

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



TEXT BOOK CLASS – VIII

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



TEXTBOOK FOR CLASS VIII

(English)

Prepared by :

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

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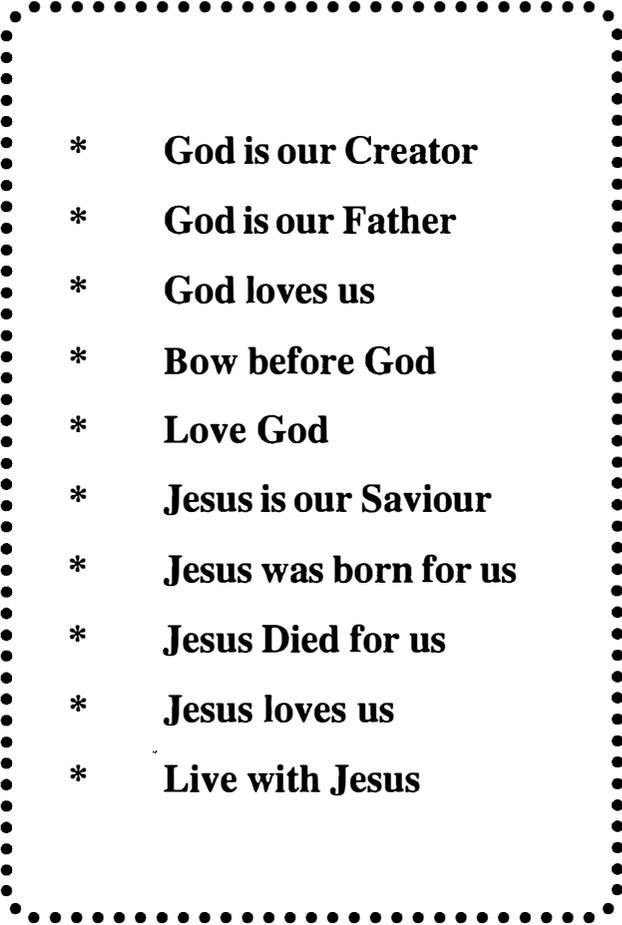
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- 
- * **God is our Creator**
 - * **God is our Father**
 - * **God loves us**
 - * **Bow before God**
 - * **Love God**
 - * **Jesus is our Saviour**
 - * **Jesus was born for us**
 - * **Jesus Died for us**
 - * **Jesus loves us**
 - * **Live with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

LESSON 1

PRAYERS

Prayer of Ninth Hour

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, one true God.

Glory be to Him; and may His grace and mercy be upon us for ever. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, by whose glory, the heaven and the earth are Filled; Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who has come, and is to come in the name of the Lord; glory be to Him in the highest.

QUAMO

TRISAGION

(Repeat three times)

Holy art Thou, O God;

Holy art Thou, Almighty;

Holy art Thou, Immortal,

+Crucified for us, have mercy on us;

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

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

PITHAVINUM PUTHRANUM PARISHUDHA RUHAYKKUM STUTHI. AADHI MUTHAL ENNENNEKKUM THANNE, AMEN.

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

DHEIVAMAYA KARTHAVINTE THIRUNAMATHIL VANNAVANUM VARUVANIRICKUNNAVANUM AAYAVAN VAZHTHAPETTAVANAKUNNU UYARANGALIL STHUTHI, BAREKMOR.

DHEIVAME NEE PARISHUDHANAKUNNU

BELAVANE NEE PARISHUDHANAKUNNU

MARANAM ILLATHAVANE NEE PARISHUDHAN AKUNNU

+ NJANGALKU VENDI KURISHIKKA PETTAVANE, NJANGALODU KARUNA

UNDAKANAME. (REPEAT 3 TIMES)

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

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

LORD'S PRAYER (St. Mathew 6:9-13)

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

LORD'S PRAYER

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

HAIL MARY (St. Luke 1: 28,42)

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

HAIL MARY

KRIPANIRANJAMARIYAME! NINAKKU SAMADHANAM. NJANGALUDE KARTHAVU NINNODE KOODAY. NEE STHREEKALIL VAZHTHAPPETTAVALAKUNNU. NINTE VAYATINTE BHALAMAYA NJANGALUDE KARTHAVEYESHU MESHIHA VAZHTHAPPETTAVAN AKUNNU. SHUDHAMULLA KANYAKA MARTHA MARIYAME THAMPURANTE AMME, PAPIKALAYA NJANGALKKU VENDI IPPOZHUM, EPPOZHUM NJANGALUDE MARANA SAMAYATHUM DAIVAM THAMPURANODU APEKSHICHU KOLLANAME, AMEN.

QOLO

Praise be to You O God, who gives life to the dead. Praise be to You O God, who grants resurrection to the entombed. We praise You and glorify Your Father who did send you and the Holy Spirit. Barekmore.

O! Lord, one of Trinity, who by Your own will stayed in the tomb for three days, give resurrection to our departed ones, for they were saved by Your precious blood. Moriyo rahae melain noo-adarain.

QOLO

ANUGRAHANGAL NIRANJIRIKKUNNAVANE ANUKOOLATHINTE DIVASATHIL NINTE SRISHTIPPINE NEE PUTHANAKKI ANUKOOLAMAKKENAME. KARTHAVE! NINTE ASHRAYATHE KURICHU MARICHA NINTE VARAVINE NOKKI PARTHIRIKKUNNA NJANGALUDE MARICHU POYAVARE NEE PUNYAMAKKANAME. ABRAHIMINTEYUM, ISAHAKINTEYUM, YACOBINTEYUM MADIYIL AVERE NEE PARPPIKKANAME. VANNAVANUM, VARUNNAVANUM MARICHAVARE ANUKOOLAMAKUNNANANUM AYAVAN VAZHTHAPPETTAVANAKUNNU ENNU SHAREERANGALUM, AATHMAKKALUM SHARIYAYITTUNILAVILICHU PARAYUMARAKANAME, AMEN.

BOVOOSO

O! merciful Lord, renew Your creation on the day of resurrection. O! Lord, grant rest and comfort to our beloved departed ones who have lived and died with hope in You.

O! Lord grant rest to our faithful departed in the bosom of Abraham, Issac and Jacob.

May the souls and bodies together cry aloud and say: glory be to the one who has come and is to come to resurrect the departed. Amen.

BOVOOSO

MORAN YESHU MESHIHA!, NINTE ANUGRAHANGALUDE VAATHIL NJANGALUDE MUKHANGALKKU NERAY NEE ADAKKARUTHAY, KARTHAVE! NJANGAL PAPIKAL AKUNNU ENNU NJANGAL ETTU PARAYUNNU. NJANGALUDE MAEL NEE ANUGRAHAM CHEYYANAME, KARTHAVE! NINTE MARANATHAL NJANGALUDE MARANAM MANJUPOKUVANAYITTU NINTE SNEHAM NINTE EDATHIL NINNUNJANGALUDE PAKKAL ERAKKI NJANGALODU KARUNAYUNDAKANAME.

QUAMO

Holy art Thou, O God;

EVENING PRAYER

QUAMO

Holy art Thou, O God;.....

PSALMS 51

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins; for I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

I have sinned against You, against You truly. I have done what is evil in Your sight. Your judgements are right. Your sentence is just. For behold, I was formed in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

But You take delight in the truth. You have made known to me the secrets of your wisdom. Sprinkle me with Your hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Satisfy me with Your joy and gladness, that my bones which are crushed shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence; and take not Your holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation; and uphold me with Your glorious Spirit; then I will teach the wicked Your way, and sinners shall turn to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall praise Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall sing Your praises.

For You desire not sacrifices, You are not appeased by burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, which You will not despise.

By Your loving-kindness do good to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then they shall offer bullocks upon Your altar.

To You belongs the praise, O God. Barekmore.

PSALMS 51

DHEIVAME! NINTE KRUPAYUM PRAKAARAM ENNODU KARUNA CHEYYENAME.
NINTE KARUNAYUDE BEHUTHWATHIN PRAKARAM ENTE PAAPANGAL
MAYICHUKALAYENAME.

ENTE ANNYAYATHIL NINNU ENNE NANNAI KAZHUKI, ENTE PAAPANGALIL
NINNU ENNE VEDIPPAKKENAME. ENTHENNAL ENTE ATHIKRAMANGAL NJAN
ARIYUNNU, ENTE PAAPANGAL EPOZHUMENTE NEREYIRIKKUNNU.

NINAKKU VIRODAMAAYI THANNE NJAN PAAPAM CHEYTHU, NINTE THIRUMUNPIL
THINMAKALE NJAN CHEYTHU, ATHU NINTE VACHANATHIL NEE NEETHIKARIKKA
PEDUKAYUM. NINTE NYAYA VIDHIKALIL NEE JAYIKKUKAYUM CHEYUVANAYITTU
THANNE. ENTHENNAL ENTE ANNYAYATHIL NJAN ULBHAVICHU. PAAPANGALIL ENTE
MATHAVU ENNE GARBHAM DHARIKUKAYUM CHEYTHU.

ENNAL NEETHIYIL NEE ISHTAPETTU, NINTE NJANATHINTE REHASYANGAL
ENNE NEE ARIYICHU, NINTE SOPPAKONDU ENTE MEL THALIKKENAME. NJAN
VEDIPPAKKAPEDUM, ATHINAL ENNE NEE VENMAYAKKENAME. THALGAYEKKAL
NJAN VENMAYAKUM.

NINTE ANANDAVUM SANTHOSHAVUM KONDU ENNE THRUPTHIYAKKENAME.
KSHEENATHAYULLA ENTE ASTHIKAL SANTHOSHIKKUM. ENTE PAAPANGALIL
NINNU NINTE MUKHAM THIRICHU ENTE ATHIKRAMANGAL OKKEYUM
MAYICHUKALAYANAME.

DHEIVAME! VEDIPPULLA HRUDAYATHE ENNIL SRISHTIKKENAME!
STHIRATHAYULLA NINTE ATHMAVINE ENTE ULLIL PUTHUTHAKKENAME. NINTE
MUNPIL NINNUM ENNE THALLIKALAYARUTHE; NINTE VISHUDATHMAVINE ENNIL
NINNU EDUKAYUM ARUTHE.

ENNALLO NINTE ANANTHYUM REKSHAYUM ENNIKU THIRICHU
THARENAME. MAHATHWAMULLA NINTE ALMAVU ENNE THANGUMARAKENAME.
APPOL NJAN ATHIKRAMAKARE NINTE VAZHI PADIPPIKUM, PAAPIKAL NINGALEKKU
THIRYUKAYUM CHEYUM.

ENTE REKSHAYUDE DHEIVAMAYA DHEIVAME! REKTHATHILNINNU ENNE
REKSHIKKANAME! ENTE NAAVU NINTE NEETHIYE STHUTHIKUM. KARTHAVE!
ENTE ADHARANGAL ENNIKU THURAKENAME. ENTE VAI NINTE STHUTHIKALE PAADUM.

ENTHENNAL BALIKALIL NEE ISHTAPPETTILLA, HOMABALIKALIL NEE
NIRAPPAYATHUMILLA. DHEIVATHINTE BALIKAL THAZHMAYULLA ALMAVAKUNNU.
DHEIVAM NURUNGIYA HRUDAYATHE NIRASIKUNNILLA.

NINTE ISHTATHAAL SEHIYONODU NANMA CHEYYENAME. OORSLEMINTE
MATHILUKALE PANIYENAME. APPOL NEETHITYODU KOODIYA BALIKALILUM,
HOMABALIKALILUM NEE ISHTAPEDUM. APPOL NINTE BELIPEEDATHIL KAALAKAL
(BALIYA) KARERUM.

DHEIVAME! STHUTHININAKKU YOGYAMAKUNNU - BAREKMOR.

EVENING PSALMS (Psalms 141, 142, 119: 105-112, 117)

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 NEEUTHARAMARULI CHEYTHU, ENTE VACHANANGAL SRADHICHU KELKANAME.

ENTE PRARTHANA THIRUMUNPAKE DOOPAM POLEYUM, ENTE KAIKALILE KAZHCHA VAIKYUNNERATHE KAZHCHAPOLEYUM KAIKOLLENAME. ENTE HRUDAYAM DUSHKARYATHINU CHAAYUKAYUM, NJAN ANNAYA KRIYAKAL PRAVARTHİKAYUM CHEYATHIRIPAN, ENTE VAIKU KAVALKARANNEYUM ENTE ADHARANGAL KU SOOKSHIPPUKARANNEYUM 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, PAATHALAVADUKALAVARUDE
ASTHIKAL CHITHARIKYAPETTU. 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 OODUVAZHICAL ARIYUNNU.

ENTENADAPUKALUDE VAZHYYIL 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! STHUTHININAKKU YOGYAMAKUNNU - BAREKMOR.

Introductory Prayers

O Lord, listen to our prayers with mercy and answer them with compassion. God accept, and be pleased in our worships and prayers and be gracious to us. Sthoumen kalos, Kurielaison.

KARTHAVE! KARUNAYODE NINTE CHEVI CHAAYICHU NJANGALUDE PRAARTHANAKALE KETTU NJANGALODU UTHARAMARULI CHEYYANAME. NJANGALUDE SHUSROOSHAYUM PRARTHANAKALUM DAYAVODE KAIKKOLVAAN NINAKKU ISHTAMUNDAKAYUM CHEYYANAME. STHOUMENKALOS, KURIELAISON.

Prayer for the Offering of Incense

Lord, let our prayers be like a pleasing incense before you. Let it rise to the highest like an offering of fragrance. As you are pleased in the offer of incense, accept our worships, prayers, supplications and praises without counting our unworthiness, and grant our petitions. Barekhmore.

KARTHAVE! NJANGADE PRAARTHANA NINTE SANNIDIYIL SUGANDA VARGAM POLE IMPAMAYI BHAVIKKENAME. SUGHANDA DOOPAM POLE ATHU NINTE SANNIDI YILEKKU UYARUMAARAKENAME. SUGHANDA VARGGAM POLE ATHU NINTE SANNIDIYILEKKU UYARUMAARAKENAME. SUGHANDA VARGGANGALUDE PUKA NINAKKIMBA MAYIRIKKUNNATHU POLE NJANGALUDE NAMASKAARANGALILUM PRARTHANAKALILUM APEKSHAKALILUM STHOTHRANGALILUM NEE ISHTTAPEETTU NJANGALILULLA AYOGYATHAKALE ORKKATHE AVAYE KAIKKOLLUKAYUM NJANGALUDE YAACHANAKALE NALKUKAYUM CHEYYANAME. BAREKMORE

For the Intercession of St. Mary

O Virgin Mother! shield us from all menace that confront us and forbid from us the whirls and tides of this world. O Mother! since you have acceptance in the presence of God, pray that your intercession grant us forgiveness and mercy, heal the sick, bring relief to the afflicted and the return of those who are away to us peacefully.

KANYAKAYAYA MATHAAVE ! ELLABHAGANGALIL NINNUM NJANGALKKU VANNU KOODUNNA UPADRAVANGALEYUM EE LOKA SAMUDRATHINTE OLANGALEYUM CHUZHALIKALEYUM NEE THADUKKANAME. MATHAVE! DAIVASANNIDIYIL NINAKKULLA DAIRYAMAAYA PRAVESHANAM MOOLAM DAIVAM NJANGALKKU KARUNAYUM PAAPAMOCHANAVUM ROGIKALKKU SWAKYAVUM NJERUKKATHIL IRIKKUNNAVARKKU AASWASAVUM AKALE POYIRIKKUNNAVARKKU THIRICHUVARAVUM NALKUVAANAYITTU NJANGALKKUVENDI APEKSHIKKENAME.

For the Intercession of Saints

Martyrs! as in the time of deluge, when the righteous Noah protected the beasts that entered with him in the ark, let your intercession protect us from the tides and whirls that encircle this world.

SAHAEDENMARE JALA PRALAYA KAALATHIL NEETHIMANA NOGHA
THANNODUKOODE PETTAKATHINAKATHU PRAVESHICHA JEEVAJANDUKKALE ATHINTE
ULLIL MARACHUKONDA PRAKAARAM NINGAL LOKATHE CHUTTIYIRIKKUNNA
THIRAMAALAKALIL NINNUM CHUZHALI KALIL NINNUM ATHINE MARACHU KOLLENAME.

For the Intercession of Patron Saint

(St. Thomas!) your grace has astonished the heavenly beings. Your glorious name is praised on earth among us. Your good deeds have been counted worthy by your Lord Jesus Christ, and He has revered and upheld your memory. May your prayers be a refuge to us.

(MARTHOMA SLEEHA) NINTE SHOBHAMELULLAVARE VISMAYIPPICHU NINTE
SERSHTAMAAYA NAAMAM THAZHEYULLAVARUDE IDAYIL PUKAZHTHA PPEDUNNU.
NINTE YAJAMAANANAYAYA MESHIIHA NINTE NALLA NADAPADIKALE KANDU NINTE
ORMAYE BAHUMANICHU SRESHTATHAPPEDUTHIYIRIKKUNNU. NINTE PRARTHANA
NJANGALKKU SAHAAYA MAAYIRIKKENAME.

Prayer of Repentance

O God, the lover of those who are unblemished and upright, grant us perfection in our hearts. Remove from us all evil and malicious thoughts. O Lord, open to us Your merciful door, as you did to the thief. Accept our repentance as you had accepted the penance of the tax collector and the sinful woman. O Lord, You are merciful and pleased with those who turn to You in repentance as You graciously pardoned Peter who came to you after he had denied you. Lord cleanse us from our sins and follies.

PARAMARTHIKALE SNEHIKKUNNA SNEHIKKUNNA NIRMALANAAYIRIKKUNNA
DAIVAMAAYA KARTHAVE! NJANGALKKU ELLAYIPPOZHUM NIRMALA HRIDAYATHE
THARANAME. NINAKKU ISHTTAMILLATHA VYRTHA VICHARANGALEYUM DUSH
CHINDAKALEYUM NJANGALIL NINNU NEEKKI KALAYANAME. KARTHAVE! KALLNU
THURANUU KODUTHA PRAKAARAM NINTE KARUNAYUDE VAATHIL NJANGALKKU NEE
THURANNU THARENAME. CHUNKAKKARANTEYUM PAAPIYAYA STHREYUDEYUM
ANUTHAAPATHE KAIKKONDATHU POLE NJANGALUDE ANUTHAAPATHEYUM
KAIKKOLLANAME. MAANASANDARA PPETTU THANTE ADUKKALEKKU VARUNNA
ANUTHAAPAKKARIL PREETHIPPEDUNNAVANAAYA KARUNA POORNA NAYIRIKKUNNA
KARTHAVE! NINNE UPEKSHICHU PARANJATHINTE SESHAM SEMAONE NEE
PUNYAPPEDUTHIYA PRAKAREM NJANGALUDE KADANJALEYUM PAPANJALEYUM
PARIHARIKKANAME.

