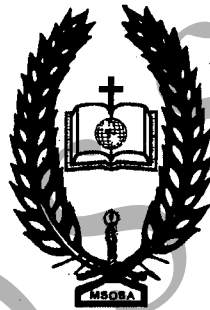


**MALANKARA SYRIAN
ORTHODOX SUNDAY SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION OF
NORTH AMERICA**



TEXT BOOK CLASS – III

2003

PREFACE

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

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

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

Carteret, NJ
07-11-2003

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

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(English)

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

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* **God is our Creator**

* **God is our Father**

* **God loves us**

* **Bow before God**

* **Love God**

* **Jesus is our Saviour**

* **Jesus was born for us**

* **Jesus Died for us**

* **Jesus loves us**

* **Live with Jesus**

LESSON 1

PRAYER

KAUMA

+ 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 earth are filled, Hosanna in the highest.

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

Holy art Thou, O God!

Holy art Thou, Almighty

Holy art Thou, Immortal

+ O Thou who was crucified for us, have mercy upon us.

Holy art Thou, O God!

Holy art Thou, Almighty

Holy art Thou, Immortal

+ O Thou who was crucified for us, have mercy upon us.

Holy art Thou, O God!

Holy art Thou, Almighty

Holy art Thou, Immortal

+ O Thou who was crucified for us, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, be kind and have mercy upon us.

Lord, accept our workship and prayers, have mercy upon 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. Barekmor.

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 debts and sins as we have forgiven our debtors. Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from the evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

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 Holy Virgin Saint Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners, now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Malayalam Version

+ Pithaavum puthranum parisuddha roohayum-aaya sathyamulla eka daivathinte thirunaamathil thanikku sthuthi. Nammutemel thante karunayum manogunavum ennekkum undayirikkatte. Amen.

Aakaasavum bhoomiyum thante stuthikal kondu niranjirikkunna balavaanaaya daivam thampuraan parisuddhan, parisuddhan, parisuddhan uyarangalil sthuthi.

Daivamaya karthaavinte thirunamathil vannavanum varuvanirikkunna vanum aayavan vaazhthapettavanaakunnu. Uyarangalil sthuthi.

Daivame nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Balavaane nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Maranamillaathavane nee parisudhanaakunnu

Njangalkuvendi kurisikkapettavane +
njangaludemel karunayuntaakaname.

Daivame nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Balavaane nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Maranamillaathavane nee parisudhanaakunnu

Njangalkuvendi kurisikkapettavane +
njangaludemel karunayuntaakaname.

Dai vame nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Balavaane nee parisudhanaakunnu.

Maranamillaathavane nee parisuddhanaakunnu

Njangalkuvendi kurisikkaettavane +
njangaludemel karunayuntaakaname.

Njangalude karthaave! njangalodu karuna cheyyaname. Njangalude
karthaave! krupayundaayi njangalodu karuna cheyyaname. Njangalude karthaave!
njangalude susrooshayum praarthanakalum kaikkondu njangalodu karuna
cheyyaname.

Dai vame ninakku sthuthi. Srushtaave ninakku sthuthi. Paapikalaaya ninte
adiyarodu krupa cheyyunna mashiha raajaave ninakku sthuthi. Baarekmore.

Karthru Praarthana

Swargasthanaaya njangalude pithaave, Ninte thirunamaam
parisuddhamaakkapedaname, Ninte rajyaam varaname, Ninte thiruvistam
swargathilepole bhoomiyilum aakaname, Njangalkku aavasyamaayirikkunna
appam, innum njangalkku tharaname, Njangalude kadakkaarodu njangal
kshamichathupole, Njangalude kadangalum papangalum njangalodu
kshamikkaname, Pareekshayilekku njangale nee pravesippikkaruthe, Pinneyo
dhushtanil ninnum njangale rakshichu kollaname, Enthukondennaal raajayavum
sakthiyum mahathwavum ennekum, Ninakkullathaakunnu. Amen.

Krupa niranja Mariyame ninakku samadhanam, Njangalude
karthaavu ninnodu koodu, Sthreekalil nee vaazhthappettavalaakunnu, Ninte udara
phalamaya Njangalude karthaveshu mashiha vaazhthapettavanakunnu,
Daivamaathaavaaya visudha kanyaka Martha Mariyame, ippozhum, eppozhum
njangalude marana samayathum paapikalaaya njangalkku vendi apekshichu
kollaname. Amen.

O Jesus Christ our Lord, close not the door of Thy mercy upon our faces.
We confess that we are sinners. Have mercy upon us. O Lord! Thy love for us
made Thee to come down from Thy place, that by Thy death, our death might be
abolished; have mercy upon us. Amen.

LESSON 2

CREED

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

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

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

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

Barekhamor, Sthoumen kalos, kurielaison.

LESSON 3

QURBONO SONGS

Bhoovilashesham
Daivathaal preritharaaya
Shleehanmaar poy
Jaathikalidayil
Bhoothala seemayatholam
Nallevan-gelion
Kaikkolvo-rokeyezhum
Bhaagyamithe-nnariyicchu
swargga maharaajyam

Those Apostles
Chosen, sent by God, they went
to ev'ry place,
Through all the world,-
Gentiles heard from the news.
the Gospel grace
They proclaimed-the kingdom,
Heav'n's rule-of freedom,
For the faithful bliss.

LESSON 4

Paulos Sleeha
Dhanyan cholkette nithevam
Ningale njangalareechathozhi-
Chingoruvan vannariyichaal
Vaanavanenkilu maadhoothan
Thaanelkkum sabhayin shaapam
Palathara mupadeshangalaho
Paaril mulachu parakkunnu
Daivathinnupadesham tho-
Ttavasaanippippon dhanyan

Paul the Blessed
Saint, the Lord's Apostle, said
If one come to preach to you
Other doctrine than we knew,
Be he man or angel bright,
Curs'd be he in Church's sight;
Doctrines all diverse arise,
Shooting up with many lies;
Blest is he who first and last
Trusts God's truth and holds it fast.

LESSON 5

Yajamaan varumanner
Thunarvulloraai than
Munthiri thoppil paniyaayi
Kaanmore dhanyaraam
Pakalellaam than
Koodeppanithor-
Kkavanara ketti
Parikarmmicheedum
Thaathaniruthum meshaykkaai
Parikarmmikkum suthan
Rooh kudshaa paarakaleetha
Mudayunnoro mudi
Haaleluyyaa Choodum makudathil

Blessed are those servants good
Whom their Lord shall find
Wakeful, working when He comes
To His Vine-yard good
Girding up His-loins He serves them all-
They who worked with-
Him from morn till eve,
God the Father makes them sit,
And the Son serves them
Lo, the Holy Paraclete
Plaits them victor's crowns-
Haleluiah-setting on their heads.

