankara, sent notice and convened a meeting of the representatives of the church at Mulanthurithy Marthoman church to take appropriate decisions regarding the spiritual and administrative matters of the Malankara church. This was a very important event in the modern history of the church and is known as the Mulanthurithy Synod. The Synod was conducted on 15, 16, and 17 of Mithunam 1501 M.E. (AD 1876). H.H. the Patriarch presided over the meetings. H.G. Joseph Mar Dionysus Metropolitan, H.G. Abdullah Mar Gregorios Metropolitan (who came with the Patriarch), 130 priests and 144 laymen representing 103 churches, were the other participants of the synod. The Mulanthurithy synod took place before the division of the Malankara church into seven dioceses. Rev. Gheevarghese Ramban, Chaturuthil (later known as Parumala Thirumeni), who was the secretary of the Patriarch while the Holy Father was in Malankara, was the chief organizer of the synod. As the synod was convened in a very peaceful and cordial atmosphere, it was possible to take very important and far reaching decisions regarding the church administration.



The following are the important decisions taken at the Synod.

1. The members of the Malankara Church should stand together under the Throne of Antioch accepting the approved faith and creed. (As per this all persons who disobey ancient faith and creed – will not have any place in the church as a member. In the light of this declaration reformists are no more members of the church)
2. It was decided to print the CANON law of the church and send them to all churches.
3. Every Parish (priest) should maintain separate registers for the baptism, marriage, burial etc. conducted by them in the church.
4. A special fund should be constituted and maintained for the common needs of the church.
5. It was decided to elect a committee of priests as well as laymen under the chairmanship of the Metropolitan. Thus a committee for democratic administrative setup was established.

It was also decided that all the decisions taken by the synod, be written and submitted to the Patriarch, duly signed and registered by the members present and that a copy should be kept in the office of the Malankara Metropolitan. Accordingly a consent letter recording all the above decisions in detail was submitted to H.H the Patriarch. This is known as 'THE MULAMTHURUTHY PADIYOLA'.

**Questions:**

1. When was the Mulanthurithy Synod convened?
2. Who presided over the Synod?
3. Who were the participants in the synod.
4. What is meant by 'Mulanthurithy padiyola'?

## THE SEMINARY CASE

Objective: The head of the church should manage the common property of the church.

Though the arrival and stay of H.H. Peter III the Patriarch and the decisions of the synod at Mulamthuruthy helped the Church to acquire unity and become a mighty unit, the common properties of the Church continued to be vested in the hands of Thomas Mor Athanasius, the bishop ordained by Mathews Mor Athanasius, as his legal heir. The royal declaration in 1876 made it a requirement for the Church to procure a favorable decree from civil court to get back the properties of the church.

For and on behalf of the Syrian Church, Mor Dianasius V filed a suit against Thomas Mor Athanasius in the Civil Court at Alleppy in 1879 to get back the property of the church. (There were no civil courts at Kottayam where the headquarters of the Church had been located). The important items in the properties of the Church included the old seminary and the properties attached to it. So the suit came to be known as the seminary case.

Mathews Mor Athanasius got the right to manage the properties of the entire church through the decisions of the Panchayath committee because he was ordained bishop by the supreme head of the Syrian Church and had given his STATHIKKON to the Patriarch. Now these two qualifications were exclusively possessed by Mor Dianasius V the plaintiff. Mor Dianasius V got favorable decrees from the Civil Court at Allepey. He was able to secure favorable decrees in the appeals given by the defendant in the high court and finally at the royal court. Thus the entire property of the Syrian Church came under the management of Mor Dianasius V. He got the eligibility to get the interest of the VATTIPANAM. Moreover Mor Dianasius V was able to get the control of the all important Churches in Malankara except the church at Maramon which was the parish of Thomas Mor Athanasius.

The synod at Mulamthuruthy paved the way for the ousting of the reformers from the Church. After the decisive failure in the Seminary case, only two ways were left in front of them. They were either to give up the tradition of the Oriental Churches and merge in the C.M.S. Church or to establish a new church without leaving the tradition of the Oriental churches and the reformative ideas.

The reformers chose the second way. The supporters of Thomas Mor Athanasius joined together to form a new church which came to be known as the “Marthoma Syrian Church”.

**Questions:**

1. Who were the plaintiff and the defendant in the seminary case?
2. Why did the case regarding the property of the Syrian Church come to be known as the seminary case?
3. Who succeeded in the seminary case? What was the verdict?
4. What was the far-reaching consequence of the decree in the seminary case?

***THE TRUE FAITH OF THE HOLY CHURCH***

**LESSON 29**

**THE HOLY SACRAMENTS I**

To save the human race, God has set apart certain invisible rites. The Holy Sacraments are the visible form of these invisible blessings. Sacraments are also called ‘secrets’. Sacrament means ‘that which purifies’.

The sacraments confer benefits only when carried out by the ordained priests in the proper way as prescribed by the Holy church. There are seven Sacraments in the Holy church. Our Lord Jesus established all these. All the sacraments were either installed or initiated by our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ asked the Apostles to carry out Baptism. (John 4:1-2, Matthew 28:19). He established the Holy Qurbana and asked the disciples to continue the tradition (Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23). The Lord gave the Apostles the right to forgive sins (John 20:23) (Holy Confession). He appointed them as his Ambassadors (John 20, 21, 22) (Priesthood). When they were sent to spread the gospel, the Apostles used the holy ointment to cure the sick. The Apostles used Holy Mooron as a symbol of the blessing by the Holy Spirit. Marriage is a sacrament established by God.

There are four components in the sacraments, namely the celebrant, the sacramental items, the Holy Liturgy and the recipient. The person authorized

to carry out the sacrament is the celebrant. The celebrant can be a priest or a bishop. Only properly and canonically ordained clergy are authorized to conduct the Holy sacraments. God is the actual celebrant and the priests act as his ambassadors (1Cori. 4:1)

Sacramental articles are the items used for the sacrament. For the baptism water, saith oil and Mooron are used. For the Holy Qurbana, sour wheat bread (Ammera) and lightly diluted wine are the articles. For the Mooron Koodasha saith oil and varieties of perfumes are used. When the priest does the anointing, Mooron is used. When sick people are anointed, purified saith is used. No articles are used in confession. In the sacrament of marriage, the ring and the chain can be considered as the articles.

To carry out the sacraments, the church has arranged special prayers and rituals. This is known as liturgy. There are specific liturgies for each sacrament. The one for the Holy Qurbana is known as the Qurbana Taksas (Anaphora). Different Taksas are known by the name of the holy fathers who assembled and codified it.

