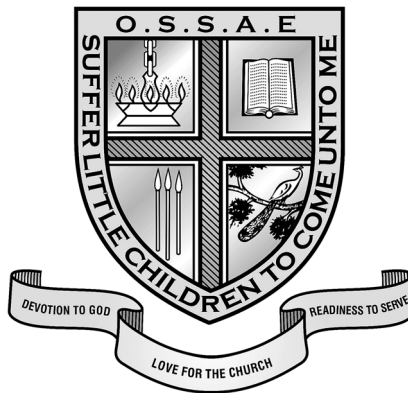


ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST



JERUSALEM DIVISION

Class VIII

(English)

Sunday School Central Office
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Foreword

Biblical education has been considered to be of utmost importance in the spiritual and liturgical practices of our church. Our Lord in His words “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these” expresses His great tender care for children and recognizes their value. Growing up by knowing God from childhood is a blessed privilege of the Christian life. We should develop a lifestyle in which the basics of spiritual life are practiced and reinforced, because a strong spiritual foundation is necessary to make our life meaningful. Training our children in Christian witness is a mission and a big responsibility before God. Sunday School education is a sacred service where we impart the knowledge of the Scripture to the children to help them to experience God. It helps them to experience the life of the saints who understood the beauty of that experience, the glory of worship which is a grateful response to the divine experience, and the social responsibility which is to be carried out in the fullness of that experience and identity. The greatest gift that we have to offer our children is the strong Orthodox faith that has been handed down to us through generations.

Sunday School education should not be evaluated in terms of secular education. It is a quest for the divine in which the teachers and students partake together making it a life-long learning experience. Sunday school education becomes perfect only with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The aim of this learning system is to recognize the value of the divine revelations that happened before ages and to interpret it according to the needs of the present age. This must be fulfilled in the model we see in the Holy Scripture. God has raised prophets and visionaries in different ages to reveal the divine will to His own people. The Sunday School teachers fulfill this great responsibility.

Sunday School education becomes meaningful only when the parents involve in the teaching and learning process. Values instilled from the Sunday School should be further reinforced and practiced at homes to make them part of their personality. Moses told the Israelites to teach their children the commandments of God “recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:7).

We should train the new generation to respond with a Christian conviction to the changes in the society. Our young generation should be able to share the models of love and forgiveness in this troubled society. Only then our new generation will inherit the blessings of those children who are blessed by our Lord. This is the universal responsibility that the Church has to carry out for the transformation of our society to goodness, and its growth to the Kingdom of God.

Our Sunday School curriculum has been developed effectively to teach the Scriptures and the spiritual practices of our church. This is visible in the content and teaching modules. Also, the online resources have been very valuable in the learning process. Let our Sunday School teachers and students make use of the available resources and opportunities to make the Sunday School learning a joyful experience which will enhance the moral and spiritual values of our younger generation.

01-06-2022

Alexios Mar Eusebius Metropolitan
President
O.S.S.A.E

Introduction

Reading is necessary for all to achieve their goal in life. Today a reader, tomorrow a leader is quietly trusting maxim in human life. Really a book opens a door of infinite possibilities and probabilities in life; new persons, new ideas and ideals which may transform the whole life. It is interesting that no entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. For learning and success, books have an unavoidable part in human life. As Patrick Rothfuss says, "I always read. You know how sharks have to keep swimming or they die? I'm like that. If I stop reading, I die".

This text book for OSSAE class IX comprises contents like bible studies including both Old Testament and New Testament, Prayer, liturgical hymns, ecclesiology, liturgy, dogmas and biographies of great men of God. Also the text includes current affairs like ecology, media and psychological issues faced by teenagers. The lessons are prepared after a pretty long stretch of study, discussions and corrections by a team of people who have expertise in the field of education, theology and liturgy. However, suggestions for improvement are most welcome. The contributions of those who prepared various lessons are invaluable. Being the notable teachers who paved the way for the coming generations we owe them a lot.

A book communicates knowledge, and not only knowledge but wisdom of all kinds. The lessons you study from this text may become best friends who will never walk away from you. They will help you to build a life which is centered in Christ. May it help you to have knowledge about our Lord Jesus Christ, great men of God and the way of spiritual life. Thus you can improve yourself in order to take better decisions in the future. The aim of Sunday School education has been based on Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God. It is the continuation of Jesus' teaching ministry in order to equip the people to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Hence our ultimate purpose is the achievement of eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

May God continue to bless you all.

Fr. Dr. Varghese Varghese

Director General

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STRUCTURE OF THE LESSONS

(Prepared by Prof. Dr. Sam V. Daniel)

1. **Message:** The central idea that should be sensitized through each lesson is given here.
2. **Verse to be Memorized:** A biblical verse related to the central theme of the lesson is given for memorizing. The teacher should read out this verse from the Holy Bible at the end of the class and the students should say it aloud several times.
3. **Teaching Aids:** Information on pictures, and books connected to the central theme are given to present lessons effectively.
4. **Introduction:** This section helps in making the presentation of the lesson attractive and enjoyable.
5. **The Lesson or Text:** This is the content of the lesson. We have tried our best to make it student-centred. The ideas should be presented by participating students. The teacher should take the Holy Bible to class and should read out the biblical passages. The descriptions made should have the quality of a narration. The students should be encouraged through interaction questions. When important ideas come let the students recite them in Chorus.
6. **Song or Hymns:** A song or hymn connected with the lesson is given here. The teacher should sing it aloud and the students should recite it in chorus.
7. **Let Us Pray:** A simple prayer connected with the theme of the lesson is given here. The teacher and the students can say this prayer in the class together. All should stand up and cross themselves before the prayer.
8. **Our Decision or Resolution:** An idea that can touch the students' mind like a decision and that can be implemented in their lives is given in this section. Make the students say aloud this concept.
9. **Let Us Think:** These are evaluation questions given to examine how far the students have grasped the ideas in the text.
10. **Activities:** Most of the tasks given in the section are for enacting, drawing, physical action or narration.
11. **Further Reading:** Various biblical passages connected with the lesson are given for reading in the evening and in the morning of all days of a week.

UNIT I

BIBLE STUDY

Lesson 1

Early Prophets

(Nathan, Elijah, Elisha)

(Bible Passages: 2 Samuel 7, 12; 1 Kings 17-21; 2 Kings 1-9)

Learning Objectives: To learn about the ministry of prophets and their role as messengers of God. Also, to learn to live in active relation to God and to tell others about God's mercy as well as judgment.

Verse to be Memorized: "Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. Happy are all who take refuge in him" (Psalm 2: 10-11).

Teaching Aids: Chart showing the periods of the kings of Israel, the Holy Bible, a map of Israel, Prayer Book (Pamapakuda) and the Service Book of the Holy Qurbana.

Introduction

Who are the Prophets? What is their role in society? Can you name some of the prophets you have come across in the Old Testament? Moses, Samuel and Nathan are familiar prophets in the Holy Bible. There were several prophets during the time of kings, who functioned as the 'spokesmen of God.' Some of them wrote down their prophecies. They are the writing prophets. However there are many others the early prophets-Elijah and Elisha, who never wrote down their prophecies. The books of Kings in the Holy Bible tell us about their ministry. When the kings who were to be the ambassadors of God, sometimes disobeyed the will of God, the prophets admonished them, and told them about the dangers of acting contrary to the ordinances of God. Today let us learn about three of these prophets.

The Lesson

Nathan, Elijah and Elisha were three prophets lived and prophesied during the tenth and ninth century BC.

Prophet Nathan

The name Nathan means 'He has given.' Nathan lived in Israel in tenth century BC, during the reign of king David. His ministry started when David was thinking of building a temple for Yahweh (2 Samuel 7, 1 Chronicle 17). Nothing is recorded regarding the early life of Nathan. He is first seen appearing before David with a message from God. Later he became the official warden of the kingship of David and his successor Solomon. Though David was not given permission by God to build the Temple, he wrote hymns to be used in worship. David was encouraged by Prophet Nathan (2 Chronicles 29:25) to do this.

When King David committed a deadly sin, Nathan confronted him with a story, which is one of the beautiful descriptions in the Holy Bible. He daringly pointed to the king that he was living in a grievous sin, and thus led him to repentance. Psalm 51, which we recite daily, is the song of repentance composed by David at that time. God continued to speak and act through Nathan. Accordingly, he initiated steps to anoint Solomon as the next king. This was done with the secret parlance of Bathsheba, wife of king David, because, Adonijah, another son of David was plotting to become the successor to King David (1 Kings 1:11-45). Nathan is considered as an important prophet, who gave the messages and commands of God to the people, and to the rulers. His life and prophetic ministry show how a messenger of God should speak and act without fear or favour.

Prophet Elijah

The name Elijah means 'Yahweh is my God.' He lived during the time of King Ahab (Ninth century BC), who ruled in the Northern Kingdom, i.e. Israel (the united kingdom of Hebrews was divided into Israel and Judah, after the death of King Solomon). A description of the life and ministry of Prophet Elijah is available in the first two chapters of the Second Book of Kings. Prophet Elijah had to confront Ahab, one of the cruelest Kings of Israel (1 Kings 17). Ahab was one who often acted against the will of God. Elijah prophesied that there would be drought and famine in Israel for three years. Ahab became angry with Elijah for this prophecy, which did come true. To escape the wrath of the king, Elijah went hiding, and dwelt by the brook of Cherith. There was famine in the land. There, a widow used to feed Elijah, because she got enough provisions as a result of a miracle performed the prophet.

After three years, the prophet presented himself before the king. He offered sacrifice on Mount Carmel challenging the prophets of the Baal, the false god. Yahweh accepted the sacrifice of Elijah; and the prophets of Baal were stupefied. That day, Elijah proved that Yahweh is the only God. Following this Elijah prayed for rains, and God answered his prayer. The prophets of Baal were annihilated (1 Kings 18). 1 Kings 19 records that Elijah was threatened by King Ahab and his wife Jezebel. So the prophet hid himself. He was fed miraculously by God. Then he hastened to Horeb, the Mount of God, fasting for forty days. God spoke to Elijah on Mount Horeb. It was on this

mountain, that God entered into a covenant with Moses. On his return to Samaria, Elijah anointed Hazael as king of Syria, and Jehu as king of Israel. He also appointed Elisha as his successor, as directed by God.

It is seen that Elijah interfered once again when Ahab confiscated the vineyard of Naboth (1 Kings 21), Isabel got Naboth killed; then Ahab seized the vineyard. God punished Ahab for this murder. Apart from being a heinous act, it was against the Law of Moses which said that one tribe should not lay claim on the land belonging to another tribe. The last recorded incident associated with Prophet Elijah is in 2 Kings 2. The Prophet was taken into heaven in a whirlwind by God, while he was on the banks of river Jordan with his disciple and successor Elisha (2 Kings 2:12). Elijah was one of the two humans who never died, but was taken to heaven, in the body; the other is Enoch (Genesis 5:24). Prophet Malachi wrote that prophet Elijah would be sent by God before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5).

Prophet Elisha (BC 850-800)

The name Elisha means 'God is savior'. Elisha was the disciple and successor to Prophet Elijah. While Elijah was travelling, found Elisha plowing the field of his father Shaphat (1 Kings 19); He threw his mantle upon Elisha, as a sign of calling him and accepting him as his disciple. Later, when Elijah was taken up to heaven, Elisha asked for the double of his master's spirit. As Elijah was being taken up, Elisha received his master's mantle, as a symbol of his status as a prophet (2 Kings 2:13-14). The ministry of Elisha continued through the reign of the kings Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Joash of Israel. While Elijah liked to live in caves, Elisha chose to live in sub-urban areas.

Convinced of the holy stature of Elisha, a rich woman of Shunem prepared a small dwelling for him while he passed by. However, it was his home in Samaria which was more important to him. Elisha was full of wisdom; he performed several miracles; and he lived with his disciples. He used to visit the worship centers at Bethel, Gilgal, and Mount Carmel. The details of the ministry of Elisha are recorded in chapters 2-9 and chapter 13 in the Second Book of Kings. The activities of Prophet Elisha were varied and numerous. They could be catalogued as follows:

Elisha was always accessible to the common people. He came to the help of the people to solve their problems. Some of such incidents related to his personal life are the following. Elisha purified the harmful water in the spring in the city of Jericho, by adding salt into it (2 Kings 2:19-22). The prophet resurrected the son of the woman of Shunem, who had prepared a small dwelling for him (2 Kings 4:18-37). He nullified the poisonous effect of the stew/porridge served to the disciples of the prophet at Gilgal (2 Kings 4:38-41). He healed leprosy of Naaman, who was the commander of the army of the King of Syria (2 Kings 5:1-9). At the Prophet's word, the axe that had fallen into the river was regained, to the great relief of the disciples of the Prophet (2 Kings 6:1-7).

In the social and economic realm, the Prophet miraculously increased oil in the house of the widow (2 Kings 4:1-7). He increased the quantity of loaves of barley bread (2 Kings 4:43-44). Again, he restored the field of the woman of Shunem to her (2 Kings 8:1-3). He interfered in the political realm also. He anointed Jehu instead of Hazael as King of Israel (2 Kings 9:1-7). He provided water miraculously to the allied forces of Israel when they set out to fight the Moabites (2 Kings 3:4-20). He revealed to the King of Israel the location where the forces of Syria encamped (2 Kings 6:8-12) and rescued Israel from the terror of Syria (2 Kings 6:13-7:20). He prophesied, while on his death bed, that King Josiah would defeat the King of Syria (2 Kings 13:14-19). The punishment of Gehazi, the disciple of Elisha, for his greed is a notable incident. Another significant incident is the resurrection of the dead body which was put into the grave of Elisha (2 Kings 13:20-21.) This incident supports the Church's teaching regarding the power of the relics of saints.

Hymn

Sleeba Namaskaram Evening Prayer Kolo, Prarthippeen Sleehanmare...

Pray for us Apostles to Him Who chose you
That schisms and disputes cease in the-Holy Church
See, heretics surround her on every side
To conceal the faith which you proclaimed-unto her
May Your truth-be a crucible
Which refines-her words like pure gold
May priests in victory praise Him who-magnified her.

Let Us Pray

Lord, make us fearless to speak the truth always and never to retract from it in the face of trials and difficulties. Teach us to intensify our prayers when we encounter difficult situations, to trust in You, and to cling to You. Amen.

Resolution

We shall show courage to speak the truth and act accordingly. We shall never be tired of praying.

Let Us Think

1. What is the role of a prophet? Who authorizes him to speak?
2. What is the meaning of the name 'Nathan'?
3. Name the king of Israel whom prophet Nathan led to repentance?
4. Why did Nathan show haste to anoint Solomon as king?
5. How is Nathan significant as a prophet?
6. What is the meaning of the name, 'Elijah'?
7. Name the who king ruled in Israel during the ministry of Elijah?

8. Name the mountain which Elijah climbed to escape from the King?
9. Who did Elijah appoint as his successor?
10. What were the mighty deeds of Elijah during his prophetic ministry?
11. Describe the 'God-experience' that Elijah had on Mount Horeb?
12. What is the importance of the incidence of a dead man coming alive, while touching the bones of Prophet Elisha?
13. Taking the ministry of Elisha as a model, try to identify the significant aspects of prophetic ministry.
14. What is the meaning of the name 'Elisha'?
15. What was Elisha engaged in when he was called to be a disciple of Elijah?
16. Who was the woman who prepared a small dwelling for Elisha?
17. Name the places of worship that Elisha used to visit?

Activities

1. "You are the man." Who said this and to whom? Try to find out from the Old Testament.
2. It was mentioned that two individuals, including Elijah never tasted death; name the other person (Ref. Hebrews 11:5 and Genesis 5:24).
3. Find out a prayer in which both Moses and Elijah are referred to.
4. Prepare a chart showing the major miracles performed by Prophet Elisha.
5. What was the role and influence of Prophet Nathan during the rule of King David? Substantiate in the light of important incidents.
6. Identify three most important actions of Prophet Nathan as the Prophet of God.
7. What was the prayer said by Elijah, while he was offering sacrifice to God on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18: 33-37)? This prayer of Elijah is repeated by the celebrant in the Holy Qurbana. Can you say when is this prayer said?

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	2 Samuel 7
Monday	2 Samuel 12	1 Kings 1
Tuesday	1 Kings 17	1 Kings 10
Wednesday	Psalm 51	1 Chronicles 17
Thursday	2 Chronicles 29	1 Kings 19
Friday	2 Kings 1	2 Kings 2
Saturday	1 Kings 21	*

Lesson 2

Division of Israel's Kingdom

(1 Kings 11 & 12)

Learning Objectives: To understand that God shall punish those who act against His will; and He may remove that person from his positions of honour. Also to understand that it is not God's intention to destroy the disobedient, but to give an opportunity to correct oneself. To internalize significance of this; fact and to redefine one's concept of God and His intentions.

Verse to be Memorized: "If you will listen to all that I command you, walk in my ways, and do what is right in my sight by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you, and will build you an enduring house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you" (1 Kings 11: 38).

Teaching Aids: A map of Israel during the reign of David and Solomon, the Holy Bible, the Book of Common Prayer (Pampakuda) and the Service Book of the Holy Qurbana.

Introduction

We studied the covenant made by God with king David. The unity and integrity of the kingdom deteriorated as king Solomon failed to rule the country respecting the commandments of God. This lesson describes the circumstances which led to the division of the kingdom.

The Lesson

King Solomon ruled Israel from 961 BC to 922 BC He was rich, powerful and wise. His rule was considered as a golden period for Israel. However, Solomon went against the commandments of God. He accepted wives from the neighboring countries (2 Kings 11:1-4). He turned away from the paths of David and worshipped foreign gods. He did not follow the ordinances of God. Because of this some people in the kingdom rose against him. For instance Hadad from the royal family of Edom turned against Solomon. Hadad was living in Egypt escaping from David, when David conquered Edom (1 Kings 11:14-22). God made Rezon, King of Zobah turn against Solomon (1 Kings 11:23-25). The officials of Jeroboam too turned against the King (1 Kings 11:26-40). However, none of these people could defeat Solomon. The country was divided as God gave up Solomon; and internal strife started in the kingdom. Prophet Ahijah said that these things happened as per the will of God.

Following the death of king Solomon, the people assembled at Shechem to elect Rehoboam, the son of Solomon as king. Jeroboam also went there along with a group of people. They demanded that the tax rate be reduced as the people were facing

difficulties due to the economic policies of the country. Rehoboam asked for three days' time to take a decision. Meanwhile he discussed the matter with elderly people who were the advisors of his father, and also young friends who were his new advisors. The elderly people said that the pleas of the people should be listened to; but the youngsters advised the new king to reject the demands of Jeroboam and his group and assert himself.