LESSON 6

Ninnaal sthuthiyodu raajamakal
Haaleluyyaa vu Haaleluyyaa
Nin valamai raajabhaaminium
Ninnazhakarachan mohippaan
Haaleluyyaa vu Haaleluyyaa
Nin janamorkkaayka pithru grhavum
Baarekmor.

See the royal daughter stand.
Heleluiah vu Haleluiah,
Glorious queen at-Thy right hand,
Thy father's folk and home leave thou.
Haleluiah vu Haleluiah.
The king desires thy-beauty now.
Baarekmor.

Shub ho laabo labro val rooho kaadeesho
Men olam vaadamol olam ol meen aameen

Bhakthar pukazhchaa bhaajaname!
Ninniludichorekasuthan
Thrikkaral njangalilalivaan than
Pakkalapekshayanakkenam
Sthoumen kalos, kurielaison.

Thou whose praise the church doth sing.
Intercession for us bring.
Unto Him, Thine only Son.
That we may not mercy shun.
Sthoumen kalos, kurielaison.

LESSON 7

Mannamakalkkaayi shlomo
Vanneki doothavaran
Ninnotukooden naathan
Ninnil thannudayamathum
Baarekhmor

Peace the bright arch angel brought,
Hailing Mary fair,
Favoured is thy blessed lot.
Thou the Lord shall bear.
Baarekhmor

Shub ho laabo labro val rooho kaadeesho.

LESSON 8

Akhila jagal pathiye naayaka
Naayetti ghoshicchang
Athi bahumaanichu Mariyaam
Valuthaam padavaai than.
Moriyoraahemelainoovadarain

Like a ship did Mary bear-
Laud and honour be-
Him, the captain and the Lord
God of all the world.

OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON 9

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

(Genesis: 37, 39-46)

Objective: To understand how God safeguards His loved ones.

Now the Lord told Abraham, “Get thee out of the country and from thy kindred, and thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee” (Genesis



12:1). With this command from God, Abraham travelled to Canaan. Abraham had Isaac as his son, and Isaac had Jacob. Jacob had 12 sons and a daughter. Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob. He was the eldest of the two sons of Jacob from Rachel. Joseph means ‘May He add’.

Jacob was fond of Joseph more than others because he was his son of old age. Jacob also gave a special coat of many colors to Joseph. His brothers

were jealous of him as Joseph was the darling of his father. Then Joseph told them about a dream he saw in which, while they were all binding sheaves in the field, Joseph's sheaf rose and stood upright, while the sheaves of his brothers stood around and bowed down to it (Genesis 37: 3-8).

Once Jacob sent Joseph alone to his brothers who were tending the sheep at the hills. He met them near Dothan at Shekhem. When the brothers saw Joseph they conspired to kill him. However at Reuben's suggestion, instead of slaying Joseph, they stripped him of his coat of many colors and put him in a dry well in the desert. Later, when they sat down to eat they saw a company of Ishmaelite merchants on their way to Egypt. At Judah's suggestion, they pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him as slave for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites. His brothers showed the torn pieces of his coat dipped in a goat's blood to their father. Jacob believed that a wild beast had devoured him. He was grief stricken and could not be consoled (Genesis 37: 19 – 35).

The traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. When Potiphar found that the Lord gave Joseph success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his sight and Potiphar made him overseer of his house (Genesis 39: 5). However, his wife caused much misery to Joseph (Genesis 39:14-20). Believing her lies, Potiphar sent Joseph to prison. The Lord was with him and showed him mercy and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. Joseph was assigned as a steward of the prison.

During this time two senior officers of Pharaoh were imprisoned, as they had offended the king. One was the baker and the other was the butler. One night they both had dreams and in the morning they were sad, as they did not know the meaning of their dreams. Joseph prayed to God and told them the meaning of their dreams. It happened as Joseph had interpreted them. The baker was hanged and the butler was reinstated.

After about two years, Pharaoh, the king saw two similar dreams on the same night. The dreams were like this: Pharaoh saw 7 fat-cows coming out of the river and they were feeding in the meadow. Later 7 lean-cows came out of the river and they ate up the fat-cows. Pharaoh was troubled but he went back to sleep again. Then he had the second dream. Seven good ears of corn came

upon one stalk. Then came seven thin ears of corn scorched with the east wind. The seven thin ears devoured the seven good and full ears of corn. In the morning his spirit was troubled and he called in all magicians and wise men of Egypt and told them his dreams. None could interpret them. Then the chief butler told Pharaoh about Joseph. Immediately, Joseph was brought in before him. Joseph prayed to God and began to interpret the dreams. Both the dreams had the same meaning. The ensuing seven years would be of great plenty throughout the land of Egypt and afterwards there would be seven years of severe famine. Joseph also told the king that it would be wise to gather all the food grains of the years of plenty against the seven years of famine. Pharaoh was greatly impressed in the knowledge and wisdom of Joseph. Pharaoh gave him the position next to him and made him minister over the land of Egypt (Genesis 41: 25-45). Because of the able administration of Joseph, Egypt and the surrounding places survived the famine.

Moral: God is capable of raising His servants from prison to the royal throne.

Memory Verse: "When thou pass through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walk through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).

But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head (Psalms 3:3).

I. Answer the following

1. Why were his brothers jealous of Joseph?
2. What did his brothers do to Joseph at Dothan?
3. What happened when he was in the prison?
4. Pharaoh was troubled in spirit. Why?
5. What was the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams?
6. How did Pharaoh honor Joseph?

FLIGHT OF MOSES

(Exodus 2:1-6, 20)

Objective: At His people's times of difficulty, God always sends his representatives.

We have learnt that Joseph was the ruler in Egypt. He brought his father and all his brothers and their families to Egypt and made them settle in Goshen,



the most fertile region in Egypt. The children of Jacob multiplied. They were known as Israelites.

Then a new Pharaoh, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. He was worried at the fast growth of Israelites. He feared that in course of time they would take over the country. So he began to persecute them in several ways. He declared them to be slaves. The Egyptians forced them to hard labor. They appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with burdens. They were paid very little and the taskmasters beat them cruelly. Their lives became miserable. In spite of all this, the Israelites multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous. So, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt,

ordered the midwives to kill all male Hebrew children at birth. But the midwives, for fear of God, did not obey that order. Then, Pharaoh made a cruel decree that all male children of Israelites should be thrown into the Nile River when they are born. He ordered his soldiers to see that this decree was followed (Exodus 1:7-22).

During this time a son was born to a man named Amram of the Levi tribe. His wife was Jochebed. They hid the child for three months. As they could no longer hide him, they put the child in an ark of reeds and laid the ark in the river among the reeds. Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to bathe. She saw the child in the ark. She took the child and brought him up as her own son. He was named Moses, meaning, "drawn from water". Moses grew up in the palace of Pharaoh. When Moses grew up, he came to know that he was an Israelite. He used to watch the rigorous burden of his brothers. One day he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. He killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand. When it became known, he feared punishment of Pharaoh and fled to Midian (Exodus 2:11-15).