O Lord! we, the sinful, are sad about your dispassionate last judgement". When the great books of account" are opened and our sins are read, let Your grace strengthen us and let your mercy help us. Let our sins be pardoned. O Lord!, we acknowledge our sins, have mercy on us.

KARTHAVE! NINTE ANTHYAMAAYA NYAYA VISTHARATHIL MUKHA PAKSHAMILLATHATHINE ORTHU KUTTAKKARAAYA NJANGAL ETTAM DUKHIKKUNNU. BHAYANGARAMERIYA KANAKU PUSTHAKANGAL VIDURKKAPPETTU NJANGALUDE KUTTANGAL VAAYIKKAPPEDUNNA SAMAYATHU NINTE KRIPA PRABALAPPETTU NINTE NEETHIYIL NJANGALE SAHAAYIKKENAME. KUTTAKKARAAYA NJANGALKKU MOCHANAM LABHIKKAYUM CHEYYUMARAAKANME. KARTHAVE! NJANGAL PAAPAM CHEYTHU POYI ENNU NJANGAL SAMMADIKKUNNU. DAYAVODE NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME.

For the Faithful Departed

Lord! grant good remembrance to the faithful departed who have received Your atoning body and blood. Lord Jesus Christ, when You come gloriously with the company of angels, let our departed ones stand before you with praises. Moriyo rahe melain noo-odarin.

KARTHAVE! PUNYAPPEDUTHUNNATHAAYA NINTE VISHUDHA SHARERATHEYUM, RAKTHATHEYUM ANUBHAVICHITTULLA VISWASIKALAAYA MARICHU POYAVAREKKURICHU NALLA SMARANA UNDAKUMAARAKENAME MESHIIHA! KARTHAVE! NINTE MALAKAMARODU KOODE MAHATHWATHIL NEE VARUMPOL NJANGALUDE MARICHU POYAVAR MUKHA PRASADATHODU KOODE NINTE VALATHU BAHAGATHU NINNU KONDU NINTE DAIVATHWATHE STHUTHIKKUMAARAKANAME. MORIYO.....

(Special prayers for the day may be said here)

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, do not close the door of Your mercy on our faces. Lord, we confess that we are sinners, have mercy upon us. Moriyo.....

NJANGALUDE KARTHAVAAYA YESHU MESHIIHA NINTE KARUNAYUDE VAATHIL NJANGALUDE NERE NEE ADAKKARUTHE KARTHAVE! NJANGAL PAAPIKALAKUNNU ENNU NJANGAL ETTUPARAYUNNU. NJANGALODU KARUNAYUNDAKENAME. MORIYO.....

O Lord, Your love made you descend from Your place to us that by Your death, our death was abolished; have mercy upon us. Moriyo.....

KARTHAVE! NINTE MARANATHAAL NJANGALUDE MARANAM MANJUPOKANAAYITTU NINTE SNEHAM NINTE STHANATHU NINNU NJANGALUDE ADUKKALEKKU NINNE IRAKKI KONDU VANNU NJANGALODU KARUNAYUNDAKENAME. MORIYO.....

QUAMO

Holy art Thou, O God;

1. O Lord, who is merciful to sinners, have mercy on us on the day of your judgement.

O merciful one, the afflicted are knocking at Your door. By Your grace answer their supplications.

Our heavenly Father, we pray that You accepts our offerings and have mercy on us.

Lord of those above and the refuge of those on earth, accept our offerings and have mercy on us.

Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Glory be to you O, God. Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Glory be to you O, God. Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Glory be to you O, God.

O! merciful God, be compassionate towards us in your mercy.

In our sacrifices and in our prayers we commemorate our fathers who while alive taught us to be children of God.

Son of God grant them rest in the eternal heavenly kingdom with the just and the righteous. Amen

PAAPIKALODU KARUNA CHEYYUNNAVANE NINTE NYAYAVIDHI DIVASATHIL NJANGALODU KARUNA CHEYYANAME.

KARUNAYULLAVANE NJERUKKATHIL IRIKKUNAVAR NINTE VATHUKKAL MUTTUNNU. NINTE KARUNAYAAL AVARUDE YAACHANAKAL NALKANAME.

SWARGASTHANAAYA NJANGALUDE PITHAAVE! NJANGAL NINNODU APEKSHIKKUNNU. NJANGALUDE SHUSROOSHA KAIKONDU NJANGALODU KRIPA CHEYYANAME.

MELULLAVARUDE UDAYAVANUM THAZHAYULLAVARUDE SHARANAVUM AAYAVANE! NJANGALUDE SHUSROOSHA KAIKONDU NJANGALODU KRIPA CHEYYANAME.

HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH DAIVAME NINAKKU STHUTHI
HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH DAIVAME NINAKKU STHUTHI
HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH VU HALELUYAH DAIVAME NINAKKU STHUTHI

KARUNAYULLA DAIVAME NINTE KARUNAYAAL NJANGALODU KARUNA
CHEYYANAME.

NAAMDAIVATHINTE PUTHRAN MARAAYI THEERUVAN JEEVICHIRUNNAPPOL NAMEE
PADIPPICHA VARAAYA NAMMUDE PITHA AKKANMARE KURBANAKALILUM
PRARTHANAKALILUM NAAM OARKKANAM

AZHIVILLATHA LOKAMAAYA SWARGATHIL NEETHIMAANMARODUM
PUNYAVANMAARODUM KOODE DAIVAPUTHRAN AVARE AASWASIPPIKKATTE. AMEN

2. Lord have mercy upon us (Class IV)
KARTHAVE KRIPA CHEYYANAME (Class IV)
3. O Lord, who is wakeful (Class V)
URAKKAMILLATHA UNARVULLAVANAYA (Class V)

OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON 1

PROPHETS

Prophets or seers as they were called had a very important place in the history of Israelites. God spoke to the people through His prophets in Old Testament time. St. Paul says, "In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son." (Hebrews 1:1). The same concept is shown in the hymn used at the time of mediatory prayer to the Lord's Mother that..." the prophets indistinctly and the apostles distinctly revealed the secrets of her Son..."

In Old Testament time, Abraham (Genesis 20:7), Moses (Deu. 34:12), Aaron (Exodus 7:1); Deborah (Judges 4:4); Miriam (Exodus 15:20); Samuel and others were like prophets. However, as their nature of activities was different, they are not included in the list of prophets. Likewise, Elijah and Elisha were engaged in prophesy for many years and did many wonders. The theologians have not given them a place in the list of prophets, as their prophesies have not been recorded. Their messages have been recorded in the history of Israelites. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel are considered senior prophets. However, the Jews consider the book of Daniel with their history and not with the writing of prophets. Hosea to Malachi- the 12 prophets are construed as junior prophets. Up to the time of Samuel, those who prophesied were called seers.

The prophets or seers foretold events to come. Their mission was not restricted in foretelling future events alone. They were also engaged in other activities -

1. They were messengers of God; through whom He revealed Himself and his will to people.
2. They were the interpreters of the Law.
3. They were teachers in religious and social matters.
4. They were advisers to kings. They informed the people the Will of God.
5. They were social reformers who rebuked the evil practices of the people.

THE PROPHET ISAIAH

(From B.C. 740 to 700)

Objective: Inform the people the word of God without any bias.

Isaiah lived in the latter part of 8th century B.C. in Jerusalem during the reign of kings: Uzziah (aka Azariah), Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. According to Jewish belief, Isaiah was killed at the time Manasseh, son of Hezekiah was ruling Judah. The word Isaiah means, “Help from God,” or “God helps.”

Isaiah was blessed to have glimpse of the glory of the Almighty. “The Lord was sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim’s (Angels): each one had six wings; with two wings covering his face, and with two wings he covered his feet, and with two wings he flew. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. (Isaiah 6:1-4). Isaiah saw this heavenly vision. Therefore, the holy Church calls him the glorious Isaiah. “The Lord shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” He also prophesied that Messiah would come from the descendants of David. “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; (Isaiah 11: 1-2)

Isaiah knew that he was a sinful man. On seeing this marvelous vision, he was frightened and he cried. Then one of the Angels flew down to him, carrying a burning coal and touched his lips with it. He told Isaiah that as the burning coal from the altar of the Lord touched his lips, his guilt was gone and his sins were forgiven. Based on this, we sing the hymn while Holy Qurbana is given in Passover Service, “To the prophet Isaiah.....”

Isaiah heard the Lord speak, “whom shall I send? Who shall be our messenger?” And he replied, “I will go! Send me!” (Isaiah 6:8) From that time on for about forty years, Isaiah incessantly worked for the Lord.

Isaiah is called the prophet of Salvation. And figuratively his book is known as the fifth gospel and Isaiah as the fifth evangelist.

The scholars are of the opinion that the book of Isaiah should be studied in three parts and this is generally accepted. We can see that 1 to 35 chapters are prophesies, 36 to 39 are historical facts and 40 to 66 are partly prophesies. Considering the historical background, the differences in language and contents, it is believed that this book is not written by one person alone. For the sake of study, let us make this book into three parts.

Book of Isaiah – Part I – The prophet (chapters 1-39)

A. THE PROPHET

From Chapters 1 to 39, we get some hints about his life. He lived in the latter part of 8th Century B.C. He got the vision during the year king Uzziah died (6:1). He was from the royal family. His father was Amos, the youngest son of King Josha. As he got the vision at the Temple, so it is believed that he was an official of the Temple. His wife was a prophetess (8:3). They had two sons, Shearjashub (7:3) and Maher-shalal-hashbaz (8:3). In the book 'Ascendancy of Isaiah' (5:11-14) (Hebrew 11:37) written in AD first century, it is recorded that during the reign of Manasseh, Isaiah was killed by a sword

B. PROPHECY BACKGROUND

Isaiah had shone like a shining star during the latter part of the 8th century BC. He prophesied during the reign of kings Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz and Hezekiah. In BC 740 when king Uzziah died, Isaiah had God's calling. Under the rule of Uzziah the land progressed in trade and industry and the people were prosperous and rich. They gradually lost the fear of the Lord. They sought a life of pleasure and merry making. They became unjust and oppressed the poor. Wealth remained with a few and the number of poor increased. The condition of the poor and helpless worsened. They suffered miserably under the rich and powerful people. The prophet very vehemently warned (2:3) against this social injustice.

In BC 735, the Syrians and Israelites made an agreement. Against this Ahaz, king of Judah sought help from the emperor of Assyria. Ahaz took the silver and gold from the Temple and the palace treasury and sent it as a present to the emperor. The prophet opposed this move and warned Ahaz that it would be unwise to seek help from Assyrians and that it would be self-defeating in future. The King did not heed to the counsel of the prophet.

After Ahaz, Hezekiah ruled Judah. He did what was pleasing to the Lord. He destroyed the pagan places of worship, broke the stone pillars and cut down the images of goddess Ashera. In all these the prophet Isaiah was guiding the king. However, influence by the advice of some of his counselors, he made an agreement with the king of Egypt. The prophet advised him that it would be foolish to rebel against the emperor of Assyria. In BC 701, Sennacherib, the emperor of Assyria attacked the fortified cities of Judah. The Lord told Isaiah to inform the king not to be afraid of the Assyrians. The desperate cry of the prophet and the king reached God. The angel of the Lord killed 1, 85,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army. In addition, a kind of rats went into the Assyrian camps and gnawed the strings of their bows. The dejected emperor withdrew with the rest of his army.

C. IMPORTANT IDEAS

We get many important concepts in this part, some of which are listed below:

1. The deep understanding of the prophet about the Lord.

Death of Uzziah was the end of the golden era of the Jews. The mighty Assyrians utterly destroyed Israel, and Judah was weakened (2 kings 15:19). Judah was invited to join hand with Israel and Syria against Assyria. At this point, the counsel of Isaiah was based on his deep understanding of the Lord. Isaiah had a larger vision of the Lord. The sovereignty of the Lord is universal (10:5-11) and is founded on the concept of One True God. The idols of the heathen would be destroyed (2:8-18, 17:8, 31:7). The God is just and He judges the world (2:5). Sin is the unholiness of man before the holy God (6:8).

2. God who fulfils His Promises:

The God whom we see in the history is not only a righteous God, but He is also the Lord who fulfils His part of the covenant and promises (9:6-7; 11:1-2). The prophet believed that the will of the Lord would be accomplished through a remnant of the Israelites. The expectations of this remnant, the prophesy about Immanuel, the transformation of Israel (1:26, 2:2-5, 32:1-5) and all these would take place in the course of history. The prophet believed that through them the people of the Lord would get salvation and prosperity.

Even though he was from the royal family, he lived among the ordinary people (1:8, 21:11-12). He criticized the ruling and upper class of society (1:23, 3:1-15, 5:7). His royal heritage was never a hindrance to mingle with the common people. He had many friends.

CONTENTS

Chapter's	1-12	introductory messages and the call of the prophet
	13-23	Speeches against heathen countries
	24-27	Revelations
	28-32	Foreign policy of Judah
	33-35	Visions about end of time
	36-39	Historical addendum

PART II GOD, THE DELIVERER (Chapters 40-58)

The back ground for these chapters is considered to be BC 6th century (BC 587-539). In chapter 40, the events described were yet to take place after about 100 years. The king Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem in BC 588, and in BC 597 and subdued Jerusalem in BC 586. He destroyed the Temple and carried away the majority of the people as slaves to Babylon. This chapter speaks about those prisoners who are helpless in a foreign land. 40th chapter begins with the words of solace, "Comfort my people, and Comfort them!" A message of comfort to the people who underwent the pains and disgrace of slavery. The prophet reassures them that they would get deliverance from king Cyrus of Persia. No doubt, both these events are part of history of the Jews.

Theological Concepts:

When we study the available Hebrew literature, we can understand the prophet's thoughts. The main theme of his message is deliverance.

a) *God, the Deliverer:*

The important theological point is that the Jews who were scattered in Babylon would be led in God's ways and they would be freed. The prophet sees this deliverance in connection with the holiness of God. "Your redeemer

is the holy one of Israel.” (41:14; 47:4). The redeemer of Israel is the Lord God. The Lord paid ransom for their deliverance (43:3, 50:2). The prophet proclaims that the mighty God, who revealed His omnipotence in the creation, and also his mighty hand in bringing out Israel from slavery of Egypt, would reinstate His people from bondage. The Lord God is the deliverer and He gives them the message of salvation (42:6; 49: 26).

b) His visions about God:

The visions of Isaiah about God are precious. God is the creator. The God who created us only can save us. From vanity God brings us to reality. Lord God is the everlasting God who created the universe (40:22-23). He is the Alpha and Omega (44:6). The Lord God is One God. He is omnipresent and there is none like Him. Chapters 42, 45 and 48 further throw light on the God Almighty. “I am God, and there is no one else; I am God and there is none like me.” (46:9)

Hymns about a Servant:

Isaiah gave many prophetic visions of a Servant of the Lord who suffers. There are four such hymns -

1. 42:1-4
2. 49:1-6
3. 50:4-9
4. 52:13- 53:12

There are many comments about this suffering servant of the Lord which bear witness to Israel, Jesus Christ and the Christian Church.

Contents:

Chapters 44 to 55 contain the messages given at various times to the people who were in exile. The inner meaning of these chapters is difficult to understand.

1. The Only One true God (40:1, 42:12)
2. God’s zeal to the deliverance of Israel (42:14; 44:23)
3. God’s hand in deliverance of Israel (44:24; 48:22)

4. Promise of the Lord about reinstatement of Israel (49:1; 54:17)
5. The hymn of joy of victory (55:1-13)

PART III- Chapters 56-66

In BC 538 king Cyrus announced that the Jews could return to their own land. The next years itself many people returned to Jerusalem, and they started rebuilding the Temple at Jerusalem. In BC 575 the temple work was completed. Thus the prophesy of Isaiah was fulfilled.

Theological Concepts:

Chapters 56-66 have given prominence to salvation through worship. The prophet declares that salvation has become a reality (60:1). It can be experienced through worship (60:7, 13; 62:9). Salvation also brings peace and prosperity (60:10, 18, 22; 61:4, 11). Salvation would continue till the end of time (60:19-80; 65:16-25).

The prophet stresses the importance of Sabbath with the same zeal of those prophets who had lived before the time of exile. To the humble and repentant flows help from the Lord (66:1, 2).

Contents:

Isaiah's prophecies climaxes in chapters 60-62. The gospel of salvation is highlighted in the light of social lamentation. The reason for lamentation is that the expectations of those who returned from exile are not fulfilled. Their sorrow is expressed in their worship. Here the heavenly messages can be divided into four:

1. The various hindrances to salvation (56:1 -59:29)
2. The future glory of Zion (60:1 – 63:6)
3. Prayer for heavenly help (63:7; 64:12)
4. Salvation of Zion (65:1; 66:23)

The Book of Isaiah is compared to the Bible as a whole. The first 39 chapters are like the Old Testament and the last 27 chapters like the New Testament. The first part shows the law and the last part grace. The book of Isaiah contains more spiritual light than any other book of the Old Testament.

Questions:

1. What are the names and phrases used to describe Isaiah?
2. Into how many groups are the prophets divided? What are they? What are the contents of each?
2. Into how many parts are the prophecies of Isaiah divided? Name them.
4. Quote the related prophecies and explain that God would fulfill His promise.
5. Isaiah is a spokesman of deliverance. Describe.
6. What are the visions of Isaiah about the Suffering Servant of the Lord?
7. What did the Jews do for the Lord God when they returned from exile?
8. Name the following
A) The father of Isaiah b) The sons of Isaiah. c) The king who made the declaration that the Jews could return to their country.

LESSON - 2

AMOS

Objective: The prophet conveys the message of the Lord regarding injustice in society. To hear and obey the voice of the Lord is the way to salvation.

Amos has a very important place amongst the Old Testament prophets. He was the spokesman for social justice. The book of Amos is the first one in canonical prophecies. Amos was a prophet in the beginning of the 8th century BC. A clash between worthless rites, ceremonial observations and social justice is observed in his book. Amos is considered a prophet of tribulations. The word Amos means one who carries burden.

Historical background:

Amos prophesied during the time Jeroboam 2nd was king of Israel from BC 787 to 747. Uzziah, king of Judah, was a contemporary of Jeroboam who regained the prosperity and splendor as of the time of King Solomon in Israel.

Jeroboam could bring political stability and financial growth in Israel. However, this security and stability was grabbed by a prosperous group. In this group, there were landlords, merchants and government officials (2:6-7, 5:10-11, 8:45).

The traders sold wheat mixed with chaff and used false measurements. The judges took bribes and set aside justice. To pursue hedonism, the women wanted more money and they encouraged their husbands to oppress the poor (4:1). They followed many crooked and immoral ways, and became a shallow society without any love or care for one another because of greed. However, they conducted sacrifices every day (4:4-5). When the people observed Sabbath and full moon, Amos told them that as the Lord is just, He expects justice and righteousness more than religious piety and observances.