The king accepted the immature and rash views of the young advisors; and after three days he conveyed his decision in very harsh words (1 Kings 12:1-15). The people became very angry and went away shouting against David and his family, and saying that David and his family had not done anything good for them. Then, king Rehoboam sent Adoram to meet the people as his representative; but the people stoned him to death (1 Kings 12:16-20) the tribes of Judah and Benjamin made Rehoboam their king and the remaining ten tribes accepted Jeroboam as their king. Thus the kingdom was divided into two.

Rehoboam reached Jerusalem to attack it, but God stopped him at Samaria, telling him not to fight his own brothers (1 Kings 12:21-24). Jeroboam's kingdom came to be known as Israel (the Northern country). The capital of Israel was Samaria. Rehoboam's country came to be known as Judah (the Southern country). Its capital was Jerusalem. It is obvious that the wrong economic policies, and lack of obedience to God led to the division of the kingdom.

Hymn

Post Gospel hymn, Nibyanmarum jaathikalodevan...

We remember the Prophets and Apostles,
Who preached the Good News of Christ
To all nations of the earth;
We remember the Virgin
The saints and the faithful dead
And the just ones who triumphed;
The martyrs and confessors
Who received crowns of glory;
May their prayers be our fortress.

Let Us Pray

Merciful God, enlighten us with Your wisdom. Lead us in the way of Your commandments. Give us the wisdom and humility to remember Your greatness and mercy and be grateful to You. Help us to listen to others sympathetically, and always search for Your will. Amen.

Resolution

We will never deviate from the will of God. We shall never forget the blessings of God. We praise God for His goodness.

Let Us Think

1. Write the notable characteristics of king Solomon.
2. Find the sin committed by Solomon defying the commandments of God.
3. Find the punishment meted out to Solomon by God.
4. Who were the leaders who rebelled Solomon?
5. Name the prophet who met Jeroboam on the way (1 Kings 11:29-35).
6. The elders and youngsters advised Jeroboam on the question of tax. Whose advice did he accept? Do you think it was a wise decision?
7. Name the tribes which accepted Rehoboam as king?

Activities

1. Write the verses.
The Lord said to Solomon, “.....”
.....
.....” (1 Kings 11:11-13)
2. Answer the following by referring to 1 Kings 11 and 12.
 - i) What made Solomon worship foreign gods?
 - ii) Who were the leaders who rebelled against Solomon as willed by God?
 - iii) What was the difference between the advice given by the elders and that by the youngsters to Rehoboam?
 - iv) What did prophet Ahijah say about the troubles in the kingdom that led to its division?

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Kings 11:1-8
Monday	1 Kings 11: 9-22	1 Kings 11: 23-25
Tuesday	1 Kings 11: 26-30	1 Kings 11:31-40
Wednesday	1 Kings 11: 41-43	1 Kings 12:1-5
Thursday	1 Kings 12: 6-10	1 Kings 12:11-20
Friday	1 Kings 12: 21-28	1 Kings 12:29-33
Saturday	Deuteronomy 7:1-4	*

Lesson 3

King Josiah who Cleansed the Temple and Lived according to the Law of God

(2 Kings 22:1-23:30)

Learning Objectives: To make students understand that God will save those who obey His commandments from perdition. To help the students to live according to God's commands.

Verse to be Memorized: "Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God" (Jeremiah 11:4).

Teaching Aids: A map of Israel, Prayer Book and the Service Book of Holy Qurbana.

Introduction

Josiah was a king who did what was pleasing God. He became king of Judah at the age of eight. Josiah ruled for 31 years (BC 640-609). Let us learn about king Josiah.

The Lesson

Josiah was the son of Amon and Jedidah. The chief priest during the time was Hilkiah and the principal secretary (court secretary) was Shaphan. In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent Shaphan to Hilkiah the chief priest with an order to repair the Jerusalem Temple. As the work was going on, Hilkiah discovered the Book of Law in the temple and handed it over to Shaphan. Shaphan read the book to Josiah. The king understood that the words in the book are from God. He humbled himself and repented before God. He sent some people to prophetess Huldah to know God's message through the book. The prophetess informed that God will punish Jerusalem, but this would happen only after his death.

After listening to the Book of Law, Josiah destroyed all the idols and worship places of foreign gods in Judah and burned them. He destroyed the place of worship at Bethel and the tools used for worship there. He took out the bones of the dead from the tombs and burned them on the places of sacrifice to make it impure. However, Josiah kept one of the tombs safe which belonged to the unknown prophet who prophesied against the places of sacrifice in Bethel (1 Kings 13:2-32). Then Josiah asked the people to observe Passover as instructed in the Book of Law. In the 18th year of his rule, the king and all the people observed Passover in such a way that the Passover has not been observed so perfectly since the time of Judges (2 Kings 23:2-32). He removed all wickedness from the country (2 Kings 23:24). There had never

been a king like him before, who served the Lord with all his heart, mind and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses; nor has there been a king like him since (2 Kings 23:25).

Josiah lived according to the commandments in the Book of Law. But Jerusalem was destroyed because of the sins committed by Manasseh his ancestor. God said that he will destroy Judah also as he has done with Israel. When Pharaoh Neco, the king of Egypt came to fight with Asur, Josiah fought with him. He was killed by Pharaoh Neco at Megiddo. His servants brought his body to Jerusalem and buried it there. Josiah's son Jehoahaz became the King (2 Kings 23:29-30).

Hymn

Kyamtha Namaskaram Compline Kolo, Rekshakaneshu maharaja...

Glory to You, Christ our King
Who opens doors-to those who repent
I am-a sinner who begs
Of You,-Giver of good things
Gladden my heart by Your grace
That I may sing-as a harp to You.

Let Us Pray

Our Lord Jesus, come and dwell in us. Strengthen and protect us. Jesus, do not allow the wicked to come near to us, forgive our sins and offences. Jesus, have mercy on us at the time of Your judgment. Lord have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us.

Resolution

We shall live in accordance with the commandments of God whole heartedly.

Let Us Think

1. What does it mean to say that the observance of the Passover was discontinued for several years?
2. List Josiah's initiatives to fulfill the commands of God in the Book of Law (2 Chronicles 23:24)
3. What were the religious observances revived during the rule of Josiah?
4. Explain the observance of Passover during the time of Josiah?
5. Though Josiah lived according to the Book of Law, Jerusalem was destroyed. Why?
6. How did Josiah die?

Activities

1. Read Deuteronomy 15:19-18:22 and summarize the commandments given there.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Deuteronomy 15
Monday	2 Kings 22	Deuteronomy 16
Tuesday	2 Kings 23:1-20	Deuteronomy 17
Wednesday	2 Kings 23:21-27	Deuteronomy 18
Thursday	1 Kings 12	Jeremiah 11
Friday	2 Chronicles 35	1 Kings 13
Saturday	1 Kings 14	*

Lesson 4

Fall of the Kingdom of Israel

Learning Objectives: To understand that the kingdom of Israel was set up by God, so the king had his obligation to God and also the people. To understand that it is 'unfaithful' to worship foreign gods; and that God will punish unfaithfulness.

Verse to be Memorized: "But the Lord was gracious to them and had compassion on them; he turned toward them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them; nor has he banished them from his presence until now" (2 Kings 13:23)

Introduction

We learnt that the Israel was divided after the rule of Solomon and the ten tribes formed a country named Israel under the leadership of Jeroboam with Samaria as capital. Let us learn about important kings in Israel from the period BC 922 to BC 721, when Samaria was defeated by King of Asur.

The Lesson

Israel was ruled by 19 kings from Jeroboam (BC 922 -901) to Hosea (BC 732-721). All of them belonged to nine different clans (refer 1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17). We shall learn about some of these kings in this lesson.

Jeroboam (BC 922-901, 1 Kings 12:25-14:20)

He was the first king of Israel. He did not succeed in the attempt to oust king Solomon, and hence escaped to king Shishak of Egypt (1 Kings 11:26-40). When Solomon died, Jeroboam attempted reconciliation with Rehoboam, son of Solomon, but failed. He became the king of Israel with the support of ten tribes. He ruled Israel for 22 years. The people of Israel used to go to Jerusalem which was in Judah, the southern country, to offer sacrifice at the temple there. Jeroboam thought that this movement of people to Jerusalem will create problem for him and the security of his country. He made two bull calves of gold and placed them one at Dan and the other at Bethel and asked the people to worship them. Thus he made the people to deviate from the worship of Yahweh. He appointed priests from families which were not from the tribe of Levi. He himself offered sacrifice on the altar.

As Jeroboam stood at the altar to offer sacrifice, a prophet from Judah reached there and denounced the altar. He said, "A child, whose name will be Josiah, will be born to the family of David and destroy this altar". Hearing this Jeroboam wanted to get hold of the prophet but his arms became paralysed so that he couldn't pull it back. The altar fell apart and ashes spilt to the ground fulfilling the words of the prophet. Prophet Ahijah told Jeroboam's wife about the death of Abijah, Jeroboam's son, and

the disaster to take place in the family (1 Kings 14:9). He told that the Lord had abandoned Israel because of the sins of Jeroboam. Abijah, son of Jeroboam died because of the sins of his father. Jeroboam came to be known in the history as the son of Nebat who led the people of Israel into sin.

Ahab (BC 860-850, 1 Kings 16:29-22:40)

Ahab did not belong to the family of Jeroboam. Elijah, prophet lived during the time of Ahab. Ahab ruled for 22 years. He sinned against the Lord more than his predecessor Jeroboam. It was not enough for him to sin like Jeroboam. He married Jezebel, the daughter of King Ethbaal of Sidon and worshipped Baal. He built a temple to Baal in Samaria, made an altar for Baal. He sinned against the Lord more than any of his predecessors (1 Kings 16:31-34). Prophet Elijah tried to correct Ahab and warned him many times. There was drought in Israel for three years when Elijah said 'There will be no dew or rain for the next three years until I say so'.

450 prophets of Baal were killed after they were proved wrong at the worship at Carmel (1 Kings 19:1-3). Jezebel ordered to kill Elijah but could not succeed. Ahab's family was removed from kingship because of his sins. When King Ben-hadad of Syria came to attack Israel, Ahab acted as per the words of a prophet and defeated him (1 Kings 20:1-34). Ahab wanted to confiscate the vineyard of Naboth. Jezebel got Naboth killed and seized the vineyard. The Lord became very angry at Ahab for this (1 Kings 21:1-24). Later, after three years, Ahab died in a war with Aram. This was predicted by Prophet Micaiah (1 Kings 22:1-40). Dogs licked up his blood (1 Kings 22:37) according to the prophecy of Elijah (1 Kings 21:19).

Jehu (BC 842-815, 2 Kings 9:1-10:36)

When Prophet Elijah returned from Mount Horeb, the Lord asked him to do three things; one, to anoint Jehu as the king of Israel (1 Kings 19:16). At God's command Elisha the disciple of Elijah sent a young prophet to Jehu and anointed him as the King of Israel (2 Kings 9:1-10). Jehu ruled Israel for 28 years. The destruction of the family of Ahab was one of the assignments given to Jehu. He killed Joram (also known as Jehoram) the king of Israel who was the son of Ahab and went to Samaria (2 Kings 9:14-26). When Jehu reached Jezreel, Jezebel tried to attract him with her beauty. She was thrown down from the window by her own officials. Her body was eaten by dogs fulfilling the word of God (2 Kings 9: 30-37). Then Jehu killed all the descendants of Ahab (2 Kings 10:1-17). He killed all the prophets of Baal and wiped out the idol worship in Israel. But Jehu retained the golden bull calves at Bethel and Dan set up by Jeroboam. So the Lord gave him the rights to be the King to his descendants only up to the fourth generation (2 Kings 10:18-36).

Hosea (BC 732-723, 2 Kings 17)

Hosea was the 19th and last king of Israel. He ruled for nine years. He sinned against the Lord. When emperor Shalmaneser of Assyria made war on him; Hosea

surrendered and paid him tribute every year. Later Hosea sought the help of king of Egypt and stopped paying annual tribute to Assyria. When Shalmaneser learnt this, he arrested Hosea and put him in prison. In BC 721, the Assyrian emperor captured Samaria and took Israelites to Assyria as prisoners and settled them in different places (2 Kings 17:6). Samaria fell because the Israelites sinned against the Lord by disobeying his commandments, put up idols of pagan gods and worshipped them (2 Kings 17:7-18). The emperor of Assyria took people from the cities of Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and settled them in cities of Samaria in place of the exiled Israelites (2 Kings 17:24). Israel, the northern country was totally destroyed for ever by BC 721. The Israelites even lost their racial purity.

Hymn

Sleeba Namaskaram Compline Kolo, Sthuthi anuthapakkar...

Let all who seek the Kingdom
Be found pleasing-to God through pure love
For that-is the way the saints
Enter-the marriage chamber
And by it the repentant
Are spared from death-and inherit life.

Let Us Pray

Lord, teach us Your commandments. Help us to follow them and live in Your mercy. Help us to keep Your blessing in us and not allow them to be taken away. Holy Lord, praised by the saints, purify our thoughts so that we shall praise You as the angels do, for ever. Amen.

Resolution

We shall faithfully observe the faith and practices of Orthodox Church. We shall lead a life faithful to Lord.

Let Us Think

1. What were the reason for the fall of Jeroboam?
2. Why did Jeroboam' go went to prophet Ahijah?
3. What was the message given by prophet?
4. Name two prophets who lived during the reign of Ahab.
5. Ahab wanted to posses a vineyard near his palace. Whose vineyard was it? What did he want to make of it?
6. What was the crime committed by Ahab? Explain how the actions of his wife influenced the rule of Ahab?
7. Who anointed Jehu as the King? Explain the situation that led to this.

8. How many generations did the descendants of Jehu continue in kingship? Why was Jehu's descendants allowed to rule only for four generations?
9. What difficulties did Jeroboam face in his life and what were the reasons for them?
10. Who was the last King of Israel? What was the immediate a reason for the destruction of Israel?

Activities

1. Read 1 Kings 12:1 to 2 Kings 17:41 and find out the all the kings who ruled Israel.
2. Who out of the above mentioned kings had their descendants as kings?
3. Read 1 Kings 18 and prepare a short story (for children) on the worship at Carmel
4. Prepare notes on the reign of Jeroboam, Ahab, Jehu and Hosea

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Kings 15,16
Monday	2 Kings 1, 2	1 Kings 17,18
Tuesday	2 Kings 3, 4	1 Kings 18, 19
Wednesday	2 Kings 5, 6	1 Kings 20, 21
Thursday	2 Kings 7, 8	1 Kings 22
Friday	2 Kings 9, 10	2 Kings 13,14
Saturday	2 Kings 11, 12	-

Lesson 5

Fall of Judah, the Southern Kingdom (Babylonian Exile)

(2 Kings 15, 18, 23 and 25)

Learning Objectives: To understand the meaning of covenant made by David with God and to analyze the factors which led to the fall of Judah, and Babylonian exile. Also to evaluate the effects of decline of faith in that followed God in the house of David and the Kingdom of Judah.

Verse to be Memorized: “The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing” (Psalm 34:10).

Introduction

The first king of Israel was Saul. King David was Saul’s successor. Later David’s son Solomon became king of Israel. When Israel was divided, only two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, stood with the house of David which ruled the country with Jerusalem as capital. Judah was ruled by the house of David. Twenty kings ruled Judah till the king of Babel captured Jerusalem (586 BC). Let us learn about some of these kings, the fall of Judah and the situation that led to the exile in Babylon.

The Lesson

Jeroboam the son of Solomon was the first king of Judah. He ruled for 17 years with Jerusalem as the capital. Let us learn about some of his successors.

Uzziah (BC 783-742, 2 Kings 15:1-7, 2 Chronicles 26:3-23)

Uzziah (also known as Azariah) became the king of Judah at the age of 16 and ruled for fifty-two years. Prophet Isaiah lived during the time of Uzziah (Isaiah 1:1, 6:1). Initially Uzziah ruled the country as per the advice of Zachariah the chief priest; but later when he became powerful, he disobeyed God and tried to burn incense in the Temple of Jerusalem. The Lord struck Uzziah with leprosy. When Azariah, the chief priest and other priests saw this, they forced the king to leave the temple. He lived in a separate house for the rest of his life, while his son governed the country for him. Uzziah was the king who enjoyed protection and prosperity when he lived in accordance with God’s commandment and faced isolation and leprosy when he disobeyed the Lord.

Hezekiah (BC 715-687, 2 Kings 18:1-20:21)

Hezekiah was the thirteenth king of Judah who ruled for twenty nine years. He ruled according to the will of God. The last fifteen years of his rule was an extension

given by God. Hezekiah was caught with a vital disease and was about to die (2 Kings 20:1, 2 Chronicles 32:24, Isaiah 38:1). The Lord sent prophet Isaiah to him to inform him to put everything in order (get ready to die). But Hezekiah cried bitterly and prayed to God. As a result Lord informed him through prophet Isaiah that his life has been extended for 15 years. As a sign for the God's word Isaiah had made the shadow on the stairway to ten steps backward. Isaiah put a paste made of figs on him and he was cured.

Manasseh (BC 687-643, 2 Kings 21, 2 Chronicles 33:1)

Manasseh son of Hezekiah became king at the age of 12. This shows that if God wouldn't have extended the life of Hezekiah there would not have been successor to Hezekiah from the house of David. Manasseh ruled Judah for 55 years. This was the longest reign of a king in Judah.

Josiah

We have already learnt about Josiah in the previous lesson.

Last Kings in Judah (BC 609-578, 2 Kings 23:31-25:7)

The last kings in Judah were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin ruled only for three months each; and both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah ruled for 11 years. During their time Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem two times. The king of Babel attacked Jerusalem in BC 598 and destroyed it completely (2 Kings 24:2-3). This was because of the sin committed by Manasseh. Later all the instruments of the temple along with lots of skilled people were taken to Babel during the time of Jehoiachin. Zedekiah sinned against the Lord. Nebuchadnezzar came with all his army and captured Jerusalem and destroyed it. They looted the temple and the treasury and took them away along with holy articles and instruments of the temple. They captured all the remaining skilled and intelligent people to Babel. This incident has been termed as the Babylonian exile in the history of Judah. The kingdom of Judah was completely destroyed. The temple was destroyed and they were denied the facilities for offering sacrifices to Lord. The sins of the people and the sacrilegious acts of the leaders were the reasons for this fall. God's own people thus entered a new stage in their religious and political life.

Hymn

Compline Kolo, Akhilam njan aranjittum...