Moral: God is a refuge in the midst of suffering to those who trust Him.

Memory Verse: The Lord is the strength of His people; He is the saving refuge of His anointed (Psalms 28:8).

I. Fill in the blanks

1. The Children of Jacob were known as.....
2. Pharaoh declared the Israelites to be.....

II. Answer the following

1. Why did Pharaoh persecute the Israelites?
2. What was the cruel decree of Pharaoh?
3. What is the meaning of the name 'Moses'?
4. How did Moses happen to live in the palace of Pharaoh?
5. Why did Moses flee to Midian?

LESSON 11

GOD CALLS MOSES (THE BURNING BUSH)

(Exodus, chapters 3 and 4)

Objective: To learn that we are obliged to humbly accept and perform the work that God entrusts to us.

Moses reached the house of Jethro, a priest of Midian. Jethro gave Moses Zipporah, his daughter, in marriage. Moses tended his father-in-law's flock. One day Moses led the flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a



flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. Moses saw and was astonished that the bush was burning, but that it was not consumed. He went near the bush to see that marvelous sight. God then called 'Moses, Moses' from the midst of the burning bush. Moses replied, "God here I am".

God told him to take off his shoes, as the ground where he stood was holy. (This is why we remove our shoes when we enter the church) Moses was afraid to look and stood there hiding his face. The Lord God told Moses that

He had seen the affliction of the children of Israel. God told Moses that He would send him to Pharaoh so that he might bring them forth out of Egypt (Exodus 3:7-10).

Moses expressed his limitations to God that he was not an able person to fulfill this order. Moses again told God that the people of Israel may not believe him and may say that God has not appeared to him (Exodus 4:1). God did not accept the excuses put forth by Moses. God gave him three signs to make the people of Israel believe him. 1. God told him to put his staff on ground, and it became a serpent. 2. God told him to put his hand into his bosom and when he took it out it was leprous. He put his hand again into his bosom and it became normal. 3. Still if they do not believe him, Moses was to take some water out of the river and pour it on the dry land and the water will become blood. Upon this Moses said to the Lord "I am not eloquent, I am slow of speech, and have a slow tongue". God strengthened him and commanded him to go, saying that He would send his brother Aaron to help him. God gave Moses power to do wonders before the Egyptians, and told him to go to Pharaoh and demand him to release the Israelites. Although hesitant, Moses accepted the command of God. He bid farewell to Jethro and returned to Egypt.

Moral: When we submit ourselves to the will of God, He will enable us to do greater things for Him.

Memory Verse: Blessed is the man you choose, and cause to approach you, that he may dwell in your courts (Psalm 65:4).

L Answer the following

1. What was Moses doing in Midian?
2. What did Moses see at the mountain of Horeb?
3. What was the command of God to Moses?
4. What is the name of Moses' wife?

LESSON 12
DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL
(Exodus 5 -12)

Objective: To learn that one should not challenge the power of God.

According to the commandment of God, Moses reached Egypt. His brother Aaron welcomed him. They both stood before Pharaoh and insisted that he liberate the Israelites. Moses did wonders before Pharaoh to convince that the Lord God had sent them.

Moses told Aaron to put down his staff. He did so. Immediately, it became a serpent. Pharaoh called in his sorcerers. They also turned their staffs into serpents. But the staff of Aaron swallowed the rods of the sorcerers. Still Pharaoh did not change his mind. He did not allow the Israelites to go. Instead, he made their lives more miserable.

So God decided to punish Pharaoh and his people. They had ten pestilences one after the other. They were:

- 1) Water turned into blood (Exodus 7:14-24).
- 2) Frogs (Exodus 8:2-14).
- 3) Gnats (Exodus 8:16-19).
- 4) Flies (Exodus 8:20-24).
- 5) Pestilence on the livestock (Exodus 9:1-7).
- 6) Boils (Exodus 9:8-11).
- 7) Hail (Exodus 9:13-34).
- 8) Locusts (Exodus 10:12-19).
- 9) Darkness (Exodus 10:21-23).
- 10) The death of the first-born (Exodus 11:4-8).

In each pestilence, the Egyptians suffered miserably. Then Pharaoh would call Moses and Aaron and tell them that he would send away the people. Moses would pray to God to remove the pestilence. It happened nine times. All these nine times, there was no pestilence amongst the Israelites. The Lord God protected them. The tenth pestilence was very serious. All the first-born of Egyptians, from Pharaoh to all his people, and the first born of their beasts died. But, all first-born of the Israelites were safe. There was a great cry in Egypt. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron in the night, and ordered them to go out of the country with their people immediately. The children of Israel departed soon. Thus the Lord God delivered His people out of the bondage of Egypt with his mighty hand.

The Israelites were in Egypt for 430 years. In the coming lessons we shall learn how the Lord led the children of Israel to the Promised Land.

Moral: God delivers His people from all difficulties.

Memory Verse: Though I walk through the valley of shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me (Psalms 23:4).

I. Fill in the blanks

1. The staff of Aaron swallowed the rod of the
2. God delivered Israel from bondage of Egypt by His

II. Answer the following

1. Why did Moses do miracles before Pharaoh?
2. Why did God punish Pharaoh?
3. How did God punish Pharaoh and the Egyptians?
4. What did Pharaoh do, when they had the pestilence?

LESSON 13

GOD CARES FOR HIS PEOPLE

(Exodus : 14 & 16)

Objective: To learn how God cares for His people.

As God commanded, Moses led the people to the shore of the Red Sea. The Lord God went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day and in a pillar of fire during the night.

When Pharaoh saw that the people had gone, his mind changed. He pursued them with all his army on chariots and horses to bring them back. When the people saw the horses and chariots coming after them, they were horrified. God commanded Moses to stretch his staff upon the sea. The



waters of the Red Sea divided, and dry land appeared. The Israelites went on dry land and reached the other side of the sea. The soldiers of Pharaoh followed them into the sea. Until all Israel passed, the waters, stood divided. Then Moses stretched his staff again on the sea, as commanded by God. The



waters came back in full force and drowned the army of Pharaoh with their chariots and horses. With a great miracle God saved His people. The people sang unto God and praised Him. They traveled through the desert of Shur (Exodus 13:17, 14:2, 15:22-25, 18:20).

On their journey forward, they forgot the mighty powers of God and murmured against God, Moses and Aaron. They feared that they would not have anything to eat. Moses prayed continuously for the people. God heard his prayer and gave them manna from heaven. In the morning manna was found around their tents. People would gather manna for that day. For meat, God gave them quails (Exodus 16:13-16). For forty years until the people reached and inhabited the land of Canaan, God fed them likewise. When there was shortage of water, the people again blamed their God. God told Moses to strike the rock in Horeb with his staff. Water gushed out of the rock abundantly for all the people and their cattle (Exodus 17:5-7). Thus the Lord God looked after His people without any problems either for food or water.