### **Examples**

1-Taksas of St. James

2-Taksas of Dionysus Mor Sleeti

3-Taksas of Iwanios of the golden tongue.'

The Church has many Taksas and they are considered as precious and invaluable assets, especially the Taksas of St. James. The Taksas of St. James is the most ancient and the most beautiful and is a model for other Taksas.

The faithful who receives the sacraments with full physical and mental preparation and devotion is the recipient. The faithful, who receives the sacraments, get divine grace. It is God who gives the heavenly grace, not the human celebrant. It is the wish of God that through a human celebrant the sacraments are completed. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1Corinthians 4:1). The celebrant who is the priest is a servant of Jesus Christ and is appointed as keeper of God's secrets. We, the recipients receive the grace not because of our greatness or superiority, but because of His mercy.

The incarnation of Jesus Christ, his crucifixion, resurrection and his continued mediation for humanity has enabled the believers to receive these abundant blessings. When the faithful receive the sacraments, God is not bound to bless him with his grace, but he becomes eligible for the grace through his belief in Jesus Christ. Thus with each sacrament we receive the good blessings which are divine and not confined to any earthly dimensions.

Whether or not the recipient believes it, the sacraments give blessings, the attitude of the recipient does not alter the blessings conveyed through the sacraments. But the recipient should have faith and do the necessary preparations to receive the blessings. Disbelief, poor mental and physical preparations are hindrances to receive the blessings and these prevent him from the contact with God who gives the blessings.

The personal purity and qualifications of the priest does not affect the quality of the sacraments as long as the priest is not disqualified by the Metropolitan or Synod. His personal life will not affect the result of the sacraments. Since a priest is "rightly ordained" the sacraments are done in the name of Jesus Christ, and since the result of the sacrament does not depend on the personality of the priest, the one who participates in it with good intentions and true faith will get good result. If the priest has not done it with purity he will get the due punishment from the Lord (Matthew 23:12-17). A disqualified priest is not authorized to do any sacrament and if he does, a true faithful should not participate in it.

With baptism, one is born again, accepts Jesus, and receives Grace. Anointing with Mooron gives them the gift and strength of the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Communion we become one with the blood and body of Christ. Since Christ lives in us and we in Him, we get the gift of eternal life. With priesthood, the authority to carry out the sacraments are vested in the priest. With holy matrimony the consent and blessing to lead a family life based on Christian love is bestowed. Anointing the sick helps in recovery, forgiveness of sins and mental strength. Confession gives forgiveness of sins and the ability to resist sins.

### **Questions:**

1. What is the meaning of sacrament? How many sacraments are there in the church? What are they?
2. Prove that the sacraments of the church were either established by Jesus Christ or entrusted to the Apostles by Him.
3. What are the four components of the sacraments? Explain them.
4. Qualifications of the priest or the attitude of the recipient does not alter the result of the sacrament. Why?
- 5) What are the blessings received due to the different sacraments?

### **LESSON 30**

## **THE HOLY SACRAMENTS II**

The Holy Qurbana is the sacrament which gives completeness to all other sacraments. So the Holy Qurbana is called 'The Queen of all Sacraments'. Through the Holy Qurbana we not only receive the grace, but also Jesus Christ, who gives us all the blessings.

The invisible and powerful presence of God is felt in all the sacraments. Different sacraments have different purposes. For salvation one has to take five essential sacraments. They are (1) Holy Baptism (2) Holy Qurbana (3) Holy Mooron (4) Holy Confession and (5) Anointing of the Sick. The sacrament of priesthood is only for those who dedicate themselves for it and have been called (selected by our lord) for it. The sacrament of matrimony is only for those who wish to have a family life. For a man and woman to live together without getting married is sin. Each of the sacraments other than Baptism is meant for believers only.

Baptism, Holy Mooron and priesthood are taken only once in a lifetime and cannot be repeated. They put the permanent mark of spiritual blessing on the person taking it. It can never be erased. In the Nicene Creed we say, "One baptism for the remission of sins". If a person who has received baptism and Holy Mooron breaks away from the church and later decides to come back, baptism is not repeated. He should repent and confess, and then with the permission of the Bishop is accepted back in-to the church. Likewise if a person

who is baptized in another church with the right apostolic ordination wants to join our church, he will have to denounce his heretic life, accept the true faith, and be anointed with Mooron. He will have to do the confession and take the Holy Communion. He does not have to be baptized again. But a person baptized earlier by un-ordained persons is equal to a nonbeliever. So he will have to be baptized, anointed with Mooron, do confession and receive Qurbana. Then only he can become a member of the church.

Sacraments are divided into two types: one 'for the living', and other 'for the dead'. Here death does not refer to the physical death but to spiritual death. Any person born of human parents is born with sin and is dead spiritually at birth. When baptized, he is born again in Spirit and is filled with new life. Such a person can fall into sin in earthly life. When he commits sins he dies spiritually. He can regain his spiritual life again by repenting and confessing his sins and then receiving the Holy Qurbana. So the sacraments that give life to the spiritually dead are called 'sacraments for the dead'. They are baptism and confession.

The other five sacraments namely the Holy Mooron, the Holy Qurbana, the priesthood, the marriage and the anointing of the sick are to give everlasting blessings abundantly to those who are born again in Christ. So the above five sacraments are called 'sacraments of the living'. To have a steady relationship with Jesus Christ, one must receive Qurbana again and again. Also to lead a pure life, confession has to be repeated. Sick can be anointed repeatedly if needed. If husband or wife dies, the remaining person can have the sacrament of marriage again.

The sacraments can also be divided into two other forms: 'Recipient Sacraments' and 'Dedication Sacraments'. All the seven sacraments are recipient sacraments. There has to be a recipient for these. Mooron Koodasha and priesthood are dedication sacraments also. Dedication sacraments are done only by the Patriarch or the Metropolitan. When the Mooron is anointed on somebody that becomes a recipient sacrament. When the Mooron is made it is a 'Dedication Sacrament'. When the Metropolitan ordains a priest it is a recipient sacrament as the person who is receiving the priesthood is the recipient and it is a dedication sacrament because the priest gets the permanent blessed authority to conduct the sacraments.

Apart from these, the sacraments done only by a bishop like the consecration of a church, the tabalitha (alter) koodasha, blessing of the saith for baptism and anointing the sick are dedication sacraments.

A sacrament will not give grace just because the proper liturgy was followed. There are conditions to be fulfilled to make it blessed. If the conditions are not met, a person receiving the sacraments will not be blessed and the sacraments will make no difference to his spiritual life.

The conditions are as follows:

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ must have established the sacrament.
2. The correct objects and the liturgy established by the church should be followed.
3. Except baptism all the other sacraments are allowed only for the members of the church.
4. The celebrant should have the proper apostolic ordination.