All things I have considered
Nothing have I seen better
Blessed is he who loved-the fear of the Lord
Joseph the just loved it and became king of Egypt
Moses loved it and divided the sea with his staff
Daniel and his friends loved it

And it saved them from the flames
More desirable than gold
Sweeter than the honeycomb
Blessed is he who loves-the fear of the Lord

Let Us Pray

Lord God, help us to learn from life experiences. Help us not to forget the good things You do in our life. Help us live as per Your will. Help us to correct our mistakes and come closer to You and do Your will. Amen.

Resolution

We learnt about the situations which led to the exile to Babylon. We shall live according to the commandments of God.

Let Us Think

1. Who was the first King of Judah? Who were the last kings of Judah?
2. What was the other name for Uzziah? What was the reason for the fall of Uzziah?
3. How did the life of Hezekiah got his life extended? Who cured Hezekiah's disease? Explain how Hezekiah responded when he was fatally ill? How was Hezekiah cured?
4. Name the son of Hezekiah.
5. Who was the longest ruling King in Judah?
6. What was the reason for the Babylonian exile and for the destruction and desolation of Judah?

Activities

1. Read 2 Kings 24 and find out how many times the king of Babel attacked Judah?
2. Prepare a chart giving the names of all kings of Judah and Israel (read the two book of Kings)
3. Read 2 Kings 18 and fill in the blanks for the following questions along with the references:

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Kings 14:21-31
Monday	2 Chronicles 26:3-23	Isaiah 1:1-4, 6:1-3
Tuesday	Isaiah 7:1-17	2 Kings 15:1-7
Wednesday	Psalms 19:9-11	2 Kings 15:8-22
Thursday	2 Kings 18	2 Kings 19
Friday	2 Kings 20	2 Kings 21
Saturday	2 Kings 23	*

Lesson 6

Election of Matthias

(Acts 1:15-26)

Learning Objectives: To help children understand the situation in which Matthias was elected to join the apostles, in the place Judas Iscariot, and appreciate the mode of election and to help children to face trying situations by seeking God's will.

Verse to be Memorized: So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection (Acts 1:21-22).

Teaching Aids: Pictures of the twelve disciples, the Holy Bible, Pampakkuda Prayer book, the Service Book of the Holy Qurbana and the book of 'Shehma' Namaskaram.

Introduction

The Apostles of Jesus Christ were twelve. They were Peter, his brother Andrew, James, John, Matthew, Bartholomew, Thomas, Philip, Simon the zealot, Judas son of James and Judas Iscariot. Jesus chose disciples for preaching the word of God, and to be with him. Judas who betrayed Jesus was removed from the group of disciples. It was necessary that someone had to be chosen in his place. Let us learn about Matthias who has elected in place of Judas Iscariot.

The Lesson

After the ascension of Jesus Christ, the eleven Apostles and other disciples were in Jerusalem spending time in prayer. Mary, the mother of Jesus was also among them. During a meeting of the faithful, where 120 people had assembled, Peter spoke that one person had to be elected in place of Judas Iscariot, who was a member in the apostolic ministry (Read Acts 1:23-26). They had to keep the total number of Apostles as twelve, since Jesus had chosen and appointed twelve. The election and appointment were important. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Church. The call of the Apostles was to remain faithful as witnesses to this. They were to qualify for this. The criterion was that the person should be one who was with other eleven Apostles from the time of baptism of Jesus Christ by John, to the time of ascension. This means that a person who firmly believed that God became incarnate and lived as a human being and was crucified and resurrected, would become a true witness and an apostle.

There were two individuals who fulfilled the criteria set for the election of new apostle. One was Joseph. He was also known as Justus or Barsabbas. The second was Matthias. The Apostles cast lots after praying God for guidance. They were confident that this election was being done by God Himself. The lot fell to Matthias. Therefore Matthias was included into the 'college of Apostles.'

A disciple of Jesus is one who leads a life of true witness. The elections in Church should be based on prayerful waiting for God's intervention. The elections should be accepted in one accord once a person is divinely elected. Jesus had 'elected' twelve apostles. In a situation where one of them was 'lost', it was left to the Church to fill that position calling for God's intervention in the election. When an election is completed in a divine way, everyone has to accept it. This election in the early Church is a model for all times. The election is actually done by Jesus Christ Himself, in every situation.

Hymn

Sleeba Namaskaram, Morning Prayer Kolo, Kshemamodangezhunelluka...

Come in peace-Come O True Shepherd
O Foundation of the Church
For you are-like Peter and Paul
O brother of the Prophets
O friend of the Apostles
Full of zeal like Elijah
Pure like John the Beloved
Blessed are we, the Church, who
Received you, O Wise Ruler

Let Us Pray

Lord, enable us to hold the true faith that You have handed over to us through the disciples. Help us to hold on to that faith till our death. Make us worthy of praising You along with the holy disciples. Amen.

Resolution

We believe that it was through the twelve disciples that we received the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We shall serve God and His Church without craving for positions and power.

Let Us Think

1. What was the intention of Jesus when he chose the twelve Apostles?
2. What did Peter say in the assembly of the believers?
3. What was the need for filling the position of Judas Iscariot?

4. Explain how St. Matthias was chosen?
5. What was the land bought by the wage earned by Judas for betraying Jesus called?
6. What were the eligibility criteria for the election of an Apostle in the place of Judas?
7. What were the other names of Joseph?

Activities

1. Find out the details of the mission of St. Matthias.
2. Write a note on the elections conducted in the early church.
3. What do you think is the significance of the 'criteria' considered at the election of Matthias?
4. Do you think that casting lots is the best way to conduct an election? Do you recall people travelling in a ship casting lots in the book of Jonah? Explain.
5. Compare the election held in the early church with the elections in the contemporary Church.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 12:26
Monday	John 6:23-40	Matthew 8:16-27
Tuesday	Ephesians 5:1-14	Titus 3:1-14
Wednesday	1 Peter 1:1-16	Matthew 11:16-29
Thursday	2 Corinthians 5:11-21	Romans 14:1-8
Friday	1 John 2:1-10	John 13:47
Saturday	Luke 12:1-12	*

Lesson 7

Waiting for the Holy Spirit and the Pentecost

(Acts of the Apostles 2:1-47)

Learning Objectives: To learn about Jesus Christ transmitting power to the Church through the Holy Spirit. To learn that prayerful waiting is a precondition for receiving the power of God.

Verse to be Memorized: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me” (Psalms 51:10).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, an icon showing the descend of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

Let us learn the incident where the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples who prayerfully waited for it. Jesus entrusted his disciples the responsibility to spread the word of God all over the world. He promised that the Holy Spirit shall descend on them and that they would be strengthened to spread the Word of God. They waited to receive the Holy Spirit with prayer and fasting as directed by Jesus before His ascension. Let us learn about the day of Pentecost.

The Lesson

The word ‘Pentecost’ means ‘fiftieth day’. This was actually the harvest festival of Jews. It was also known as ‘Shavuoth’ (Leviticus 23:15-21, Deuteronomy 16:9-12). This comes after fifty days from the Passover festival. This day was also commemorated as the day on which the Israelites received the Ten Commandments from God through Moses.

Jesus had asked disciples to stay back in Jerusalem until they received the power from heaven. So they with the believers stayed in Jerusalem in prayer and meditation. On the day of Pentecost, suddenly they heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind at the place where they gathered. The disciples saw ‘tongues of fire’ which came and rested on each of them. There were people from different nations who spoke different languages living in Jerusalem. When they heard the sound, they came together and were utterly amazed at what they saw. They were perplexed because the disciples who were illiterate spoke in languages they were not familiar with. Every one gathered there could understand what the Apostles said, in their own languages.

When the Apostles started talking in other languages some people from the crowd ridiculed them saying they were drunk. Peter stood up and talked to them. He explained two important points in his speech:

1. The prophets in the Old Testament period has already talked about the coming of Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28, 29, Zechariah 12:10)

2. The Holy Spirit was sent as Jesus Christ had promised. So Peter exhorted the people to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38).

It was the first day of the of Church. It was also the day on which the disciples became courageous, who were otherwise afraid after the crucifixion of Jesus. About 3000 people were baptized on that single day. The Church considers Pentecost as a day on which the fullness of Holy Trinity was revealed. We should utilize the feast of Pentecost as a day for getting renewed the Holy Spirit we have received the Holy Spirit in our Baptism.

It was the Holy Spirit, who is the third person in the Holy Trinity, who came upon the disciples. The power that the disciples received on the day of Pentecost made them witness Jesus Christ and spread the gospel all over the world. The presence of Holy Spirit is essential in our personal and social life. While talking in other tongues does not mean to talk in a language which no one else can understand. The disciples talked on the day of Pentecost in different languages, which were understood by others. It is important to know that whatever the disciples said, the people understood in their own language. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of order and decorum, and not disorder.

Hymn

Kyamtha Namaskaram, Lilyo, Kolo, Vinnulakin arachan...

The King of Heaven
Founded His Church and
Made it His palace
And dwelt within it
Let all who wish to
Speak to the Lord, come
For behold, He dwells
Within the True Church
Halleluiah-Halleluiah
You Who sustain her
Have mercy on us.

Let Us Pray

Lord God, we praise You for sending Your Holy Spirit on the disciples. Lord, make us worthy to receive Your Holy Spirit and be transformed by this power. Amen.

Resolution

We shall participate in the service of Pentecost with full devotion and get renewed by the Holy Spirit whom we have already received in baptism.

Let Us Think

1. Explain the incidents which took place on the day of Pentecost.
2. What do we learn about the operation of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost day? In what form did the Holy Spirit come upon the disciples?
3. Summarize the speech made by St. Peter.
4. What changes did happen in the disciples because of descent of the Holy Spirit?
5. What is the meaning of the word 'Pentecost'? What was the other name of the Jewish feast of Pentecost? What did the Jews celebrate on Pentecost ?
6. How many people were baptized on the day of Pentecost?

Activities

1. List out the instances in the Holy Bible, where it says, 'the Holy Spirit descended upon'.
2. Which are the blessings and graces we pray for during the worship, on the feast of Pentecost in our Church?
3. What are the other names used for Holy Spirit?
4. Compare the incident happened during the construction of the Tower of Babel with the happenings on Pentecost day.
5. Recite the third paragraph of Nicene Creed which confirms faith in the Holy spirit.
6. Examine what St. Paul taught regarding usage of other languages (1 Corinthians 14, *glossalalia*)

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Monday	Galatians 5:1-24	Philippians 2:1-18
Tuesday	Luke 11:1-13	Romans 7:1-10
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 14:26-39	2 Peter 1:1-21
Thursday	John 1:1-18	Acts 8:9-25
Friday	1 Corinthians 12:1-31	1 Corinthians 14:1-19
Saturday	Luke 12:1-12	*

Lesson 8

Life in the Early Church

(Acts 1-4)

Learning Objectives: To understand the lifestyle followed by the early Church and to appreciate and imitate in our life. Also to understand that we have the responsibility to live in world by keeping our life holy, without being influenced by evil.

Verse to be Memorized: Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common (Acts 4:32).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible

Introduction

We know that people living in various countries have their own life style and culture. The early Church too had its own mode of living. The Church started to grow after Pentecost and followed a unique mode of life. We shall learn about it in this lesson.

The Lesson

About 3000 people joined the Church on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41). Soon, another 5000 people also joined the Church (Acts 4:4). The Church was fast growing. Jesus Christ and his disciples were Jews. Hence the early Church had to follow some of the customs of the Jews. However, they created a life pattern based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. They concentrated mainly on four aspects (Acts 2:42). (i) Devotion to the teachings of Apostles (ii) Spiritual fellowship (iii) Breaking of bread (iv) spending time in prayer.

The believers in the early Church listened to the words of Apostles. The Apostles strictly followed whatever they learnt from the life of Jesus. The believers respected the power received by the Apostles. The Apostles did many miracles. Another factor was the unity among them. They were of one mind, one heart and one soul. They assembled in the temple of Jerusalem, as one family. They decided not to have any discrimination among them based on wealth. They treated all their possessions as common for all; they sold them and brought the money to the Apostles. The Apostles distributed it for the needy among them.

Jesus established the Holy Qurbana (Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 11:24). He commanded that it should be continued for his memory. The disciples faithfully did the 'Breaking of Bread' in their liturgy. They assembled on the day of the Lord, the

day on which Jesus had risen from the dead, and spent time in prayers and breaking bread. During that time, there were no churches as we have now. The believers gathered in certain houses for prayer and Breaking of Bread. They were known as 'house churches' (Acts 2:46). They also had love feasts together at homes. The first Christian community was to be one in Christ through the Breaking of Bread.

The first Christian community gave importance to prayer and praising God. They arranged the liturgical services in the pattern of prayers in Jewish synagogue. The early Church had to face a lot of difficulties and persecutions, but they could overcome them with the power of prayer. They followed a life based on worship which was distinguished them from the worship of others. The early Church can be considered as a model for Christian community life.

The early Church and its witness provides us valuable insights. We should deeply appreciate the unity, sanctity and spirit of stewardship in the early Church. We shall care for others by sharing our resources. The life of early Christians was Christ-centered. The early Church accepted the authority of Apostles. This authority is continued in the Church through the office of priesthood. Christian life is centred on worshipping God. The Church is called for worshipping God, and it lives and works for the realization of the Kingdom of God. The Church shall practice justice, peace and love which are the characteristics of the community of God.

Hymn

Kyamtha Namaskaram, Lilyo Kolo, Mashiha than mamavatti...

The Holy Church which
Is the Bride of Christ
Is like Paradise
Full of all blessings
For within her is
Holy Baptism
And priests within her
Bear holy mysteries
Halleluiah-Halleluiah
And distribute the
Medicine of Life

Let Us Pray

O Triune God, teach us to lead a life of faith like the early Christians. Help us to follow the Fathers and Mothers of the Church, by sharing our possessions with the needy. Teach us we are all part of the same body and Jesus Christ is the head. Amen.

Resolution

We shall follow the example of early Christians in our life. We shall respect the priesthood established in the Church by Jesus Christ. We shall help those who are weak economically and socially, and encourage others for the same.

Let Us Think

1. What were the four major characteristics the early Christians maintained in their life? or what were the four things the early Christians strictly followed in their life?
2. Explain the relevance of the life of early Christians in the contemporary Church.
3. What is meant by 'house churches'?
4. Why is the early Church considered as a model for future generations? What was notable in the life of early Church?
5. What caused a transformation in the life style of early Christians?
6. How did they treat their material wealth?

Activities

1. Prepare a chart showing the activities in the early Church. Check against each characteristic whether we follow it our Church now.
2. Find out the other names used for 'Breaking of Bread' at different times in the history of the Church.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Ephesians 4:1-16
Monday	Matthew 16:13-28	1 Corinthians 3:10-23
Tuesday	Ephesians 2:1-16	Ephesians 4:17-32
Wednesday	Matthew 5:1-16	Revelations 22:1-9
Thursday	1 Timothy 2:1-15	Acts 6:1-7
Friday	Ephesians 6:10-20	1 John 3:1-12
Saturday	1 John 3:13-24	*

Lesson 9

Stephen and Philip

(Acts 6-8)

Learning Objectives: To learn about the life and ministry of St. Stephen and St. Philip, the deacons in the early Church and to follow their life of devotion by witnessing Jesus Christ in our life.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God’ (Ephesians 5:1-2).

Introduction

Have you met any deacons (*M’shamshono*) in Church? Have you noticed the ‘*Oorara*’ or stole they wear during liturgical services? The responsibility of deacons is to assist in worship. We shall learn about a few deacons elected in the early Church. These deacons, who were elected and appointed for the service of Church, served Christ in different places.

The Lesson

The early Church developed under the leadership of Apostles. There was a complaint by the Greek speaking Jews that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of provisions. So the Apostles decided to elect a group of people to do this job. Those elected accordingly were the deacons in early Church. The Syriac word for deacon is ‘*M’shamsono*’ which means ‘one who serves’. Seven were chosen, who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. They were Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus. The Apostles prayed and placed their hands on them.

St. Stephen

Stephen and Philip were important among the seven deacons. We are familiar with the reading in fourth diptychs (Thubden) about St. Stephen as “Illustrious saint Stephen, chief of the deacons, and the first of the martyrs.” Stephen became a great proponent of the Gospel and performed great miracles and wonders among the people. Many people believed in Jesus seeing the life and words of Stephen. He was filled with wisdom and Holy Spirit. So no one could repudiate his words. The Jewish leaders became afraid of the works of Stephen and plotted against him. They accused him with blasphemy against the law of Moses. They seized Stephen and brought him before the council.

Stephen made a speech and established that Jesus was the promised Messiah and the Jews were actually disobeying God. The members of the council became furious.

Stephen remained calm just like Jesus in trial. He said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God". They took Stephen out and stoned him to death. Stephen kept on praying God not to remember this sin against them. The martyrdom of Stephen gave a new life and direction to the Church. The Church faced more persecutions; but it spread to different areas. He was the first martyr in Christianity. We commemorate his memory on January 8.

St. Philip

Philip also was called to be a deacon along with Stephen. Philip spread the gospel of Christ after the death of Stephen, in the city of Samaria. He did many miracles and brought a lot of people to Christ. People like Simon who was a magician came to believe in Christ. One day an angel of the Lord asked to Philip to stand on the road that went from Jerusalem to Gaza. Those days there used be eunuchs serving in the palaces. That day an Ethiopian eunuch, who was in charge of the treasury of the queen of Ethiopia was on his way home from Jerusalem. He had been to Jerusalem to worship God and was going back home in his carriage. Philip went near to the carriage and walked close to it. The eunuch was reading from the book of Prophet Isaiah without understanding what he read (Is. 53:7,8). Philip explained that what was mentioned in the text was about Jesus Christ and all the prophesies have been fulfilled in Jesus. Convinced of good news about Jesus, the eunuch got baptized by Philip. Even now the Church baptizes the grown ups who believe in Jesus and wish to join the Church. Philip went on to Caesarea and spread the gospel in all the villages on his way. He inspired many people to believe in Jesus including Jews and people from other religions including servants from palaces.

We shall be willing to suffer and get hurt for the sake of the Gospel. The martyrs suffered for the sake of the Gospel. They made the Church to grow. In his life, St. Stephen followed Jesus. He imitated Jesus Christ even in death. We will be strengthened in times of difficulty by the Holy Spirit like St. Stephen. When we pray for our persecutors we do imitate Christ. We too have a purpose in our life, as the deacons of the early church had.

Hymn

Pre-Qurbana Kolo, Thannullam kayyil...