Moral: God hears the prayers of His people who put their trust in Him.

Memory Verse: If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? (Luke 11:13).

I. Answer the following

1. How did God lead His people through the wilderness?
2. How did the Israelites pass through the Red Sea?
3. How did God feed His people?
4. What did Moses do when there was scarcity of water?

LESSON 14

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

(Exodus 18, 19, 20, 24 and 32)

Objective: To learn that we should worship only the true God.

The Israelites reached the wilderness of Sinai after three months from their departure from Egypt. They encamped at the foot of the Mount Sinai. There the people sanctified themselves at the directive of Moses. They were told not to touch the boundary of the mountain nor set their foot thereon. The Lord God descended on the mountain in a fire. When the people heard the voice of God, they were greatly afraid. They said that they would die if they continued to hear the voice of God.



They wanted only Moses to speak to them. God called Moses and he went up to the top of the mount. He stayed there with the Lord for forty days. There God gave Moses the Law to be observed by the people. God gave Moses two stone tablets of Ten Commandments written with the finger of God. Mount Sinai is also called Mount Horeb.

When Moses was with God at the mountain, the people were committing a grave sin. They did not know what had happened to Moses. They wanted a god and they compelled Aaron to make them a calf with gold that they could worship. They worshipped the golden calf as their god and offered sacrifices to it. They sang and danced before the idol. There was big noise at the celebration.

God told Moses what was happening and he descended from the mountain. Moses saw the people in great exhilaration before the idol. His anger knew no bounds. He threw down the two stone tablets with the 10 commandments written on them, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. Moses burnt the gold calf in fire and ground it to powder. He strewed it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink it.

God's anger burned against the people as they quickly turned away from the Lord God who had brought them out of Egypt with his mighty hand and led them so far. God decided to punish the people for their ungratefulness. Moses fell upon his face before the Lord and pleaded, reasoned, and reminded God of the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He also prayed to the Lord not to destroy His people out of anger. God accepted his prayer. God again gave Moses two tablets of stone on which the Law was written. God said that the names of those who sinned would be blotted out of the book of life.

The Ten Commandments as given to Moses are as follows:

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other Gods before me.
2. You shall not make yourself an idol (in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below).
3. Thou shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; (for God will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain).

4. Remember the Sabbath day, by keeping it holy.
5. Honour your father and your mother (so that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
6. You shall not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor. (You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or maidservant, or his ox, or his donkey, or any thing that is thy neighbor's).

Moral: He who does not keep the commandments of God will be punished.

Memory Verse: But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die (Ezekiel 18:21).

I. Answer the Following

1. How did God appear at Mount Sinai?
2. At the mountain what did God give to Moses?
3. When Moses saw the people committing sin, what did he do?
4. What was the sin committed by the people at the camp?
5. What did Moses do to pacify God?

LESSON 15

BRONZE SERPENT

(Numbers 20 & 21)

Objective: Those who seek him attain salvation. Never belittle the gifts of God.

Moses led the people through the wilderness of Zin. The king of Edom refused passage to the Israelites through his country. So they had to go around the country of Edom. Thus they reached mount Hor (Numbers 21:4). There Aaron passed away. His son Eleazar became the priest. From Hor, the people traveled towards the Red Sea. This zigzag journey through the wilderness made the people unhappy. They murmured against Moses and God. They said that they were happy in Egypt. They felt they would die in the wilderness without water and food. All through their journey to the Promised Land, they had been murmuring incessantly for one thing or the other. They said the manna, the heavenly food given by God, is loathsome. Then the wrath of God came upon them. He sent venomous fiery serpents to attack them. (These snakes are deadly and poisonous, and are seen plentifully in wilderness. When they bite, the victim would feel great pain as if he had been burned. So they are known as fiery serpents.)

Many people were bitten by the fiery serpents, and many of them died. Moses prayed for the people. The people understood their sin and repented. They cried to the Lord. As commanded by God, Moses made a serpent of bronze and hung it on a pillar at the center of their camp. God told them to look upon the brass serpent if they were bitten by the fiery serpents. Those who looked at it saved their lives.

Moral: When in great trouble, find solace in God.

Memory Verse: And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (John 3:14).

I. Fill in the blank

1. At mount Hor passed away.

II. Answer the following

1. The people started murmuring against God and Moses. Why?
2. Why was God angry with the Israelites?
3. How did God punish the people?
4. In order to save the lives of the people bitten by fiery serpents, what did God command Moses?

LESSON 16

DEATH OF MOSES; JOSHUA BECOMES THE LEADER

(Deuteronomy 34)

Objective: To learn that he who is faithful till the end can only inherit the Promised Land.

The Israelites traveled through the desert and reached the land of Moab, near the river of Jordan. Beyond this river was the promised land of Canaan. God told Moses that he would die at Moab and that Joshua had been chosen to lead the people. Moses was sad that he was not fortunate enough to set his foot in the Promised Land. God was compassionate and told him to go to the top of mount Nebo. From there the Lord showed him the lands promised to the Israelites. Moses died there. He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, but no man knew where his tomb was. Moses died when he was 120 years old. He led the Israelites through the deserts for forty years. The Israelites mourned his death for 30 days.

After the death of Moses, Joshua became the leader of Israel. "*Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him*" (Deuteronomy 34:9). He was the captain of Israel in all the battles fought in the deserts. God gave Joshua wisdom and strength, and entrusted him to fight for the Promised Land and possess it. Of the grown-up men who started from Egypt, only Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb son of Jephuneh of the tribe of Judah were alive to occupy the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 1:36-38). All others perished in their journey through deserts

that lasted for forty years. God did not allow even Moses to set his foot in the Promised Land. Joshua and Caleb were always faithful to the Lord and they did not waver at any time. So God blessed them to enter the Promised Land.

Important achievements of Joshua:

1. Led Israel and crossed the Jordan River
2. Captured the town of Jericho
3. Punished Achan
4. Divided the land for the 12 tribes
5. Gathered Israel at Shekhem and advised them
6. Advised Israel to renew their ties with the Lord God

Joshua died at the age of 110 and was buried in his land at Ephraim.

Moral: We should submit ourselves to God even when His Will is not pleasing to us. Then God will be compassionate to us.

Memory verse: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15)

I. Fill in the blank

1. Moses died at Mount

II. Answer the following

1. Why was Moses sad?
2. What did God do, when He realized that Moses was sad?
3. What responsibility did God give to Joshua?
4. Of the grown-up men who started from Egypt, only two entered the Promised Land. Who were they?

ISRAELITES OCCUPY THE PROMISED LAND

(Joshua 6 and following chapters)

Objective: To learn that God fulfills His promises.