**Questions:**

1. How many sacraments should one take for salvation? Which are they?
2. Which are the sacraments for the dead and which are the ones for the living? Why are they called so?
3. Which are the sacraments to be taken once only and why? Which are the ones to be taken repeatedly and why?
4. Which are the recipient sacraments and which are the dedication sacraments? What is the special feature of the dedication sacrament?
5. What are the conditions to be fulfilled so that a sacrament gives grace?



## THE HOLY CHURCH

The spiritual body of people who believe in Jesus and who were baptized and gained the new life thereby and are growing in the Holy Spirit is called the holy church. This is a spiritual house of the Divine Lord with Christ as the Cornerstone and the Apostles and prophets as its foundation.

Living cornerstone (1 Peter 2:4) foundation (Ephesians 2:20), “you also, like living stones, are built into a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5, Ephesians 2:21). Those who died with faith and hope in Christ are also included in the church. Though the earthly body is not there, they continue to live in Christ (Philippians 1: 23; 2 Corinthians 5:8) Luke 20:38 ‘For he is not the Lord of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him’. From Adam onwards those who were awaiting his arrival and those who believed in redemption are included in the church. It is written in Hebrews 12:1, “Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses”. The faithful and righteous described in Hebrews chapter 11 are these witnesses. They are alive in Christ and are around us. “In his spiritual existence he went and preached to the imprisoned Spirits” (1 Peter 3: 19). “That is why the Good News was preached also to the dead” (1 Peter 4:6). So we have to accept the biblical truth that Christ himself preached the Good News about hope and salvation to those who died before Him and gave them an opportunity to repent and they have become part of the church and are in contact with us through Jesus Christ.

So the church of Christ consists of the fellowship of the living visible people who are born again in Christ through baptism, and renewed the new life through the holy communion and continue to grow stronger by the grace of the holy sacraments, and who long for the eternal life, by carrying out the mission of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and those of the invisible people who lived in faith, and those who waited for the arrival of Christ since the beginning of the world and departed with hope (John 8:56).

The holy church can be divided into Old Testament church and New Testament church. The church in Israel, which followed the laws of Moses, was the shadow of the real Christian church. The limited aim of the Old Testament church was completed with the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the Old Testament church was to make the ground ready for

incarnation of our Lord for the salvation of all human kind. All the prophecies about incarnation were given to the Old Testament church. With the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the divine relationship of man with God, which was lost due to man's sins, was regained. The New Testament church, which includes all the generations from Adam, was thus established. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets were in effect up to the time of John the Baptist"(Luke 16:16).

When Christ was crucified, the laws were fulfilled. His sacrifice was for the remission of sins of all the generations of people. Till the end of the world we should participate in this sacrifice and seek the remission of our sins. With the sacrament of the Holy Qurbana, according to the law of Jesus, His life giving blood and body is divided and given to people. Worship is carried out in the church as described in Revelations chapter 4. Like the angels, members of the church say, "The Lord God is holy holy holy". They continuously sing and praise the Lord saying 'Halleluiah' and kneel down and worship him. The gospel is glorified in the church. The holy sacraments are given to the church members so that they continue to grow in Spirit. So the church is the kingdom of God.

### **Holy Church - The living Spiritual Monument**

"On this rock foundation I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). From these words of Jesus, St. Peter and St. Paul were encouraged to call the church a 'Spiritual monument'. St. Paul teaches that through Jesus Christ the living stone, we also are living stones to build the living Spiritual monument "Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5). This monument is not built with ordinary stones but with each believer being the stones of the monument. We have to become one with Jesus, attain life, become living stones and build the monument. This is possible only when we believe in him and take the holy communion of his blood and body (John 3:36, 6:47, and 6:53-54)

The rock on which Jesus built his church is the true faith, which Apostle Peter proclaimed." "Thou art the Christ; the son of the living God" (Mathew 16:16). This truth was revealed to Simon whom Jesus calls by the name Peter, meaning rock. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jo-na; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). In Ephesians 2:20 St. Paul teaches that church has Jesus as the corner stone and

Apostles and Prophets as the foundation “And is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone”. This monument (church) continues to grow in Jesus. For God to live in us, we are also joined to this church spiritually “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:21, 22). So church is the living spiritual monument where God dwells.

From the above descriptions the facts to remember are:

1. Jesus is the corner stone of the monument called church.
2. Apostles form the foundation.
3. This house continues to grow.
4. This house is one with Jesus.
5. This is the House of our Lord.
6. Spiritual sacrifice that is pleasing to God takes place in this house.

Jesus and Apostles gave the above picturesque description of the church to us to remove any doubts in our minds about the apostolic foundation of the church. Only the church with Jesus as the cornerstone and Apostles as foundation is the true church. When a person, however great he be, gathers a group of people according to his wishes and interpretations, it will not become a church.

Jesus Christ teaches about the church as, “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). We the branches have to join with Jesus the main vine. “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him.” John (15:4-5). If we break away from Jesus we will lose life and will die like the branch that withers if cut off from the main tree. So the church is like a vine plant with Jesus as the main vine and we the branches, drawing life from him.

## **Questions:**

1. What are the definitions of the church?
2. Quote from the bible and prove that the dead faithful are also spiritually one with the church.
3. The church is the kingdom of God. Why?
4. Name the Apostles who described the church as a holy building (monument)? What can be understood from the description?

## **LESSON 32**

### **THE HOLY CHURCH II**

#### **THE HOLY CHURCH-BODY OF JESUS**

Apostle Paul repeatedly teaches in his epistles that the church is “the body of Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 12: 27, Ephesians 1: 23, 3:6, 13, 15 Colossians 1: 18, 24). Christ is the head and church is the body of Christ. Church, the body, fulfills the wish of the head, which is Christ.

The body has different organs. Different organs have different functions. Each part carries out its functions as instructed by the head. All the organs work in coordination. One organ cannot do the function of the other. All the organs together constitute the body. The body is totally submissive to the head. So church, the body should be totally submissive to Christ the head. Like the body having different parts, people in the church have different kinds of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-31). Each one has to work according to the gifts given to him (1 Corinthians 12:27-30) and serves the same Lord (1 Corinthians 12: 5). Under Christ’s control the whole body is nourished (Colossians 2:19). Like the body obeying the head, all the activities in the church should be according to the wishes of Christ.