THE LIFE AND CALL OF THE PROPHET:

At a place called Tekoa, the southern part of Jerusalem, Amos was a shepherd. He also collected fig fruits for a living. He knew the history and customs of the Israelites (1:2, 2:3, 6:14, 9:5, and 9:7). On seeing the moral deterioration of the people, Amos must have been burdened mentally, and we can assume that at the time he saw the visions described in chapter 7. Answering to the call of the Lord, Amos set about to prophesy leaving his occupation. However, Amos could not continue his work in Israel as Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, told Amos to stop his prophesy in Israel and return to Judah.

IMPORTANT THOUGHTS:

The messages strongly expressed in the prophecy of Amos are -

1. The Lord likes justice more than religious rites.

Israelites are the chosen people of the Lord. He accepts religious rites that are just. Amos declares that those people who do not keep justice and righteousness will perish and that their worship and sacrifices are hollow and is not acceptable to the Lord. The main theme of his prophecy is to let justice flow like a stream and righteousness like a river that never goes dry (5:24). As righteousness is preached vehemently, Amos is called 'the prophet of righteousness'.

2. Care for the Weak

In many parts of his prophecy, we can see his concern for the weak. Amos states that the Lord will completely destroy those who amass money illegally and deny justice to the poor (2:6-7, 5:10, 5:12; 8:4-8). Amos also foresees the reinstatement of Judah (9:11-15).

We have to highlight the five visions of Amos in his prophecy.

1. Vision of Locusts (7:1-3)
2. Vision of Fire (7:4-6)
3. Vision of a plumb line (7:7-9)
4. Vision of a Basket of Fruit (8:1-3)
5. Vision of the Lord standing by the altar (9:1)

In his message, Amos has very strongly pointed out punishment. To escape this, one has to listen to the word of God and obey it. "Come to me, and you will live" (5:4) His prophesy is concluded with words of hope (9:11-15). The fallen house will be straightened. The Lord God will plant his people on the land He gave them and they will not be pulled out again.

The intentions of the Lord will not come to naught. There is no need to fear the darkness of sin. Those who live justly will have a new dawn, indeed.

CONTENTS:

- 1:1-2 - Heading and Introduction
- 1:3-2:5 - Declaration of punishment to those who are cruel
- 2:6-9:10 - Sinful deeds of Israel and their punishment
- 9:11-15 - Restoration of Judah

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the social setting of Israel at the time of Amos?
2. Why is Amos called a prophet of righteousness?
3. What are the main ideas in the prophesies of Amos?
4. Describe Amos' visions and their significance.

LESSON-3

HOSEA

Objective: Inform the people the message of salvation of the Lord.

Hosea explained to the people the laws of the Lord, showing his own life as an example. His wife was unfaithful to him and deserted him, causing him much sorrow. Likewise, he said Israel was unfaithful to the Lord and deserted Him. His prophesy contains messages of God's love, long suffering and salvation. Hosea is given the title as the Prophet of Love. The word Hosea means 'God's help.

The prophet and the historical background:

He was born and brought up in the northern part of Israel and he is the son of Beeri. He prophesied during the reign of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Heseekiah, kings of Judah and Jeroboam, king of Israel. Except his miserable married life, no other information about him is available either from his prophesy or from the Old Testament.

During the reign of Jeroboam, there was considerable prosperity and abundance in Israel. Along with it there came moral and religious degradation (4:2). The priests were indifferent (4:6); political leaders participated in the Canaanite sacrifices and were engaged in rebellious ways and revolted against the Laws of the Lord (7:3) and depended on the might of the army. In such a scene appeared Hosea.

Important Ideas: The important thoughts in this book can be abridged as follows:

1. ***Boundless Love and Patience of God.*** The prophet went out in search of his lost unfaithful wife and bought her back for 15 silver coins and 140 kg of barley. Hosea declares that the God loved his people, as Hosea loved his wife. The love and forbearing of the Lord is boundless. The depth of love can only be understood by the magnitude of self-denial. Love is not expressed through lip service but through tolerance and deeds. The Lord God is the Savior of Israel. We see the Love of God which goes in search of his people. "Yet I was the one who taught Israel to walk. I took my people up in my arms, but they did not acknowledge that I took care of them." (11:3). We can see the infinite love and patience of God to forgive anything to carry them to their original state.

2. ***God likes mercy and knowledge of God.*** The God is pleased in kindness more than sacrifices and the understanding of God more than burnt offerings. (6:6). This is the crux of his prophesy. As soon as they entered the Land of Canaan, did the unfaithfulness of Israel begin (9:10; 10:9; 13:6) Hosea preached that the reason of their downfall is their Baal worship (4:5, 14; 5:9, 14; 10:4). He reminds them that their sacrifices are not enough to express their gratitude for the Love of the Lord, but they have to know the Lord and live according to his Laws. The Lord is pleased in kindness more than in sacrifices and in understanding the Lord more than in burnt sacrifices.

Contents:

I 1 - 3 Preface

- a. 1:1 Introduction
- b. 1:2-9 The miserable married life of the prophet
- c. 1:10- 2:1 Message of Hope
- d. 2:2-14 The unfaithfulness of Israel and their judgment
- e. 2:15-23 Promise of deliverance
- f. 3. Gomer is bought back

II 4-14 Prophecies

- a. 4-8 Sin of Israel and their judgment
- b. 9-11 Consequences of sin and judgment
- c. 11-12; 13: 1-16 False integrity of Israel and their downfall.
- d. 14 Hope

This book was given the present form in the land of Judah. The prophesy with 14 chapters is poetic and contains many figures of speech. Parables from everyday life are plenty - stubborn mule (4:16), Trap (5:1), young lion (5:14), morning mist (6:4), dough ready to bake (7:4), half baked loaf (7:8), silly pigeon (7:11), crooked bow (7:16) are some of them.

The prime message of his prophecies is the unequalled love of the Lord. Rebuke and chastisement are there, but in the end there are showers of blessings because of the Love of the Lord. How beautiful is the 14th chapter that ends with hope.

Questions:

1. Write about the period when Hosea started his prophesy?
2. What was the event which caused Hosea much sorrow?
3. Describe the important points in the prophesy.

LESSON - 4

MICAH

Objective: God is pleased in kindness and not in sacrifices.

The beginning of the In 7th century BC, Micah started his prophesy. At that time both in Israel and Judah there was moral and social degradation and Micah was with the poor and oppressed. The word Micah means who is equal to the Lord! His sense of justice and zeal were equal to that of Amos. So Micah is also called the resurrected Amos. This prophesy is the basis for religious observance and judicious conduct. Therefore, the prophesy of Micah is named the Magna Carta of prophetic system.

The prophet and the historical background:

When Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah were kings of Judah, the Lord gave his message to Micah who was from the town of Moresheth."But as for me, the Lord fills me with his spirit and power, and gives me a sense of justice and the courage to tell the people of Israel what their sins are." (3:8). He received the power of the Spirit and continued his ministry.

The prophet was moved by the prevalent injustice and the difference between the haves and have nots. Before the downfall of Samaria, Micah had begun his prophesy (BC 722-721). For his pompous life Jotham levied heavy taxes on the poor farmers. Ahaz who ruled later put a heavy burden on the poor again to meet expenses of frequent battles. (1:5, 6). Jerusalem had become a den of evildoers. At this juncture, Micah roared for justice.

Important Ideas: The important thoughts of the prophesy of Micah can be briefed in the following words:

1. ***Real religious vision and worship.*** Micah interprets what is religion (6:6-8). It is not possible to please the Lord with sacrifices. It is not possible for a society where there is no social justice and morals to know the Lord or to serve him. Justice, love and humility have to be practiced amongst the people. Thus Micah gives a basis for religious and social behavior for the people. He declares that those who walk in unjust ways will be punished (3:2). His prophesies were fulfilled in Jerusalem in BC 586.
2. ***Reestablishment of Promises:*** We can see the reestablishment of promises in this prophesy. “He will settle disputes among the nations, among the great powers near and far. They will hammer their swords into ploughs and their spears into pruning knives. Nations will never again go to war, never prepare for battle again.” (4:3). He states about their exile in Babylon and their return (4-10). Above all, he prophesied that the birth place of Jesus would be Bethlehem. “Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are one of the smallest towns in Judah, but out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family line goes back to ancient times.” (5:2).

Contents:

- 1:1; 3:12 Prophecies against Israel and Judah
4:1; 5:15 About the shining future of Israel
6:1; 7:7 Lord’s argument with Israel
7:8-20 Promises for the future

The prophet, who had been engrossed in gloomy thoughts, concludes his message in hope. “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise. When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.” (7:8).

“There is no other god like you, O Lord; you forgive the sins of your people who have survived. You do not stay angry forever, but you take pleasure in showing us your constant love.” (7:18, 19). The prophet had a deep belief of the revival of the people. The above verses show that the prophet was convinced of God’s forgiveness and his love is sufficient to reconcile the people to God.

Questions:

1. What was the reason for Micah to start his prophesy?
2. Why did he raise his voice to bring about social justice?
3. What is the theme of his prophesy? Explain quoting verses.

LESSON - 5

JEREMIAH

Objective: To learn that God's words are spoken impartially.

The book of Jeremiah is the biggest prophetic book. In the Hebrew Bible the name Jeremiah is mentioned 147 times. The word Jeremiah means 'extolled by God.' Jeremiah passed through great trials and tribulations for his God, and therefore he is considered an exempla gratia of Jesus Christ. As he always had a sad expression, he is also called the 'Weeping Prophet.' As he conveyed the message of judgment impartially, he is also known as the 'Prophet of Judgment.'

The life and activities of Jeremiah

Jeremiah is the son of Kilkiah, a priest of Anathoth, a place north of Jerusalem (1:1). God Chose him from the womb of his mother, sanctified and ordained him a prophet to the nations (1:5). Nothing is written about Jeremiah in 2 Kings. There is no mention of even his name. In the book of Chronicles there are some hints about him. "Jeremiah lamented for Josiah...." (2 Chronicles 35:25). Zedekiah did not heed to the word of God spoken through Jeremiah (36:11, 12). There are a few statements like these.

There are few statements in the book of Jeremiah about his way of life and activities. From these we can surmise the following:

1. Jeremiah was called and set apart for the ministry of prophesy during the time of King Josiah. He was set in service when Jeremiah was yet a boy. So he told the Lord, "Sovereign Lord, I don't know how to speak..." (1:6).
2. The Lord gave him courage by telling him that he was chosen by the Lord before he was born and that the Lord would be with him to protect him (1:5-8). The Lord reached out and touched his lips and said to him, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth." (1:9).

3. His message was mighty. “See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant.” (1:10). Even though he served in his native place, he had to suffer ridicule and contempt, especially from his own kinsmen (12:6). They caught him and put him in prison. The King and other people sought to kill him.
4. As a burning fire in his heart, Jeremiah proclaimed the words of the Lord in the midst of oppression. He stood steadfast in his ministry of prophesy (15:6). Later, Jeremiah was put in a dungeon (38:6). He was forcibly taken to Egypt (43:1-5). For forty years he served the Lord and at the end he was stoned to death.

Formation of the book: In BC 604 when Jehoiakim was king of Judah, the Lord God told Jeremiah to write on a scroll everything that the Lord told him (36:1). Then Jeremiah called Baruch, one of his disciples, the son of Neriah and dictated all the words of the Lord and Baruch wrote them on a scroll. At their festival, this scroll was read aloud for all the people to hear. The king was angry at this and put the entire scroll in fire (36:23). Jeremiah made Baruch to write them again. It is believed that the prophecies were made at the time Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were kings. Part of the life history of the prophet was added on to the book to form book of Jeremiah.

This book has three parts:-

1. The poetic form of preaching as seen in chapters 1-25.
2. Details about Jeremiah (19-20:6; 26:1-19:32).
3. Messages formed by reason of repetition of writing and influences of the language of the scribe, as prophecies of Jeremiah (7: 1-8; 17:19-27; 25:1-14).

Summary Outline*

- a. God’s Judgment on Judah (Jer. 1:1 – 45:5)
- b. The call of Jeremiah
- c. Jeremiah condemns Judah for its sins
- d. Jeremiah prophesies destruction
- e. Jeremiah accuses Judah’s leaders

- f. Restoration is promised
- g. God's promised judgment arrives
- h. God's Judgment on the Nations (Jer. 46:1-52:34)
- i. The prophecies about foreign nations
- j. The fall of Jerusalem

**(Outline taken from Life Application Study Bible – Tyndale publishing)*

*Historical Background - Events around Jeremiah's time**

612 BC – Babylon overthrows Assyria (with help of Persia)

609 BC – Josiah killed in battle against Pharaoh Neco of Egypt (2nd Chr 35:20-27)

609 BC – Jehoahaz(son of Josiah) becomes king (2nd Kings 23:31-33)

After 3 months, The Pharaoh captures him and puts him in prison

609 BC – Jehoiakim(son of Josiah) becomes king (2nd Kings 23:34)

The Pharaoh makes Jehoiakim king (after imprisoning Jehoahaz)

605 BC – Babylon defeats Egypt (2nd Kings 24:7)

*605 BC – **Babylon invades Judah for first time***

Daniel taken captive to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-7)

Jehoiakim agrees to pay tribute to Babylon (2nd Kings 24:1)

604 BC – Baruch reads Jeremiah's scroll at a feast (Jeremiah 36)

598 BC – Jehoiachin(son of Jehoiakim) becomes king (2nd Kings 24:8-9)

*597 BC – **Babylon invades Judah second time** (2nd Kings 10-16)*

They take Jehoiachin away as captive to Babylon

597 BC – Zedekiah(son of Josiah) becomes king (2nd Kings 24:17)

He was appointed king by Babylon.

588 BC – Babylon lays seige to Judah (2nd Kings 25:1)

586 BC – Babylon defeats and destroys Judah (2nd Kings 25:2-21)

539 BC – Babylon defeated by alliance of Persia & Medes

538 BC – Cyrus (king of Persia) allows Israelites to return to Judah (2nd Chr 36:22-23)

**(Dates taken from Life Application Study Bible – Tyndale publishing)*

Historical Background:

Jeremiah's ministry appeared at a crucial time in the history of Judah. The prophet advised in vain Jehoakim, the evil-minded, foolish king not to depend on the king of Egypt, but to obey the king of Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews will remain slaves in Babylon for 70 years and afterwards they would return. (The Babylonian empire invaded Judah three times. Each time taking away exiles, until the final invasion when it destroyed Jerusalem.) In BC 597 the forces of Babylon attacked Judah. While the war was going on, the king of Judah passed away. In BC, 597, Judah was completely subdued.(2nd Invasion) Jehoiakim's successor, Jehoiachin and a large number of people of Judah, all the princes, mighty men of valour, all the craftsmen and smiths, were taken as prisoners to Babylon. The Temple was plundered and all the things of value were taken away.

Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah, Jehoiakim's brother, king of Judah and made him pay tribute. Zedekiah wanted to end Babylonian control. So he entered into a treaty with Egypt. Again, the Babylonian army came and burnt down the Temple and the city (BC 586). Zedekiah was caught and his eyes were pulled out. He was put in chains and was carried to Babylon. (2 Kings 25:1-7) (Jeremiah 40:7, 41:18). The king of Babylon showed mercy to Jeremiah and let him free. In fact, he was invited to Babylon. But the prophet decided to stay with the people left over in Jerusalem. Later some of the arrogant men of Judah decided to go to Egypt. They did not believe the words of Jeremiah and forcibly carried all the men and women including Jeremiah to Egypt (43:1-5). After the destruction of Jerusalem, the prophet looked around the burnt and broken down city and wrote a sad poem which is called Lamentations in the Bible. Hebrew tradition says that Jeremiah was killed in Egypt.

Important Thoughts:

We see the influence of Hosea in the prophesy of Jeremiah. He was called by the Lord to inform the leaders and the people at large who do not keep the moral laws and did not listen to God that they would be punished (7:26).

1. A God who waits for the change of heart of his people.

A tendency to do evil has found a place in men's heart. We notice Israel's unnatural way of life in 2:10-13. He said, "If a person can change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then the people who are accustomed to do evil may also do good." (13:23). The relationship with the Lord can be maintained by doing justice (2:13). This is the crux of the whole religion of Israel. The prophet shows them a picture of the Lord who laments (12:7) at the pitiable condition of his people. The Lord is waiting for his people to return to him (3:12-14, 19, 4:1-4, 18:11, 31:3).

2. The God who is alive in history:

God controls events that affect the world. The evildoers will be punished (5:22; 8:7). The Lord is bringing disaster and great destruction from the north (4:6). God would use Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen king for this (27:6). All these were told by Jeremiah to prove that the Lord controls the historical events. But the elders of the people portrayed him as an enemy of the land. The shadow of grace in Jesus Christ was reflected in Jeremiah's messages. The vision of Jeremiah about the new covenant of salvation (3:31-34) was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Contents:

The important subjects in the prophesy of Jeremiah can be briefly stated as follows:

1. Prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem (1:1-25; 38)
2. Promises for Israel and Judah (26:1; 35:19).
3. Sufferings of Jeremiah (45:5)
4. Prophecies against foreign nations (46:1- 51:64)
5. Historical addendum (52:1-34).

Questions:

1. Why is Jeremiah called prophet of lamentation?
2. What is said about his life and prophesy in the book.
3. What is the important message of the prophesy?
4. How Jeremiah life end?

LESSON – 6

ZEPHANIAH

Objective: Turning from worshipping idols, people must serve the one true god.

In the latter part of the 7th century BC; when people were at its worst levels of idol worship and immoral life, Zephaniah came forward and preached judgment. Therefore, he is known as the prophet of judgment. Zephaniah said that the day of God would come and it would be a day of judgment. The prophecies conclude with hope that there would begin a new era of morality after the last judgment. The word Zephaniah means “One who is hidden by God.”

The Prophet and the historical background:

Zephaniah lived during the time Josiah was king of Judah in the latter part of 7th century BC. He was born in the royal family of King Hezekiah and grew up in that background. He started prophesying before the religious reforms brought about by Josiah. He was a contemporary of prophet Jeremiah & Nahum. It can be seen that Zephaniah was influenced by the prophetic messages of Amos, Isaiah and others.

Important Ideas: The important ideas mentioned in this book can be abridged as follows:

1. **The Day of the Lord.** The great day of the Lord is near - very near (1:14-18). Any generation who breaks the law of the Lord, would be punished (Joel 2:28-32). Like Joel, Zephaniah too describes that day. “It will be a day of fury, a day of trouble and distress, a day of ruin and destruction, a day of the Lord. Zephaniah meant punishment of Judah and Jerusalem.

At many times there came the day of the Lord, and it will continue to come. The day of the Lord came upon Sodom and Gomorrah. In AD 70 it came upon Jerusalem. The reason for this is the sin of man. The long patience and mercy of the Lord postpones this day; certainly there would be punishment for sin.