The Children of Israel crossed the Jordan River under the leadership of Joshua. When the priests carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord set their feet in the water, the flow of the river stopped. All the people walked over the river, on dry ground. Until all the people crossed the river, the priests stood in the midst of the river bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

After crossing Jordan, the first city to be subdued by Israel was Jericho. A very strong wall surrounded Jericho. On seeing the Israelites, the king of Jericho fortified the wall even further. They were prepared to face any assault by anyone. But the Lord God fought for His people. As commanded by God, the priests bearing the ark of God, Joshua and his armed men went round the wall of Jericho once a day. They did so for six days. On the seventh day, they went around the wall seven times and when the priests blew the trumpets, the people shouted aloud. The wall came down before them. Every man went straight into the city, and thus they captured the city. This event made the people realize that their God was definitely with them. This enhanced their faith and courage.

Joshua captured Canaan, the land wherein milk and honey flow, after fighting with many of its inhabitants. The land of Canaan, the Promised Land, was then divided among the tribes of Israel. The tribe of Levy was chosen as priests and hence for them no particular land was allotted (Joshua 13:14). Joshua called in all leaders of the people and repeatedly taught them the laws of God. He made them promise that they would serve the true God only. Joshua died at the age of 110.

Moral: We succeed in our lives not by our efforts, but by the power of God.

Memory Verse: The Lord, your God is with you; He will not fail you nor forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6)

I. Answer the following

1. How did Israelites cross the River Jordan?
2. The strong city of Jericho was subdued without a fight. How?
3. Why was the tribe of Levy not given any land as their possession?
4. Before his death, what did Joshua do?

NEW TESTAMENT

LESSON 18

JOHN, THE BAPTIST

(Luke 1:8-25 & 57-80; 3:1-22; 9:9)

Objective: To understand that to become a witness to Jesus Christ is a blessing.

The elderly priest Zechariah and his aged wife Elizabeth were without children. They were very sad for not having children. God heard their prayer and gave them a son. As told by the angel of the Lord, he was named John. He was brought up in strict abstinence. In his early life, he went into the wilderness and stayed in meditation. He ate fruits, roots and wild honey, and lived as a hermit. As inspired by God, he came to the banks of Jordan and began to preach remission of sin and baptism of repentance. A great multitude came to listen to him. He exhorted the people to turn from injustice and to repent for their sins. He rebuked the sinners and evildoers. He forewarned them that the unjust would be severely punished. Many people came to him and confessed their sins. He baptized them in the river Jordan. Since he baptized people, he was called John the Baptist. He was considered a great prophet.

John the Baptist is considered to be the forerunner of the Lord; John came to prepare His ways and to be a witness for Him. When John saw Jesus, he said, "*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*"

Jesus also came to John and got baptized by him in river Jordan. At the time of His baptism, the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. When Jesus was getting baptized, there came a voice from heaven, saying "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*"

John rebuked King Herod for the many wicked deeds that he committed. The king became angry and put him in prison. Later John was beheaded in the prison.

Moral: We have to faithfully carry out our duties without fear of persecution.

Memory Verse: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mathew 10:39).

I. Answer the following

1. Who were the parents of John the Baptist?
2. When he grew up, what did he do?
3. Why was John called 'John the Baptist.'?
4. What was the purpose of the coming of John the Baptist?
5. At the time of the baptism of Jesus, what happened?
6. How did John the Baptist die?

LESSON 19

TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS CHRIST

(Mathew: 4: 1-11)

Objective: To learn how to overcome our temptations.

After receiving baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus went into the wilderness. He spent forty days there in meditation and fasting. After that Jesus was hungry. Then Satan came to tempt Jesus who was very hungry. He told Jesus, "*If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.*"

He knew that He was the Son of God. Still, Jesus did not fall into temptation. He replied, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*" (Mathew 4:4).

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "*If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, "He shall give His angels charge over you; in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone."*"

This was quoted from Psalm 91: 11 and 12. The devil thought Jesus would take this opportunity to show a big sign before the people. Jesus did not fall into this trap also. He replied, *"It is written, you shall not tempt the Lord, your God"* (Mathew 4:7).

Again, the devil took Him to a high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, *"All these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me."*

It is very difficult for men to hold back their desire for money, power and high offices. They will be willing to bow down before anybody to get them. But Jesus overcome this temptation also. Jesus told the devil, *"Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve'"* (Mathew 4:10).

Then the devil left Him. Angels came and ministered to Him. The temptations of Jesus show us how to face temptations without falling into them. Jesus used only the Word of God to overcome the temptations.

Moral: We shall use the power of the Word of God to overcome temptations.

Memory Verse: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalms 119:105).

I. Answer the following

1. What did Jesus do in the wilderness?
2. When did the devil come to Jesus? Why did he come?
3. How many temptations did Jesus face?
4. What was the weapon used by Jesus to overcome temptation?
5. Who ministered to Jesus after he overcame the temptations?

JESUS REBUKES THE WIND

(Mathew 8:23-27, Mark: 4: 35-41, Luke 8:22-25)

Objective: To understand that Jesus is the Creator and He has power over nature.

Once Jesus was preaching at the shores of the Sea of Galilee. When the crowd increased, He sat in a boat and continued to preach. When evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." Jesus sat in the stern and fell asleep while the disciples rowed the boat. After a while there arose a tempest and strong waves were beating into the boat. The disciples feared that the boat would overturn. They were not able to control the boat. Jesus was sleeping soundly. They woke Him up and said to Him, "Lord, do you



not care that we are perishing?" Jesus woke up and rebuked the storm and the sea. The wind ceased and the sea stood still. There was a great calm. The disciples were surprised. Jesus asked them why they were so fearful and without faith.

The disciples should have known that Jesus is the creator of all things and that He has all the power. Therefore, when Jesus is with them, no harm would fall upon them. Had they known it, they would have been courageous. This happened to convince them of His power over nature as well.

Moral: When Jesus is with us we need to fear nothing.

Memory Verse: O Lord God, You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, You still them (Psalms 89:9).

I Answer the following

1. Why did Jesus sit in a boat to preach?
2. When it was evening, what did Jesus and the disciples do?
3. Why were the disciples afraid in the sea?
4. What was Jesus doing at that time?
5. What did Jesus do after He woke up?
6. What does this event teach us?

LESSON 21

JESUS RESURRECTS LAZARUS

(John 11: 1-46)

Objective: To understand that Jesus is the Lord of both life and death.

Lazarus was a dear friend of Jesus. His sisters, Martha and Mary were also dear to Him. They lived in the village of Bethany, very close to Jerusalem. He used to stay in their house when he comes to Jerusalem.