#### **Holy church - Bride of Jesus**

The happiness that a bride and bridegroom share together cannot be compared to anything else. Fulfillment of life is seen in marriage. In the same way, completeness of church lies in the relationship of Christ as the groom and church as the bride. Christ the groom loves his bride, looks after her, and

gave his life for her (Ephesians 5:29). Bride of the Lamb mentioned in Revelations 19: 7 is the church. The linen she wears is the good deeds of God's people (saints). The groom mentioned in the parable of the ten young women in Matthew chapter 25 is Jesus himself. The Coming of the groom is the second coming of Jesus. Some will be lazy thinking that his coming will be delayed. He will come at an unexpected moment and will feast with his bride, the holy church. The second coming of Jesus will be to take his bride, the church along with him to the heavenly kingdom.

### **Promises and responsibilities given by Christ to the church**

Jesus Christ chose twelve people as apostles from his disciples with special intentions (Mark 3: 14-15; Luke 6:13). He wanted them to be with him, preach the gospel and gave them the authority to drive out demons. The great body living with Jesus and carrying out his mission is the living church. The Apostles who were with Jesus are the beginning of the church fulfilling the Old Testament and starting the New Testament. The promises given to them and the missions entrusted to them are the same as to those given to the Church.

1. He promised them the gift of Holy Spirit (John 15:26, 16:7) Holy Spirit was given to the church when it prayed together with the Apostles (Acts 1: 4, 2:4). "To the intent that now unto the princepalities and Powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10) Through the sacraments, the gift of the Holy Spirit is given through the church.
2. He gave them the hope that He will come again (John 14:18, Acts 1: 11). The church is waiting for his second coming.
3. He promised them that he would be with them till the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). He promised his everlasting presence to the church.
4. Body and blood of Christ that are the symbols of ever lasting life, were entrusted to the church.
5. He gave the authority to baptize in the name of the Trinity and to take care of the growth of the church (Matthew 28:19)
6. Authority to forgive sins was given (John 20:23)

7. The mission for which God the Father sent him, the same mission was handed over to the church (John 20:21). Incarnation took place to deliver humanity from sins and to make them God's children again (Colossians 1:14, Galatians 3:26). Forgiveness of sins and acceptance of the Son are done through the church.
8. They were ordered to witness for Jesus Christ (John 15:27, Acts 1:8).

The main goals of the church are (1) Spread the good news about Jesus to all nations of the world, (2) talk about repentance and forgiveness of sins and (3) become witnesses for Jesus Christ. The Gospel message should be spread and witnessing of Jesus should be done by the way we live. The holy church means each and every member of the church. Christian means one who follows Christ or one who witnesses Christ. It is not the name of a caste. On the other hand, it's a state of existence where one is made new in Jesus Christ and shows it to the whole world by the way he lives.

If the church has all good qualities but has no Gospel work and witnessing, even if it is the true church it will be equivalent to the fig tree, which is healthy but doesn't bear fruit (Matthew 21:18, 19).

**Questions:**

1. The church is compared to the body of Jesus. Why?
2. How does Christ care for his bride?
3. What are the promises and responsibilities given by Christ to the church?
4. What is the main mission of the church?

## THE HOLY CHURCH III

### SIGNS OF THE HOLY CHURCH

We believe in 1) Catholic 2) Apostolic 3) Holy 4) The one church (Nicene Creed). These are the 4 fundamental characteristics of the church of Christ. If any character is missing it is not a true church.

#### 1. Catholic

The adjective 'catholic' for the church was used by H.H. Ignatius Noorono, Patriarch of Antioch (A.D.110). He wrote that, and "wherever there is Messiah, the catholic church is there". He explains that the word 'catholic' denotes the true church, which accepts the authority of the Episcopas and spreads the truth all over the world. The Greek meaning of catholic is 'complete' or 'including everything'. In practical terms it means universal.

The Holy church is catholic. The Catholic Church speaks the whole truth to the whole world. It does not delete or hide anything about incarnation. It does not misinterpret or twist facts that were imparted through the incarnation. It does not add anything of its own. Catholic Church does not belong to any nation, community, society, color, caste or group. Old Testament church was for the Hebrews only. The New Testament church of Christ includes people of all nations. All countries might not have the church in them but that does not make it less catholic. Though on the day of Pentecost, the church was confined to Jerusalem only still it was completely catholic (H.H.Patriarch Aprem I)

Mar Koori lose of Jerusalem writes five points describing catholic. They are (1) It is universal (2) Teaches the whole truth (3) It is for all the races of the world (4) Through the holy sacraments it gives grace and spiritual and physical well being (5) It is the source of goodness and blessings.

'Catholic' is the fundamental nature of the church founded by Christ. For administrative purposes even if the churches are under different visible heads, all the churches are catholic. All those who are excommunicated from the church lose their unity with the church and lose their status of being catholic. Those who alter the faith or become heretic or reject the true faith also lose their nature of being catholic.

The Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) church has so far stood steadfast in the true faith without altering or adulterating it. In good times and bad times our church has stood loyal behind H.H. Patriarch of Antioch, who is the visible head of the church and who is ruling from the throne of Peter. It was at the council of Nicea, our church was entrusted to the care of the throne at Antioch. This council was held with the guidance of Holy Spirit. So the relationship between Antioch and all the East to the throne of Antioch, exemplifies the catholic nature of our church. Those who break away from this relationship lose their catholic nature.

## 2. **Apostolic**

Apostolic inheritance, and proper ordination of priests and the apostolic faith make the word apostolic suitable for the true church.

Jesus had many followers, but he chose twelve Apostles as the builders of the church. It was through the Apostles that the authority for the ordination of priests was given to the church. If we look at the history of our church we can trace the proper ordination to the Apostles. Even if apostolic inheritance and right ordination are there, if the church doesn't follow the apostolic faith, it will not be an apostolic church. In the same way even if apostolic faith is there but proper ordination is lost, that church is not apostolic.

The Syrian Orthodox Jacobite church under the throne of St. Peter in Antioch has carried on the right ordination. It has kept the faith pure, follows and spreads the message, which Jesus Christ gave his Apostles, carries out the sacraments and ordains priests. So our church is apostolic. If anybody breaks away from the throne, which is the apostolic source for ordination, they lose their identity of being apostolic. For apostolic nature to be complete apostolic ordination is necessary. Only apostolic nature can bring heavenly grace.

## 3. **The One**

The Church of Christ is only one. "Because there is the one loaf of bread, all of us, though many, are one body, for we all share the same loaf." (1 Corinthians 10:17)

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as there is one hope to which God has called you. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; there is one God and Father of all people who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)



So the church of Christ is only one. Though known by different names in different countries, the church with one hope and one faith and Christ as the head is the true church.