Glory to Christ Who-built upon His hands
The Church and set up the altar in it
And set the prophets-apostles and the
Martyrs who triumphed as its foundation
Halleluiah w-Halleluiah
Blessed is He who built and confirmed His Church

Let Us Pray

O God, help us to witness You in life like St. Stephen. Help us to face all difficulties even unto death for Your sake. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and strengthen us to do Your will. Amen

Let Us think

1. Name the deacons of early Church. What were the criteria for selecting deacons?
2. What is the meaning of the word 'deacon'? Name the seven deacons of the early Apostolic times.
3. To which place did Nicolaus belong?
4. What were the eligibility criteria of the deacons?
3. How is St. Stephen described in fourth intercessional prayer (Diptychs or Thubden) in Holy Qurbana.
5. Summarize the speech of St. Stephen.
6. Stephen was accused of blasphemy against whom?
7. Read Acts 6:15 and find out how Stephen's face looked like when the council members looked at him? What was Stephen's prayer when he was being stoned?
8. Prepare a note on the life and mission of St. Philip.
9. What lessons do we learn from the lives of these two deacons?
10. In which city did Philip preach the gospel first?
11. What was the road on which Philip met the eunuch? What is notable about the pilgrimage of the Ethiopian eunuch?

Activities

Prepare a skit based on the speech made by St. Stephen, his trial and the judgment.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Matthew 10:16-33
Monday	2 Corinthians 12:1-10	Hebrews 5:1-4
Tuesday	Luke 9:1-22	1 Corinthians 15:1-19
Wednesday	Matthew 6:19-34	Hebrews 12:1-13
Thursday	Philippians 4:1-9	1 Corinthians 1:4-25
Friday	James 3:1-18	Matthew 18:1-14
Saturday	2 Timothy 4:1-18	*

Lesson 10

The Missionary Work of Saint Peter

(Acts 3,5,9)

Learning Objectives: To understand the missionary work of St. Peter.

Verse to be Memorized: Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk” (Acts 3:6).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible and the Service Book of the Holy Qurbana.

Introduction

Apostle Peter had denied Jesus. However, Peter who was a coward became a courageous leader of the Church. His missionary work was a manifestation of his dedication to Christ. Let us learn about the mission and witness of Apostle Peter.

The Lesson

Peter was the eldest among disciples of Jesus. Peter delivered a speech at the time of the election of Matthias and on the day of Pentecost. The early chapters in the Acts of the Apostles give the details of the missionary activities in the early Church. Peter did many miracles, cured the sick and gave life to a dead woman (Acts 9:36-40). Peter made a speech on the day of Pentecost; and that day 3000 people joined the Church. Many people joined the Church thereafter. In the first miracle performed by Peter, a lame beggar was made to walk. The lame beggar asked for money; Peter told him he had none, but in the name of Jesus of Nazareth he bid him to rise and walk. The beggar did as he was asked to; he stood up and walked (Acts 3:1-10). This miracle attracted many people to Christ. But Peter never took the credit of it.

The Jewish leaders put Peter in prison when they saw that many people were attracted to Christianity after listening to Peter. But every time God rescued him miraculously (Acts 12). All such incidents made people join Christianity. Sick people were carried into the streets and placed on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on them as he passed by (Acts 5: 12-16), so that they would be healed. Many other miracles were performed by Peter. He healed a man Aeneas who was paralyzed for eight years (Acts 9:32), and raised Tabitha from death. In the early Church there was the practice of sharing everything that the believers had. They sold their belongings and brought the money to the disciples. When Ananias and Sapphira acted against this and lied, they were punished by God. This happened in the presence of Peter.

In the beginning of Christianity, only Jews joined the Church. The work of Peter brought gentiles also to the Church. He baptized the first gentile, a man named Cornelius, and won the support from gentiles. Peter helped to shape the

Christian attitude towards them. Peter's action initially invited opposition from those Christians who were Jewish converts. But Peter was firm in his convictions. Thus many gentiles joined the Church. Peter denied Jesus three times (Luke 22:54-62). But like other disciples, he too became an effective missionary after receiving the Holy Spirit. Let us accept the transformation and mission spirit of St. Peter as a model for us. According to Church tradition, Peter was crucified in Rome on the orders of Nero Augustus Caesar. It is said that he was crucified upside down, at his own request, since he considered himself unworthy to be crucified in the same way as Jesus. The Church commemorate the martyrdom of Peter on 29 June.

The life and witness of St. Peter gives us inspiration. We have received the Holy Spirit and we are called to be witnesses of Christ, like Peter. The Lord will not give us up in our difficulties. Miracles and healing should not be counted as personal glory, but they are for the glory of God's name. We get a new direction in life when we stand firm in Jesus Christ.

Hymn

Pre-Qurbana Kolo, (Marthoma) shleeha ninne ormichor...

The right hand of God-holy St. Peter
Rests upon your flock which remembers you
She honours your bones-and she praises Christ
Who has magnified your great memory
Halleluiah-w-Halleluiah
May your prayer be our stronghold and refuge

Let Us Pray

Our loving God, who taught the truth to the Church through Your disciples who were fishermen, do not leave us in our sins. Protect us from attraction of the world and Satan who makes us sin against You. Amen.

Resolution

We learnt about the missionary work of St. Peter. We shall also work for the gospel of Jesus Christ. We shall not deny Christ even if it costs our life.

Let Us think

1. Point out the highlights of the speech made by Peter at Pentecost.
2. Describe the event in which Peter healed the lame beggar. Where was the lame beggar, when he met Peter and John?
3. How many people joined the Church on the day of Pentecost?
4. What paved way for the gentiles to join Church? Describe the incident related to this.
5. Compare Peter's behavior before and after he denied Jesus.

6. Name the place where Peter raised a woman from death?
7. What is the meaning of the word 'Tabitha'?
8. Where was Peter martyred? Who ordered his death?
10. What are the lessons we learn from the life of St. Peter?

Activities

1. Present a skit based on the event where St. Peter raised Tabitha from death.
2. Prepare a chart based on the important events in Peter's life.
3. Identify the day called the Golden Friday (*Swarna Velliyazhcha*)

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 3:1-9
Monday	Matthew 16:15-19	1 Corinthians 3:10-23
Tuesday	Acts 4:13-22	1 Peter 3:18-22
Wednesday	Luke 13:18-30	Acts 9:32-35
Thursday	John 6:50-60	2 Peter 3:1-10
Friday	Acts 9:36-43	Matthew 17:1-13
Saturday	Acts 10:1-8	*

UNIT 2

PRAYER

Lesson 11

Angelic Hymn

Learning Objectives: To understand the meaning and importance of the prayer ‘angelic hymn’ which is used in our worship and to recite this prayer every day with full devotion.

Verse to be Memorized: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Is. 6: 3).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, Prayer Book, Church Encyclopedia, the Service Book of Holy Qurbana, and the book of Sheema Namaskaram

Introduction

Angel is a messenger, emissary or ambassador. The Church Fathers teach us that there are nine rows of angels who praise God without break. In the Holy Bible we see the presence of angels on several occasions. The nine rows of angels are: Seraphim (Is. 6), Cherubim (Ezek 10:3,5), Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels (Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael), and Angels (Gen. 21:17). Let us learn Angelic hymn.

The Lesson

The functions of angels are praising God in heaven continuously, always being ready to obey the will of God, conveying the will of God to human beings and protecting people. In Isaiah Chapter 6:1-4, there is an account of the vision of Isaiah. Isaiah saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Above him were Seraphs, each with six wings praising God. The Seraphs praised God. Our Church Fathers have organized this prayer for us so that we could also praise God as the angels praise Him in heaven. This prayer is a part of night time prayer. Let us examine the meaning and importance of this prayer.

Angelic Hymn is to praise Almighty God. When we participate in the service on Christmas night the faithful put the incense into the fire while reciting the Angelic Hymn. The hymn is also used in the funeral service. An Eastern Church tradition says that the angels stand in rows and praise God. So the prayer is written in a pattern in which the leader and others chant the verses alternately. Let us chant the prayer in this manner.

Angelic Hymn

Teacher: Like the heavenly angels who praise You up in the heights, we who are frail and sinful offer praise.

Students: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth, tranquility and good will among men at all times and in all seasons.

Teacher: We praise You, we bless You, we adore You. We sing to You a hymn of praise.

Students: We give thanks to You because of Your great glory, Lord, our Creator, King of heaven, God the Father Almighty; we praise You, Jesus Christ, Lord God, God's only Son, along with the Holy Spirit.

Teacher: Lord God, Lamb of God and Word of the Father, who takes away the sin of the world, be gracious to all.

Students: You, who take away the sin of the world, incline Your ear to us and receive our prayers.

Teacher: You, who sit in glory at the right hand of Your Father, have compassion on us and be gracious to all.

Students: Because You only are holy, Lord Jesus Christ, You deserve the great glory of God, the Father, along with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Teacher: At all times and on all the days of our lives we bless You and praise Your holy and eternal name.

Students: Blessed are You, Lord, Upholder of all, God of our fathers, Your name is blessed and glorified with praises, for ever and ever.

Teacher: To you belongs glory, to you belongs praise, to you belongs honor, God of all, Father of truth; we praise You, Your only Son and the living holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

The important themes included in the Angelic Hymn are:

1. Praise to Holy Trinity: In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, angels are said to keep praising God. The purpose of human life is to praise God, like the angels do. The word 'Orthodox' means 'true worship or true praise'. The true worship is the Trinitarian praise. All the prayers in the Orthodox church start with praise to the Triune God. The content of angelic hymn is the praise to the Holy Trinity. In this prayer different attributes are given to Holy Trinity. When we praise God in Spirit and Truth, the holiness of God fills us and we get purified and transformed.

2. Peace on Earth: The prayer contains special appeals for peace on earth and hope of people of God. The following are certain important liturgical occasions when the Angelic Hymn is recited.

1. During the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord at the liturgy of the bonfire.

2. Funeral service.
3. At the end of the Liturgy on Good Friday.
4. Parts of the Angelic Hymn are used during the liturgy of the Exaltation of the Cross on Feast days.

We use the angelic hymn during the service on Christmas and recall the song of angels at the birth of Jesus Christ. The prayer is used in the funeral service to show that the soul of the departed one is given in to the care of angels.

Hymn

This is used in place of ‘Harken gracious Lord we pray..

Seraphim of Fiery line
 Saw Isaiah in the Shrine
 Each six winged, around the throne
 Ever serving God alone.
 Covered each with two his face
 Lest he see that Holy Grace
 Covered each with two his feet
 Lest they burn in holy heat.
 Flapping their other two wings
 They all shout and proclaim so
 Holy, Holy, Holy, Thou
 Holy are thou Son of God.
 Holy art thou, Lord of hosts
 Praise to thee be, all our boast

Resolution

We realize that we are in the company of angels when we recite the Angelic Hymn.

Let Us Think

1. Explain the important ideas in the ‘angelic hymn’.
2. Which are words used for Holy Trinity in this prayer?
3. See how the humility of the praying person is expressed in this prayer.
4. Note the significance of the descriptive ‘Names’ given to Jesus Christ.
5. Establish that the theme of this prayer is praise to the Triune God.
6. Identify certain liturgical occasions when the Angelic Hymn is recited.
7. Why is this prayer known as ‘Angelic Hymn?’

Activities

1. Prepare a chart showing different descriptive names used for Jesus Christ in different types of prayer books (Liturgical book and Common family prayer book).

2. Learn to recite the Angelic Hymn without the help of the text and include parts of the Angelic Hymn in your personal prayers.

Group Work

1. Identify the descriptive names used for Jesus Christ in Angelic Hymn (find out from the prayer book). The teacher shall help children to understand each of them.

Lord God, the only Son; Son of the Father; Word; One who takes away the sins of the world; Lamb of God; One who sits on the right hand of the father in great glory; The Holy One; To Whom glory is due

2. In the same manner, find out the adjectives used for ‘God the Father’ in this prayer.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Isaiah 8
Monday	Psalm 104	Isaiah 9
Tuesday	Isaiah 10	Isaiah 11
Wednesday	Revelations 1:10-20	1 Timothy 6:11-19
Thursday	Hebrews 1:5-14	Psalm 96
Friday	Psalm 97	Psalm 98
Saturday	Psalm 99	*

Lesson 12

Lenten Prayers

Learning Objectives: To learn the order of prayers during the lent, and to pray accordingly during the Lenten season.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the Lord made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water’ (Deuteronomy 9:9).

Teaching Aids: Prayers of the Great Lent, *Susrusha samvidhanasahai* (Guide Book for various Liturgies)

Introduction

The Orthodox Church gives great importance to the fasting and prayer. The Church insists that all members of the Church shall observe five canonical lents. Fasting, by avoiding certain food materials, and being continuously in contact with God through the Bible reading and prayer are some of the observations during the Lent. Lent strengthen us spiritually, and helps us to activate and realize the full significance of the Image and Likeness of God in us. Jesus said, ‘This kind can come out only through prayer and fasting’ (Mark 9:29). It shows the importance of fasting in overcoming the temptations of devil. Jesus himself defeated Satan through the power of fasting. The Church has prescribed specific liturgical observations during Nineveh fasting (three days) and the Great Lent (fifty days). This lesson deals with the liturgical observations for these two Lenten seasons.

The Lesson

In our common prayer, the theme of the prayers vary with days and with canonical hours; but during lent, there are no such variations. Lenten prayers of *Suthoro* (compline) and *Lilyo* (midnight) consist of prayers of repentance. Prayers of other hours contain descriptions of fasting and related petitions. The prayers of the Lent begin at the evening of Sunday. On ordinary days canonical prayers of seven hours are done during morning and evening. But during lent days seven hours’ canonical prayers are done at evening, morning, and noon. Evening prayer and *Suthoro* are done in the evening, *Lilyo* and morning prayers are done in the morning; the third hour prayer, noon prayer and ninth hour prayer are done together at noon.

Prayers are longer than usual in churches during lenten days. Psalms, hymns, Promion, Sedro and Ethro are included in the prayers so that the participants can experience a real lent. We shall look at certain prayers used during lent.

1. Great Lent, Tuesday evening prayer: ‘This is the pure fast’, cries out the prophet and he preaches to us its manners as to how we should keep it: “Loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?” (Is. 58:6-7).

2. Great Lent, Wednesday evening: “If anyone fasts from bread but sins by word, what profit is there? He builds up and pulls down and loses his reward. If he fasts and gets justified and speaks boastfully, he damages his justice, his stomach is empty and his fasting is not accepted.”

3. Great Lent, Wednesday morning: “By his fasting, the prophet Moses brought down tablets for the people of Israel; Elijah was lifted up; Daniel conquered the beasts. Brethren, let us fast and pray in order to inherit the kingdom.”

Prostration (Bowing Down)

Prostration is a spiritual exercise in Orthodox worship. During Lenten days prostration is made several times. At the time of *Kauma* we prostrate. In Church worship, we bow down several times during Sedro. Bowing down forty times after noon prayer is part of the Lenten worship. The following prayers are repeated ten times followed by bowing down. “Kyrieelaison; Lord have mercy upon us; Lord have pity and mercy upon us; Lord, answer and have pity on us”. According to the teaching of the Church, we shall not bow down on the following days: Feast of the Lord (*Moranaya*), Sundays, and on the days from Easter to Pentecost.

Saturdays and Sundays

We know that Lenten days are fasting days. In the lent days there is no fasting on Saturdays and Sundays. The special prayers for great lent is not applicable on Saturdays and Sundays. We use common prayers on these two days. Prayers of the lent start with the prayer at ‘Monday evening’ (evening after Sunday); so the Monday evening prayer shall be conducted only after the prayer of the ninth hour of Sunday.

Let Us Pray

My Lord, who heard the prayer of the prophet Jonah in the belly of the fish, kindly accept my fasts and prayers also. Amen

Resolution

We shall faithfully observe the Lents prescribed by the Church and say the Lenten prayers with devotion and repentance.

Let Us Think

1. What is the theme of the ninth hour (None) of common prayer?
2. Which are the *Moranaya* feasts which may come during Nineveh fast and Great Lent? What is the significance of the two Sundays between these fasts?

3. Explore how the date of Easter is decided.
4. Which are the seven canonical hours of prayers? Have you ever attended canonical prayers in the church during lent days?

Activities

1. Explain how we may use the money we save from fasting.
2. Discuss the benefits gained by body, mind and spirit by fasting.
3. 'Fasting has a social aspect too'. Discuss.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Isaiah 58:3-8
Monday	Deuteronomy 9:9-17	Isaiah 58:9-14
Tuesday	Deuteronomy 9:18-21	1 Kings 19:1-9
Wednesday	Daniel 1:1-15	Jonah 2:1-10
Thursday	Hebrews 8:21-23	Jonah 3:1-10
Friday	Matthew 4:1-11	Luke 4:1-11
Saturday	Mark 1:9-13	*

Lesson 13

Prayer at Suthoro

(Fourth Psalm)

Learning Objectives: To learn the message and significance of Psalm 4 included in Suthoro.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life’ (Psalm 121: 6,7)

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, Service Book of Holy Qurbana, Book of Common Prayer, and Prayers of the Great Lent.

Introduction

The prayer which is said before going to bed is called *Suthoro*. ‘Suthoro’ means ‘protection’. Suthoro is the prayer through which we seek God’s protection. Let us learn the Psalm 4 which is included in the prayer at Suthoro. The book of Common Prayer does not include this prayer for Suthoro. But this prayer has been included in the Suthoro of the lent days.

The Lesson

Psalm 4 is king David’s prayer of compline. Let us learn this Psalm (*Peshitta*) by heart. This Psalm can influence us when we recite it with devotion. It gives many spiritual lessons to the faithful.

When I called you have answered me, my God, the salvation of my righteousness. In my affliction You have comforted me; have mercy upon me and hear my prayer. O men, how long will you hide my honour? And will you love vanity and seek after lies? Know that the Lord has set apart the chosen one by miracle. The Lord will hear when I call to Him. Be angry, but do not sin. Say in your hearts and meditate in your beds. Offer sacrifices of justice and put your trust in the Lord. There are many who say: ‘Who will show some good, and extend the light of His face upon us’. O Lord, You have given your joy in my heart, more than the time when their grain and wine and oil abounded together in peace. I will lie down and sleep. For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in tranquility. To You befits glory, O God.

1. In times of affliction we shall find comfort in the Lord. King David was a man who had faced many trials and difficulties in the life. On all such occasions, he was in the habit of depending on God and finding comfort there. Similarly at times of afflictions we shall come to our Lord Jesus Christ and spend more time in prayer. This will comfort us.