Lazarus became fatally ill. Jesus was far away on the other side of the Jordan. His illness further worsened. Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus about it. Jesus had to stay in that place for two more days. Then He started to Bethany with His disciples. When they reached there, Lazarus was already dead. He was in the tomb for four days. Martha and Mary came to Jesus. They lamented that had Jesus been there, their brother would not have died. Jesus went along with them to the place where Lazarus was buried. Many Jews were also gathered there. When Jesus saw them weeping, He was troubled in His Spirit. Jesus wept (John 11:35). He told the people to remove the stone from the entrance of the tomb. Then Martha told Him that by that time there would be a stench, as he was dead for four days. Jesus told her if she believed, she would see the glory of God (John 11:40). They removed the stone. Jesus looked up and thanked the Holy Father. Then He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" Lazarus came out alive hand and foot bound with grave

clothes and his face was also wrapped with cloth. All the people saw this and they marveled.

Moral: Bodily death is not the end of life. He who believes in Jesus shall live even after death.

Memory Verse: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54).

I. Answer the following

1. Who were the sisters of Lazarus?
2. When Lazarus was sick, what did his sisters do?
3. When Jesus reached Bethany, what had happened?
4. What did those sisters say, when they saw Jesus?
5. Jesus wept. Why?
6. When Jesus told the people to remove the stone from the tomb, what did Martha say?
7. At the tomb, what did Jesus do?
8. Why were the people astonished?

LESSON 22

THE TEN VIRGINS

(Mathew : 25: 1-13)

Objective: To learn that we must always be prepared for the second coming of our Lord, for the hour is not known. Otherwise, we will not attain everlasting happiness with Him, and will be left behind.

The parable of the ten Virgins is one of the most beautiful parables that Jesus told His disciples. Jesus told parables so that the moral could be easily understood. This parable was told to forewarn that those who expect His second coming must prepare for it so that they will be able to enter His Kingdom while the unprepared are forsaken.

The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to receive the bridegroom. It was the custom in those days for young

ladies to receive the bride and the bridegroom with lighted lamps. In this parable, five virgins were wise and the other five were foolish. The wise virgins took spare oil along with their lamps. The other five foolish virgins did not take oil with their lamps. The bridegroom was delayed in his arrival and all the virgins fell asleep.

At midnight it was announced that the bridegroom was arriving. Immediately the wise virgins put oil in their lamps and lighted them and were ready to receive the bridegroom. The foolish virgins could not light their lamps, as there was no oil. So they asked the wise virgins to spare them some oil. They replied, *“No, lest there should not be enough for us and you, but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves”* (Mathew 25:9).

The foolish virgins went out to procure oil. At that time, the bridegroom came and the wise virgins received him. They went in with Him to the wedding and the door was shut. In the meanwhile, the foolish virgins came and knocked at the door and prayed that the door be opened for them. The bridegroom said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you”* (Mathew 25:12), and he rejected them.

Moral: We should always be prepared to meet our Lord, as we do not know when He is coming. Never wait for later in life to repent for your sins and to do the will of God. It may be too late.

Memory Verse: You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming (2 Peter 3:12).

I. Answer the following

1. What is the moral that Jesus is teaching us by the parable of the 10 virgins?
2. What did the wise virgins take with them in addition to the lamps?
3. When the bridegroom came, what did the wise virgins do?
4. The foolish virgins could not meet the bridegroom. Why?

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

(Acts 5:1-11)

Objective: To learn that we should have noble hearts.

At the commencement of the Holy Church, the disciples of Jesus Christ preached the gospel of the kingdom of God only in Jerusalem. Many people believed and joined the Church. Those who believed and received baptism and became members of the Church were called 'disciples.' These disciples used to sell their property and give all of the money to the Apostles, and they in turn spent the money for the common use of the Church.

Ananias was such a disciple. His wife was Sapphira. They sold their property and kept back a portion, and they put the rest at the feet of the Apostles, as if it was the entire amount they received. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter knew their deceit and asked Ananias, *"While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God"* (Acts 5:4). Ananias was terror stricken and fell down and breathed his last.

After some time Sapphira came in without knowing what had happened to Ananias. Peter asked her whether they had brought the full amount for which the property was sold. She replied that it was the full amount. Then Peter said to her *"How is that they have agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord? He continued: "Those who buried your husband are near and they will carry you away as well"* (Acts 5:9).

At that moment she also fell down and breathed her last. So great fear came upon all the Church and upon all who heard these things. Everyone realized that those who deceive the Holy Spirit of God would be punished.

Moral: God sees everything, and knows everything. Nothing is hidden from His eyes, nor can we hide anything from Him.

Memory Verse: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer" (Psalms 19:14).

I Answer the following

1. At the beginning of the Church, how were the members known?
2. What was the custom of the early believers?
3. What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira?
4. What punishment did they receive?
5. What do we learn from this incident?

LESSON 24

ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR

(Acts 6:1-7:60)

Objective: To learn how to be a witness to Jesus even if we have to give away our lives for it.

The Church of the Lord was steadily growing. When the number of believers increased, there arose a need for more ministers. The Apostles chose seven men with fullness of spirit, wisdom and good reputation to serve the Church as deacons. The first among them was Stephen. The others were Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas from Antioch. They served at the tables and preached the gospel.

Stephen, filled in faith and power, did great miracles and signs among the people. He spoke with wisdom and fullness of the Spirit, which the Jews could not resist. So they hated him. They seized him and brought him to the council. They set false witnesses against him saying that he spoke blasphemous words against Moses and God.

Stephen spoke before the council explaining the rebellious attitude of the Israelite tribes as a whole. He accused them of crucifying their Lord and Savior and persecuting the prophets who prophesied about the coming of the Lord. When they heard these things, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him" (Acts 7:54). But, "Stephen, being filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). And said, "*Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God*".

When they heard this, the Jews covered their ears and cried out at the top of their voices, and they all rushed at him. They cast him out of the city and stoned him. Stephen knelt down and prayed, "*Lord Jesus receive my spirit. Lord, do not hold this sin against them.*"

He said this and kneeled down in front of them and fell dead (Acts 7:58-60).

Stephen was the first martyr of the Church. After his death, great persecution broke out against the Church. The disciples had to flee to different parts of the Roman Empire. They preached the gospel in all those places. Thus the martyrdom of Stephen caused further growth of the Church.

Moral: When one is persecuted for witnessing Jesus, the Lord receives him in heaven.

Memory Verse: Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (Hebrews 13:7).

I. Answer the following

1. How many deacons did the Apostles choose? Why was it necessary?
2. What was the job of these deacons?
3. Why did the Jews hate Stephen?
4. What was the accusation the Jews put on Stephen?
5. When the Jews heard the speech of Stephen, they were furious at him. Why?
6. How did the Jews kill Stephen?
7. After the death of Stephen, the Church grew further. How?

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

(Acts 9: 1-16)

Objective: To learn the Lord chooses people for His assignments.

Saul was born in the tribe of Benjamin. He had his education in Tarsus and Jerusalem. He was a student of Gamaleal, the great teacher of that time. He became a disciple in AD 32-33. In Philippians 3:5-6, Saul gives his own background as “Circumcised on the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the



tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee. Concerning zeal, persecuting church; touching the righteousness which is the Law, blameless”. That is, according to the law of Jews he was blameless.