2. **The God who delights in repentance:** We can see the call to repent in this book (2:3). It also describes the blessings such people get (3:10-20). The Lord is their King (3:15), and he delights in his people (3:18-19). The exiled people would be brought home and they would have everlasting joy and prosperity (3:20).

Contents: The main theme of this prophesy can be condensed as follows:

- 1:1-1 The punishment day of the Lord to Judah and to the rest of the world.
- 2:1-15 Judgment on Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia and Assyria
- 3:1-20 Tribulations that come against Jerusalem. The glory of Israel who are delivered from their enemies.

The book ends with the fervent hope that the exiled people would be brought home and they would be famous throughout the world. “The time is coming! I will bring your scattered people home; I will make you famous throughout the world and make you prosperous once again.” The Lord has spoken.” (3:20). The main theme “Day of the Lord” has many meanings. At all times remnants of Israel will be saved. Thus Zephaniah’s prophesy began with judgment and concluded with kindness.

Questions:

1. What are the viewpoints of the prophet about the Day of the Lord?
2. How does the prophet describe the God who is pleased in repentance?
3. How does the book of Zephaniah begin and how does it conclude?

HABAKKUK

Objective: The prophet conveys to the people the truth that the righteous shall live by faith.

The book of Habakkuk tries to find answers to many important problems. The word Habakkuk means 'dear to God' and also 'embrace'. This book which has three chapters and 56 verses concludes with a beautiful poem full of subjects to ponder on. The prophet is trying to find out the reason why the righteous toil and the unrighteous flourish.

The prophet and the historical background:

The book of Habakkuk does not mention who he is and to which village he belongs. After the prophet Samuel, Habakkuk has influenced the thinking of the nations of Israel and Judah. It is possible that he was a priest who belonged to a group of musicians of Levy Tribe. In chapter 3 he gives instructions about musical instruments to be used with Psalms. When we refer to the apocryphal book named Behl and Dragon, it can be assumed that he is the son of Joshua, the Levite. Most of the theologians believe that Habakkuk lived between BC 605-597.

Important Ideas - The important thoughts in this book can be condensed as follows:

Hardship of the righteous and prosperity of the unrighteous:

Why does God tolerate the cruel deeds of the evil men? Why is God silent when they destroy people who are more righteous than they are (1:13) Israel are unjust people. But the Chaldeans (Babylonians) are ferociously evil men. Is it right to punish unjust people with those cruel Chaldeans? The evil man bears seeds of his own destruction. His words of ridicule and curse reveal the same concept. "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it" (Habakkuk 2:11) "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" Proverbs 16:18. Cruelty will lead to self-destruction.

When the prophet waited for an answer from the Lord, he got the answer, “The just shall live by faith.” (2:4). The concept of justification by faith is further improved by St. Paul and is mentioned in his epistles (Romans. 1:17; Galatians. 3:11; Hebrews. 10:38).

2. *The Lord is in the holy temple.* In the midst of all the evil doings, the Lord is sitting on his throne in his holy temple. Let everyone worship him. Many times we hear cries of lamentation in the prophesy (2:6, 9, 12, 15, 19). The reward for the proud evildoers is this. “The Lord is his holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence before him (Habakkuk 2:20).

Contents:

1:1-17 Conversation with the Lord

2:1-20 The just shall live by faith

3:1-15 Thanks giving psalms.

Chapter 3, verse 2 is a prayer, “O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” (3:2). Let this be the prayer of all the generations. Then the prophet praises the glory of the Lord. The last three verses are the golden words of his prophesy (3:17, 18, and 19). Verses 18 and 19 should be our hope in this world full of complex problems were nobody has time for anything. They will comfort us and give us courage. When our expectations wither and life situations become adverse, let us put our burden on the Lord and face the problems surefooted as a deer on a mountain. The Holy Spirit of the Lord helps us to be like Habakkuk.

Questions:

1. “The just shall live by faith.” Describe this statement of Habakkuk.
2. Which is the message for generations given in this prophesy?

LESSON 8

NAHUM

Objective We can understand from this prophesy that God is the Savior of the orphans and the oppressed.

The theme of this prophesies is the ruin of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria. We see the judgment of God on wickedness. The word Nahum means 'Comforter'. There are three chapters and 47 verses in this book.

The prophet and the historical background:

The prophet is from Elkosh (1:1). It is believed that Elkosh is 58 km away from Jerusalem in southwestern Judea. Jerome says it is the Capernaum of Galilee.

The prophet did his ministry between BC 664 and 605. We can assume that he lived at the time of king Hesekiah and prophet Isaiah. On hearing Jonah, the people of Nineveh repented. Later they were immersed in idol worship (2 Kings 18:35). They challenged the Lord God (2 Kings 19: 10-13). The Lord accepted that challenge (2 Kings 19:22-23). The cruelty of the Assyrians was detested by nations. The Babylonians and Medians attacked Assyria simultaneously. The scene is described, "The crack of the whip, the rattle of wheels, the gallop of horses, the jolting of chariots, cavalry troops charge, and desolate (2:10). It is recorded that in BC 331 the emperor Alexander in his victorious march saw the ruins of this ancient city and he was astonished. This book bears witness that any huge man-made establishment built up without God would crumble down.

Important Ideas:

1. *The God is the Lord of History.*

The way of war is failure at the end. Kingdoms established by sword would be destroyed by sword. In the first chapter we see God's anger pours out on such a land (1:1-8). Here the anger of the God against his enemies and its fierceness is depicted. In the love of God we see strong steps against injustice. The power of the Spirit is stronger than the power of the sword.

2. *The God of Hope:*

In this book the anger and enmity are prominent. But we can also see some everlasting truth. A hint is given that the enemies of the people of the Lord will fail. In this book in the midst of cry of judgment, we can hear a sweet voice of peace. “The Lord is good, he protects his people in times of trouble; he takes care of those who turn to him.” (1:7).

This book of prophetic poetry is a golden feather for Old Testament. The holiness of the Lord appears as the judgment against wickedness. He judges the nations and rules the world. He rewards individuals and kingdoms according to their deeds. This book teaches that the Lord is the redeemer of the poor and the oppressed.

Contents:

- 1:1-10 The anger of the Lord for revenge
- 1:11-15 God hates idol worshippers
- 2:1, 3-5 Siege against Nineveh
- 2:6-13 The fall of Nineveh
- 3:1-7 Woe to the blood thirsty city
- 3:8-11 Nineveh and Egypt are alike
- 3:11-19 Nineveh will fall and will drink the cup of God’s anger.

Questions:

1. How did Nineveh become desolate and empty?
2. What are the important ideas expressed in the book of Nahum?

LESSON - 9

OBADIAH

Objective: The Lord God gives his commandments to Israel through his prophet.

The book of Obadiah, having only 21 verses is the smallest in Old Testament books. The word Obadiah means 'God's servant' or 'Worshipper of God'. There are 13 people in Old Testament having the name Obadiah. The main point is punishment of Edom who were enemies of Israel. Obadiah lived at the time of Josiah, king of Judah. He prophesied for five years.

The time of prophesy and the context:

It can be assumed that Obadiah prophesied near about BC 586. It is the time of downfall of Israel.

Edomites are children of Esau. Israelites and Edomites had been enemies for a long time. Edomites were very happy when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem and plundered it in BC 586. Because the Edomites were happy at the destruction of Israel, Obadiah describes the judgment that would fall upon the Edomites.

The main points in the book:

1. *Anger towards your brethren would cause disaster.*

On their way to the Promised Land, Israelites requested Edomites permission to pass through their land. "We refuse to let you pass through our country! If you try, we will march out and attack you," (Number 20:8), declared the Edomites. What an evil attitude not to help their brethren in need!

2. *Arrogance of knowledge will cause downfall.*

The cause of the downfall of Edom is arrogance of knowledge. The prophet points out that their pride of wisdom would bring them disaster. "On the day I punish Edom; I will destroy their clever men and wipe out all their wisdom." (Verse 8). Haughtiness of understanding would bring forth inexplicable misery.

The book concludes with the hopeful note that the Kingdom belongs to God. Those who search God will ultimately be successful. God will lift up the humble. The arrogant are like stubbles. This is the message Obadiah gives to all the generations.

Contents:

Obadiah in a few words depicts the fall of Edom and the protection of Israel.

Questions:

1. What are the main points of the prophesy of Obadiah?
2. Write about the time and context of this prophesy.
3. When did Nebuchadnezzar destroy Jerusalem?

PROPHECIES - A REVIEW:

When we look at the prophecies, we can see a glow of moral strength of Israel in them. Old Testament prophets conveyed Lord's commandments to people so that they could correct themselves. They preached that there would be a life of hope if the people accepted God's ways and return to him.

In the history of Israel 8th century BC was the golden era of prophets. Amos, Isaiah, Hosea & Micah preached during this time. We see Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah and Obadiah in 7th century BC.

These prophets were men of conviction who understood their call from God and who impartially and very strongly criticized without fear or favor those who indulged in immoral ways of life whether they were ruling class or not. Because of that they had to face strong challenges. It is a challenge to us whether we would be willing, to question the injustice and immorality in our society as the prophets did and thus accomplish the will of God. If we are willing to do so, then only we could continue the work of Jesus through us. As the prophets suffered ridicule and other consequences, we too may have to suffer ridicule, criticism, banishment from society and so on. On the other side, we would be justified by truth and would have communion with great people and thus we could have joy, peace, contentment and a sense of fulfillment of a useful life. May the Holy Spirit and the Lord help us to achieve these?

NEW TESTAMENT

LESSON 10

THE GOSPELS

Objective To understand the similarities between the gospels and that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

After the ascension of Jesus, many people wrote gospels (Luke 1:2). However, only four of them have been accepted as canonic gospels and included in the Holy Bible by the Holy Church. Amongst them, the first and fourth ones were written by apostles and second and third ones were written by evangelists. None of these is a complete history of Jesus Christ or a description of the whole public ministry of Jesus. Each of the authors gave importance to a particular viewpoint in the life of Jesus and quoted events and His words to highlight that point. For example, St. Mathew gives prominence to the fact that Jesus is the King of Jews born in the family of David, whose native place was Bethlehem. Even though he was born to Joseph a carpenter from Nazarene. Mathew describes, knowing that Jesus is the king of Jews; the wise men presented him, while he was still an infant, gold, the symbol of kingship. His Gospel was intended for Christians converted from Jews. Also he has quoted many verses from the Old Testament to prove that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

It is generally accepted that the gospel written by Mark is the first one. The necessary information and material was given by St. Peter to his dear disciple, Mark. St. Mathew and St. Luke enlarged this gospel and wrote theirs. These three gospels have many similarities. Therefore, the theologians call them Synoptic Gospels. The gospel written by St. John is different in many ways from the other three. However, when we read all the four gospels, then only we get a good history of Jesus.

Questions:

1. Which gospel was written first?
2. To symbolize his kingship, what did the wise men present Jesus?
3. Which are the Synoptic Gospels? Discuss.
4. Who are the evangelists who wrote gospels?

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

Objective: To understand who was the beloved disciple of Jesus and how he achieved that fortunate position.

The author of the fourth gospel is John, son of Zebedee and brother of James the apostle. The well regarded and original church fathers like, Iranius, Clement of Alexandria, Theophelos of Antioch, famous historian Eusebius and others have confirmed that this gospel was written by John the disciple. This belief is further strengthened by the personal references of the author. In addition to this gospel, the three epistles and the Book of Revelation were written by St. John the disciple.

John's mother was one of the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and helped him (Mathew 27:55-56). In the gospel John has said about himself as the one whom Jesus beloved (13:23; 19:26). When Jesus chose the twelve disciples, he named James and his brother John, 'Boanerges' which means 'Men of Thunder' (Mark 3:17). It is traditionally believed that John was the youngest of the twelve disciples. John was lucky to have special consideration of Jesus and had the most fortunate privilege to look after the mother of Jesus after his crucifixion. While on the cross, Jesus entrusted his mother to John (19:26-27). Of the twelve, except Jude and James, no clear picture is available about the end of the other ten disciples. The Church believes that all others were killed and became martyrs except John who was a prisoner in Patmos for a few years. He lived up to his ripe age and died naturally at Ephesus.

Amongst the apostles, John held an important position. When Jesus resurrected the daughter of Jairus (Luke: 8:51), and at the time of transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:28) and when Jesus went into the garden of Gethsemane to pray, he took John also along with Peter and Jacob with him (Mathew 26:37). To prepare the Last Supper (Passover), Jesus sent John along with Peter and Jacob (Luke 22:7). When Jesus was arrested and taken to Annas for trial (John 18:5) and after the crucifixion of Jesus, John was a close companion of Peter. John went along with Peter to the tomb of Jesus (John 20:4) and later when the lame man was made to walk at the Beautiful Gate

(Acts 3:4), and when arrested for preaching about Jesus (Act 4:3) and when the people of Samaria believed in Jesus, Peter and John went as two representatives of apostles. (Acts 8:14), On all these occasions Peter and John were together. The administrative matters were looked after by Simon Peter and preaching by John. During matrimonial ceremonies, our Church remembers both of them together in a hymn.

Questions:

1. Who were called the “Sons of Thunder”?
2. What was the most fortunate privilege John received?
3. Describe incidents that prove that John had an important position amongst the disciples?
4. Quote the instances when both Peter and John worked together.

LESSON - 12

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

(Continuation)

Objective: Believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God and get eternal life through Him.

John clarifies why he has written this gospel, “These have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him, you may have life.” (20:31). It is possible that John had read the other three gospels before he wrote his book, giving more importance to the Godhead (Divinity) of Jesus Christ. He wrote this book to include those important matters which were not mentioned in the other books and also to highlight to the world the real place of Jesus. Mathew and Luke begin the history of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem. But John sees Jesus as the beginning and end, everlasting, the Word and God, and starts his descriptions. “In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. From the very beginning the Word was with God. Through Him God made all things, not one thing in all creation was made without him” (1:13). He continues, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (1:14).

St. John had written his Gospel towards AD 90. During that time there were blasphemous teachings by different groups of believers. Some taught Jesus was God but refuted he was complete man and some others refuted the Divinity of Jesus itself. John wrote his gospel in order to refute those blasphemous teachings and to establish true faith.

There are many instances in this gospel that clearly establish that Jesus is God:

1. From the very beginning the Word was with God. Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him (1:2-3).
2. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, which is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him. (John 1:18).
3. “Jesus answered, “You belong to this world here below, but I come from above.”” (8:23).
4. “I come from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own authority, but he sent me” (8:42).
5. “I am telling you the truth,” Jesus replied. “Before Abraham was born, ‘I am’” (8:58).
6. “The Father and I are one” (10:30).
7. “Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made” (17:5).
8. “Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”” (20:28).

At the same time there are many instances to show that Jesus was Complete Man.

1. “Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat down by the well” (4:6).
2. “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled” (11:33).
3. “Jesus wept.” (11:35).
4. “Deeply moved once more, Jesus went to the tomb” (11:38).
5. “I am thirsty” (19:28).

Questions:

1. What is the purpose of St. John writing this gospel?
2. When was this gospel written?
3. Which are the portions that reveal the Godhead (divinity) of Jesus?
4. Which are the portions that prove that Jesus was complete Man?

LESSON - 13

THE CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

Objective: Jesus shows through his public ministry how a true shepherd should work.

The contents of this gospel can be generally divided into three parts. The first part consisting of chapters 1 to 12 has details of the public ministry of Jesus. The second part consisting of chapters 13 to 17 has details about his personal ministry for his disciples. The third part consisting of chapters 18 to 21 has details about his passion, resurrection and subsequent events.

FIRST PART:

St. John used the term signs for miracles. There is only one miracle that is included in all the gospels; Jesus feeding 5000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish, John has also reported another event of Jesus walking on water, which was also reported by St. Mathew and St. Mark (6:15-21). St. John has not recorded the other miracles seen in the other gospels. However, he has written some miracles which are not mentioned in the other gospels:

1. Water was turned to wine at Cana (2: 1-11).
2. Curing the son of a government official in Capernaum (4:46-54).
3. Curing the sick man lying at the porch of Bethsaida pool for 38 years (5:2-15).
4. Curing the man born blind (9:1-7).
5. Resurrecting Lazarus (11:1-44).

In the first part of the gospel, besides the above miracles many other events have been described in detail. These are;

A..Activities of John the Baptist (1:15-36).

B. Marriage at Cana (2:1-11)

C. The incident of Jesus driving away the money changers and sellers of pigeons and cattle out of the temple (2:13-22)

D. The incident of the woman who was caught in adultery and was about to be stoned to death, being sent away with an advice not to sin again. (8:3-11)

E. Giving sight to the man who was born blind (9:1-41)

John has not written continuously about the public ministry of Jesus, as we see them in the gospel of Mathew, chapters 5, 6 and 7. But he has quoted many important conversations Jesus had with people from different walks of life.

1. The discussion with Nicodemus about being born again (3: 1-15). The verse, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not die but have everlasting life (3:16)” is extolled as one of the most noble verses in the Bible.
2. The incident of Jesus talking with the woman of Sychar, of Samaria town about matters like living water, eternal life, salvation, true worship and Messiah, and the events that followed are vividly described (4:5-26) in this Gospel.
3. John also recorded the talk Jesus had about the bread of life which ultimately brought to light the need for eating his flesh and drinking his blood (6:25-65).
4. Verses from 10:1-18, explain who is a good shepherd and how he works.

Questions:

1. Which is the miracle that has been described in all the gospels?
2. What are the miracles John recorded which are not seen in other gospels?
3. Which is the verse extolled as the most noble one in Bible?
4. In the town Sychar of Samaria, what were the subjects Jesus discussed with the woman?

**THE CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN
SECOND PART**

Objective: Bring forth good fruits understanding that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

In his personal ministry for disciples, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and taught them a glorious lesson (13:3-15). Then Jesus told them without any ambiguity that one of them would betray him. "I will dip some bread in the sauce and give it to him, he is the man. So he took a piece of bread, dipped it and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot" (13:26-27). Jesus then told them of the need to love one another, narrating his own conduct (13:34-35). Peter told Jesus that he was ready to die for his Master. Jesus replied to him, "The cock shall not crow, till thou has denied me thrice". (13:37-38).

Jesus told his disciples that he and the Father are one, and that he is going to prepare a place for them. He also gave suitable reply to Thomas and Philip who had asked him some questions regarding this. He strengthened his disciples saying that all their requests would be fulfilled and that he would send them the Holy Spirit. He promised them that he would come again to the world (14:1-31).

The relationship between Jesus and his disciples is compared to that of a vine and its branches. The branches can bear fruit only when they are on the vine. Likewise, the followers of Jesus could do good work only when they have lively connection with Jesus. The main theme here is love. As if to prove that St. John is rightly called the "Apostle of Love," the word love has been mentioned several times in this part (15:1-27). In addition, in his first epistle "God is Love" is said twice in the same chapter (2 John 4:9, 16).