2. The chosen one will be set apart by God. A true faithful will always get special consideration and protection from the Lord. He will use his devotions to accomplish His will. His ear will be always open towards His dear ones.

3. A devotion on the bed is very important. When we go to bed in the night it is good to take some time to recall our day's activities. This will help us to praise the Lord for the blessings received and to repent for the sins committed in the day. This will really nourish our spiritual life.

4. False love and flattering will not stand for ever. True love alone shall withstand for ever. Pretensions shall come out anytime. We can see true love in the Lord. He shall give rewards at the appropriate time.

5. Happiness shall come from God. Happiness obtained from worldly pleasures is not permanent. Real happiness comes from God. Joy given by our Lord is better than the joy from any other source of worldly comfort.

6. The Lord gives the light of His face to his devotees. In the Psalm 34:5 we read, 'Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed'. Radiant face is the symbol of the grace of God.

7. Peaceful sleep is a blessing from God. The spiritual blessing given by God helps us to lead a peaceful life. Peaceful sleep is a gift of God.

Let Us Pray

Recite this Psalm together

Resolution

We shall read and meditate the Psalm 4 daily before going to bed.

Let Us Think

1. What is the meaning of *Suthoro*?
2. How did king David find comfort in afflictions?
3. What are the characteristics of true devotees?
4. What is the result of false love?
5. Where can we get true love?

Activities

1. Compare different translations of the Psalm 4.
2. Make it a habit to read Psalm 4 daily before going to bed.
3. Learn the Psalm 4 by heart.
4. Practice the spiritual lessons learned from Psalm 4 in daily life.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Psalm 4
Monday	2 Timothy 2:14-26	Ephesians 4:17-24
Tuesday	Ephesians 4:25-32	Numbers 6:22-26
Wednesday	Isaiah 9:1-10	Psalm 3
Thursday	Psalm 2	Psalm 5
Friday	Psalm 6	Psalm 7
Saturday	Psalm 8	*

UNIT 3

LITURGICAL HYMNS

Lesson 14

Kukilion for the Departed Clergy

Learning Objectives: This lesson aims to study in detail the Kukilion for the departed clergy which will help to attend the worship sessions meaningfully.

Verse to be Memorized: 'Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let your faithful shout for joy' (Psalm 132:9).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, Qurbana kramam, the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

Kukilion is a cycle of prayers which consists of Psalms, Ekbo, Kolos and Bovoitho. We learned the Kukilions for St. Mary, the Mother of God and Saints. The next Kukilion given in the Qurbana kramam is the Kukilion for the departed clergy. In this lesson we are going to study that Kukilion in detail.

The Lesson

The first hymn in the Kukilion for the departed clergy is the following

(Chaarthum neethiye...)

In righteousness Thy priests be clothed-Halleluiah
Thy righteous ones in glorious garb.
For David's sake, Thy servant true-Halleluiah
The face of Thine anointed heed.

This hymn is based on Psalms 132:9-10. We read the passage in the Bible as follows: 'Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let your faithful shout for joy. For your servant David's sake do not turn away the face of your anointed one'. Here the 'anointed one' is the priest.

Ekbo

Next hymn in the cycle is an Ekbo. The word Ekbo means 'step' because this is a step from Psalm to Kolo. The Ekbo in the Kukilion for the departed clergy is given below;

(Suchiyodu shudhya...)

May those feet that cleanly trod,
Keeping pure Thy holy place,

Tread the courts of paradise
And with angel's e'er abide.

Lord, let the feet of the priests which have touched the Holy places be allowed to enter the doors of paradise so that they live along with the holy angels for ever.

Kolos

The word Kolo means 'hymn'. Three Kolos are given in the Holy Qurbana kramam so that we can choose one.

(Deivam srishttichaadathe...)

After God had Adam made,
Rested He and looked on him,
And beheld him beautiful-
His Creator's image there
When the earth born moved and
Passed through the trees of paradise,
Angels wond'ring gazed,
Seeing man exalted thus. Barekmor.

God created Adam in His own image. God saw that His creation was beautiful. The human being began to walk through the paradise. Angels were astonished to see the high position attained by human beings who was made out of dust of the earth.

When the priesthood passed on down
Moses got it, Aaron too:
Moses passed it on Skariah
Passed Skariah it on to John
John did pass it to our Lord,
Christ ordained apostles twelve;
They sent forth by Him
Passed it on throughout the world.

The second hymn is intended to bring out the continuity of priesthood. The New Testament priesthood is the fulfillment of Old Testament priesthood. At first Moses and Aaron obtained priesthood from God. Moses transferred it to Zechariah. Zechariah gave it to his son John the Baptist and John gave the priesthood to Jesus Christ. Christ gave it to His disciples and the disciples gave the priesthood to the whole humankind. Here we shall keep in mind that Christ is a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:6). But in the hymn it is said that Christ 'got' the priesthood from John the Baptist, only to show the continuity of priesthood.

(Nirmala madbaha.....)
Blest be priests whose love for Christ
Mark'd their sacred altar's task;
Watching angels haste to come,
Leading them to courts of joy. Barekmor

Son of God, forget them not-
Priests of thine who served thee right;
Grant them pleasantness of face
On Thy advent day sublime

The priests had been serving at in the altar of Christ because of their love of Christ; So the angels of heaven shall hastily come to receive them to heaven. Son of God, when you come again, do remember the priests who have served you sincerely during their lifetime, and bless them with pleasantness of face. The first stanza is a statement and second is a petition.

(moochanamaachaaryarkkekuka....)

O Lord, absolve the clergy- Halleluiah
Those priests and deacons faithful-
They who served Thee
In churches and in abbeys- here in their lifetime
Whose very hands did offer- in the chancel
Thy body and precious blood- for pardon of sins
Thy body Lord absolve their debts
Thy blood Lord-pardon all their faults
May they proclaim beside Thee-
“Praise to thee O Lord”

O Lord, give absolution to the priests. Absolve the sins of the priests who have exalted and adored your body and blood in their hands for the absolution of the faithful. Also, pardon the sins of the deacons who have served you faithfully in churches and monasteries. Absolve their sins by your body and blood so that they shall sing “Praise to Thee, O Lord”.

Bovootho (Petition)

Two bovoothos are given as the concluding petition of the Kukilion for the departed clergy.

1. Bovootho of Mar Aprem

(mudikal mudanjava niranirayai...)

Crowns are plated, closely placed,
On the holy altar there;
Crowns will thus be set on heads
Of those priests who’ve served Thee well.

Beautiful crowns are prepared and closely placed (arranged) on the altar of Christ. These shall be placed on the heads of priests who have done their duty well. The hymn mentions about the reward the righteous priests are to get at the time of judgment.

2. Bovootho of St. James

(Aachaaryesha...)

O Christ who art-of priests-the
Lord of clergy chief,
Pray pardon, Lord those priests
Thy mysteries who served.

O Christ, who is the Lord of priests and chief of clergy, give absolution to the priests who have served Your holy mysteries.

Let Us Pray

O Lord, let all the priests who have served You on the altar partake in Your kingdom when You come again. Amen.

Resolution

We will pray for the departed priests regularly.

Activity

1. In between two Kolos, the priest says a sentence of praise. What is it?
2. Kolos end with a supplication, usually in Syriac. What is it? Find out the meaning of it.
3. What is the meaning of 'barekmor'?
4. Identify the Sunday on which we pray for all the departed clergy.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Psalm 132
Monday	2 Samuel 7:12-16	Psalm 89
Tuesday	Exodus 28	Exodus 30
Wednesday	John 1:19-34	Luke 3:7-22
Thursday	Matthew 3:1-12	Matthew 3:13-17
Friday	Mark 1:1-8	Mark 1:9-11
Saturday	Psalm 84	-

Lesson 15

Office of the Prayer for the Departed

Learning Objectives: To learn the Kukilion used in the office for the departed and hence to attend the Holy Qurbana and other services in a meaningful way.

Verse to be Memorized: 'As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear Him' (Psalms 103:13).

Teaching Aids: Holy Bible, Book of the Holy Qurbana, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

Prayer for the departed is an inalienable part of Orthodox worship. In the Holy Qurbana there are various occasions to remember our departed. Just before the commencement of the holy Qurbana, we sing the hymn 'Lord, grant good remembrance to all the faithful dead...' This is an occasion to remember the dead. Another occasion is the sixth Thubden. The prayers of the priest and the faithful after the sixth Thubden are also prayers for the departed. Office of the departed is another important occasion to pray for the departed. This office also is in the form of Kukilion and we shall study that in this lesson.

The Lesson

In the previous lesson we studied the Kukilion for the departed clergy. We know that Kukilion always starts with a verse from Psalm. In the Kukilion for the departed faithful, we sing Psalm 103:13-15. The hymn is as follows.

'As doth a father his children love-Halleluiah
So doth the Lord love those who fear His name.
The days of man are but as grass-Halleluiah
He springs up like the herbs that grow in fields.'

The Lord loves His children exactly like the love of a father towards his children. The days of human beings are like grass in the fields. He flourishes like a flower in the fields. The last line shows the mortality of humans. As the flower goes in a wind so is a human.

Ekbo

(saranathaale nin...)

'They who served and died in hope
Trusting in Thy mercy, Lord;
May Thy living voice them raise
From their graves to paradise.'

Lord, let your life giving voice raise those who served you, from the graves, so that they may enter Paradise. Here we are praying for only those who lived in hope and served God in their lifetime. On special occasions of remembering the departed, Promion-Sedro is read after 'Stoumenkalos.' 'Sthoumenkalos' means 'let us stand well', and kurielaison means 'Lord have mercy on me.' After ekbo, we sing hymns ('Kolos'). Various kolos are given in the Qurbana kramam so that we choose one.

Kolo

(rakshakane nin...)

Grant, O Savior, that the dead, who ate Thy flesh
Who drank Thy blood, the chalice of salvation,
May be raised up from their graves Yea, incorrupt,
Clothed in glory full and bright, Lo they wait for thee. Barekmor
Borne aloft in state upon clouds of glory
Comes the prince who giveth life to the dead ones,
Righteous ones the trumpet hear of His angels;
They proceed in glorious stoles in His presence.

O Savior, let the faithful who have eaten Your flesh and drank Your blood be risen from the graves. Let them be clothed in glory. They are waiting for You, Lord. The prince who gives life to the dead comes in glory in clouds. The righteous hears the sound of the trumpets of angels who accompany Him and proceeds to welcome Him in glorious attire. The incident which shall happen at the second coming of Christ is dramatically presented here.

(uyirekunnoon...)

Comes the Prince of life
From His glorious throne above,
Raising those who in their graves take rest
From their graves they'll rise
With them our departed ones,
Praising Him who- giveth life to all. Barekmor
Praise be Jesus' words
In His gospel give'n to us
Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood
Them I will not leave
Bound in hell-for them I died
Giving all the everlasting life.

The Lord who gives life to all comes down from heaven and gives life to all in the graves. Those who are in graves rise up from there and praise You who is the giver of life. The Lord says, 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood will not be sent to hell. I descended to earth and died on the Cross so that they shall live for ever'. Lord, we praise you for your promise.

(naadhaa thavaka.....)

Thine, O Lord are both the worlds
Here and there Thy pow'r extends
Keep the living by Thy cross
By Thy grace absolve the dead. Barekmor

Praise we Thee who giveth life
To those lying in the tombs
Praise the Father, Thee who sent
Praise the Holy spirit too.

O, Lord, Heaven and earth are yours. They are all under your reign. Lord! Protect the living by the cross, and absolve the dead by Your grace. We praise You who gives life to the dead, Your Father who had sent You and the Holy Spirit.

Bovootho (Petition)

A Kukilion usually ends with a bovootho. Two bovoothos are given in the Kukilion for the dead. We can use any one of them.

May departed ones receive-
Who confessed the Trinity
What was promised to the thief
Paradise with thee O, Lord.

O Lord, You promised paradise to the thief when You were on the cross. Kindly grant the same promise to the departed ones who have confessed the Holy Trinity. The words of Jesus to the thief on the right are recalled here.

Son of God who by Thy death
Quick'neth mortal men,
Give us life that from the dust
We may cry aloud, Paise to thee , O lord.

Son of God, You have made us immortal by Your death. Give us life from the dust so that we may cry aloud 'praise to Thee O, Lord'. This petition is applicable to the dead as well as the living.

Let Us Pray

O Lord, bless all the departed to enjoy in Your kingdom along with Your saints. Amen.

Resolution

We have understood that it is our duty to pray for the departed ones. We shall do it with all devotions.

Activity

Now we have learnt the Kukilions for the Mother of God, saints, and the departed.

In the morning worship in church we use a common Kukulion where we remember the Mother of God, saints and the departed. Find it out and try to get at its meaning. Sing together, all the hymns studied in this lesson.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Psalm 103
Monday	Romans 6:1-14	1 Corinthians 15:1-19
Tuesday	Romans 7:4-13	1 Corinthians 15:20-34
Wednesday	Romans 8:8-13	1 Corinthians 15:35-49
Thursday	2 Corinthians 4:10-15	1 Corinthians 15:50-58
Friday	2 Corinthians 5:1-15	Hebrews 2:1-18
Saturday	John 6:47-59	*

UNIT 4

MY CHURCH

Lesson 16

The Holy Church during the First Two Centuries

Learning Objectives: To understand the general conditions which prevailed in the early Church and to identify the social factors behind it.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues’ (1 Corinthians 12:28).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the Service book of Holy Qurbana, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Service book of Sacraments.

Introduction

A written constitution and a fixed system of governance help a country to stay united and develop. Similarly, several factors helped the growth of the early Church. Let us learn more about those factors in this lesson.

The Lesson

The council (synod) held in Jerusalem played an important role in the stabilization of the Church. Here we shall learn about the administrative system in the early Church, life in the Church, development of liturgical texts etc.

Council (Synod) of Jerusalem

With the advent of pagans into the Church a variety of problems cropped up. Is it necessary to circumcise the gentiles who join the Church? Should they lead a life according to Jewish religious customs? Such issues were there waiting to be addressed by the Church. Circumcision was a Jewish religious custom. In order to consider these problems, an Apostolic Council (Synod) was held in Jerusalem in A.D. 49 with St. James in the chair and it came to be known as the Synod or Council of Jerusalem (Acts of the Apostles Chapter 15). The synod convened in the presence of the disciples decided not to compel the pagans who became Christians to strictly follow the Jewish customs.

Administrative System

It was in the second century that a proper administrative system came into existence in the Church. The head of this administrative system was a bishop.

Presbyters (priests) and deacons were appointed to assist the bishop. There was also the order of deaconess Phoebe mentioned in Romans 16:1. It was St. Ignatius who first made a mention of the 'Three-fold Ministry' of Episcopa, Presbyter and deacon.

Church Life

The life in the Church was centered chiefly on worship and prayer. Church offered utmost importance to helping the poor, the sick and widows. A system of life based on Christian morality was instituted. Christians adopted an attitude that countered the pagan mode of worship and immorality. However, it respected the political authorities and the law. The Christian Church followed the synagogue mode of worship, but chose Sunday as the Sabbath, the day of Resurrection of our Lord.

Church Literature

There were two chief sources which give a detailed account of the Church as it existed in the first and second centuries, namely Apostolic Fathers and Apologists.

Apostolic Fathers

The disciples of the apostles or their contemporaries are called 'Apostolic Fathers'. The books and treatises written by them during the period between A.D. 95 and 150 throw light into the history of the early Church. The First Epistle of St. Clement of Rome, the Epistle of Polycarp of Smyrna, Writings of Papias of Hierapolis, the Didache ('Teachings of the Twelve Apostles'), the Epistle of Barnabas, the seven letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch, the Epistle to Diognetus and the Shepherd of Hermas are considered as the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. The important themes dealt within the writings of Apostolic Fathers include teachings of Christian principles, regulations for worship, role of clergy, exhortation for Christians to remain courageous against persecutions, and how to resist the injustice of the Jews. Here is a quote from Didache: 'Your fasts should not be with the hypocrites, for they fast on Mondays and Thursdays. You should fast on Wednesdays and Fridays' (Didache 8:1).

Apologists

The Apologists tried to respond to the criticism faced by the Church, counter the accusations against Christians and to teach true faith in place of faithlessness. They, who were scholars and philosophers, through their writings, explained the faith and the Christian way of life, pattern of worship, and the attitude of Christians towards pagans and rulers. Aristides of Athens, Quadratus of Athens, Tertullian of Carthage, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen of Alexandria, Athenagoras of Athens, Hippolytus of Rome, Cyprian of Carthage, Melito (Meletius) of Sardis, Tatian of Syria were the chief Apologists during the early Christian times.

Let Us Pray

O Lord, let Thy love and peace prevail in Thy Church. Eliminate rebellions, quarrels and arguments from it. Lord, enlighten the priests as well as the authorities to lead and rule the sheep which You saved with Thy sacred blood. Amen.

Resolution

We will not go after alien faiths. We will stand firmly in the true faith of the Church.

Let Us Think

1. What were the earlier Church records that give information about the history of the Church?
2. What was the role played by the Council of Jerusalem in the formation of the Church?
3. Name the Apostolic fathers.
4. What were the important issues dealt with by the Apologists?
5. What was the issue that was discussed and solved in the Synod of Jerusalem?
6. Explain the Three-fold Ministry.
7. How did the Christian life and worship differ from those of Jews?

Activities

1. Collect more information about the administrative procedures of the Church from Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11 and note down in the diary.
2. Compare the Christian life in the early Church and that exists in the present day Church.
3. Make a comparison between the Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists.
4. Write a note on the way in which the Apostles solved issues of faith and practice that cropped up in the early Church.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 15:6-21
Monday	Matthew 18:19-20	Acts 10:17-23
Tuesday	Matthew 16:18-20	1 Timothy 3:1-16
Wednesday	Philippians 3:1-6	Romans 12:6-81
Thursday	Ephesians 4:1-11	1 Corinthians 12
Friday	Galatians 1	Galatians 2
Saturday	Galatians 3	*

Lesson 17

The Holy Church up to Fifth Century Persecutions, Synods

Learning Objectives: To learn how the early Church survived and developed in spite of persecutions, and also opposition from heterodox beliefs. Also to keep away from heretic movements and keep the true faith of the Church.

Verse to be Memorized: 'I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them' (Romans 16:17).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the Service Book of Holy Qurbana, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

Christianity spread to places outside Jerusalem, following the martyrdom of St. Stephen, when Christians fled to many places. The Church had to face persecutions and oppositions. We are going to learn about these in this lesson.

The Lesson

The Church had to face very hard and difficult situations during the first four centuries. Almost everywhere there were opposition and persecution. A few of the Universal Councils or Synods were organized during this period. Let us learn more about them.