As a youngster, Saul watched the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. Saul had agreed with the killing of Stephen. Afterwards, Saul threatened the

disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem. He obtained letters from the high priest for the synagogues in Damascus. These letters said that if he found any man or woman in Syria following the way of Jesus, then he could bring them bound to Jerusalem. He gathered his friends and went to Damascus. When he came near Damascus, he found a great light shining around him from heaven. Saul fell down and heard a voice asking him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Arise and go into the city and there you shall be told what to do" (Acts 9:4-6). The men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no one. Saul got up from the ground. He had lost his sight. His friends led him to the city.

Saul stayed there without seeing anything, nor eating or drinking anything for three days. In Damascus there was a disciple, named Ananias. The Lord said in a vision to Ananias to go and meet Saul. When Ananias met Saul, he put his hand on Saul and prayed. Saul got his sight back. He believed in Jesus Christ and got baptized and ate food.

From that day onwards, Saul started preaching the gospel. Saul later came to be known as Paul. St. Paul set apart the rest of his life for the gospel. He suffered considerably and undertook most difficult tasks for the gospel, and ultimately became a martyr at Rome. Paul is also included in the fold of Apostles. He is considered along with Peter, the leader of Apostles.

Moral: The Lord calls him who He likes, and entrusts this person with His tasks.

Memory Verse: The message of the cross is foolishness to those who perish, but to us, who are being saved; it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18).

I. Fill in the blank

1. Saul later was known as

II. Answer the following

1. Why did Saul go to Damascus?
2. What happened to Saul near Damascus?
3. Who prayed for Saul? Then what happened?
4. What has Paul done for the Church?
5. Paul is considered along with whom?

TRUE FAITH

LESSON 26

ST. IGNATIUS

Objective: Sufferings are inevitable for the faithful

Our Lord held a child in his hands to exemplify humility and purity of heart to His disciples (Mat. 18:1-6). This child later became the Patriarch of Antioch and came to be known as St. Ignatius Noorono, as indicated in the writings of the holy Church Fathers. St Ignatius, a disciple of St. Peter and St. John, was the third Patriarch of Antioch. The saint, who lived a pious life in prayer and fasting, was jailed and exiled for the sake of the true faith.

In a vision this Holy Father witnessed the fiery angels alternately praising God in two batches. Modeling this, St. Ignatius instituted such an order in the Church of Antioch.

While passing through Antioch on his way to invade Persia, the Emperor Trojan heard about this Holy Father and forced him to desert his faith. Seeing his unwillingness to obey his order, the enraged emperor ordered Ignatius to be thrown into the lions' den. When the soldiers approached him to chain him, the saint kissed the shackle and uttered: 'as the grain of wheat is crushed in the mill to form fine flour to be used to prepare sacrificial bread for the Lord, I am eager to be crushed by the teeth of lion and be offered as a sacrifice to my Lord'. Even on his way to martyrdom he kept on preaching the gospel of the Lord to the faithful. His writings are included in the New Testament apocrypha section. The Greek word 'apocrypha' means hidden. One of the clear subjects in his writings is that the members of the Church are obligated to obey and respect bishops, priests, and deacons. By the order of the emperor, St. Ignatius was martyred in Rome in AD 107.

Moral of the Lesson: How high a price one has to pay to protect the true faith!

Memory Verse: I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

I. Answer the following

1. What does Church tradition say about St. Ignatius?
2. What order did St. Ignatius institute in the Church of Antioch? What incident is considered as the basis for that?
3. What was his fate after being forced by the emperor Trojan to abandon Christianity?
4. What is the clear theme in many of his writings?

LESSON 27

ST. POLYCARPOS

Objective: To learn the life, the unwavering faith, and martyrdom of St. Polycarp

St. Polycarp was born and brought up in Smyrna, in Asia Minor region under the Roman Empire. He became a disciple of St. John the apostle at a very young age. According to the Church father Tertulian, Polycarp was ordained and appointed as the bishop of Smyrna by St. John. The meaning of the Greek word Polycarp is 'excellent reward/ fruit'. His life and martyrdom is a fulfillment of the very meaning of his name and is a model for the faithful. While St. Ignatius (Noorono) of Antioch was heading to Rome to attain his martyrdom, St. Polycarp visited him on his way and received his blessing. St. Polycarp is credited with the authorship of an Apocryphal book called the 'Book of Polycarp'. He exhorts the readers to live a life of unity and unwavering faith.

During his time the Christian life was unbearably bitter due to cruel persecution by pagan religious zealots. In his time the Jewish oppression of Christians was also at its peak. The Governor of Rome insisted that the Holy Father desert his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. To this St. Polycarp replied: "I was His servant for the last 86 years, and He did no wrong to me. How can I now deny my king who has redeemed me?" The result was that St. Polycarp was elevated to martyrdom.

The Christians of Smyrna wrote about the martyrdom of St. Polycarp: "The body of the saint refused to burn in the fiery furnace. Then the Roman Governor ordered his soldiers to pierce his body with a spear. When pierced by the spear, a dove flew up from the body of the saint and the fire was doused by the blood that flew from his body." His martyred body was not released to

the faithful. His body was cremated. The faithful eyewitnesses gathered his bones and preserved them as holy relics.

Moral of the Story: The lives of His devotees are precious to the Lord.

Memory Verse: “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I have joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me” (Philippians 2:17-18).

I Answer the following

1. What was the answer of St. Polycarp when asked by the Roman governor to reject Jesus Christ?
2. Explain shortly about the martyrdom of St. Polycarp.

LESSON 28

THE INCARNATION

The Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, took unto Himself the task of redeeming man, when He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The purpose of incarnation was to redeem the human race, which fell into the fold of sin. The incarnation of the Son of God is the great Divine mystery, which cannot be comprehended by humans fully, unaided by revelation. Even thousands of years before the birth of Christ, the promise of the redeemer was made by God. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers; HE WILL CRUSH YOUR HEAD....” (Genesis 3:15). Jesus Christ, the incarnated God occupies the center place in human History, dividing B.C and A.D. Jesus Christ is Perfect God from all eternity and perfect man. When the Son of God incarnated, the Godhead or manhood were neither lost nor altered to become a third nature. This is known as the unaltered incarnation of Jesus from the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Holy Trinity: There is only one God. In God there are three Divine Persons (Knomo in Syriac) - the Holy Father, the Holy Son and the Holy Spirit. The Three are One, One God, the same Substance, equal in Power and Glory, having one Intelligence and one Will. Each person in itself is complete and cannot be separated and is equal in power. Never, even for a moment, confuse the Three Divine persons in the Godhead to be three different Gods. God cannot be compared to anything known to us and cannot be named or defined. God is beyond our thought and knowledge. However, the following

examples may be used to understand the oneness of the three Persons of Godhead. The three states of water, namely, ice (solid), water (liquid) and steam (gaseous) are of the same substance. Similarly, sun emits light and heat which are inseparable. But one can feel them individually by experience. These comparisons point at the oneness of the Holy Trinity, but human knowledge and abilities are too limited to understand the complete mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Memory Verse: "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

I. Answer the following

1. What was the purpose of the incarnation?
2. Explain how did God incarnate unaltered from the Blessed Virgin Mary.
3. What is the mystery contained in the Holy Trinity?