Jesus cautioned them about the sufferings his followers would have. He told them this because it was time for him to depart from them. But they do not have to be sad because he shall send the holy spirit. The holy spirit will give insight to the people of the world about sin, justice and judgment. By his departure those who will be sad will rejoice later. Father loves those who believe

that Jesus came from him (16:1-27). Although at the hour of need, all the disciples would be scattered and abandon him, Jesus would not be alone. He is not really alone because the Father is with him. Jesus told them to be brave as he has overcome the world (16:32-33).

The 17th chapter is the conversation between Jesus and the Father about fulfillment of his work in this world and his prayer to the Father for those who believed in him. Theologians call this the “Prayer of the High Priest.”

Questions:

1. Why is St. John known as the apostle of love?
2. What is the caution that Jesus gives to his followers?
3. Who will give insight to the world about sin, justice and judgment?
4. What is called the “Prayer of the High Priest”?
5. Write the context. “The cock shall not crow, till thou has denied me thrice”.

LESSON - 15

THE CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN THIRD PART PASSION - RESURRECTION

Objective: Jesus who defeated death gives us peace through his lively presence with us.

Jesus went with his disciples except Judas to the garden at Gethsemane where he used to go often. Judas went there with a group of Roman soldiers and some Temple guards. They arrested Jesus. Then Peter drew out his sword and smote the High Priest’s slave, cutting off his right ear. Jesus asked Peter to put the sword back in its place (18:1-11).

They took Jesus to the house of Annas for trial. At that time Peter went with John and entered the courtyard of the house. There Peter had to say thrice that he did not know of Jesus. Then the rooster crowed. (18:12, 27). Later Jesus was brought before Pilate. The Jewish authorities did not go inside the palace, for they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to

eat the Passover meal. (Jesus knew that he would be crucified on the Passover day of the Jews, on Friday. So he had celebrated the Passover early with his disciples.) When Pilate tried him, he could not find any fault in him, and wanted to set him free (18:28-40).

Pilate was convinced that Jesus had done nothing wrong. However, to please the Jews, he had Jesus whipped. The soldiers made a crown of thorny branches and put it on his head. They then put a purple robe on him and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him. Pilate said to them again that he found no reason to condemn him. When the crowd kept on shouting and threatening, Pilate once again sat on the judge's seat in the place called 'The Stone Pavement' (In Hebrew the name is 'Gabbatha') and handed Jesus over to them to be crucified (19:6-16).

He went out carrying his cross and came to 'the Place of Skull,' (In Hebrew it is called 'Golgotha'). There they crucified Jesus. They also crucified two thieves, one on his right side and another on the left. It was a Friday. A notice "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" was put on the cross. Jewish authorities wanted to change the notice, but Pilate said, "What I have written is written." (19: 17-22) The four soldiers who were there divided his clothes into four parts, one part for each. They did not want to tear his robe. So they drew lots to see who would get it (19:23-24).

Standing close to 'Jesus' cross were his mother, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene and John, his disciple. Jesus, lying on the cross told his mother "Behold is your son" and to John "Behold your mother" From that time John took care of her in his home (19:25-27).

Later Jesus said "I am thirsty". Jesus drank the cheap wine which the soldiers gave him, and said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his Spirit (19:28-30). They did not break the legs of Jesus, since Jesus had already died when the soldiers came to break the legs of those that were not dead lying on the cross. However, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water (19:31-37)

Joseph of Arimathea, a secret follower of Jesus took his body with the permission of Pilate, wrapped it in linen with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial and placed it in a new tomb which was in a nearby garden (19:38-42).

Early Sunday morning Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the tomb was open. She did not see the body of Jesus. She went running to Simon Peter and John and informed them. At once they came running to the tomb and saw only the linen and returned. But Mary stood near the tomb crying. Then the two angels who sat there asked her why she was crying. She turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but did not recognize him. When Jesus called her, "Mary," she recognized him and said, "Rabboni." Jesus told her to tell his disciples that he, having risen is returning to the Father. Mary Magdalene got the first opportunity to see the Resurrected Jesus (20:1-18).

That night when the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace be with you." He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (20:19-25). Thus Jesus himself gave the disciples power to forgive sins. Using this power confession has been established in the church. Those churches who teach that there is no need to confess before a priest is in fact denying the resurrected Jesus himself who gave this power to his disciples.

When Jesus visited the disciples, Thomas was not there. When they told him that they saw Jesus, he did not believe them and said that he would believe only after he sees the pierced hand of Jesus and puts his hand where the spear pierced his side. Next Sunday the disciples were together again indoors. Thomas was also there. Jesus appeared and stood among them and wished them peace. Then Jesus showed Thomas his hands and the side. Thomas believed whole heartedly and said, "My Lord and My God!" (20:21-31).

On another occasion, Peter, John, Thomas and some other disciples went fishing in the sea of Galilee. All the night they tried but did not catch a thing. At dawn, Jesus stood at the water's edge and told them to throw the net on the right side of the boat. They got 153 big fish. When they reached ashore, Jesus gave them bread and fish to eat. This fishing and later events are not mentioned in the other gospels. Then Jesus called Peter separately and asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than the others?" Peter replied, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love thee." Jesus said to him, "Take care of my lamps." When Jesus asked him again the same question, he repeated his reply. Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep." A third time to him, "Lord you know every thing, you know that I Love you." Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep."

(In a weak moment Peter had denied Jesus thrice. He repented immediately and begged for pardon. He has now publicly announced his love for Jesus thrice and did penance for his sin.)

Jesus himself gave Peter authority to lead and look after the church in the presence of other apostles. It can be seen that this authority was accepted by other apostles from the activities of the apostles and the first church, as seen in the book "Acts of Apostles". Jesus also hinted that in his old age Peter would be bound and taken to a far away place which he would not like (21:18-19).

John concludes his gospel saying that he was an eyewitness for all the events that had happened and that he himself has written this book (21:24).

Questions:

1. What was the notice written on the cross of Jesus?
2. Who got the blessed first opportunity to see the Resurrected Jesus?
3. How did Jesus give the authority to Peter to lead and look after the church?
4. Why did Pilate hand over Jesus to Jews, even though he could not find any fault in Jesus?
5. The Jews did not enter the palace of Pilate when Jesus was being tried. Why?

LESSON - 16

PECULIARITIES OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Objective: Understand clearly the peculiarities of the Gospel of John.

- A. *John has written in his gospel describing the occasions several persons had publicly confessed the true nature of christ.*
 1. John the Baptist told the people, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29).
 2. Andrew told his brother Simon Peter, "We have found the Messiah." (1:41).

3. Philip found Nathaniel and told him, "We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the book of the Law and whom the prophets also wrote about. He is Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth" (1:45).
4. "Teacher," answered Nathaniel, "You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" (1:49).
5. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom should we go? You have the words that give eternal life. And now we believe and know that you are the Holy one who has come from God" (6:68-69).
6. "Yes Lord!" Martha answered. "I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world" (11:27).
7. After the resurrection, Thomas told Jesus, "My Lord and My god!" (20:28).

B. Parables and similes:

Parables of the Good Samaritan, Prodigal Son, the farmer who sows and the like, seen in other gospels are not included in the gospel of John. He has written many similes which Jesus spoke about himself. The important ones are given below:

1. I am the bread of life (6:48)
2. I am the light of the world (8:12)
3. I am the gate (10:9)
4. I am the good shepherd (10:11)
5. I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)
6. I am the way, the truth, and the life (14:6)
7. I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener (15:1)

C. The main differences between the gospel of St. John and other gospels.

1. The other gospels describe mainly the ministry at Galilee and the other side of Jordan. But John gives importance to the ministry in Judea. John has recorded those events the other gospel writers omitted.

2. The other gospels say about one Passover only. John has described about three Passovers (2:13; 6:4; 12:1). This shows that Jesus had his public ministry at least for three years.
3. The other gospels revealed more of the human nature of Jesus. John gave more importance to the God head (divinity) of Jesus.
4. By driving away the merchants and others from the Jerusalem temple, Jesus cleansed the Temple. The other gospels say it happened at the end of the public ministry of Jesus. John says it happened at the beginning of the public ministry (Mathew 21:12- 16, Mark; 11:1-11; Luke 19:45-46; John 2:15).
5. The other gospels have recorded many parables. John has not written even one.

Questions:

1. What are the similes Jesus used to describe himself?
2. Write the important differences between the gospel according St.John and the other gospels.

LESSON - 17

CATHOLIC EPISTLES

Objective: We learn the common etiquettes through the Epistle of James.

Of the 27 books in the New Testament, excluding the four gospels, Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation, 21 books are epistles. Out of these, 14 epistles are written by Paul to various churches and individuals. You would have learned about some of these in your previous classes. Out of the remaining seven, three are written by John, two by Peter and one each by Jude and James. Let us learn about them briefly. None of these epistles are written specifically for a church or individual. As they were written generally for the church, they are called general or Catholic Epistles. During the Holy Qurbana, either from the Acts of the Apostles or from these Catholic Epistles, the deacons read standing at the left side (north side) of the sanctum sanctorum. Although four different people have written these epistles except for the difference in the language, there is much similarity among themselves and with the epistles of St.Paul.

The Epistle Written by St. James:

Most of the theologians believe that this epistle was written by James brother of Jesus (Mathew 13:55). James was a perfectly pious God fearing person. He, however, did not believe Jesus as the Son of God during the life time of Jesus (John 7:5). When the resurrected Jesus appeared to him, there was tremendous change in him (1 Cor 15:7). He became a member of the church and he was recognized as an important leader of the church in Jerusalem. Paul, after his conversion when he reached Jerusalem, stayed with Peter and it is recorded that he met James, brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19). Moreover, in the verse Gal 2:9, James, Peter and John were considered the pillars of the church. The first named James is the brother of Jesus. In the synod held at Jerusalem, (Acts 15:15-16) James presided and we remember him in the 5th diptychs as the first chief priest of Jerusalem, blessed, apostle and martyr. (James, son of Zebedee and brother of John was put to death by sword at the early stage of the church. (Acts 12:2). At that time, the church was not large enough for James to write a letter to far away churches. So it is illogical to think that James, son of Zebedee wrote this epistle.)

For whom it is written:

In the beginning verse itself it is noted that this epistle is written to the 12 tribes which are scattered abroad. "Twelve tribes and Dan to Bersheba"- these words meant all Israelites. Israelites' Promised Land is Canaan. Joshua divided the whole land of Canaan among all the tribes of Israel. In course of time, many Israelites due to various reasons were staying in other countries outside Canaan. People of all tribes were among such people. The scattered twelve tribes means this group of people. James having accepted Jesus as Messiah, Son of God; believed those Israelites staying in other countries that receive Jesus Christ as the Son of God, are true Israelites. He has written this epistle for those Jewish Christians around AD 60.

The subject of the epistle:

He has written about practical wisdom and guidance for Christian attitudes and conduct in every day life. He exhorted them to treat fellow believers who are poor, with brotherly love (2:1-13). Faith should not restrict itself, but should be shown in deeds (2:14-26). Though tongue is a small limb, unless it is controlled as we put bits in horses' mouth to control them, there are chances

of great danger (3:1-12). You should be humble (4:10), these and many more are mentioned in the epistle. He concludes the epistle by pointing out the importance and need for praying for the sick and anointing him with oil (5:13-18) in the name of the Lord.

Questions:

1. What is meant by general epistles or Catholic Epistles?
2. Name the apostles who are called the 'pillars of the church?'
3. Who are the scattered 12 tribes?
4. What are the admonitions St. James gives to us?

LESSON - 18

EPISTLES WRITTEN BY PETER

Objective: Our church is built on the faith proclaimed by St. Peter, the leader of the Apostles.

The Author:

Peter who became the leader of the apostles was from Bethsaida, an important fishing centre near Capernaum, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee (John 1:44). His father's name is recorded as Jona in Mathew 16:17 and as John in John 1:44. Both these are synonyms. At first Peter was known as Simon. Jesus named him Peter (Mark 3:16); Luke 6:14). When some of the earlier disciples stopped following Jesus, Jesus asked the twelve, "Would you also like to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God." (John 6:66-69). When Jesus asked his disciples who he was, Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." (Mathew 16:16). Jesus was pleased with his reply. Jesus described his firm faith as a rock and he gave a new name to Simon as Peter which means a rock. Our church is built on this faith proclaimed by St. Peter. The word Cepha also means rock.

In many of the events when names of the disciples are used, he is mentioned as Peter. Example where names of the apostles are mentioned

(Mathew 10:2); when the daughter of Jairus was resurrected (Luke 8:51); where the event of transfiguration is described (Mathew 17:1); when they went to the garden at Gethsemane (Mark 14:33); and when Jesus foretold him that he would deny Jesus (Luke 22:34). But when personal matters are written about him, the apostle is mentioned with his old name Simon. Example when catching fish at Lake Galilee is described (Mathew 4:18); when he was told to go to the lake and drop a line to catch fish for a coin to pay Temple tax (Mathew 17:25); when his mother-in-law was laid up with high fever (Luke 4:38); and when Jesus speaks to him about the test by Satan(Luke22:31) “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat” .

The resurrected Christ in the presence of the other apostles entrusted Peter the responsibility of looking after his lambs and taking care of his sheep (John 21:15-17). Jesus also told him to strengthen his brothers. (Luke 22:32). Jesus foretold him that in his old age, he would be bound and will have to leave his native place (John 21:18).

Peter worked in accordance with the trust Jesus laid in him. He understood the responsibility and took the leadership in establishing the church in Jerusalem. Then He established his apostolic throne in Antioch. We remember this day on February 22. Later he went to Rome and it is traditionally believed that there also he fulfilled his work as the leader of the church. Peter and his brother Andrew were fishing at the Sea of Galilee. Jesus called them and told that he would make them fishers of men (Mathew 4:19). Peter made his calling a reality by guiding many to Jesus Christ.

At the time of persecution by Nero the emperor in AD 67, in Rome Peter was killed by crucifixion head down. The Church celebrates the memory of Peter on June 29.

Questions:

A. Name the following:

1. Native Place of St. Peter.
2. Father of St. Peter.
3. Meaning of the word Cepha.

4. Place where St. Peter established his apostolic throne.

5. The emperor who crucified St. Peter.

B. Write the context.

1. “I will make you fishers of men”.

2. “You have the words of eternal life”.

C. Write the dates:

1. Commemoration day of the establishment of the Throne at Antioch.

2. Commemoration day of St. Peter.

LESSON - 19

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PETER

Objective: We who are cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb of God can attain eternal salvation and enter the eternal kingdom.

Of the general epistles, for many reasons the most important one is the First Epistle of Peter. The author describes himself as “Apostle of Jesus Christ” (1:1); “A witness of Christ’s sufferings,” “and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed” (5:1). As dictated by Peter, Silas has written it. Mark was also there with Peter (5:12-13). The epistle says that it is from Babylon. In fact, it was written in Rome which city is referred to as Babylon. At the time of persecution by Emperor Nero in AD 64, this epistle was written from Rome to give courage to those who were withdrawing from the church fearing the persecution and to convince them that all oppressions were only for a short while.

Since the original text of this epistle was written in such a fine linguistic style, some theologians even doubted that it could not have been written by Peter, a fisherman who had no formal education. If we look into the tremendous change Peter had after receiving the Holy Spirit and to the many beautiful orations of Peter, such doubts have no standing. In addition, Silas who wrote it was a linguist by himself.

In the Acts of Apostles three important speeches of Peter have been included. They are - 1. At the day of Pentecost. Acts of Apostles 2: 14-36), 2. At Solomon's Porch (Acts 3:11-26), and 3. the speech before the High Priest and elders of Jews (4:5-12). The fact that not only the ideas but the same verses used in the above speeches are used in the epistle is an added evidence that this epistle was written by Peter. It can be understood that the first church had recognized that this epistle was written by Peter, as elders of the early church such as Iranius, Clement and others have quoted verses from this epistle and said that Peter had written so.

Contents of the Epistle:

The contents of the first epistle of Peter can be summarized as follows. The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives hope to those who follow him. The sinners were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God (Jesus). He was there at the beginning of the world and he will reveal himself in the last days. Only the members of the family of Aaron of the Levy Tribe were chosen as priests. The heathens were away from God in those days. But all, all those who received Jesus Christ as their Savior, irrespective of their ancestry, according to the grace of the Lord, are "the chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation and God's own people" (2:9). Christians should be examples to others and should obey all lawful authority (2:13-15). Men and women should lead an exemplary family life (3:1-7). He then states about the importance of baptism. (3:19-21) To suffer for the name of Jesus Christ is a blessing and hence we have to live a holy life. We should give time for prayer and love and serve one another (4:1-11). The priests of the church should live a model life, and love and lead the people whom they serve (5:1-6). He advises us to leave all the worries with Jesus, because he cares for you (5:7). Peter affirms that if you will stay firm in your faith, the temporary difficulties will vanish and you can attain eternal salvation and he concludes his letter with benediction.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER:

There has not been raised any objection about the author of this epistle. The epistle begins by saying Peter the servant and apostle of Jesus Christ. He entreats us to add to our lives faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, Christian affection and love and assures us that if we observe these, entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior is

possible. (1:1-11) “Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance,”(1:13) wrote Peter knowing that his death is near. So this letter should have been written in AD 66. He was killed in AD 67. He foretold them about false teachers who will bring in destructive, untrue doctrines. He reminds us about the band of angels who sinned and were removed from grace; the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, show us how the sinners were destroyed and the just were saved (2:1-19). It is more dangerous to have church members who sin and live wicked lives than the enemies from outside. He admonishes such people in very strong language. He has compared them with dogs that turn to its vomit and pigs which are cleansed and then turn again and roll in dirt (2:20-22).

Peter clarifies that this is his second letter and it is written to those who have received the first letter (3:1). Therefore, any doubt about the author of the first letter is set naught. At the time of Noah, God punished the earth with a flood and God had given an assurance after the flood that a flood will never again destroy all living beings” (Gen. 9:15). The apostle says very clearly that the next destruction will be by fire (3:7, 10). God has extended the time of destruction of all, as he wants all to turn away from their sins (3:9-13). St.Peter also mentions about the significant letters written by his dear friend St.Paul (3:15-16). In the New Testament this is the only reference about another writer. The letter concludes with exhortation to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Questions:

1. How does the author describe himself?
2. Who wrote the letter when St.Peter dictated it?
3. What is the proof to show that the author of this letter is St.Peter himself?
4. What are the counsels Peter gives in his first letter?
5. Through his second letter what counsel did St.Peter give?

THE EPISTLES ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

Objective: Live in fellowship with God, knowing the true faith that Jesus Christ was Complete God and at the same time Complete Man. The author describes himself in the introduction of the letter.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN:

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life” John 1:1. John continues “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us.” (1 John 1:3). Thus John said about his intention in writing this letter.