Persecutions

The Christian Church had to face persecutions from the very beginning, which continued unabated till the beginning of the fourth century. The faithful were subjected to persecutions from Jews and Roman rulers.

1. The Jews: It was the Jews themselves who began to persecute the Christians initially. When they came to know that the Christian Church was different from their own religion, they started persecuting Christians. These persecutions caused the martyrdom of many Christians, including the apostles.

2. The Roman Rulers: The Roman rulers did not persecute the Christians during the early days. However, they began to persecute the faithful later and it turned to be the most severe persecution of Christians. The following were the reasons which provoked the Roman emperors:

- a) Suspicion that Christians were not obedient to the Roman gods and the emperor.

- b) Reluctance of the Christians to offer sacrifice to the Roman gods.
- c) Unwillingness of the Christians for military service.
- d) Misunderstandings about the worship followed by the Christians (that they were 'cannibals.')

Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Maximinus, Valerian, and Diocletian were the emperors who persecuted the Christians the most. The Edict of Milan (February 313 AD) by emperor Constantine stopped the persecution of Christians. However, the persecution helped in strengthening the faith and unity of the Church.

Oppositions to the Faith and the Divisions in the Church

The Christian Church met with various oppositions to the faith from the very beginning. When Church gained independence in the Roman empire, there arose other kinds of opponents. As a consequence, many of the followers deviated from the path of true faith. The main challenges to the faith were the following:

Gnosticism- Salvation is possible through acquiring knowledge.

Montanism- The argument that Montanus was the Holy Spirit.

Schism of those who allegedly betrayed the faith during the persecution.

Manichaeism- Body and the activities of the body are completely evil.

Monarchianism- God was unpersonal rather than Trinitarian.

These false teachings caused divisions in the Church which were partly solved in the Universal Church Councils.

Universal Synods (Councils)

The schisms and divisions in the Church caused disturbances within and outside the Roman Empire. Therefore emperors and government authorities took the initiative and began to interfere in the affairs of the Church. Following this, Universal Councils were convened. The Oriental Orthodox Churches have accepted only the first three Universal Synods only.

Synod of Nicea (AD 325): The Synod of Nicea, convened by the emperor Constantine in AD 325 was the first Universal Synod. Tradition says that 318 Church Fathers participated in it, discussed and rejected the heterodox teachings of Arius, a scholarly monk-priest.

Heterodox Teachings of Arians: The arguments put forward by Arians were:

- a) The Son is not equal to the Father.
- b) The Son and the Holy Spirit are not absolutely God.
- c) The Son who was created is not eternal.
- d) There was a period when the Son was non-existent.

- e) The Father is the only real God and hence the Son is neither complete God nor complete Human.

The Council rejected the arguments of Arians and formulated the first two paragraphs of the proclamation of faith (Creed) and a few canons as well.

Synod of Constantinople (AD 381): The purpose of the Synod of Constantinople, convened in AD 381, was to confirm the resolutions formulated in the Synod of Nicea and to reject the heretic teachings by Apollinarius, the bishop of Laodicea; and Macedonius, the bishop of Constantinople (Macedonianism). This Council, convened by the Emperor Theodosius had the participation of 150 Church fathers, and the resolutions were authenticated by 148 of them. The Synod elaborated the proclamation of faith formulated in the Synod of Nicea and confirmed it. A few canons laws were also passed in the Council.

Apollinarianism: It was argued by Apollinarius of Laodicea that Jesus Christ could not have had a human mind; rather, that Jesus had a human body and lower soul but a divine mind. It was also argued that Christ was a complete God.

Macedonianism: According to this heresy, the Holy Spirit is not God and subordinate to the Father and the Son.

Synod of Ephesus (AD 431): In this Synod, convened by the Roman Emperor Theodosius II in AD 431, 198 Church fathers participated. The purpose of the Synod was to reject the heretical teachings of Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Council rejected the argument of Nestorius and categorically declared Virgin Mary as the 'Theotokos' (Mother of God).

Nestorianism: This doctrine emphasized the distinction between the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ. It argued that Holy Virgin Mary shall not be addressed as Theotokos (Mother of God), but as 'Mother of Christ' only.

Let Us Pray

Morning Special prayer on the Qudosh Eetho

Blessed are you, O Holy Church, the bride of the true Light; your Bridegroom is everlasting. O Church, who was saved by His Cross, sing praises to Him, for He sacrificed Himself for you and gave Himself as food and drink for the absolution of your people. Barekmor

Resolution

We will work for the upkeep and progress of the Church by protecting it from and heretical teachings which weaken it.

Let Us Think

1. What were the heretical teachings the earlier Church had to confront?
2. Which were the first three Universal Councils? What were the reasons for convening the universal Synods? What were the issues of discussion and resolutions in the universal Councils?
3. Explain the persecutions Christians suffered in the early Church? What were the reasons for the persecution of Christians by the Roman emperors? Name the emperors who persecuted Christians.

Activities

1. Compare the persecutions suffered by the earlier Church with the problems which the Church faces at present (discuss with a Church historian and collect information).
2. In the context of the heretical teachings which plagued the early Church, evaluate the heretical teachings in modern times.
3. If you were living during the persecutions and heresies, how you would have responded to them?

A famous statement by St. Polycarp

“86 years have I have served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?” -St. Polycarp of Smyrna.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 1
Monday	Acts 2	Acts 3
Tuesday	Acts 4	Acts 5
Wednesday	Acts 6	Acts 7
Thursday	Acts 8	Acts 9
Friday	Acts 10	Acts 11
Saturday	Acts 12	*

Lesson 18

The Malankara Church up to Ninth Century (Christian Migrations to South India)

Learning Objectives: To understand the history of the early Christian migrations to South India and how the migrants became part of Indian Christianity.

Verse to be Memorized: 'In the wilderness, where you saw how the Lord your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you traveled until you reached this place' (Deuteronomy 1:31).

Teaching Aids The Holy Bible, the Service Book of Holy Qurbana and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

History tells us India had been subject to a number of foreign invasions, mostly by those who came as traders. The cultural influences of the invaders still exist among us. Along with it, there two important Persian migrations to South India. We are going to learn about these migrations and how the migrants integrated themselves with the St. Thomas Christians of India.

The Lesson

The main Christian migrations to South India occurred in AD fourth and ninth centuries. The first migration of AD 345 was under the leadership of Knai Thomman and the second of AD 825 was under the leadership of Sabore Easow (Sabrisho). The trade links which existed between Persia and India and the Christian faith and traditions which existed in both the countries were the factors that facilitated these immigrations.

1. First Persian Migration (AD 345): In fourth century, during the reign of Shapur II, the Christians in Persia had been subjected to severe persecutions. In order to escape from this, a group of Christians, under the leadership of Knai Thomman (Cana Thoma or Thomas of Cana) migrated to South India which was connected to Persia through trade. The group consisted of 400 people from 72 families which included one bishop called Mar Ouseph (Joseph), two priests, two deacons besides women and children.

The migrants reached Kodungallur and accepted the patronage of the ruler Cheraman Perumal. Their interest in trade helped them in acquiring social and religious freedom. The local ruler granted them several civil rights which have been inscribed on the copper plates. They are called *Knai Thomman Chepped*. As they resided in the southern side of Kodungallur they are known as the Southists (*Thekkumbhagakkar*). The present day *Knanaites* claim to be the successors of these Southists.

2. Second Persian Immigration (AD 825): Led by the merchant called Sabrisho, a group of Christians with two bishops Mar Sabore and Mar Proth landed in Kollam in AD 825 and this is considered as the second Persian migration. It is said that the Kollam Era (Malayalam Era or *kollavarsham*) was started in commemoration of this migration. Out of the two bishops, Mar Sabore settled in Udaymperoor and Mar Proth settled in Kollam. However, the second migration comprised of less people than the first. The 'Tarisappally Copper Plates' document the rights given to the migrant Christians by the local ruler. The word 'Talisa' is derived from the word 'Threesai' which means 'true'. In AD 925, the bishops were canonized and churches were dedicated in their name. But, in later times, the Portuguese Roman Catholics disapproved of this canonization and renamed the churches '*Kadisha*' churches (eg. *Kadisha* churches in Kollam and Kayamkulam).

Importance of Persian Migrations

- Corroborated the tradition of Apostle St. Thomas in Malankara (the Persian Church also was established by St. Thomas).
- Enhanced the general social status of the Christians in India.
- Kollam Era was started.
- Broadened the influence of Christianity in India.
- Deepened the trade connections between Persia and India.

Hymn

Pre-Qurbana Kolo, Saurabhyam pole theekundil pett...

You martyrs fell like-incense on the fire
Your love's sweet fragrance perfumed all the earth
Pray to Christ that He-may shed His blessing
Upon the faithful who honour your bones
Halleluiah-w-Halleluiah
May peace reign in the Church which honours you.

Let Us Pray

Another Morning Special prayer on the Qudosh Eetho

Lord, may the Church and her children be protected by Your Cross. May the Holy Spirit, who indwelled in the prophets and the apostles and guided them to preach, come and indwell in the Church. Lord, grant remission of debts to the departed spiritual father, brethren, and all the departed children of the Church, and write their names in the Book of Life in Your Eternal Kingdom. Amen.

Resolution

Persecutions shall not deter us from following our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are migrants travelling to the Promised Land.

Let Us Think

1. Detail the importance of Persian migrations to South India. Describe the Second Persian immigration.
2. Note the significance of the start of 'Kollam Era'.
3. What was the earlier status of the present-day *Kadisha* churches?
4. Which were the chief Christian migrations to Kerala?
5. What were the reasons and significance of the migration under Knai Thomman?
6. Explain how the name *Thekkumbhagakkar* originated.

Activities

1. Note the position of Persia in the map of Asia and trace the route by which migrants reached South India.
2. Present a skit based on Persian migrations.
3. Visit the *Kadisha* churches and collect more information regarding their history.

To be read carefully

“The church stood firmly by the declaration of faith by St. Thomas ever since. The persecutions suffered in different periods did not weaken the Church, but it aided in enhancing the faith of the people”-H. H. Catholicos Baselios Marthoma Mathews I.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 15
Monday	Acts 16	Acts 17
Tuesday	Acts 18	Acts 19
Wednesday	Acts 20	Acts 21
Thursday	Acts 22	Acts 23
Friday	Acts 24	Acts 25, 26
Saturday	Acts 27,28	*

Lesson 19

The Malankara Church up to Tenth Century (Copper Plates)

Learning Objectives: To learn about the high social status enjoyed by the early Christians in Kerala. To understand that the integrity of Nazranis earned them good name and status in society.

Verse to be Memorized: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away and the wolf snatches them and scatters them” (St. John 10:11, 12).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the Service Book of Holy Qurbana, the Book of Common Prayer, and pictures of ‘Cheppedes’.

Introduction

We use paper for writing. However, certain important documents are inscribed on wood, stone or metal. The early Christians in Kerala received four copper plates on which were inscribed the special rights granted to them by the local kings. Let us learn about them.

The Lesson

The early Indian Christians received four copper plates, namely Knai Thomman plate, Tarisappalli plate 1 and 2, and Iravikorthan plate, from the then rulers.

Knai Thomman Plate: This plate is believed to be issued to Knai Thomman who migrated from Persia, by Kochera Koran Perumal. The actual year of the plate is a matter of dispute among historians. However, the years AD 345, 774 and 882 are attributed to this plate. The original plate is missing, but an English translation (by the Portuguese) is kept in the British museum. By this plate, Mahadevar town (Kodungallur) and the church in it were bestowed to Knai Thomman and successors besides some titles. Relatives and religious followers of Knai Thomman were provided with some special rights and privileges by virtue of this plate.

Tarisappalli Plates: These are two copper plates issued by the then ruler of Kollam Ayyanadikal Thiruvadikal. The first one was issued in AD 849 to the St. Thomas Christians in Kollam and the second one was issued in AD 883 to the Jewish Christians, it is believed. Some plates are missing at present; the rest are with the Malankara Orthodox Church and the Marthoma Church. The language of the inscriptions on the plates is *Vattezhuth*, a form of ancient Tamil script which was prevalent in

Tamizhakam from Sixth to Fourteenth centuries. These plates throw light on the social status of the Christians of the time. Christians granted several rights and privileges like the control over the lower castes, protection of land and churches, tax collection, military powers, and 72 feudal powers.

Iravikorthan Copper Plate: This was issued to Iravikorthan by the king Veeraraghava and hence it is called as 'Veeraraghava Pattayam'. The year of issue of the plates in 'Vattezhuth' script is not clear; the years AD 230, 680, 775 and 1320 have been suggested. At present, this plate is under the custody of Malankara Orthodox Church. According to this, Christians were entitled to enjoy esteemed social status on par high caste the Hindus. The plate granted many rights and powers to Iravikorthan like the leadership (Perumchetty) at 'Manigramam', trade rights, power to collect taxes, and authority over slaves.

Importance of Copper Plates

- Indicate the status and esteemed position enjoyed by the Christians.
- Indicate the social status of Christians.
- Prove the loyalty of Christians.
- Throw light on the trade efficiency and integrity of Christians.
- Indicate that the kings considered Christians as loyal and as asset to the economy of the State.

Hymn

Pre-Qurbana Kolo, Thannathan papam cheythen kezhunnen

By my will I sin-and by it, repent
I know the reason Satan has caught me
Woe to me for I-have sinned against You
Woe to me for I am not repentant
Halleluiah-w-Halleluiah
Woe to me when You judge; Lord have mercy.

Let Us Pray

Another Morning Special prayer on the Qudosh Eetho

Praise to the Messiah, who indwelled in the Church and adorned her with high priests, priests, and deacons. Praise to the invisible Father, who betrothed the Church to the Son, who saved her by the Cross, and to the Holy Spirit, who continuously sanctifies her. Amen.

Resolution

We shall always try to maintain the integrity, unity and spiritual status that Nasrani Christians enjoyed in early times.

Let Us Think

1. Prepare a note on Iravikorthan plates. Who was Iravikorthan?
2. Identify the copper plates issued to the Christians in Kerala? Describe the importance of copper plates.
3. What are the evidences for Knai Thomman plate? What were the rights and privileges obtained through this plate?
4. What is 'Vattezhuth'?
5. Give an account about Tarisappalli copper plates.

Activities

1. Collect more information about other royal proclamations similar to copper plates.
2. Collect more information about copper plates.
3. Arrange a discussion in the class to compare the earlier status and the current status of Christians.
4. Attempt a translation of the plate-inscriptions into modern Malayalam.

To be read carefully

'Arunoottuvar, Anchuvannam and Manigramam are authorised to protect the land and the church. Anchuvannam and Manigramam are directed to act as instructed in the copper plate until the earth, sun and the moon exist'- Second Tarisappalli Plate

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Romans 1
Monday	Romans 2	Romans 3
Tuesday	Romans 4	Romans 5
Wednesday	Romans 6	Romans 7
Thursday	Romans 8	Romans 9
Friday	Romans 10	Romans 11
Saturday	Romans 12	*

UNIT 5

THE HOLY QURBANA- A STUDY

Lesson 20

Prototypes of the Holy Qurbana in the Old Testament

Learning Objectives: To understand the Biblical basics of the service of the Holy Qurbana. To learn that the Holy Qurbana is completely based on the Holy Bible and the Holy Traditions. To receive the mercy of God by participating in the Holy Qurbana with devotion and to become conscious of the presence of God in this sacrament.

Verse to be Memorized: 'Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever' (Hebrews 7:3).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, Qurbana kramam, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

The Holy Qurbana is the crown and perfection of all other sacraments and worship services. By participating in the Holy Qurbana regularly and by receiving the body and blood of the Lord, we are incorporated into the body of Christ. Do you remember the interpretations of the Holy Qurbana we learned in earlier classes? We need to know that Holy Qurbana is based on the Holy Bible. The hymns, prayers and responses of the congregation in the Holy Qurbana are based on the Holy Bible. For this, we need to understand the related Bible passages and establish connection between them. Once we understand it, our participation in the Holy Qurbana would become more meaningful; and we will be more interested in participating in it. Now, we are going to learn the biblical background of the Holy Qurbana.

The Lesson

The consecration of the bread and wine is one of the most important moments in the Holy Qurbana. Here we remember the blessing of bread and wine by our Lord during the Last Supper before giving it to his disciples. All the important events in the life of our Lord Jesus had been indicated in the Old Testament history of the Israel. The writers of New Testament point to them on various occasions (Matthew 1:21-22, Luke 24:25-27). It is true of the Last Supper also. The act of Jesus in blessing bread and wine by saying 'this is my body' and 'this is my blood which is poured out for the new

covenant' had already been foreshadowed through several events which happened in the Old Testament. The most important of them are stated briefly below:

1. Fruit of the Tree of Life: The fruit from the tree of life (Genesis 2:9-17) was the first symbol of the Holy Qurbana. Since human beings ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil against the will of God, the Almighty considered that they might also eat the fruit from the tree of life and live in sin forever, and hence the Lord drove Adam and Eve out from the garden (Genesis 3:22-24). After baptism, the baptized is given the Holy Qurbana. The hymn recited then is this:

The fruit that Adam did not taste in paradise
It is happily placed in your mouth today.

2. Offering of Abel: Human beings, who are created by God, are to offer the fruit of their toil to God as sacrifice. When the first brothers, Cain and Abel, made offerings to God, Abel offered the firstling of his flock as a perfect sacrifice (Genesis 4:4). It was a great gift in the context of his toil and wealth and it was a valuable offering. He had shown that he placed God higher than everything else; and God accepted his offering.

3. Offering made by Melchizedek: Melchizedek brought bread and wine when he welcomed Abraham, the 'Father of the Faithful' (Genesis 14:18-20). Melchizedek (meaning 'my king is just'), was the priest of God and the king of Salem (*salem* means 'peace'). There is no mention of his parents in the Holy Bible. The promise in Psalm 110, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek' (Psalm 110: 4) had been fulfilled in our Lord. It is discussed by Paul in the epistle to the Hebrews (7:1-10).

4. Lamb in a Thicket seen by Abraham: The most striking foreshadow of the sacrifice of our Lord was the sacrifice of Abraham when he offered his son Isaac (Genesis 22:1-17). When God commanded Abraham to offer his only son as a sacrifice, he was all willing to do so. Seeing the faith and obedience of Abraham, God arranged a lamb in a thicket for Abraham to offer as sacrifice. Let us remember that Lord Jesus, offered himself as sacrifice, in our place and for our sake.