As agreed at the ecumenical councils, the one church that is spread all over the world was divided under the 4 Patriarchates for administrative purposes. They are Rome, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople. But, with royal influence when some factions tried for full authority and control of the church, divisions occurred. Though names differ, if in tradition and faith if there is unity, it is the same church. The Apostles never had different churches. Jesus Christ is the one and only foundation and no other foundation can be laid as written in 1 Corinthians 3:11. When different factions came up in the name of different Gospel servants we see St. Paul strongly reprimanding them in 1 Corinthians 3:4-7. It is necessary for us to stand by the decisions of the Holy synods (councils) which declared us under the Patriarch of Antioch.

“You must, of course, continue faithful on a firm and sure foundation, and must not allow yourselves to be shaken” (Colossians 1: 23).

With Christ as the head and H.H. Patriarch of Antioch as the visible leader, when you continue in the true faith, facing innumerable tribulations, we receive spiritual gifts from the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church. For reasons like wealth or greed or misunderstanding if anybody breaks away from the church he will become alien to the one true church.

Churches of Antioch, Alexandria, Armenia, Ethiopia and the branch churches, which come under them, follow the same tradition of sacraments and faith.

#### 4. **Holy**

Since the church is the body of Christ, it is holy. Church is the bride of Christ. “He did this to dedicate the church to God by his word, after making it clean by washing it in water, in order to present the church to himself in all its beauty – pure and faultless, without spot or wrinkle or any other imperfection” (Ephesians 5: 26-27) Salvation was achieved through the sinless blood of Christ, and the working of the holy Spirit is in the church, and sacraments are given through the church. Our church is holy.

The church is holy; but that does not mean all the church members are holy. Of the twelve disciples Jesus had, one was greedy and was a traitor. Understand the parable of the field, which is God's kingdom as written in Matthew 13:24-30. Though good seeds were sown, weeds sown by the enemy also grew along. He did not allow the weeds to be pulled out early, as he was scared that some good plants could be pulled out along with the weeds. So he wanted the wheat and the weeds both to grow together until harvest and then the weeds were to be burnt. This does not mean that bad people can be in the church, but conveys the message that on judgment day they will be punished and thrown into the burning eternal fire.

The word 'holy church' urges us to lead a holy life and grow up every way in Christ who is the head (Ephesians 4: 15).

### **Facts to understand**

Being a member of the church and receiving the sacraments will not make anybody eligible for heavenly kingdom. Remember that the weeds also grew along with the wheat plants taking nourishment from the same soil. Pure life, pure thoughts and good deeds should be there. Still leading a pure life alone will not lead anybody to heaven. Nobody is justified by his or her own deeds. A person is put right with God only through faith, not by doing what the Law commands as written in Romans 3:28. The believers should join the church (Acts 2:47). The grace of God is in the church. So a person leading a pure life should be member of the church and should receive the sacraments. Then only he will have eternal life. In other words, a person leading a holy life has to be a church member and should be aware that the sacraments give grace, which is necessary for an eternal life.

### **Questions:**

1. What are the 4 features of the church? Describe each in short paragraphs.
2. Our church is catholic. What was the explanation of Patriarch Mar Aprem I about this?
3. What does the nature apostolic show? Prove that the Syrian Orthodox Jacobite Church is apostolic.

## LESSON 34

### FASTING

In Syriac language, the word 'saum' means fasting. Restricting food intake or not taking food at all, during lent period, one should also live in purity, giving importance to prayer.

God put restrictions on food for Adam (Genesis 2:17). So for spiritual growth, God himself imposed fasting. Great importance is given to fasting in both New and Old Testaments. Moses fasted for 40 days and forty nights (Exodus 34:28) David fasted for his child (2 Samuel 12:16) Prophet Elijah fasted for 40 days (1 Kings 19:8) In the Old Testament there are examples when people were fasting to avert God's wrath and also as penance. We have learnt about the story of people of Nineveh-about the judgment passed on them and how God forgave them when they regretted and fasted. Our Lord fasted for forty days (Matthew 4:2) Jesus taught us that only with fasting and prayer we can overcome Satan (Mathew 17:21). Apostles also used to fast and pray. (Acts 13: 2, 27:10). So Fasting is a practice which Jesus himself followed and entrusted to us. The church has been following it from early days.

The church has decided on five types of fasting. (1) Nineveh lent or the 3 day lent (2) Great lent or the 40 days lent (3) Slehha lent for 3 days (4) Shunoyo lent for 5 days (5) Eldo lent for 10 days.

Nineveh lent is in remembrance of how the people in Nineveh were saved from God's wrath by fasting and penance. When the whale swallowed Prophet Jonah he was fasting and praying for three days inside the whale. Jonah had committed sin by disobeying God's order and running away, but his sins were forgiven by his fasting and prayer. In the same way, the people of Nineveh listened to Jonah, repented for their sins and sitting in ashes fasted and prayed to God. God forgave them. This shows that a sinner is not without hope and God will forgive those who truly regret their sins, fast and pray. This 3 days lent teaches us the greatness of repentance for sins and of fasting.

40 days lent is in remembrance of the incident where our Lord Jesus Christ fasted for 40 days and had victory over Satan. Fasting is the weapon to fight Satan, the tempter. The desire for wealth, good food, power and position, all lead us into sins. We have learnt how our Lord overcame all these

temptations. It is through fasting and prayer that we can overcome these bodily desires and attain purity. As our Lord did, we also gain strength by fasting for forty days. The Passion Week following the forty days is also for fasting. So the forty days of fasting is really completed in 48 days and is commonly known as the fifty days lent.

Sleeha lent is in memory of the Apostles who built the church. It is for three days and is completed on June 29th with celebrations on the feast of Apostles Peter and Paul.

Shunoyo lent is to show respect for St.Mary. It is for five days and is broken on August 15th to coincide with Shunoyo perunnal (Day when St.Mary completed life on earth and was taken into heaven).

Eldo lent is in preparation to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. It is for 10 days. All the five Lents are to be observed with restrictions on food and with prayer and in purity. The foods forbidden during lent period by the church should not be consumed. During 3 days lent, big lent and passion week there are special prayers seven times a day. They are prayers of Penance. These prayers should be said with real repentance. Confession should be done. When the lent is properly observed we will find ourselves stronger in Spirit.

Apart from these, all Wednesdays and Fridays are also days of fasting. But the church has exempted Wednesdays and Fridays which come between resurrection and Pentecost from fasting. Lent is according to the bible and is a rule of the church. One who does not observe lent is committing sin. Excess desire for food and no control over bodily desires are sins. They will make us physically sick also. So lent is meant for the physical and spiritual well being of the church members.

Of the seven rules of the church three are about lent. Following are the rules of the church.