Once Jesus said to his disciples, “As for you, how fortunate you are! Your eyes see and your ears hear. I assure you that many prophets and many of God’s people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not and to hear what you hear, but they did not” (Mathew 13:16-17). Thus John the apostle was fortunate to see the incarnate Son of God with his own eyes and to hear his voice with his own ears; and he writes this letter to those who were not so fortunate.

John clarifies that the subject matter of his letter is the words that he heard from Jesus (1:5). Atonement of sin is through the blood of Jesus. A sinner has to repent and confess his sins; then only shall he receive forgiveness. A Christian who understands all these things but does not obey his words is a liar (2:4). One who loves his brother lives in true light.

In the course of time false teachings spread in the church and the activities against the teachings of Christ strengthened. Some questioned the God head (divinity) of Jesus. Concerning them John wrote, “Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son” (2:22). Some others denied the complete Manhood of the Son of God. Concerning them John wrote, “By this you know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world” (4:2-3). The main intention of this epistle is to warn the believers against such false teachings.

The usual prelude or the concluding blessings are not seen in this epistle. For whom it is written is not clear. It is assumed that while the apostle was staying in the Island of Patmos (Ephesus), he wrote this epistle to the various churches in Asia Minor.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN:

In the beginning of the letter, John calls himself 'Elder.' It is not clear for whom it is written. It is addressed to the 'Elect Lady and her children; and the letter ends with, 'the children of your sister greet you.' There are two schools of thought among theologians that the letter is addressed to an important lady and her children, and the other is that the Church is personified as mother and its members as children.

The epistle is very short. The main counsel of this letter is to make the true believers alert against the false teachers who deny the Godhead (divinity) as well as the Manhood (complete man) of Jesus Christ. It was written near about the time when he wrote the first epistle from Ephesus.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN:

As in the second epistle, John describes himself as 'Elder' in the third letter also. It is addressed to Gaius. The relationship John had with Gaius was as strong as the relationship of Paul and Timothy. Tradition says that later Gaius became a bishop in Asia Minor. This letter was also written from Ephesus.

In this small letter, the apostle has used the word truth six times. He desired that the members of the church must understand and believe the true faith that Jesus Christ is the Complete God and Complete Man.

It was the accepted custom in those days to receive traveling evangelists and attend to them. In certain churches some local leaders were there who rejected the apostle. John praised the work of Gaius and concluded his letter with the hope of seeing him personally in the near future.

Questions:

1. What was it, that many prophets and righteous people wanted to see and hear? Where they could not fulfill their desire, the apostles had that fortune. What was that fortune the apostles got?

2. Who is an Antichrist?
3. What is the spirit of Antichrist?
4. There are two different opinions amongst the theologians about the second epistle of John. What are they?
5. What is the main theme of the second epistle?
6. What is John's desire as to the belief and life of the church members as revealed in the third epistle?

LESSON - 21

THE EPISTLE WRITTEN BY JUDE

Objective: Those who reject Jesus Christ cannot bring forth fruits.

The author describes himself in the beginning of the letter as a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James. Among the theologians there are many opinions as to who is Jude. When he says that he is the brother of James, James must be a well known person so that others can identify him easily. In the early church, such a James is the brother of Jesus.

Paul says three names as pillars of the church. In that the first name is that of James (Gal. 2:9). James had a younger brother named Judas (Mathew 13:55). Most of the theologians believe that this Judas is the author of this epistle. It is not clear for whom the epistle was written or from where it was written. In the beginning the author writes "To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." Even though it is not specified for whom it was written; the epistle points towards the false teachings about Jesus Christ spread by enemies of the church.

He forewarns those who reject Jesus Christ telling them about the punishment of God, received by the angels; Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam and Korah. He compares such people to clouds without water, late autumn trees without fruit, raging waves of the sea, wandering stars and so on. He calls those who cause trouble in the church as animal persons not having the Spirit. Believers have to observe certain things. They should live a clean life and wait for eternal life. They should try to bring back those who had gone astray and should show compassion to others. Jude concludes the letter by giving praise to the only God our Savior.

Questions:

1. How does Jude introduce himself?
2. With whom does he compare those who reject Jesus Christ?
3. How does he rebuke those who cause division in the church?
4. What are the duties of a true believer?

CHURCH HISTORY

MODERN PERIOD IN MALANKARA CHURCH

LESSON 22

THE LAST DAYS OF MOR DIONASIVS V

Mor Dionasivus V was first among the illustrious Metropolitans of the Malankara Church. He served the Malankara church after being consecrated by H.H. Patriarch Yacoob II. He continued his service to Malankara church with the blessings of His Holiness' successors in office, Their Holinesses Moran Peter III, Abdul Messiah and Abdulla II. He showed absolute allegiance to the Patriarchs of the Church. He struggled hard to regain all the churches from the Marthomites after prolonged court battles. He did many things for the social development of the members of the Church. He established the Parumala Seminary and the St. Thomas Press at Kottayam Seminary. He authorized printing of Texts for the liturgy (Thaksa) and festivals. He started Monthly magazines under the titles '*The Malankara Edavaka Pathrika*' and '*The Syrian Evangelist*'. He established many schools including the M.D.Seminary High School at Kottayam in 1892. He was the founder of the Trivandrum Church and the Monastery at Vettickal. In 1901 the silver jubilee of his ordination was celebrated at Kottayam in an unprecedented manner. There were some disheartening events during these times. Mor Geevarghese Mar Gregorioso Metropolitan, who was considered to be his successor the saintly bishop of the diocese of Niranam, passed away in 1902 and was entombed at Parumala church. In 1907 Kadavil Mor Athanasius Paulose of the Ankamaly-Kottayam diocese passed away and was entombed at Aluva.

Patriarch Mor Abdul Messiah was excommunicated and Moran Mor Ignatius Abdulla II was consecrated to his position in the year 1906. This event was officially intimated to all the churches in Malankara through a circular by Mor Dionasius V.

All Metropolitans in Malankara except Mor Dionasius V and Mor Ivanios Murimattom passed away. The Malankara Association then elected Remban Paulose Kochuparampil and Remban Geevarghese Vattaseril to the seat of Metropolitans and they were sent to the Patriarchate of Antioch. At that time, His Holiness the Patriarch was at Jerusalem on his way to London. Remban Paulose Kochuparampil and Remban Geevarghese Vattaseril reached before the Patriarch in Jerusalem and submitted their papers of selection by the Malankara association. They were then consecrated at St. Mark's Monastery (*Sehion Malika*) as Metropolitans on 31 May 1908 under the names Mor Coorelose Paulose and Mor Dionasius Geevarghese. They reached Malankara in July 1909 along with the newly consecrated Patriarchal delegate to India Mor Osthathios Sleebea Metropolitan. Mor Dionasius Joseph V Metropolitan of eternal memory expired on July 11, 1909 and was entombed at the Old Seminary Chapel, Kottayam.

The Malankara Association convened a meeting and selected Mor Dionasius Geevarghese Vattaseril to be the Malakara Metropolitan. The election of Mor Dionasius Geevarghese Vattaseril was forwarded to H.H. Patriarch Mor Abdulla and based on the confirmation received from the Patriarch the installation ceremony of Mor Dionysius was conducted at Kottayam under the leadership of Mor Ivanios Murimattom, Mor Coorelose Paulose and Mor Osthathios Sleebea. Mor Dionysius is known in church history as *Vattaseril Thirumeni* and also as *Mor Dionasius VI*. During this time, the co-trustees of the church at that time were Konattu Mathan Corepiscopo and Mr.C.J.Kurian. A split among them started when the Metropolitan started handling the church properties single handedly without the knowledge of the co-trustees. This was the beginning of the struggles and litigations in the church which is still continuing.

Questions

1. What are the main contributions of Mor Dionasius V ?
2. What are the disheartening events that happened in the Malankara Church during the last of Mor Dionasius V?
3. Who were elected as Metropolitans during the reign of Mor Dionasius V? Where, when and by whom were they consecrated as Metropolitan?
4. Who became the Malankara Metropolitans after Mor Dionasius V?
5. How did the split in Malankara Church begin?

LESSON 23

THE APOSTOLIC VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS PATRIARCH ABDULLA TO MALANKARA

His Holiness Moran Mor Ignatius Abdulla II, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East arrived at Bombay on 24th September 1909. Mor Dionasius VI and the leaders of the community warmly received him in Bombay. At Kottayam a very grand reception was arranged. His Holiness then proceeded to meet His Highness Sree Moolam Thirunal, the ruler of the then state of Travancore. After his return to Kottayam he concentrated on the administrative arrangements of the church and asked the newly consecrated Metropolitans to sign the legal document of allegiance. The Metropolitans consecrated by His Holiness Patriarch Peter III had submitted signed documents. Mor Coorelose Metropolitan submitted the deed without hesitation. But Mor Dionysius hesitated to present the deed. Moreover he started to spread scandals against His Holiness. He prompted his supporters to spread the scandal that His Holiness is a despot and autocrat. This being the same Patriarch to whom he vowed allegiance to at the time of consecration, from whom he received the order of confirmation as the Malankara Metropolitan and to whom a very grand reception was hosted under his leadership. When he found that His Holiness will not side with him on his autocratic attitude, he prompted his partisans to spread all scandals against His Holiness. His Holiness summoned the Malankara Association at Kottayam on 28 November 1909. The partisan group of Mor Dionasius with his supporters created turbulence in the conduct of the meeting. The result was the formation of two rival groups in the church one

the supporters of His Holiness and the second the partisans of Mor Dionasius. The former known as the Patriarch group is called the *Bava Kakshi* and the Metropolitan group, *Metran Kakshi*. The co trustees Konattu Mathen Corepicopo and C.J. Kurian stood strongly behind His Holiness the Patriarch.

His Holiness consecrated Pynadathu Paulose Remban as the Metropolitan of Ankamaly diocese on May 27, 1910 with the title Mor Athanasius at the Akaparampu Church. He formed the Knanaya diocese and a Metropolitan Mor Severiose Geevarghese Edavazhikkal was consecrated on 28th August 1910 for the Knanaya diocese.

Mor Dionasius continued to spread dissension and the church had to face struggles. Instead of making any compromises he tried to create more problems in the church through his supporters. Thus His Holiness was forced to excommunicate Mor Dionasius VI.

In 1911 His Holiness consecrated Holy Chrism, *Holy Mooron* at Mulanthuruthy Church. He also summoned the Malankara Association at Aluva and elected Paulose Mor Coorilose as the Malankara Metropolitan, Konattu Mathen Corepiscopos as Clergy trustee and C.J. Kurian as Layman trustee. It should be specially noted that the circular letter for the Mooron Consecration and the Malankara Association was sent by Murimattom Mor Ivanios. His Holiness returned from Malankara in the month of October 1911.

The next step of Mor Dionasius VI Metropolitan paved the foundation for the continuing split in the Malankara Church. Mor Dionysius knew very well that the relation with the Patriarchate of Antioch was necessary for the perfection of the Church. But he did not take the right step. He brought the deposed and excommunicated Patriarch Mor Abdul Messiah to Malankara in 1912 and consecrated Kallaseril Punoose Remban as metropolitan. They also consecrated Mor Ivanios Murimattom as the Catholicose. Mor Dionysius himself did not attend these consecrations.

The acts of Mor Abdul Messiah shows that he was not a sane person. He did not have any authority as the Patriarch because he was deposed and excommunicated. How can it be valid if he consecrates a regional head when he does not have any authority? Moreover the establishment of the Catholicate has to be done by the decisions of the Universal Synod of the church. The person to the post of the Catholicose has to be elected by at least the regional synod. Nothing was done. It is the tradition of the church that there should be

at least two Metropolitans along with the Patriarch to consecrate a Metropolitan. Exceptions to this rule are given only very rarely. This tradition was violated here and the position given by the excommunicated Patriarch was null and void. Knowing all these Mor Dionysius kept aloof from all these consecrations. The master mind that worked behind the bringing of Abdul Messiah was Fr. P.T. Geevarghese, who later became Metropolitan in the *Metran group* with the title of Mor Ivanius Later he left the Syrian Orthodox church and joined the Roman Catholic Church and started the Malankara Catholic Church, commonly known as the *Malankara Reethu*.

Questions

1. When did the Patriarch Moran Mor Abdulla II visit India? How did the rift between the Patriarch and Mor Dionasius VI start?
2. Who were the Metropolitans Consecrated in Malankara by Patriarch H.H. AbdullaII? Which dioceses were allotted for them? When were they Consecrated?
3. Which is the church in Malankara where Holy Chrism (Mooron) was consecrated twice? Name the Patriarchs that consecrated the Holy Chrism?
4. Who consecrated the Catholicose for the *Metran Group*? When was it done? Why do you it was invalid?

LESSON 24

THE ENDOWMENT LITIGATIONS (VATTIPPANAKKES) AND ALLIED EVENTS

This famous endowment litigations started in 1913. The secretary of State of the British India Government filed a case against Mor Dionysius, his co-Trustees, Mor Coorelose and his co Trustees at the Trivandrum District Court. Interest on the endowment money was not received by any of the trustees since 1908. The case was to decide on the eligibility of the claimants to receive the interest. Later with the permission of the court it was transformed into a representative suit that was binding upon the whole community. The court listed Mor Dionasius VI and trustees as Plaintiffs and Mor Coorelose and Trustees as Defendants in the suit.

The pious and saintly Paulose Mor Coorelose Metropolitan was the Malankara Metropolitan till 1917. He passed away on 14 December 1917 and was entombed at St. Mary's Church, Panampady. The Malankara Association elected Paulose Mor Athanasius as the Malankara Metropolitan. But the confirmation from the Patriarch did not arrive due to the World War I and the difficult political situations in Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Because of this reason, the court did not permit Mor Athanasius to take the position of the Malankara Metropolitan.

Patriarch Mor Abdulla II expired in 1915 and in his place H.H. Ignatius Elias III was enthroned to the Patriarchal See. In 1923 Mor Dionasius VI went to Mardeen to see the Patriarch Moran Mor Elias III to repeal the excommunication order upon him. He approached the Patriarch with the letters of apology from the Metropolitans on his side. His Holiness agreed to accept him on condition that Mor Dionysius withdraw his stands against the traditions of the church. He would accept him and his Metropolitans, after canonical prayers if they execute the bonds of allegiance to the Patriarch. He agreed to this and His Holiness sent Mor Julius Elias with him to Malankara. Mor Dionysius did not keep the promises that he gave to the Patriarch and the excommunication was not repealed. Mor Dionysius continued the litigations.

In 1926 Moran Mor Ignatius Elias III consecrated Mor Dionysius Michael Metropolitan for the Kottayam, Quilon and Niranam Dioceses and Mor Dioscoros Thomas Metropolitan for the Knanaya Diocese. In 1927 His Holiness also consecrated Mor Themotheose Ougen Metropolitan for the Kandanadu Diocese.

The Martyrdom of His Holiness Moran Mor Elias III

Moran Mor Elias III did everything possible for him to establish peace in the Malankara Church. But the arrogance and litigation attitude of Mor Dionasius VI made the situation in Malankara worse and the split widened. In 1931, His Holiness in spite of his heart disease and ill health came to Malankara. Lord Irwin, the Indian Viceroy made all arrangements for the visit of His Holiness. Soon after His Holiness arrived at Aluva on March 20, 1931 Mor Dionysius VI reached him. His Holiness opened the door of peace in Malankara by absolving the excommunication declared upon Mor Dionysius VI. Then Mor Dionysius insisted on the acceptance of the 'Catholicate'. But His Holiness did not accept the illegal institution invalidly created by a deposed Patriarch against the canons

and traditions of the Holy Church. By this one thing is made very clear that Mor Dionysius VI knew the need of the acceptance of the Patriarch for the Catholicate and his conviction about the canonical Patriarch. He had the humility to approach the Patriarch to withdraw his excommunication but he did not have the humility to establish peace in the Church. His Holiness tried to establish peace by summoning Mor Dionysius several times but the arrogance of Mor Dionysius VI spoiled all the attempts.

His Holiness was given very warm receptions by several parishes. In February 1932 His Holiness visited St. Stephen's Church, Manjikkara. His Holiness was very much disheartened because his generosity was not reciprocated. On 13 February 1932 His Holiness passed away after a cardiac arrest and was entombed there. Thus His Holiness dedicated himself fully for the Malankara Church. The holy tomb of His Holiness at Omalloor (Manjikkara) is a place of solace for thousands of people. We remember his name in the 5th Thubden in the Holy Eucharist.

Mor Dionysius VI (Vattasery) expired in 1934 and was entombed at the Old Seminary Chapel, Kottayam.. His scholarship and efficiency did not nurture the church properly. It is really sad that litigation and the split started by him still continues in the church.

Questions

1. How did litigation regarding the endowment fund commence? Who were the Plaintiffs and the defendants?
2. When did the death of Mor Coorelose Paulose Metropolitan take place? Where was he entombed? Who became the Malankara Metropolitan after him?
3. When did Mor Dionasius VI go to Mardin? What was the purpose? Who was the Patriarch then? Why was the journey fruitless?
4. Who were the Metropolitans consecrated by His Holiness Elias III? In which Year? Which were their dioceses?
5. When did H.H. Elias Ignatius Patriarch visit India? Enumerate the things he did to establish peace in Malankara Church? Why did the peace efforts not succeed ? When and where did His Holiness pass away?

**MOR PAULOSE ATHANASIUS THE GREAT
METROPOLITAN
(VALIYA THIRUMENI OF ALUVA)**

Mor Athanasius Valiya Thirumeni was a great model of humility and meekness. He was born on 23rd January 1869 in the Pynadathu branch of the Kuttikkattil family of the Akapparampu Church. He received 'Korooyo' position of the deaconhood at the age of 10 and priesthood and monastery vow in the year 1898. On May 27th 1910 Patriarch His Holiness Moran Mor Abulla II consecrated him as Metropolitan with the title Mor Athanasius at Akapparampu Church for the diocese of Ankamaly.

When Mor Coorelose Paulose Metropolitan expired in the year 1917 the Malankara Association held at Aluva elected *Valiya Thirumeni* as the Malankara Metropolitan. This election did not get legal ratification because the confirmation from His Holiness the Patriarch was delayed. Therefore on August 22, 1935 the Association meeting held at Karingachira re elected him as the Malankara Metropolitan. This election was duly accepted by the Patriarch.

Valiya Thirumeni was a saintly bishop who earned the love and respect of the people by living a life of prayer and piety. He was away from all greed of authority and pomp. He had to struggle hard to conduct the litigations all his life. There were many efforts for reconciliation and peace. He was willing to compromise on all issues other than the allegiance to the holy throne of Antioch. The defection of Mor Themotheose Ougen to the *Metran faction* in 1942 pained him greatly. His Holiness the Patriarch excommunicated Mor Themotheose and entrusted the administration of Kandanadu Diocese also to him.