5. Manna given to Israelites in the Desert: The 'Exodus' of Israelites to the land of Canaan under the leadership of Moses after a prolonged period of slavery in Egypt, is a golden chapter in the annals of the history of Israel. Israelites, after crossing the Red sea, continued their journey for forty years through the desert confronting natural disasters and enemies. When they reached the desert of Sin, between Elim and Sinai, the people became desperate with hunger and God rained manna from heaven for them. When they found manna scattered on the ground, the people were surprised, and Moses said, 'this is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.' Though the command of the God was only to collect the manna needed for each day some of them collected more manna and it decayed by the next morning. They were supplied

with enough manna each day. Jesus, who came down from heaven, is the real 'Manna' (John 6:32-33). Jesus said that those who eat his flesh and drink his blood, would gain eternal life and he would resurrect them on the last day (John 6:53-54).

6. Hallowed Bread eaten by David: While fleeing from his enemies, David (before he became king) reached Nob and met Ahimelech, the priest. He was very tired and asked Ahimelech for food. Ahimelech answered that he had no common bread with him but only hallowed bread which was reserved for priests (1 Samuel 21:1-6). During the period when the Israelites worshipped in tabernacles, God had commanded them to bake twelve loaves of bread (one each for each of the twelve tribes) and set them in two rows upon the sacred table (Leviticus 24:5-9). Jesus also referred Ahimelech giving the hallowed bread to David (Matthew 12:3-4).

7. Bread supplied to Elijah by Ravens: Elijah the Tishbite was a great prophet in Israel. When there was severe famine in the country, God arranged ravens to supply bread and meat to Elijah (1 Kings 17:2-6). The God who gave food to His people miraculously, gives us his flesh and blood through the Holy Qurbana.

8. Sacrifice at Mount Carmel: Jezebel, wife of King Ahab was highly influential in the administration. As Jezebel was a devotee of Baal, the worshippers of Yahweh were persecuted. Further, the authorities started murdering the prophets of Yahweh. There was drought in the country; and people believed that it was a punishment from Yahweh. Ahab and Jezebel declared that the pagan god 'Baal' was mightier than Yahweh. In order to prove the greatness of Yahweh before the people, Elijah arranged for a sacrifice on Mount Carmel. At the same time, the 450 prophets of Baal also offered sacrifice to Baal. God accepted the sacrifice of Elijah, and consumed it with fire. Yahweh saved the people from famine by providing enough rain (1 Kings 18:16-46).

9. Fire that purified the Tongue of Isaiah: It is said in the book of Isaiah that God intervened to purify the prophet. When Isaiah cried that he was a man with unclean lips, one of the seraphs flew towards him carrying a live coal taken with the hot tongs from the altar, and touched his lips with it. Thus his sins were effaced (Isaiah 6:1-7). Similarly, the Holy Qurbana is the fire that takes away our sins.

Thus, it can be said that several pointers to the Holy Qurbana are seen in the Old Testament. Though none of them contained the complete reality of the Holy Qurbana, all of them served as indicators of it, in many ways.

Hymn

Post Communion Hymn, Agnimayanmar...

Though the fiery ones fear to gaze-upon the Lord
You have seen Him-in Bread and Wine-on the Altar
If those clothed in lightning saw Him-they would be burned
Yet shameful dust stands unveiled when they consume Him.

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Evening of the Holy Thursday

Lord, who created Adam from dust, made water flow from rock, revealed the lamb on a tree, and was born from a Virgin, You took bread and wine in Your hands, blessed it, made it Your body and blood, and established it for the salvation of humankind. Lord, may they not be for our condemnation; we praise You for Your graces upon us. Amen.

Resolution

We learned about many instances in the Old Testament which point to the Holy Qurbana. We are now more convinced of the greatness of the Holy Qurbana. We shall participate in the Holy Qurbana with utmost devotion and consciousness of the presence of God.

Let Us Think

1. Give an example to show that all the important events in the life of Jesus Christ had been foretold in Old Testament.
2. What element in the Garden of Eden point to the Holy Qurbana?
3. Why is the offering of Abel considered as a symbol of the Holy Qurbana?
4. What does the Bible say about Melchizedek?
5. What is the meaning of the word 'Salem'?
6. Why is the sacrifice of Abraham regarded as a foreshadow of the sacrifice of Jesus Church?
7. What was the food God had given to Israelites in the desert? What was special about it?
8. What was background in which David was given the sacred bread?
9. Why is the bread supplied to Elijah by ravens regarded as symbol of the Holy Qurbana?
10. What are the pointers to and symbols of the Holy Qurbana in the Old Testament? Comment briefly on each of them.
11. Match the following:

Idea	Related person
1. Sacrifice on Mount Carmel	King David
2. Hallowed Bread	Abel
3. Hot Tong	Isaac
4. The Eternal Priest	Elijah
5. The Tree which Provided Lamb	Melchizedek
6. The Lamb Offered to God as Sacrifice	Isaiah

Activities

1. Make a study on the symbols of the Holy Qurbana with the aid of Holy Bible and other texts; and by interacting with learned people. Discuss the information collected, and note them down.
2. Participate in the Holy Qurbana regularly with devotion and by being aware of the presence of God.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Hebrews 1
Monday	Matthew 1	Hebrews 2
Tuesday	Luke 24	Isaiah 6
Wednesday	Genesis 2	2 Kings 17
Thursday	Genesis 4	1 Samuel 21
Friday	Genesis 14	1 Kings 18
Saturday	Genesis 22	*

Lesson 21

The 'Diptychs' in the Holy Qurbana

Learning Objectives: To understand the significance and meaning of the 'Diptychs' in the Holy Qurbana. To learn more about the persons, we remember and pray for, in the Diptychs.

Verse to be Memorized: 'Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith' (Hebrews 13:7).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the book of Holy Qurbana and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

We learned about the symbols and foreshadows of the Holy Qurbana in the previous lesson. We also studied that the Holy Qurbana is based on the Holy Bible. Another characteristic of the Holy Qurbana is that, it contains intercessory prayers. We pray not only for ourselves, but also for all. We should, as Christians, pray for others also. Today, let us learn about the intercessory prayers (the Diptychs) in the Holy Qurbana.

The Lesson

Intercession has an important place in the Holy Qurbana. They are intended for the well-being of the living and for peace of the departed. Mainly, there are five occasions in the Holy Qurbana for this. Of these, the first two are silent prayers and the other three are public prayers said during Diptychs, during the reading of litanies and also during singing the Kukilion. The prayers called 'Diptychs' consist of altogether eighteen mediation prayers. During each Diptych, the priest says appropriate mediation prayers first in silence and after the Diptychs, in public. The portion read by the altar assistant is called Diptychs. In Syriac it is called 'Tubden' because each of these six prayers starts with 'Tubden' meaning 'but again'. In the early Church, the six prayers were written on two plates which could have folded together called Diptychs and thus derived the term 'Diptychs.' Out of the six Diptychs, the first three prayers are for the living and the rest for the departed. Let us analyse each Diptych.

1. First Diptych: In this prayer, the rulers and leaders of the church are remembered. The heads of the Church like Mar Ignatius (Patriarch of Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch), Mar Baselios (Catholicos and Malankara Metropolitan of Malankara Orthodox Church), Patriarch of Jerusalem Mar Gregorios are remembered. Then the bishop of the respective dioceses and all the spiritual fathers are remembered. If the

Holy Qurbana is celebrated by a bishop, he is also remembered by citing his name. It is advisable to remember all the Fathers who are related to the Church on this occasion.

2. Second Diptych: The faithful who are participating in the Holy Qurbana, those who have requested for remembrance in the Holy Qurbana, and those who are sick or suffering are remembered in the second Diptych. Those who are celebrating birthday and wedding anniversary also are remembered in this Diptych. Therefore birthday/wedding anniversary prayers after the Holy Qurbana is unnecessary. All those who are in need and in poverty, those who are sufferings, the destitute, slaves, widows, and orphans and those who are helping the poor and the sick are being remembered by the priest in the open prayer. Thus, it becomes clear that the Holy Qurbana is offered for all.

3. Third Diptych: In the Diptych, prayers are offered for the protection of the Church in peace, and also for the rulers. In the early Church, as the Holy Qurbana was formulated in monasteries, the leaders of the monasteries are remembered. The faithful under the patronage of Christian rulers used to remember 'the faithful and truly Christian rulers, who have established and confirmed in the true faith'. Prayer is offered for the rulers of the land also. As the unity and harmony of the Church is of paramount importance, the prayer is intended for 'the whole Christian community, the clergy and the faithful people, that they may continue in virtue'.

4. Fourth Diptych: The departed souls are remembered from the fourth Diptych onwards. All the saints, both men and women, along with Virgin Mary are remembered in this. We remember the Prophets and the Apostles, the Preachers and the Evangelists, the Martyrs and the Confessors. Among them, we also remember St. John the Baptist, St. Stephen, St. Peter, St. Paul and our Father St. Thomas. The patron saint of the particular parish church also is remembered here.

5. Fifth Diptych: Our forefathers who laid the foundation for the faith of the Orthodox Church and protected the faith are remembered in the fifth Diptych. We also acknowledge our holy fathers who proclaimed the true faith in the first three Synods, who stood for the true faith in the Synod of Chalcedon, who led the Church thereafter by suffering persecutions, the ascetics and the Holy Fathers of the Church including the Malankara Orthodox Church (We shall learn about the holy fathers mentioned in the fifth Diptych in detail next year).

6. Sixth Diptych: In the sixth Diptych we remember all the faithful departed who kept the true faith and lived according to the commandments of God. Here we pray for the remission of their debts, forgiveness of their sins and their eternal life in heaven.

We need to take care of three things, while participating in the Holy Qurbana. (1) We should be fully attentive during these prayers and should not consider the occasion

of Diptychs as the time for rest. (2) We should entrust with the altar, the names of those who need our prayers including our faithful departed, so that they would be remembered in all the Diptych prayers during the Holy Qurbana. (3) We also should pray, along with the priest and the altar assistants, for those who are in need of our prayers.

Hymn

Pre Qurbana Kolo, Vishwasathale vangipoyore...

Make memory of the-faithful departed
Let us not forget those who have left us
Let us write their names-at the Lord's altar
That at all times the Lord will give them rest
Halleluiah-w-Halleluiah
May they worship You, their Resurrection

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Feast of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Naziansus

Lord, who established the companies of angels in heaven, bless and prepare the crown of the year, months, days, and hours according to our needs. May You establish peace on earth and unity in the Church, and grant us joyful months and blessed years. Amen.

Resolution

We shall pray for those who are being remembered in the Diptychs, during the Holy Qurbana.

Let Us Think

1. What is the meaning of the word 'Tubden' (Diptychs)?
2. How many Intercessory prayers are there in the Diptychs?
3. Who are the Church Fathers remembered in the Diptychs?
7. Explain how the intercessory prayers have an important place in the Holy Qurbana.
8. Mention the occasions of intercessory prayers in the Holy Qurbana?

Activities

1. Prepare a chart showing the names of Holy Fathers who are remembered in the Diptychs. See the model given below.

Serial No.	Diptychs	The remembered
1	First Diptychs	The Church Leaders
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

2. Pray specially for the Church, for the sick and for the departed and the living Church Fathers.
3. Visit the sick and the suffering with elders and pray for them.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Hebrews 3
Monday	Hebrews 4	Hebrews 5
Tuesday	Hebrews 6	Hebrews 7
Wednesday	Hebrews 8	Hebrews 9
Thursday	Hebrews 10	Hebrews 11
Friday	Hebrews 12	Hebrews 13
Saturday	James 1, 2	*

UNIT 6

ELEMENTS OF FAITH

Lesson 22

The Holy Baptism

Learning Objectives: To understand the procedures of the Service of Holy Baptism and their true meaning. To appreciate the importance of Holy Baptism.

Verse to be Memorized: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the Service Book of Holy Baptism, the Book of Common Prayer and the Service Book of the Holy Qurbana.

Introduction

Holy Baptism is the first sacrament we receive in the Church. We receive Holy Mooron (Holy Chrism) and the Holy Qurbana along with Baptism. Here, we are going to learn the details about the service of Holy Baptism.

The Lesson

Baptism is administered for leading a life rooted in Christ. Prayers of Baptism are said, and the baptizand is washed in the consecrated water, in the name of the Holy Trinity. The Baptizand is also anointed with the Holy Chrism. The sacrament is based on the command of our Lord (Matthew 28:19). Jesus said, “No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (John 3:5). According to St. Paul, one who is baptized shares in the death of our Lord and is buried with him, and will be raised up from the dead with him (Romans 6:4).

Following are the graces we receive in baptism:

- 1. Rebirth:** The child who is born from the parents biologically, is born again by water and spirit through the womb of baptismal font, as the child of God.
- 2. Adoption:** The one who is baptized is becomes the son/daughter of God by adoption. He/she has the freedom to say ‘Abba! Father!’ (Romans 8:15).
- 3. Spiritual Gift:** The Mooron (Holy Chrism) administered after baptism transforms the baptizand to become the temple of the Holy Spirit. He/she ‘puts on’ the Holy Spirit.

4. Redemption from Sin: Anyone born into this world inherits the ‘Adamite Sin.’ Through baptism, he/she is redeemed from Satan and sin. “If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

5. Eternal Life: The person who receives baptism acquires the graces of the Holy Spirit by being anointed with Holy Mooron, and partakes in the Body and blood of the Lord through the Holy Qurbana. He is enabled to enter eternal life promised by the Lord (John 6:56-58), being part of the Body of Christ, i.e. the Holy Church.

The Service of Baptism

Infants born to Christian parents, and adults who join the Church from other religions, are baptized in the Church.

The procedure of the Service of Baptism is as follows:

1. Preparation for Baptism: The parents and the Godfather of the infant to be baptized, needs to undertake fasting and prayer, and receive the Holy Qurbana after confession. If the person to be baptized is an adult, he should be prepared for Baptism by undertaking fasting and prayers and receive the Holy Qurbana after Baptism and Holy Confession.

2. Dedication: The infant who is a gift of the God is dedicated in the church, and this is a ritual which existed in the Jewish community. The idea of dedication is incorporated in the initial prayers of baptism service itself.

3. Christening: According to tradition, the baptizand is given a Christian name.

4. Exorcism: Prayers to redeem the baptized from the bondage of Satan and sin are incorporated in the Baptism service.

5. Proclamation of Faith: The faith in Jesus Christ is publicly declared by the person who is receiving baptism (in the case of adults) or the mediator (in the case of infants). After that, the congregation of the faithful repeats Nicean Creed (A Godfather/mother is necessary even in the case of adults).

6. Act of ‘sealing’: The baptizand is sealed three times on the forehead in the Name of the Holy Trinity; first without oil, second with the blessed oil, and third with the Holy Chrism.

7. Washing with the Consecrated Water: Water is poured into the baptismal font, and after prayers and the blessing of water, Holy Mooron is poured into it. Then the baptizand is washed or sprinkled with the consecrated water, which symbolizes the water of river Jordan, in which Jesus was baptized.

8. Anointing with Mooron: After getting washed in or sprinkled with the consecrated water the baptizand is sealed and anointed with the Holy Mooron. The whole body is anointed in the case of a child.

9. The Administration of the Holy Qurbana: In the Orthodox tradition, the baptized person, (be it an adult or an infant, receives the Holy Qurbana immediately. The words of our Lord, “Abide in me as I abide in you” (John 15:4) could be recalled here.

10. Benediction and Dismissal: The service is concluded by giving advice about the grooming of the baptized person. The priest prescribes the duties of the Godfather/ mother as well. The baptized person becomes part of the Church, and the brother/ sister of Jesus Christ.

Hymn

Post Gospel Hymn, Feast of Denaha

Behold,-John mixes the water for baptism
And Christ,-is baptised in it, sanctifying it
As He ascends-out of the water
Heaven and earth-give honour to Him
The sun and moon worship Him; the clouds give glory
To Him-who sanctified the waters that the world
Halleluiah-may be purified

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on Feast of Denaho

O Lord, through Your baptism, You gave us the sacrament of baptism that washes away all the filth of sin from us; by Your grace, purify us from our sins. May we not think, speak, or act in any way that is inappropriate to the baptism we have received. Barekmor.

Resolution

We understand that through Baptism we are born again in Christ and incorporated into the Body of Christ. We are clothed with the Holy Spirit and are accepted as the children of God by adoption. We recall the vows taken at Baptism.

Let Us Think

1. What did our Lord tell Nicodemus regarding baptism?
2. What are the graces we receive in baptism?
3. How does one gain ‘eternal life’ through baptism?
4. What is real meaning of ‘being born again?’

Activities

1. Learn the hymn that is sung at the time of dedication of the infant.
2. Find out the Bible passages that are mentioned during the Service of Baptism.
3. Prepare a report after participating in a Baptism Service.
4. Collect information like the name of the priest who conducted your baptism, name of your Godfather/mother, name of the church where it was conducted and the date of baptism.
5. Find out the prayers that are to be said at dawn and dusk on the *feast* of Epiphany from the book of common worship and try to learn them by heart.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Jeremiah 1
Monday	Matthew 28	Romans 6
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 3	Romans 8
Wednesday	2 Corinthians 5	John 6
Thursday	John 15	Luke 3:7-22
Friday	Matthew 3:13-17	Mark 1:9-11
Saturday	John 1:29-34	*

Lesson 23

Baptism of Infants

Learning Objectives: To understand and appreciate that the Baptism of infants is conducted as enjoined in the scriptures. To understand that Baptism is based on the Bible. To find out the early Church tradition of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Verse to be Memorized: “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs” (Mark 10: 14).

Teaching Aids: A picture showing mothers with infants before Jesus, the picture of the baptism of an infant, and the Holy Bible.

Introduction

Have you ever attended the Service of baptism of infants? What was the age of the infant who was baptized? Do you have any Christian friends (belonging to Protestant Churches and other church groups) who is not baptized? If so, what may be the reason for it? They consider it good to get baptized after attaining adulthood. The objective of the present lesson is to understand that baptism of the infants is conducted in accordance with the scriptures.

The Lesson

1. Baptism of Infants-Tradition of the Early Church: Baptism of infants has been a practice which existed in the Church from very early days. In the descriptions relating to the acceptance of Christ by adults, it is clearly stated that their ‘families’ also were baptized (Acts 16:15, 16:33, 1 Corinthians 1:16). It can be concluded that infants also were baptized, along with the other members of the family (had the infants been exempted, it would have been mentioned). Who could forbid children from accepting Jesus Christ who had said, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these the kingdom of God belongs”. Instances of the baptism of infants are also seen in the documents of the early Church, like ‘The Teaching of the Apostles’ (Third Century) and ‘Apostolic Traditions’ (Fourth Century).