1. Must participate in Holy Qurbana on Sundays and other Maranaya days.
2. All the Lents decided by the church should be observed.
3. Should observe Wednesdays and Fridays as lent days.
4. Confess sins before the priest.

5. Have Holy Communion regularly.
6. During lent and on Sundays married people should refrain from contact.
7. Offerings, risisas and one tenth of income should be given to the church.

**Questions:**

1. Prove that observing lent is biblical.
2. Which are the Lents of the church?( Include Wednesdays and Fridays also.)
3. The Three day lent is that of penance. Why?
4. Forty days lent is for gaining strength and victory. Why?
5. What are the common observances to be followed in lent?
6. What are the seven rules of the church?

**LESSON 35**

**MARANAYA FEASTS-CONTINUATION**

A. Though not directly related to the public ministry of Jesus Christ, the church has decided that the following days should be carried out as equal to maranaya feasts.

**1 Shunoyo- feast of the Mother Mary on August 15.**

The memory of Mother Mary's end of earthly life is Shunoyo feast. Son, who is in essence one with the Father, came down from heaven. He took human form inside her and was born as a baby. Mary who was the humblest of all was raised to the position of God's Mother

When Mother Mary died, the news reached all the Apostles in various parts of the world by the action of the Holy Spirit. They all gathered together in Jerusalem. Jesus Christ came with his angels and carried her body to heaven as witnessed by the holy fathers. Feast of mother Mary starts with the lent for five days. This lent is known as Shunoyo lent. The feast is on the day lent finishes. That day one should participate in the Qurbana, stay away from ordinary activities and spend time in good deeds.

## **2 Memory of Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29.**

St. Peter is the head of the Apostles. St. Paul worked hard to spread the gospel. On June 29th we celebrate their martyrdom. The next day June 30th is the remembrance day of all the 12 Apostles. In respect of the Apostles who are the architects of the church, the Slesha lent is carried out and we celebrate the feast on June 29. Jesus Christ chose them, called them Apostles and gave them the authority to bind and to loosen on earth and in heaven. He sent them to spread the gospel all over the world. He gave them the gift of healing and the authority to cast out demons. During His public ministry, Peter was one of the three Apostles chosen by Jesus to stand beside him on special occasions. He gave the keys of the Kingdom of heaven to Peter and asked him to look after his sheep and to keep them in the true faith (Matthew 16: 18-19, Luke 22: 32, John 21: 15-17). St. Peter established his throne in Antioch in AD 37 and ordained his successor. Then he went to Rome and during the rule of Emperor Nero was crucified and martyred. As wished by him he was crucified upside down as he wanted to die kissing the feet of Jesus.

Saul, later known as St. Paul was in the forefront to harass the Christians in the beginning. On his way to Damascus to harass Christians, Jesus Christ revealed himself to him at the gate of Damascus. He repented and later became Paul and nurtured the church. He worked hard and underwent great hardships in his mission to spread the gospel. He was imprisoned in Jerusalem, taken to Rome, and was beheaded during the time of Emperor Nero. Known as the Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul is given equal importance as St. Peter. It is believed that Peter and Paul were martyred on the same day.

## **3 Dukrono-Remembrance day of Apostle Thomas on July 3.**

It was St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus who came to India and spread the gospel. St. Thomas gave us new life in Christ. He was martyred and buried in India. He is our patron saint and Apostle. To all Indians, the memory of St. Thomas, is equal to Maranaya feast since he gave in the message of new life and was martyred and buried.

St. Thomas reached Kerala in AD 52. He preached the gospel and made many families Christians. While preaching in Madras, enemies attacked him, pierced and injured him on 18th December and he died (achieved martyrdom) on 21st December. He was buried in Mylapore. In AD 396 his grave was opened

and the blessed mortal remains were taken to a town called Ureha (Edessa) in Syria and was buried in the church built in his name. Remembrance of this is Dukrono feast. The memory of his martyrdom is observed during December 18-21.

## **B Feasts celebrated like Maranaya feasts**

### **1. 40th Friday**

During the great lent, the Friday which comes after 40 days of lent is known as the 40th Friday. It makes us remember how our Lord was fasting for 40 days and overcame the temptations of Satan. Equal to man in everything except sin, Jesus Christ showed us how to fight and win over human temptations with weapons like the word of God (bible verses), fasting and prayer. We are obligated to participate in the Holy Qurbana that day.

### **2 Holy Saturday**

This is the Saturday that follows Good Friday. We believe that on this day Jesus went to purgatory and spread the gospel to all the dead and buried since Adam (1 Peter 3:18-19, 4:5). So it is known as Holy Saturday. Since it is a day of fasting, our tradition is to conduct Qurbana at the noontime. Since it is the remembrance of the Lords preaching to the dead, we also remember our beloved deported in Qurbana that day.

### **4 Mid lent**

The 4th Wednesday that comes during the big lent is the day of mid lent. That day there will be Holy Qurbana and liturgy for celebration of the cross during the Qurbana. The cross will be placed in the middle of the church on the stand called 'Mnortho'. This is to remind us that just as Moses kept the brass snake high up on a pole in the middle of the camp, God's son also will be crucified on a raised pole. This same sleeba is used for all the celebrations till the resurrection of Christ. To save ourselves from death due to sin, we should look up to Jesus. It is to remind us of this fact that the sleeba is kept in the middle of the church on Mid lent day.

## **C Other feasts**

The church has adviced that the faithful should celebrate other feasts also. Most of them are in memory of saints. Since these are blessed days, one should participate in the Holy Qurbana on these days.

**1 Feast to remember the beheading of John the Baptist-  
(Pukazchaperunnal)**

The memory of the beheading of John the Baptist is observed on August 29. January 7th is his 'Pukazchaperunnal'. Both are celebrated together on January 7th. John the Baptist is the messenger of Jesus. He came with the Spirit of Elijah to prepare the path for Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ witnesses about the Baptist, as "there is nobody greater than John among those born from a woman ". John baptized Jesus and heard the proclamation of God the Father about his Son. The mystery of Trinity was also revealed in front of John the Baptist. In Galilee John was put in jail for criticizing Herod Antipas who married his brother's wife. He was beheaded later (Matthew 14: 1-12)

**2 Feasts of Mother Mary**

Apart from Shunoyo feast, January 15th is feast of intercession by Mother Mary for seeds and May 15th for sheaves. After fasting for 8 days, September 8 is celebrated in many churches as the birthday feast of Mother Mary. December 26 is her pukazchaperunnal.