In 1946 Vayalipparampil Fr. Thomas Varghese and Mulayirikkal Paulose Remban were elected as Assistant Metropolitan of Ankamaly Diocese and Metropolitan of Kochi Diocese respectively. His Holiness Moran Mor Ignatius Aprem I consecrated them as Metropolitans in the same year in Homs with the titles Mor Greegoriose Geevarghese and Mor Severios Poulouse. In 1951 His Holiness Ignatius Aprem I consecrated in Homs Mor Clemis Abraham for the Knanaya Diocese and in 1952 Mor Phelexenose Paulose for the Kandanadu

Diocese. Thus towards the end of the lifetime of *Valiya Thirumeni* all dioceses got Metropolitans. Kottayam, Kollam, Thumpamon and Niranam Dioceses had Mor Dionasius Michael as Metropolitan. Mor Julius Elias, the delegate of the Holy See of Antioch also worked in loyalty to *Valiya Thirumeni*.

Pious *Valiya Thirumeni* had a farsighted perspective about the church. He organized the Malankara Syrian Sunday School Association (M.S.S.A) bringing together all the activities of the Sunday Schools which were functioning locally. Mor Gregorios Students Association and the Marthamariam Vanitha Association were formed under the leadership of *Valiya Thirumeni*. He also organized the Malankara Priests Conference. His Holiness the Patriarch also loved him very much and conferred upon him the honor 'the Defender of Faith'. *Valiya Thirumeni* who was well known for his monastic life and love passed away on January 25th, 1953 and was entombed on 26th January at Trikkunnathu Seminary Church, Aluva. The blessed memory of *Valiya Thirumeni* is still remembered by the faithful. To commemorate his blessed memory there are many institutions in the church. Mor Athanasius Engineering and Arts Colleges at Kothamangalam, Mor Athanasius High School at Nedumbaserry, Mor Athanasius High School at Puthencruz are some among them. Mor Dionasius Michael Metropolitan, the great orator and strong defender of the throne of Antioch passed away in 1956 and was entombed at the St. Mary's Church Panampady.

Questions?

1. Briefly narrate the life and times of Mor Athanasius *Valiya Thirumeni*?
2. Who were the Metropolitans consecrated during the last 10 years of *Valiya Thirumeni*? Which were the dioceses given to them? When were they Consecrated?
3. Which was the only uncompromising point on which *Valiya Thirumeni* was adamant in all peace efforts?
4. When did Mor Dionasius Michael Metropolitan pass away? Where was he entombed ?

THE UNITY OF 1958 AND THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED

The litigations up to 1958 can be summarized as below. In 1946 and in 1951 the Kerala High Court gave a verdict in favor of the Patriarch side. The Catholicose faction filed special leave petition in the Supreme Court of India and got a verdict to review the judgement in the Kerala High Court. Thus the whole case was heard again. On 31st December 1956 the judgement was pronounced in favor of the Patriarchal side. The Catholicose faction filed appeal in the Supreme court of India and on technical reasons their appeal was received and the judgement of the High Court was set aside. This judgment was issued on 12th September 1958.

H.H. Ignatius Yacoob III, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East issued an encyclical establishing peace in Malankara Church after long period of litigation over a period of 50 years. According to that peace encyclical the two factions came together and declared peace on 18th December 1958. Mor Julius Elias Metropolitan delegate of H.H. the patriarch gave the bull of acceptance to Mor Basalius Geeverghese Catholicose.

But the leaders of the Catholicose faction took a stand disloyal to the Patriarchate and humiliating the former patriarch side. This created dissensions again in the Church. An organization called 'Antiochean Syrian Movement' came into existence to protest against the disparaging attitude of the Catholicose faction.

In 1964 the Catholicose Baseliios Geevarghese II passed away and H.H. Ignatius Yacoob III, the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East visited Kerala. Mor Themotheose Ougen the Catholicose elect was consecrated as Catholicose of the East repealing his former excommunication. All expected that the Catholicose faction will not try to sabotage the peace and will try to make emotional unity among the church members. But the contrary happened. After His Holiness the Patriarch left India the Catholicose and his group again started to work against the Patriarch. The Catholicose faction tried to impose the following upon the Church.

1. The Malankara Church is an independent Church. As per the decisions of the synod of Nicea Malankara Church was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East. The Fathers of our church including Mor Dionasius VI had no doubt regarding this.

2. They introduced the new concept of 'The throne of St. Thomas'. The new ideology that the Catholicose of the East was seated on the throne of St. Thomas was introduced by the Catholicose group, who started to call themselves 'The Orthodox'. We are all the children of St. Thomas but St. Thomas did not establish here a priestly succession to call a throne of St. Thomas. There is no such tradition or history to establish such a claim. On the contrary there is conclusive proof to establish that the Malankara church had the priestly succession and were in the administrative jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East.
3. They started to impose the Constitution framed unilaterally by the Catholicose group upon the parish churches belonging to the Patriarch side. This constitution never had the acceptance of the Patriarch. This constitution was against the canon and tradition of the holy church and hence it was not acceptable to us.

Mor Gregoriose Geevarghese Metropolitan of Ankamaly diocese was a strong fort for the faithful in the church during this period. But His Grace passed away unexpectedly in 1966 and was entombed at the Church in Aluva. This was a great blow to the Church. After that the Catholicose faction started to spread their new ideologies strongly in the church. They also started to deny the rights and privileges of His Holiness the Patriarch. The true faithful members started to oppose this. Catholicose issued a circular banning the reception of H.G. Mor Themotheose Aprem Aboodi Metropolitan in the churches. But the faithful received him ceremoniously in their churches. The scared Catholicose faction using all influences cancelled the visa of the delegate Metropolitan and succeeded in sending him out of India. Those priests, parishes and churches who opposed this were persecuted and were trapped in legal suits.

The faithful members of the church had to organize again and on 18th November 1972 an organisation to protect the true faith' was formed at Attamangalam Church, Kumarakom under the name 'Jacobite Syrian Christian Association'. This Association gave representations to His Holiness the Patriarch concerning the developments in Malankara. The Priests and the eminent figures in the Church tried to settle the disputes in the church. But the Catholicose faction was not willing to amend their former stands nor to reconcile with the Patriarch. In the resulting situations His Holiness the Patriarch and the supreme head of the church had to initiate actions to defend the faith and traditions of the Church.

Questions

1. What were the steps taken by H.H. Patriarch Yacoob III to establish peace in Malankara?
2. Who consecrated Catholicose Ougen I? When was it?
3. What were the three reasons for the split in the Malankara Church? Why we cannot accept these ideas?
4. What were the circumstances that compelled H.H. the Patriarch to interfere in the affairs of the Malankara Church?

LESSON 27

METROPOLITANS UPHOLDING THE TRUE FAITH

His Holiness the Patriarch wrote several times to the Catholicose side to correct themselves and advised them paternally to keep away from false teachings. But they never paid any heed to that. So as the head of the church the Holy Father had to take bold steps.

Dr. Kadavil Paul Remban, the great scholar and writer was consecrated as Missionary Metropolitan of the Evangelistic Association of the East on Sept. 1st, 1973 at Damascus. As per the request of Malankara Church, Fr. P.M. Geevarghese and Fr. C.M. Thomas were consecrated as Metropolitans with the titles Mor Gregoriose Geevarghese and Mor Dionysius Thomas respectively on Feb. 24th 1974 at Damascus and were sent to Malankara. Fr. George Kurian was consecrated as Metropolitan on 21st July 1974 with the name Mor Coorelose Kuriakose. The Catholicose faction filed law suits against them even before they reached Malankara seeking injunctions and claimed that they will not be permitted to step their foot in Malankara. God showed His mercy and people of all quarters invigorated by faith and commitment to the church received the Metropolitans at various centers of the country. They were welcomed to the churches by the faithful. They led the Malankara church in spiritual glory and vigor.

His Holiness wrote to the Catholicose of the East and his partisans in detail quoting Bible, canon and traditions of the church to convince them in vain. They repeatedly declined to change stands and finally, until the Universal Synod to be held in 1975, the Catholicose of the East and his partisans were temporarily suspended from the Church. In June 1974 the Catholicose and his groups had filed a law suit which came to be known as the 'Church Case' with the Metropolitans, and priests as defendants.

On June 12 1975 Madappattu Yacoob Remban was consecrated as the Metropolitan for the *Simhasana Churches* with the title Mor Julius Yacoob and Seetharkuzhy Fr.C.M. Thomas as the Assistant Metropolitan of Kandanadu Diocese with the title Mor Osthathios Thomas.

His Holiness sent notices to the Catholicose of the East and his partisan Metropolitans showing their uncanonical stands and teachings against the church and its traditions and summoned them to explain their stands at the Universal Synod of the Syrian Church to be held on June 16th, 1975. But the Catholicose and his partisans did not attend the synod. Their Graces Mor Clemis Abraham, Mor Athanasius Paulose, Mor Gregoriose Geevarghese, Mor Dionysius Thomas and Mor Coorelose Kuriakose attended from Malankara. The synod sessions examined the teachings of the Catholicose side in the light of the Bible, Canon and traditions of the Church. The Synod declared their teachings as false and resolved on the judgements to be pronounced on them and the new administrative set up of the Malankara Church.

His Holiness the Patriarch gave the Catholicose Ougen I and his Metropolitans one more chance to repent and return to the church. They declined and finally His Holiness excommunicated them from the Church. According to the excommunication bull it is specified that the faithful shall not participate with them and doing so is sinful.

As per the decision of the Holy synod Mor Paulose Philexense Metropolitan was consecrated as the Catholicose of the East with the title Mor Baselios Poulouse II by H.H. Ignatius Yacoob III on Sept.7th, 1975 at Damascus. The Malankara Church welcomed the Catholicose whole heartedly in pomp and cheer.

Questions

1. Who were the Metropolitans consecrated by H.H. the Patriarch during 1973 - 74 period? Who were the Metropolitans consecrated in 1975?
2. Describe the procedures that H.H. sought to excommunicate Mor Ougen Catholicose and his Metropolitans?
3. Which synod elected Mor Phelexenos Paulose Metropolitan as the Catholicose? Who, When and where was the Catholicose Mor Paulose II consecrated?

THE RESURRGENCE OF THE MALANKARA CHURCH

The Metropolitans under H.B. Baselios Paulose II Catholicose worked hard to keep the faithful in true faith and to console the people in distress. They traveled all over Kerala and outside to strengthen the people and to build the church. The Catholicose group tried a lot to persecute and destroy the church. In many churches they created troubles and closed down churches and filed many civil and criminal suits against the clergy and the lay people. It is noteworthy that there exists disputes and litigations only in churches where the Patriarch side is the majority. We never tried to enter into the churches where the Catholicose faction is the majority. But they filed many law suits against our Catholicose and Metropolitans with the belief that they could annihilate us. Their sole intention was to destroy our church. But God had his own plans.

Our Sunday School, Women's League, Youth Association and other organizations were also merged and we worked together with their Associations till we separated from them. We reorganized our Sunday School in 1974 under the name 'Malankara Jacobite Syrian Sunday School Association'. All other Organizations started functioning as they were before 1958 and our Metropolitans gave leadership for them.

Thruthisserry Association

The Malankara Jacobite Syrian Christian Association meeting was held on 26th December 1975 at Thruthisserry *Simhasana* Church. H.B. Baselios Paulose II, Catholicose of the East was elected as the Malankara Metropolitan, Malankara Malpan Very Rev. Dr. Kurian Corepiscopa Kanianparampil as the Clergy Trustee, Mr. P.E. Thomas Palampadom as the layman Trustee and Mr. T.P. Mathew Thekkethlackal as the Secretary of the Church. The Managing Committee and the Working Committee of the Church was also elected at that meeting. Monk Samuel was consecrated as Metropolitan with the title Mor Phelexenos Samuel by H.B. Baselios Paulose II on that day at Thruthisserry.

Administrative Arrangements

Knanaya Diocese was administered by H.G. Mor Clemis Abraham and the Kandanadu Diocese was under H.B. Baselius Paulose II. Kadavil Dr. Poulouse

Mor Athanasius Metropoliitan was consecrated and appointed for the Evangelistic Association of the East and Mor Julius Yacoob Metropolitan for the *Simhasana* churches. Metropolitans Mor Dionasius Thomas , Mor Gregorioso Geevarghese and Mor Pheloxenose Samuel were appointed for Ankamaly Diocese, Kochi Diocese and Malabar Dioceses respectively. H.G. Mor Coorelose Kuriakose was in charge of the dioceses of Kollam, Niranam and Thumpamon. Kottayam, Outside Kerala diocese remained under His Beatitude. Mor Osthathiose Thomas Metropolitan was the suffragan Metropolitan to His Beatitude. Metropolitans Thomas Mor Theophilos, Yacoob Mor Themotheose and Philipose Mor Ivanios Metropolitans were consecrated by H.B. on April 19th, 1979 at Velloor St. Simon's Church.

The Catholicose faction filed more law suits when they found that the church was growing contrary to what they expected. Under the supremacy of H.H. the Patriarch and the leadership of the synod the church and its members stood steadfast in faith and traditions. An incident that happened in Aluva was a major event of that period. The true faithful of the church started protest against the denial of the rights to worship at the church where the holy prelates were entombed. Mor Dionysius Thomas Metropolitan of Ankamaly Diocese, a few priests and a large number of lay leaders were arrested and manhandled brutally without any reason. This happened on Dec. 6th, 1977. It was the beginning of the great series of tribulations and hardships in Aluva. People from all over Malankara arrived in Aluva and the police cruelly attacked the protesters to please the Catholicose faction. There are many priests and laymen who bear till now the mark of the brutality of the police on their bodies.

The hunger and fast started on that day by Mor Dionysius Thomas Metropolitan continued for 44 days until the Holy Qurbana (trimass) was offered by three Metropolitans at Trikkunnathu Seminary Church. The great protest march that stormed all over Kerala in those days and the great people's movement of those days and the sacrifice of the people faced are noteworthy.

A special Court itself was established to hear all the cases filed by the Catholicose faction against our church. The first pronouncement of the judgement was delivered by Justice T. Chandrasekara Menon. The Judgement based on the history and the traditions of the church was in favor of our true stand. The court dismissed the petitions filed by the Catholicose faction against the church. This historic judgement was pronounced on June 6th, 1980.

Questions

1. What was done by the Catholicose faction to annihilate the true faithful in Malankara?
2. When was the 'Thruthiserry Association' held?
3. What were the reasons for the 44 day fasting of Mor Dionysius?
4. What was the first Judgement on the legal suit filed by the Catholicose group?

LESSON 29

THE DEMISE OF H.H. PATRIARCH YACOOB 111 AND THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED

H.H. Yacoob III passed away on 26th June 1980 due to a sudden cardiac arrest. This incident immersed the Malankara Church in deep sorrow. He lived in Malankara for 12 years and taught many priests here. He was known as Monk Abdul Ahad while he was in Malankara. He loved and served the Malankara church very loyally and his name will be remembered.

His Holiness was born on Oct.13, 1912 and in 1933 he was ordained as a Monk with the name Abdul Ahad and came to Malankara with Mor Julius Elias Metropolitan. He was an intellectual, deeply learned and had divine melody. He could easily win the hearts of the people in Malankara. He stayed in Malankara until 1946 and after his return he served as the head of Mor Aprem Seminary in Mosul, Iraq. He was consecrated as Metropolitan of Beirut in 1950 with the title Mor Severiose Yacoob. After the demise of Patriarch H.H. Aprem I, he was enthroned as the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East on 27th October 1957. His Holiness issued the 'Peace Encyclical on December 9th, 1958. The peace established on 18th of December 1958, was sabotaged by the rebellious acts of the Catholicose faction and when the peace initiatives failed H.H. consecrated H.B. Mor Basalius Poulouse II as the Catholicose of the East on September 7th, 1975. In June 1980, His Holiness visited the Pope in Rome and held discussions. The demise of this loving scholar Patriarch was really a great loss to the church.

The Patriarchal Election

The Universal Synod elected the successor to H.H. Ignatius Yacoob III at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Damascus on the 11th July 1980 under the president-ship of H.B. Basalios Poulouse II, Catholicose of the East. Mor Severios Zakka, Metropolitan of Bagdad was elected to the seat of the Patriarch. He was enthroned as the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East on 14th September 1980 on the feast day of Holy Cross with the title Moran Mor Ignatius Zakka I Iwas. H.B. Basalios Poulouse II Catholicose of the East, was the chief celebrant on this occasion, which was a very unique incident in history, where a Catholicose from India acted as the chief celebrant.

He was born in Mousul in 1932 and had his priestly educations during 1946-54. He acquired deep knowledge in English, French, Arabic and Syriac languages and mastered in Theology, Philosophy and Canon law. He became a Monk in 1947 and was consecrated as the Metropolitan of Mousul in 1963. He visited India in 1964 along with H.H Ignatius Yacoob III and was made the Metropolitan of Baghdad in 1969.

After his enthronement His Holiness took very important steps regarding Malankara Church. He summoned the Universal Synod in Damascus from 17-24 November 1981. H.B. Basalios Paulose II and Metropolitans from Malankara participated in the Synod. Many decisions for the progress of the church were taken there. The decisions of the Synod enhanced strongly the relation between the Church in Malankara and the Patriarchate of Antioch.

Questions

1. When was the demise of the Patriarch Moran Mor Ignatius Yacoob III? Write briefly about His Holiness?
2. Who was the successor of His Holiness Yacoob III? When was the enthronement? What is the significance of this enthronement as far as the Malankara Church was concerned?

THE APOSTOLIC VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS PATRIARCH ZAKKA I

The Apostolic visit of His Holiness Patriarch Zakka I was to India in 1982 was a historic event. It was a part of His Apostolic visit to the church in different countries of the world. Main purpose of the visit was to inaugurate the diamond jubilee celebrations of the demise of H.H. Ignatius Elias III and to consecrate Holy Mooron in Malankara.

His Holiness was very cordially received all over Kerala and in major cosmopolitan cities in India like, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Delhi, etc. on Feb.7th a great Patriarchal day rally was staged in Ernakulam and the Jubilee was inaugurated at Manjikkara on 13th Feb. Holy Mooron was consecrated at Manarcadu on 27th February. On March 6th His Holiness consecrated Fr.A.C.Abraham as Metropolitan at Marthoman Church, Kothamangalam with the title Mor Severios Abraham. His Holiness the Patriarch, His Beatitude the Catholicose and 16 Metropolitans participated in this function. The Managing Committee of the church held on March 6th resolved to appoint a Committee to draft a Constitution for the Church. The Holy Synod was held under the president-ship of His Holiness and resolved to start a Theological College. According to the resolutions of the Holy Synod His Holiness appointed Mor Gregoriose Geevarghese as Metropolitan of Kottayam, Diocese, Mor Osthathiose Thomas as Metropolitan of Kochi Diocese, Mor Theophelose Thomas as Metropolitan of Outside Kerala Diocese, Mor Ivanios Philipose as Metropolitan as Assistant Metropolitan of Kandanadu Diocese, Mor Themotheose Yacoob as resident Metropolitan of the Theological Seminary and Mor Severiose Abraham as Assistant Metropolitan of Ankamaly Diocese. The Northern area of the Kochi Diocese was organised to establish the new Diocese of Trichur and Panakkal George Remban was appointed the administrator.