LESSON 29

THE HOLY SACRAMENTS

Definition: Sacraments are the visible acts of invisible means of grace, which our Lord ordered and instituted as essential for the salvation of the human race. The Oriental Orthodox theology seldom attempts to define sacraments, but rather teaches them as mysteries. It is beyond the perception of human intelligence that inward and spiritual graces result from outward and material means. There are seven sacraments. They are 1) Baptism, 2) Holy Mooron (confirmation), 3) Confession (Penance), 4) Holy Eucharist, 5) Holy Orders (priesthood) 6) Matrimony and 7) the Anointing of the Sick (Unction of the sick).

1. **Baptism:** Baptism joins us to the Church and gives us the grace of Christ. Through baptism we receive the remission of sins and the born-again status.
 1. Baptism is the joining of us to the church the body of Christ.
 2. Baptism signifies the death of sin and entry to new life.
 3. With baptism you inherit the new covenant.
 4. Baptism signifies new birth with the Holy Spirit.
 5. Baptism unifies us to the death and resurrection of Christ.
 6. Through Baptism we receive the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is of 2 kinds: Baptism of the child and baptism of the elderly. Our church encourages the baptism of child and also accepts the baptism of grown-ups.

2. **Holy Mooron:** Holy Mooron is applied on those born again by baptism as a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit, thereby strengthening the spiritual life.
3. **Confession:** Confession, or penance or absolution, restores life when we have broken our union with Christ. Confession is showing true remorse for our past and current sins. Such a penitent sinner, with a resolution not to sin afterwards, declares his sins in the presence of God to an anointed priest.
4. **Holy Eucharist:** Holy Eucharist (H. Communion) nourishes and supports life with heavenly food. Our Lord blessed the bread and wine and declared them to be His Body and Blood and offered them to His disciples. He then entrusted them to do this in remembrance of Him until His second coming (Matthew 26:17-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-22). Due to the grace of the Holy Spirit, bread and wine get transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. (Like 'the Word became Flesh'). A remorseful sinner, by eating the flesh and drinking the Blood of Christ becomes united into His communion.
5. **Holy Orders:** Ordination gives grace to chosen men to share in the exercise of Christ's priestly Office. This is one of the optional sacraments. God instituted the priestly orders to elevate the man enslaved to temporal nature to the experience of heavenly bliss, and to absolve sins and to strengthen the union of man with God. They are our shepherds and spiritual fathers. The priestly orders were in existence in the Old Testament Church as well. Aaron was the chief priest, whereas his son Eleazar was a priest.
6. **Matrimony:** This sacrament is not compulsory for everyone. But it is established by God and it is Holy too. It is an agreement between a man and a woman before Almighty God. The couples married through this sacrament are not permitted to separate themselves. And this sacrament must be conducted by an ordained priest otherwise it is incomplete.
7. **Anointing of the Sick:** Anointing or Unction of sick with Holy oil clearly is recorded in the book of St. James. Unction gives grace, healing of illness and emotional satisfaction to the sick who are believers. This sacrament was in practice during the time of Apostles and has been in practice throughout history until today (Mark 6:19).

Who are the saints? Where do they dwell?

Those children of God who labored for the Kingdom of God, moved to God's abode are considered as saints. Though they reside with God they are with us and we are with them in faith (Hebrew 12:1).

I. Answer the following

1. Define the sacraments.
2. How many sacraments are there in our Church; and what are they?
3. What is confession? How is it performed?
4. Where do the saints dwell?

LESSON 30

CHURCH HISTORY

1. Who are the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ?
 - 1) Peter (Simon)
 - 2) Andrew (Brother of Peter)
 - 3) James (Son of Zebedee)
 - 4) John (Son of Zebedee)
 - 5) Philip
 - 6) Bartholomew (Nathaniel)
 - 7) Thomas
 - 8) Mathew (Levi - Tax Collector)
 - 9) James (Son of Alphaeus)
 - 10) Thaddaeus (Judas - son of James)
 - 11) Simon (the Zealot)
 - 12) Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10:2-4, Luke 6:14-16)
2. Who founded the Church in India (Kerala)?

It is an undisputed fact that upon the commandment of Lord Jesus Christ to 'Go in to all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation' (Mark 16:15). St. Thomas came to India and preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. In A.D. 52 St. Thomas landed at a place called Kodungalloor in Kerala. On his arrival he proclaimed the gospel of God, and performed many miracles to those who doubted his being a servant of God.

It is believed that St. Thomas founded seven and a half churches in Kerala. They are 1)Kodungalloor, 2)Paloor, 3) Kottakkavu, 4)Gokkamangalam, 5) Kurekkeni (Kollam), 6) Chayal (Nilakkal), 7) Niranom. About the half church, two names are mentioned by different group of people. They are Malayattoor and Thiruvithamkottu. St.Thomas ordained priests (elders) from four Brahmin families and entrusted them with the evangelization. Those families are 1) Kalli, 2) Kaliyankal, 3) Shankarapuri and 4) Pakalomattam.

St. Thomas sojourned to China and Malacca for proclaiming the word of God. On his return while passing through Coramandal coast (east coast – Madras- Chennai) he was attacked by spears and attained martyrdom at a place called Kalamina (Mylapore), and was entombed at the same place. It is indicated in certain historical documents that in A.D. 396 his mortal remains was taken to Edessa and placed in the church which was dedicated to his name. The Holy Church celebrates his memorial feast on the 3rd of July. His memorial feast is also celebrated in some places between December 18-21, believed to be the days between his piercing with a spear (18) and his death (21).

The Throne of Antioch

The followers of Jesus Christ came to be known as Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26). Eusebius, a Church Father wrote that St. Peter went to Antioch for the proclamation of the Gospel, and founded the Throne of Antioch and built churches there.

Due to the efforts of St. Peter and his fellow workers the Christians rose in number. St. Peter conducted his missionary journeys to Sor, Sidon, Caesarea, Galatia and neighboring places. In A.D. 60 he appointed Evodios and Ignatius as his successors. Hence the Throne of Antioch was founded with the apostolic succession of St. Peter. St. Peter was crucified in A.D. 67 at Rome by the order of the emperor Nero, and became a martyr for His Lord and Master Jesus Christ. The Church celebrates the foundation day of the Throne of Antioch on 22nd of February.

I. Answer the following

1. Name the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. Explain the martyrdom of St. Thomas.
3. What were the places St. Thomas traveled for evangelization?
4. When was the throne of Antioch founded? By whom?