**3 The Wednesday when the 'three days lent' is completed is celebrated in memory of Prophet Jonah.**

4. **'Koodash-eitho'** Sunday is the starting of the year for the church. If Sunday comes on October 30 or 31, or the first Sunday in November is celebrated as Koodash-eitho" and the following Sunday as 'Hudas-eitho'. Koodash-eitho" means purification of the church. Hudod-eitho' means re-consecration of the church. We are the church. So these are the days we have to make ourselves pure for Christ and reconfirm our affinity towards him. We should dedicate ourselves for the purpose for which the church was founded by Christ. The following Sundays are for the preparation to celebrate the feast of his birth.

Of the two Sundays in between 'three day lent' and the 'great lent', the first one is known as 'Kohne Sunday' and the next one "Anide Sunday". On Kohneh Sunday all the priests who served at the madbaha and later died in Jesus are remembered and on Anide Sunday all the faithful who died in Jesus are remembered and special prayers are said for them.



On April 23 or on the days preceding or following, the memory of St. George is celebrated in many churches with great reverence. The Saturday before Palm Sunday is known as Lazarus Saturday. That day we remember how Lazarus of Bethany died and was buried for four days when Jesus brought him back to life.

February 22nd is to remember that St. Peter, head of the Apostles, established his throne in Antioch in AD 37. This is the 'throne of Antioch' day. June 19th is the memorial day of James, called brother of Jesus and first Episcopa of Jerusalem. He celebrated the first Holy Qurbana and the first Qurbana liturgy is known as 'St. James' Taksa'. (Mar Yacob in Malayalam)

July 18th is for the memory of Mar Kuriakose Sahada who was martyred in childhood and of his mother Marth Juliette who was also martyred.

### Questions:

1. What do the holy fathers teach us about the death of Mother Mary?
2. What is unique about St. Peter and St. Paul? How did they attain martyrdom?
3. To which incident is the Dukrona feast of St. Thomas related? Why is Dukrona feast maranaya for India?
4. What are the feasts celebrated as Maranaya? Write the importance of each.

## LESSON 36

### HOLY QURBONO SONGS

#### 1

High priests and priests-and deacons too-the Lord did set,  
And they His Church-adorn with ha-leluiah songs;  
Priests offer ear-thy fruits, their ma-ster's symbols true  
And call the Ho-ly Ghost with faith-to come to them.

As them He chose-without compul-sion now He comes,  
And dwelling in the bread-He makes-it Boby true,  
And brooding in-the mingled cup-He makes it Blood,  
Let us, the faith ful cry aloud-Haleluiah.

The One on whom-fi-e-ry an-gels trembling gaze,  
That One as Bread-and Wine upon-the alter see;  
As angels clad-in lightning are-enflamed by Him,  
So those who eat-them have their fa-ces made as bright,

The secrets of-the Son are for-the angels fire;  
So witnesseth-Isaiah too-who them perceived;  
Those mysteries-within God's bo-som deep concealed,  
For Adam's sons-dispensed upon-the table, seel

Alike che rub's chariot see the altar set,  
Celestial power's-gather round it-filled with awe great  
The Body of-the Son upon the alter see,  
Where Adam's chil-dren raise Him on-their hands in state

Here clad as one-in silk the priest-doth stand to serve;  
For those in need-he bringeth forth-dispersing gems  
Celestials, if-perchance be moved-to jealousy;  
Those cherubim-could envy well-the sons of men.

Behold, where Zi-on fixed the cross-to crucify,  
There grew the erst-while tree that firm-ly held the Ram;  
Behold, where nails-affixed the hands-of Christ the Son,  
There once was I-saac freed from bonds-of sacrifice

O priest, who bea-reth mysteries come thou in peace,  
Disbursing life-to all, the boun-ty of thy hand.  
O priest, we hail-thee, bearing ho-ly incense sweef  
Incensing forth-its smoke, perfu-ming all the world.

O priest, come, thou-in peace by Ho-ly Ghost sustained,  
Who bearest in-thy tongue the keys-of heav'n's house  
O priest, we hail-thee, thou whose bind-ing here on earth  
Is bound by God-in heav'n's height-Halailuiah.

O Priest, come thou-in peace, whose loo-sing here below  
Is loosed by hea-ven's Lord on high-Kurielaison.  
To God be praise-and grace to you-and pardon mine.  
And to St. James-that doctor good remembrance be.

MELPATTAKAAR - PATTAKAARODU - SHEMMASHANMAAR  
ERPAADAAKKI - KARTHAVIVARE - BHOOMIATHINKAL

ANIYICHAARAVA - RANISHAMTHANNUDE - SABHAYEIVIDE  
ANAVARATHAMCHEY - THETTIVASIKYUM - STHUTHIKALATHAALE.

VINNINNAAYAKA - NAAMTHANNADHA - RAHASYANGALATHAYI  
MANNIN VILAVUKAL - PATTAKKARAN (SRESHTACHARYAN) - KAAZHCHA YANACHU

THANNUDEPAKKA - LIRANGIVARAANAA - YIALMAAVINE  
NINNUVILICHEE - DUNNAKAMENAL - SHARANATHAALE.

AVANE NIYAMI - CHORALMAVO - NISAMSHAYAMAAYI  
AKSHOSHATHAA - LAPPAMTHANNIL - IRANGIVASICHU

ATHINE - GATHRAVU - MAAKAASAAYE - REKTHAVUMAAKUM  
ATTAHASICHEE - NAAMCHOLLEEDUKA - KURI - ELAISON

1. AGNIMAYANAMAA - RAARENOKKI - VIRACHEEDUNNU  
AVANE MESHAYI - LAPPAMVEENJAYI - NEEKAANUNNU  
AAREMINNALUDU - THORNOKKUKI - LERIYUNNUUDANE  
AVANE MANMAYAR - BHAKSHICHUMUKHAM - THELIYUNETTAM.
2. ERITHEE PUTHRA RAHASYANGAL AHO - VINNAVAR IDAYIL  
ESHAAYA THAAN - KANDIVA NAMMODU - SAAKSHIKYUNNU  
DHEIVATHWATHIN - MADIYIL IRIPPU - RAHASYANGAL IVA  
EVAM MESHAYI - LAADAMYARKAYI - BHAAGIKYUNNU.
3. KROOBENMAARUDE - THERATHUPOLE - STHIRAM EEMADHBAHAA  
SWARGATHINSE - NAKALUNDATHINE - CHUTTIKONDU  
DHEIVASUTHAN THIRU - MENTYATHALLO - MESHAYIL IVIDE  
KAIKALIL AADAMMAKKAL EDUTHAA - KSHOSHIKYUNNU.
4. PATTU DHARICHAVA - NOPPAM NINNIHA - VENDUNNORKAYI  
PATTAKAARAN (SRESHTACHARYAN) - MAANIKYANGALE - VITHAREEDUNNU  
VAANAVAR IDAYIL AA - SOOYA DOSHAM - PAADUNDENKIL  
MAANUSHA SUTHARO - DAAKROBENMAAR - KUNDATHU NOONAM.
5. KURISHIPPAANAYI - SUTHANE - SEHIYON - NAATTIMARATHE;  
KUNJAADATHINE - JANIPICHORU MARA - MUNDAYI AVAIDE  
EVIDE PUTHRAN - KAIKALIL AANI - THARAYKYAPETTU;  
ISAAKANTE - KETTUKALECHE - DHICHATHUM AVIDE.
6. THANNEJAMAANAN - THANDIVYARAHA - SYANGALEEVAM  
THAANKAIKONDU - VALANKAIAALE - JEEVANATHAYI  
PANKITELLA - VARKAYITTUM - NALKEEDUNNA  
PATTAKARA! (SRESHTACHARYA!) - VANEEDUKA SAMAA - DHANATHAALE.