The Apostolic visit that lasted for one and a half months gave the church a new vigor and revival. Stability and unity came into the church and it received the guidance for the progress of the church. His Holiness consecrated Remban Bennyamin, who was the secretary of His Holiness as Metropolitan Mor Osthathios Bennyamin Joseph on 7th October 1984 at Damascus. He is administering the *simhasana* churches and other institutions as Assistant

Metropolitan directly under His Holiness in Malankara with Manjinikkara as his head quarters. We must pray for the progress of the Malankara Church under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch and for the protection of the true faith of the church.

Questions

1. When did H.H. Iganatius Zakka I visit India? What was the main purpose of the visit?
2. What were the main events during the visit of His Holiness?
3. Who was consecrated as the Assistant Metropolitan of the *Simhasana* Churches? When and where was he consecrated?

THE TRUE FAITH OF THE HOLY CHURCH

LESSON 31

PRAYER

The Holy Church follows the example of the “**Lords Prayer**” – “**Our Father in Heaven**”, for its prayers. When you study closely this prayer, you will understand that the word “prayer” does not merely imply “pleading” or “asking”.

The actual prayer has three parts:-

1. Praise (Our Father.....your name) We Glorify the Lord’s holiness, goodness and greatness in this part.
2. Pleading, spiritual needs come before physical needs-(your will, daily bread, forgiveness)
3. Thanksgiving, self surrender- last part.

Human beings are weak in themselves and subject to worldly desires. Their spiritual and physical growth rests in the hands of the Lord. So we should ask the Lord for spiritual protection and growth, for the strength to face trials and come out victorious, and for physical protection. We should know the Almighty Lord and glorify him. We should remember the blessings showered upon us and offer him our praise, and our gratitude.

When we ask for our needs, we should keep in mind mainly four aspects:-

1. Following the example of Christ's prayer at Gethsemane, all our prayers should be subject to His holy will.
2. We should not pray for selfish or unfair needs but only for the victory of truth, righteousness and goodness.
3. We should pray for the glory of the Lord's name or for blessings to others but never for loss to others and gains for oneself.
4. We should pray with strong faith and adoration. The prayer with faith has great strength. (Matt 21:22, James 5:15). If we pray with all our heart and according to God's will, it will certainly be answered.

The prayer with faith will be answered in three ways

1. "So let it be". Elijah prayed for fire to descend from the sky. Immediately fire came down.
2. "No". St. Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn in his flesh. It was not removed. "My grace is sufficient for you" was the reply given to him.
3. "Be patient". The priest Zacharias prayed for a child. Though he did not get a sudden answer to his prayer, later he was blessed with a child.

God knows our needs but still we should always keep praying because prayer is communion with God.

The way to Pray

The way a real Christian should pray is elaborated in St. Mathew 6:9-13 as Christ taught them. Here are some things that the Holy Church teaches us about the way to pray.

1. Pray facing the east. "This has been followed from the apostolic ages" (St Basselios)." This custom was followed worldwide. (Origen) "We pray facing the east". The Jacobite Syrian Church alone retains this custom of the apostolic times.
2. Face the east and draw the cross and place your hands on your chest and pray. "We draw the cross while engaged in any work". (Tertullian) "They never started anything without first drawing the cross." (Cyprian)

3. Stand while you pray. “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses” (St. Mark 11:25)” “Standing while praying is a Christian tradition followed by the Eastern Church even today.”
4. While praying you should kneel and bow down at specific times. Only those who are seriously ill are exempted from this. We do not need to kneel down on Sundays, on Maranaya Festival days, on the days from Easter to the Day of Pentecost, and on days on which we have received Holy Communion.
5. At the occasions of Confession, Ordination Service, Pentecost Service-our Church orders “us to kneel down and pray. Prayer Timings

It is not that we should pray at a specific time only. We should pray always not to fall into temptation. The Holy Church orders us to pray 7 times during a day: evening, soothara, mid-night, morning, third hour, noon, and ninth hour. For our convenience it has been arranged as twice a day, morning and evening. During the 3 day fast and on great Lent days, pray 3 times a day. A church member who does not pray is committing a grave sin.

Various Prayers

Public Prayer: - The Holy church has created and arranged public prayers for each occasion. The prayers for the 7 times of the day were arranged during the second century itself. The family should pray together at home. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.” (St. Mathew 18:20) The apostles and believers prayed to the Lord “with one accord in the temple” (Acts 2: 46).

Short Prayer: - We can have communion with God each and every second. No matter what work we are engaged in, we can praise the Lord in our mind and with our lips.

Secret Prayer: - Thanking the Lord for the blessings showered upon oneself and praying to the Lord for one’s own personal needs is termed as ‘Secret Prayer’. This prayer should be done in private.

Intercession: - The prayers offered by the saints before the Lord for us and the prayers offered by us for others can be termed as ‘intercession’. St. Paul has made the request “pray for me” on many occasions. James 5:16 says “Pray for one another”.

We should pray for the Holy Church, our spiritual fathers, our rulers who are appointed to shepherd and govern the church, those who work for the church, our national leaders, our whole world, our brothers and even for our enemies.

Questions

1. Which model does the prayers of the Holy Church follow? Which are the three parts of a prayer?
2. Which four aspects should we keep in mind while we pray?
3. Which are the three ways in which a prayer can be answered?
4. Describe the way of prayer decided by the Holy Church.
5. Which are the prayer timings? How has the church adjusted the timings for our convenience?
6. Which are the various kinds of prayers?
7. What is meant by intercession?

LESSON 32

THE HOLY CROSS

Two thousand years ago the Persians, Medes, Romans, Syrians, Carthaginians etc used the cross as a punishment method for grave offences like murder, theft, treachery and strife. The accused were hanged to death on the cross. But ever since Christ has been crucified, the cross has been looked upon with the utmost faith, respect and adoration.

The Salvation of mankind, the freedom from sin and the defeat of Satan all rests upon the crucifixion of Christ. The apostles and early Christians, who realized that truth, looked upon the cross with respect and adoration. St. Paul says about the Gospel as “the message of the cross” (1 Cor 1:18)”. *Tertullian* wrote, “We make the sign of the cross before engaging in any work”. “That great lady bowed down before the cross as if Christ was lying crucified on the cross” says Jerome about Queen Helena. Protestants who don’t usually make the sign of the cross, during baptism draw the cross on the forehead of the one getting baptized. “The Book of Common Prayer” says about drawing of cross like this- “Though this is not mentioned in the Holy Gospel, this (drawing the cross) is performed.”

Why should we draw the cross?

1. When we draw the cross, we escape from all Satanic influences and is reaching out to the Holy Cross, our fortress of refuge.
2. As we are made heirs to the kingdom of heaven by the crucifixion of Christ, when we draw the cross we are remembering it and taking refuge in it.
3. As Christ suffered on the cross on our behalf, we draw the cross on ourselves with the same intention.
4. Christ said, "He who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me," we express our readiness to take up any cross (sufferings) when we draw the cross.
5. As a sign of victory over Satan and as a symbol of Christianity, we draw the cross. We consider the drawing of the cross as an honor. Bowing before the cross is not idol worship. When we bow down before the cross, we are bowing before the crucified Christ whose death on the cross gave us salvation. We keep in mind all these aspects when we draw the cross. When David brought up the ark of God, he sacrificed oxen and sheep, danced, shouted and blew the trumpet but all this was not considered idol worship by the Jewish Church (2 Samuel 6:14-16). Making idols and worshipping them as God is idol worship. When we keep the cross and other things in the Church for the knowledge and in memory of Biblical happenings, it does not constitute idol worship.

We should make the sign of the cross wherever we see a cross laid by believers or when the name "Sleebea" is mentioned. In this way we worship and remember the crucified Christ. When a cross is laid in a place, the priest is not performing any sacrament rites to consecrate it but he is glorifying the cross when its foundation is laid.

The main idea behind the drawing of the cross.

The first part of the drawing of the cross from the forehead to the chest signifies the coming of the Son of God from heaven to earth for the salvation of mankind and the second part from left to right signifies our transformation from Satan's children to God's children (Mar Severios).

The cross also signifies the inseparable Godliness (divinity) and human nature of Christ, his human incarnation, his ministry, the salvation of mankind and a host of other truths.

Questions:

1. Why should we respect the cross?
2. Why should we make the sign of the cross?
3. Bowing before the cross is not idol worship why?
4. What is the main idea behind the drawing of the cross?

LESSON 33

THE DEPARTED

Those who have lived and died with true faith in Jesus Christ as the savior are called "the departed".

The custom of burying the dead according to the religious practices existed from ancient times. This was done due to the belief that there is life after death. The funeral for the faithful departed are done with prayers and religious rites set by the Holy church.

The belief of other religions in life after death is based on guesswork, but we truly believe that everything does not come to an end with death. Based on the resurrection of Christ on the third day, we also have resurrection. The specialty of the Christian religion is the resurrection of Christ. "And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty". (1 Cor 15:14). "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:" (John 11:25)

When is the resurrection?

On the second coming of Christ, there will be, the resurrection of all the departed. "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God. Those who have died believing in Christ will rise to life first "(1 Thess 4:16). At this coming those who are in the grave will hear his voice and those who hear will live. (St John 5:25-29). The resurrection of Jairus' daughter, the widow's son and Lazarus

four days after his death signifies and proves that the voice of Jesus Christ can raise up the dead. On the day of resurrection we will rise up with glorified new bodies. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:53). Some think that resurrection is only for the righteous, which is wrong. For Christ says "those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. (St John 5:29). Therefore resurrection is for everyone.

Judgment

Christ himself teaches us about the judgment on his second coming. Christ will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him. He will separate them. The righteous to the right and the evil to the left. He will lead those who are on the right to the kingdom of heaven and those who are on the left will be punished and put away into the eternal fire. (St Math 25:31-46). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor 5:10) A Christian should have hope of resurrection and fear of judgment.

The new life constitutes both resurrection and judgment. The resurrection and judgment according to one's deeds and attaining the eternal salvation is termed as new life.

The theory of rebirth is completely different. According to this theory, when one dies depending on whether one's deeds are good or bad, the spirit takes birth in another body. This cycle goes on until total goodness is attained and thus one has salvation. The people who believe in rebirth do not believe that they have to face judgment. We should bury our dead in faith and pray that they be shown mercy on judgment day. For this reason, we fast and pray for the departed for forty days, take part in the Holy Communion and do charitable deeds.

We should conduct the funeral of little children also with prayers, even for those who died before taking baptism, because they are the children of faithful Christian parents, covenant- heirs, and children of the church.

Believers should not take part in the funeral of those who are excommunicated from the church, those who negate the Bible or those who have committed suicide.

Questions

1. There is proof that man has resurrection, what is the proof?
2. When is the resurrection? What does the Holy Bible say about resurrection? Which are the miracles that Jesus performed as a sign of resurrection.
3. How do we know that resurrection is for everybody?
4. What has Christ said about judgment?
5. What is meant by (I) new life (ii) rebirth?
6. Why should we honor the departed and pray for them?
7. Why should we conduct the funeral of little children also with prayers?

LESSON 34

PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTED

We form our basis for everything on the Holy Bible, on the Holy words of Christ, the teachings of his apostles, and the holy fathers who came after them. Christ said in St John 6:47 and 56-”Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in me has everlasting life. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.” We understand that the spirit is active even after the body is dead. Christ said in St. Luke 20:38. “For he is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto him.” So, according to the Holy Bible, the church teaches us that the spirit of the departed are alive and active.

According to some reformationist churches the spirit of the dead, though alive are in an unconscious state and so praying for the dead and seeking intercession from the saints are meaningless. The Holy Bible proves that this theory is wrong. Psalms 115:17 which says “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.” is taken as the basis of this teaching but verse 18 says “But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore” (Psalms 115:18) “for evermore” means that we will bless the Lord even after death. So Psalms 115:17 should be understood in another sense. Eph 2:1 says ”and you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Christ also says “Let the dead bury their own dead” So we understand that the dead mentioned in Palms 115:17 are those who are dead in sins. In the parable of the Prodigal son. (St Luke 15:32) which says.....for this my son was dead and is alive again. Christ teaches us what it is to be alive and what it is to be dead.

The fact that a believer will live even though he is dead and “will bless the Lord forever” shows that the dead are conscious.” the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God” (St John 5:25) “For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead.....”(1 Peter 4:6) “You will show wonders to the dead, the dead will stand up and praise you” (Psalms 88:10-11) In the CMS Bible version, this verse is intentionally misinterpreted as “will you show wonders to the dead? Will the dead stand up and praise you? As mercy is granted till the day of judgment we should understand that it is right to pray “Show mercy also to the dead”.

Our Christ is the example of perfect love. He showed us the way of salvation. We should hope for and pray for the salvation of all mankind from the very beginning. ”For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.” (Romans 14:8-9). “The Lord, who has not forsaken his kindness to the living and the dead! (Ruth 2:20).

The dead also belong to the Lord. He shows mercy to them. Judgment is the right of Christ alone. We have no right to judge anyone but instead we should hope for and pray for the dead to our ever patient Lord. In this aspect our attitude is much more Christ like than that of the Reformationists.

The practice of fasting and praying for the departed existed during the Old Testament times also (1 Sam 31:13; 2 Sam 1:12) The Jewish Maccabees (2 Maccabees 12:42) made offerings and sacrifices for their dead. St. Paul talks about being “baptized for the dead” in 1 Cor 15:29. Though one is not sure about ‘this baptism’, it is to be understood that the living cared for the salvation of the souls of the departed. To ensure this they adopted certain spiritual means. According to Tertullian the practice of offering Holy Communion for all the departed once a year existed in the second century also. The Holy church follows this even today. Even in the Book of common prayer (P-198) used by the Protestants there is a prayer which says –”Lord, let all the faithfully departed, along with us be able to enjoy complete spiritual and physical happiness when we are brought into your eternal glory”.

We remember the departed in our prayers and in the Holy Communion. We pray, fast and offer Holy Communion for the departed; all are in accordance with the Holy Bible.

The Roman Church teaches about a place named Purgatory where the souls of the departed are punished and thus made holy before the Judgment Day. The Holy Church has not adopted this theory, as there is not the slightest hint of such a theory in the Holy Bible or in the early church.

Questions

1. Give proof from the bible to show that the souls of the departed are alive.
2. The dead do not praise the Lord, neither any who go down into silence.” “The dead” mentioned in the verse falls into which category ?
3. How can we prove that the souls of the departed have consciousness?
4. Praying for the dead is in accordance with the Bible. Discuss.?

LESSON 35

HOLY QURBONO SONGS

1. MAHIMAYODA KABAREENU PURA -
PETTI SRISHTIKALE
SHOBHIPICHORU SHOBHAYATHA -
MESHU STHUTHYANAHO.
2. SHEMAONUM YOHANNAANUM
CHENNA KABARINKAL
STHUTHI PAADI SANTHOSHATHO -
DE POYI AVAR THIRIKE.
3. AZHCHAYIL AADYATHETHAYI -
DUNNEE SHUDHADINE
AADYAJAN UYIRPOOND EZHUNELLPI -
CHEE MANMAYAREYUM.
4. KONNAVARE JEEVICH ESHU
LAJJIPICHATHINAL
PALLIKALUM DAYARAKALUMI -
NN ANANDIKYUNNU.
5. MRUTHAR THAN AALMAKKALUM INN A
NANDIKYUM KRUPAYAAM
PANINEER AVAR MEL UYIRPOONDO -
RESHU VEEZHTHIYATHAAL - BAREKMOR.

6. REKSHAKANE! NINNEYUM NI -
N UTHANATHEYUM
KONDADUNN ADIYARK UYIRE -
KENAM NIN ARULPOL - KURIELAISON.

1. DHEIVAM UYARTHU MAHATHWATHOD AA -
DAMINEYUM THAN -
MAKKALEYUM JEEVIPICHU.
DHOOTHAGANAM THALPATHIYE VAAZTHI
BHOO MI VILANGI.
BRAMAMODU KAAVALKAAR NINNU.
2. SHEMAON KEEPA YOHANAANODU -
MONNICHEE NAA -
LA KABARIDAM ATHILEK ODI.
YAKKOB ANANDICHU THOMA
THRUPTHI PETTU
MATHAYI STHOTHRAM PAADI.
3. PAATHALAM POOKIDAYAN VIGRAHA -
SEVA VIDURTHI
THANNUDE SABHAYE REKSHICHU
JEEVICHU MAHATHWATHOD EZHUNNE -
TTATHINE SHAKTHYA
SHATHRUKALIL NINNUM VEENDU.
4. VEENJIN LAHARI YOZHINJAVANE POL
KARTHAV EENAAL
MARANATHE VITT UNARVODE.
MRUTHIYE KONNU THAKARTHA PAATHA
LATHIN VAATHIL
THEERTHORU NITHYA KALPEEDAM.
5. DHEIVAM UYARTHU MARICHAVAREEN I -
NEZHUNETTETTAM
KAAVALKAARIL BHARAMAM ETTI.
MASHIHA JEEVICHENN AVAR OORSHLEM
POOKARTH ATHINAL
KROOSHICHAVAR LAJJICHETTAM - BAREKMOR.

6. NIN VARAVORTHU VASICHU MARICHAVAR,
KHINNARA MODHI -
PPIKYUM NIN THEJASATHINE
KANDINNE DIVASAM THANGALUDE
THALAKAL UYARTHI
NIN KRUPAYE STHUTHI CHEYUNNU - KURIELAISON.

1. MASHIHA JEEVICH EZHUNETTU:
KAAVALKAAR LAJJAPETTU.
THAN PRIYAYAAM SABHA SANTHOSHA -
THAAL AALMA PRIYANE VAAZHTHUM.

2. NJAYAR DINE KEEPA YOHA -
NNANMAR OTH ODI POYI,
GURU MRUTHAREEN UYIRPOONDETTA -
NATHUKETT ARANJIDUVAANAYI.

3. REKSHAKANE! NIN UTHANA -
THIN DINAMAAM INN ADIYAARIL
PREETHI EZHUNNALAVILLA KAA -
RUNYATHAAL POKUKA KUTTAM.

4. DAYARAAKAL PALLIKALUM SA -
NTHOSHAM KAIKONDI NAALIL
PUTHRAN THAN UTHANATHE
VAAZHTHI STHOTHRAM PAADUNNU - BAREKMOR.

5. NASHTAMATHAAM THAN URUVAM VEE -
NDAADAMIN JEERNA SHAREERAM
PUTHUTHAKAANAYI MRUTHA LOKA -
THEKALLO DHEIVAM IRANGI - KURIELAISON.