7. AMALAMATHAAM DOO - PATHIN KALASHA - THE KAIKONDU  
ATHINUDE NALLORU SOURABHYATHE - DOOPIPPICHI  
TTATHINAL ANGANE - LOKATHE YA - NANDIPPIKYUM  
PATTAKARA! (SRESHTACHARYA!) - VANEEDUKA SAMAA - DHANATHAALE.
8. VAATHSALYATHAAL - PARISHUDHATHMAA - VAAM DHEIVATHAAL  
VALARTHA PETTAVA - NAYI, THANNUDE - NAAVATHIL ENNUM  
DHEIVATHIN BHAVA - NATHIN THAAKO - L ENTHUN AVANAAM  
PATTAKARA! (SRESHTACHARYA!) - VANEEDUKA SAMAADHANATHAALE.
9. BHOOMI ATHINKAL - THANNAAL ORUVAN - KETTAPETTAAL  
AA MANUJAN VI - NNULAKAM THANNIL - KARTHAAVAALUM  
KETTAPETT AVA - NAAM ENNULLORU - PATTAKARA! (SRESHTACHARYA!)  
VANEEDUKA SAMAA - DHANATHAALE - HALLELUIAH.
10. AAZHAMATHINKAL - THANNAAL ORUVA - N AZHIKYAPETTAAL  
AA MANUJAN THA - NUYARAM THANNIL - KARTHAVAALUM  
AZHIKYAPETT AVA - NAAM ENNULLORU PATTAKARA! (SRESHTACHARYA!)  
VANEEDUKA SAMAA - DHANATHAALE - KURIELAISON.
11. UNDAAKATTE - STHUTHI KARTHAAVINU - NINGALUDE MEL  
UNDAAKATTE - THAN KRUPA ENNUM - PUNYAM ENNIKUM  
UNDAAKATTE - MAR YAKKOKBAAM MALPAAN THANTE  
ORMAYATHUM NA - NNAYI UNDAKA - TTELLAYI POZHUM.

2

O Son of-God-who sinners saved-by sacrifice.  
Thy off' ring shall-my passions quell-my pains dispel.  
O Good one, Thou-whose side was rent on Calvary;  
Quench Thou my thirst-by blood and wa-ter shed from Thee

THAN BALIYAAL - PAAPIKALE -  
REKSHICHORU DHEIVA SUTHAA -  
NIN BALIYAAL ENN - KASTATHAMAYICH ENN -  
NOVOZHIKENAME.  
GOGULTHAAYIL - THAN MAARVU THURANNO - RUTHAMANE  
DAAHAM NEEKI - TOZHIKIYA NEERAAL CHORAYATHAALUM.

1. O! Lord Jesus, Messiah,  
Not for vengeance-nor our judgement be for us here  
Thy Blood and Body taken,  
But for debts absolving, and for pardon,  
And for standing, on Thy right-  
Haleluiah-with clear faces.
2. From the valley of delight-give them to drink  
May Thy Body eaten here, and Thy Life-blood  
What we drank in faith, O Lord,  
May they bridge and passage be-for our spirits  
Saving us from flames of hell-  
Haleluiah-life bestowing Barekmor.
3. Praise the Son of God, who in the upper room  
Brake His body for His friends;  
Mingled He His precious blood, the cup of life  
Adam's children to redeem-  
Haleluiah-through absolving
4. For these open hands outstretched, which took from Thee  
Such a pledge of life divine  
But they not shrunk at judgement's-hour on that day  
When the blazing flames consume-  
Haleluiah-but outstretched be.  
Men' Olam vadamol Olam.....
5. Hearing sighs of all the dead, -our redeemer  
On the cross on Calvary;  
Waxing strong He went and brake-that yoke of death  
From the necks of those who died-  
Halleluiah-ando consoled them,  
Moriyo Rahemalain.....

1. MORAAN ESHU MASHIHA  
ULKONDOR EENIN MEYYUM - THIRU REKTHAMATHUM  
SHIKSHA PRATHIKAARANGALKAYI  
THEERAATHE KUTTANGAL ARA - NUTHAKEEDENAME;  
NIN VALAMATHIL NILKUNNATHINUM  
HALLELUIAH - DHAIRYA SAMETHAM.
2. NIN MODHA THAAZHVARAYIL  
KUDIPPIKYUMNEE AVARE  
KARTHAVE! NJANGAL BHAKSHI - CHEENIN MEYYUM  
VISHWASATHAAL PAANAM CHE -  
YTHOR UYIREKUM REKTHAMATHUM - THEE NARAKATHIL  
HALLELUIAH THEERNEKANAME  
HALLELUIAH - JEEVAN NITHYAM - BAREKMOR.
3. SHISHYARKAYI MAALIKAYIL THAN - THIRUMENI -  
KHANDICH AADAMYARUDE RA -  
KSHAYKYUM PUNYATHINU MAYI - THAN REKTHATHE  
KAASAATHANIL CHERTHORU  
HALLELUIAH - SUTHANAYI STHOTHRAM.
4. PUTHU JEEVAN NINNODU KAICO - NDORAA KAIKAL  
AVASAAN ADINE VIDHI SAMAYA -  
THERITHEEYIN ROOKSHATHAYINKAL - NJETTEEDALLE.  
NIN SHAITHYAM KONDAVA THAANE  
HALLELUIAH - NEETAPEDANE.
5. GOGULTHAAYIL REKSHAKANAA - VRUKSHATHAINMEL  
VECHANDU MARICHOR NEDUVEER -  
PIN SHABDAM KETTITT ILAKI PAATHALATHIL  
CHENNAVARUDE NUKAMATHOZHICHU  
HALLELUIAH - MODHIPICHU.