2. Infants are Blessed to Receive Faith and Grace of the Holy Spirit: The presumption that infants are too young to receive faith is based on the misconception that ‘faith’ is a kind of logical awareness. But the Holy Bible defines faith as, ‘Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen’ (Hebrews 11:1). It is observed that infants are strong in things hoped for and more resolute in things unseen. For example, children regard their parents as most valuable in the world. Similarly, for a child of God, the Lord is the most precious thing. The blessing of God enables the child to have faith, as guaranteed by the Holy Bible, ‘For by grace you

have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God' (Ephesians 2:8).

3. Proof for the Baptism of Infants in the Holy Bible:

1. Infants called as 'saints': Those who had received baptism are qualified as 'saints' in the New Testament. Since infants are also called similarly it can be considered that infants were also given baptism. '...but as it is, they are holy' (1 Corinthians 7:14).

2. Promise of the Holy Spirit to Siblings: The baptized receives anointment of the Holy Spirit. St. Peter declared that, God calls children to attain Holy Spirit: 'For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him' (Acts 2:39). The power of God which can fill the infant with Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, acts in baptism too. It is the attainment of Holy Spirit, through baptism, and the awareness about the love of God, that enabled St. John to say that, '...I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven on account of his name.... I write to you, children, because you know the Father' (1 John 2:12-14).

Hymn

Concluding Hymn, Feast of Denaho from Qurbana kramam)

The person who willingly sins again
After baptism is indeed foolish
Such a person resembles a serpent
Which sheds its skin yet the skin grows again
Even though he has become like a child
He has taken on again his former body
Put off the old man full of corruption
And put on the new in our Lord's likeness

Let Us Pray

Lord, enable us to understand that baptism of infants is in accordance with the scriptures and help us not to deviate from true faith. Amen.

Resolution

We learned that the baptism of infants is done in accordance with the Holy Bible. We shall keep the true faith of the Church.

Let Us Think

1. What are the two early Christian documents in which the baptism of infants is mentioned?
2. '...Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not...' Locate these words of Jesus in the New Testament.
3. Why is the baptism of infants regarded as baptism in faith?

Activities

1. Find out an instance in the Bible when baby is seen filled with the Holy Spirit while being in the mother's womb.
2. Identify three occasions in the New Testament where baptized people are qualified as "saints."
3. '...the babe leaped in my womb for joy' (Luke 1:44). Who was the baby? What was the reason for joy?
4. Find out the basis for "baptism of infants" from the Holy Bible.
5. Read the Service Book of the Holy Baptism, and learn about the role of the mediator/God-father.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Mark 10:13-16
Monday	Acts 16	1 Corinthians 1
Tuesday	Hebrews 11	Matthew 19:3-15
Wednesday	Luke 18:5-17	Matthew 18:2-31
Thursday	1 Corinthians 14	1 Corinthians 7
Friday	Acts 2	Luke 1:1-5
Saturday	1 John 2	*

Lesson 24

Communion with the Faithful Departed

Learning Objectives: To understand that the departed also are alive in the abode of God. It is possible to have communion with them through prayer. Also, to seek the intercession of the departed saints.

Verse to be Memorized: Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11: 25-26).

Teaching Aids: Pictures of saints, picture of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ and of the ‘Rich Man and Lazarus’.

Introduction

We do pray at the burial places of our departed ones. It is also our practice to visit the tombs of the saints and seek in their intercessory prayers. Do you understand the significance of this? Let us study why we should pray for the departed and that they in turn pray for us, on the basis of the Holy Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers.

The Lesson

The word ‘departed’ actually means those who move from one place or one state of existence to another. So, it is better to say ‘departed’ instead of ‘dead’.

Status of the Departed

1. The departed are alive and; active and continue in their faith in Christ. Jesus said to her (Martha), “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11: 25-26).
2. They are nearer Christ. St. Paul wrote, ‘I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better’ (Philippians 1:23).
3. The departed can try to please Christ. St. Paul also wrote, ‘So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him’ (2 Corinthians 5:9).
4. They worship continuously. ‘For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them’ (Revelation 7:15).
5. They continue to enjoy the love of God. St. Paul wrote, ‘For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord’ (Romans 8:38-39).

6. They could get transformed, on listening to the Gospel of Christ. 'For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does' (1 Peter 4:6).

Sleep, Rest and Judgment of the Departed

While one is sleeping, though the external senses are inactive, the internal organs are active. The same may be said about the departed also. They have retired from worldly activities and hence they are considered sleeping and taking rest. However, they are active in the spiritual state and they are capable to wax or wane. Hence, at the time of judgment, the Lord considers all the activities undertaken by them till then. All except those who have confessed and got relieved of their sins will be punished.

Communion between the Departed and the Living

Communication between the departed and the living is not possible by physical means. But, as both the groups are part of the one body of Christ and active, though in two different states, it is possible to have communion in Christ in worship and prayers.

1. Jesus Christ is the Sole Mediator between the God and Humans: Jesus is the only mediator between God, the Father and the world. 'There is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind; Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all' (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Here it is said that Jesus Christ is the mediator. The New Testament repeatedly says that humans and God get reconciled through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13-18).

2. Jesus Christ Himself Entrusted Us to Have Refuge in the Sole Mediator- Jesus Christ: When the faithful pray for each other, and the priests and the saints pray for others it is the mediatory task entrusted by Jesus Christ that is being fulfilled. The mediator's task is to submit the prayers before Jesus. It is Jesus who takes the prayers to God, the Father.

3. Aspects of Mediation:

1. Mutual Prayer.: 'Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete' (John 16:24). 'Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed' (James 5:16).

2. Priestly Meditation: 'Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord' (James 5:14). 'So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20). '...The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective' (James 5:16)

4. Because the Departed Righteous Ones are Alive in Christ, We Continue

to Pray: The saintly people do pray for others during their life on earth. Though they departed from their life they are alive. ‘Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die...”’ (John 11: 25-26). Accordingly saintly people are alive and they do pray for the world. They are worshipping God relentlessly (Revelation 7:13-15). The Holy Scripture remind us that, ‘...we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...’ (Hebrews 12:1) and that while grouping together for worship we are closed to ‘...the spirits of just men made perfect...’ (Hebrews 12:23)

Hymn

Fraction Hymn, Sunday of the Faithful Departed, Qurbana kramam, Nin dasanmar...

O Lord, give rest to Your servants among the just
In that kingdom, which has no end among the saints
Glory to You who raise the dead up from their graves
And clothe them with glory at the resurrection.

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Sunday of the Faithful Departed

O God, grant good remembrance to the departed. When You appear in glory, may they enter into the heavenly bridal chamber. O Merciful One, before You no one is free from guilt; therefore, do not judge Your servants without mercy. Remember the body and blood which they have partaken of You and grant them absolution on the Last Day. Barekmor.

Resolution

We understood that the departed are alive in the presence of God. So, we will pray for the departed as they will pray for us too.

Let Us Think

1. It is correct to say ‘departed’ rather than ‘dead’. Why?
2. Identify a few references in the Holy Bible regarding the status of the departed?
3. Why is it that the departed are said to have attained the state of ‘sleep’ and are in rest?
4. What is the nature of the communion that the living can have with the departed?

Activities

1. Discuss the difference between the mediation made by humans and that made by Jesus Christ.

2. Find out the occasions where the saints are mentioned during the Holy Qurbana and worship services.
3. Try to understand the meaning of the hymns related to saints.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	John 112
Monday	Philippians 1	Corinthians 5
Tuesday	Revelation 7:9-17	Romans 8
Wednesday	1 Peter 4	1 Timothy 2
Thursday	James 5	John 16
Friday	Hebrews 12:1	2 Kings 13:20-21
Saturday	Samuel 28:11-20	*

UNIT 7

ACQUAINTANCE WITH GREAT PERSONALITIES

Lesson 25

St. Gregorios of Nazianzus

Learning Objectives: To learn about the saintly life and contributions of St. Gregorios of Nazianzus, one among the three Cappadocian Fathers, and to follow their virtues in our lives.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world’ (James 1:27).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the book of Holy Qurbana, the Book of Common Prayer, Encyclopedia of the Orthodox Church and *the Philokalia*.

Introduction

You have learned about two of the Cappadocian Fathers in lower classes (St. Basil the Great and his younger brother St. Gregory of Nyssa). St. Gregory of Nazianzus was the friend of these two Holy Fathers and the third among the Cappadocian Fathers. He was also born in Cappadocia (Modern Turkey). The three Fathers were contemporaries and were close to each other. They were great scholars who fought against heresies. We are going to learn about the third among the Cappadocian Fathers, St. Gregory of Nazianzus in the present lesson.

The Lesson

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God’ (John 1:1-2). St. John the Evangelist, who taught this truth for the first time was called a ‘theologian’ by the Eastern Churches. Similarly, the Eastern Orthodox Churches consider St. Gregory of Nazianzus also as a great theologian. It was his contribution towards the study of Trinity, especially his teaching regarding the unity of Godhead and humanity in Jesus Christ are considered very important. In order to have an understanding of the theological contributions of the Cappadocian Fathers one has to know about St. Gregory of Nazianzus also. His theological treatises, letters, poems and orations shed light on his holiness and theological acumen.

Birth and Early Life

Gregory was born to wealthy parents in Arianzus, near Nazianzus, in AD 330. His mother who was an ardent believer converted his father to Christianity. Later, he was ordained as bishop of Nazianzus in AD 372. In the epistle to Timothy, St. Paul clarifies that the bishop must be husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:1-2). In the early centuries it was not necessary for the bishops to remain unmarried. Gregory, after his primary education went to Alexandria and later to Athens for higher studies. On the way to Athens his ship encountered a violent storm, and the terrified Gregory prayed to Christ that if He would deliver him from the storm, he would dedicate his life to His service. His prayer was answered. Later, he dedicated himself for the service of the Church. He became proficient in rhetoric and philosophy.

It was in Athens that he got acquainted with Basil, and their friendship lasted throughout life. Julian, who became Emperor later, was also their fellow student. In AD 361 Gregory returned to Nazianzus and was ordained a priest by his father. Though his father wanted him to be active in parish ministry, young Gregory wished to lead a solitary life. Subsequently Gregory joined the monastery of St. Basil. The opposition of Emperor Julian to Christianity provoked Gregory to compose the book, 'Invectives Against Julian', in which he asserts that Christianity will overcome unjust rulers like Julian through love and patience. It was in this context, that he explained the theory of 'Theosis' which became a major element in Orthodox spirituality.

He was ordained Bishop of Sasima in AD 372 by St. Basil. Though Gregory was unwilling, he was lovingly compelled by his father and St. Basil to accept the bishopric. He presided over the Council of Constantinople (AD 381) partly and played a pivotal role in formulating the third paragraph of the Creed. He served also as the bishop of Constantinople for sometime. He, being a defender of Orthodox faith, was subjected to physical torture by the heretics. When he found it difficult to carry out his duties as bishop of Constantinople, he returned to Sasima and later retired from active service in AD 383. After enjoying six peaceful years in retirement, he passed away on January 25 in AD 390. His teachings about the Holy Trinity, like the procession of the Holy Spirit, and eternity are very significant. In consideration of his contributions to theology, the Synod of Chalcedon held in AD 451 designated him 'Theologos' or theologian.

Hymn

Concluding Hymn, Feast of St. Basil and St. Gregory Naziansus, Qurbana kramam

The saints were saved by fleeing from wrong doing
The light of their way of life removed the darkness
Saint Basil the Great of Cappadocia and
Gregory the Theologian of Nazianzus
You were two bright and shining stars
Who removed darkness in the world
Pray to God to show us mercy.

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Feast of St. Basil and St. Gregory Naziansus

O Lord, by the prayers of St. Basil and St. Gregory and all Fathers of the Church, may we receive remission of sins. Establish us in the right counsel of those teachers who held the true faith. Like them, make us worthy to glorify Your Name and gladden You. May we live according to the faith and laws confirmed at Nicaea, Constantinople, and Ephesus, and may we receive a good end according to Your will. Amen.

Resolution

We learned about Gregory of Nazianzus who was a pillar of faith in the early Church. We shall follow the holy life of the Church Fathers in our life.

To Reflect

1. Who are the Cappadocian Fathers?
2. Give a brief description of the birth and childhood of Gregory of Nazianzus.
3. Why was Gregory reluctant to enter parish ministry?
4. Assess the contribution of Gregory to the Monastic movement.
5. Is it true that married clergy were consecrated as bishops in the early Church?
6. Why was Gregory acclaimed as 'Theologos' (Theologian)?
7. Write a note on the theological contributions of Gregory of Nazianzus.

Activities

1. Read the biography of St. Gregory of Nazianzus. Collect information and note down them.
2. Discuss the ascetic life and theological contributions of the Cappadocian Fathers in your class. A common discussion incorporating the students of higher classes may also be conducted, under the guidance of the teacher.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Corinthians 1
Monday	1 Corinthians 2, 3	1 Corinthians 4, 5
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 6	1 Corinthians 7
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 8	1 Corinthians 9, 10
Thursday	1 Corinthians 11, 12	1 Corinthians 13
Friday	1 Corinthians 14	1 Corinthians 15
Saturday	1 Corinthians 16	*

Lesson 26

Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius I (Dionysius II) (The Founder of the Old Seminary)

Learning Objectives: To understand the great qualities of Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius I who gave efficient leadership to the Malankara Orthodox Church and to appreciate his great contributions to the Church.

Verse to be Memorized: 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us' (Hebrews 12:1).

Teaching Aids: Encyclopedia of the Malankara Church, picture of Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius I, the books 'Fathers in Malankara Church' (*Malankarasabha Pithakkanmar*) by Dr. Samuel Chandanappally and the 'Departed Priest Father' (*Kalam Cheytha Achan*) by Fr. P. M. Joseph, the Holy Bible, the book of Holy Qurbana and the Book of common prayer.

Introduction

Malankara Orthodox Church have two seminaries; the Old Seminary (Orthodox Theological Seminary) at Kottayam and the St. Thomas Orthodox Theological Seminary at Nagpur. The Old Seminary was established by Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius I, about whom we are going to learn today.

The Lesson

There are some places in Kerala which have a concentration of Nasrani Christian population. Kunnankulam is one among them. Joseph Mar Dionysius was born in the Pulikkottil family in Kunnankulam on November 25, 1740. His parents were Chummar and Aleyamma and his Christian name was Ittoop (Joseph). Even though his native parish was Arthat, he maintained close relation with the vicar and the church in Pazhanji which was the parish of his mother. He learned the Syriac language, arithmetic and *Vasthusastra* (Architecture) from there and led a deep spiritual life. In due course he was ordained as deacon and later as priest. In the meantime, he started a Malpan school at the Chiralayam church in Kunnankulam and started to teach candidates for priesthood. He came to be known as 'Ittoop Malpan.'

The invasion of Tippu Sultan of Mysore in Kerala was a calamity which occurred during the period. The Mysore army forcefully converted native people to Islam and murdered many Hindus and Christians. Many churches and seminaries which belonged to Christians were burnt. The faithful were scattered to various places and it was Ittoop Malpan who encouraged the Malankara Orthodox Christians to remain firm in their faith. The proficiency the Malpan had in *Vasthusastra*, made it possible

for the renovation of the destroyed churches, including the church at Arthat which was gutted by fire.

Great and Historical Contribution of Joseph Mar Dionysius I

Father Joseph, who excelled as Malpan, was professed as Ramban (Monk Priest) in 1808. During this period the 'Arthat Padiyola' and 'Kandanad Padiyola' were officially issued by the St. Thomas Christians. 'Padiyola' means an official and agreed document on faith and practices. In addition to the Roman Catholic missionaries, Protestant missionaries were also working in Kerala. They started translating the Holy Bible and order of worship into Malayalam. The need for systematic training and formation of candidates to priesthood was deeply felt at this time. Ittoop Ramban gave timely leadership in this ecclesiastical urgency. He, together with Philipose Ramban of Kayamkulam, initiated the translation the Gospels from Syriac to Malayalam. They were printed at the Courier Press in Bombay.

In the meantime, the Ramban commenced efforts to establish a 'Study House' (*Padithaveedu*) and his endeavours got the support of the British resident Colonel Munroe and the Queen of Travancore. Though there was a bishop for the Malankara Church at that time it was Joseph Ramban who guided the work of the *Padithaveedu*. It seems he had a prophetic vision about theological education of the Malankara Church. He was particular that the education and skills of the priests in the Malankara Church should be high and on par with those of other Churches in which modern system of education had been introduced. He felt the need of imparting education to common people also. Christians were not appointed in government jobs in those days. He helped many educated people to enter government jobs. It was his efforts that led to the declaration of Sunday as a public holiday.

Consecration as Bishop

While undertaking all these developmental works, he was a Ramban. However, during the establishment of *Padithaveedu*, it became necessary for him to be a bishop in order to obtain due recognition and support from the government. Though, he preferred to remain a monk, he agreed to become a bishop solely for the benefit of the Church. He was ordained as bishop by the bishop of Thozhiyoor Independent Church, Geevarghese Mar Philexenos (Kidangan) on March 21, 1815 with the title Joseph Mar Dionysius I. The construction of the seminary which started in 1813 was completed by March 1815, and soon it started functioning. The *Nalukettu* (the style of constructing buildings on all four sides with a courtyard at the centre) of the seminary, which completed 200 years in 2015 is a testimony to the *Vasthusastra* expertise of the Mar Dionysius. Though Rev. Thomas Norton, an English Protestant missionary was appointed as teacher in the seminary, the bishop Dionysius introduced a curriculum which included studies in Syriac, Orthodox Theology, prayer, fasting, and solitude.

But his reign as Metropolitan was very brief; he departed on November 24, 1816 after a brief period of nine months as the Primate of Malankara Church. He was entombed in the chapel in the Orthodox Theological Seminary (Old Seminary), Kottayam which was established by him. The practice of ordaining members of Pakalomattom family only as metropolitans also came to an end with his consecration as metropolitan. The Kottayam Orthodox Seminary and the Malankara Metropolitans who reigned from there, became renowned in Malankara Church history. The establishment of the Old Seminary was a historic and significant event in the Church, for several reasons. Since the title 'Dionysius' was already given to the Marthoma VI, Joseph Ramban was considered as Dionysius II. Further, he was the first bishop from the Pulikkottil family. Acknowledging his great contributions the Metropolitan was given the title as '*Sabha Jyothis*' ('The light of the Church') on October 31, 1991.

Hymn

Fraction Hymn on the Sunday of the Departed Priests, Bovootho of Mar Jacob

Son of God, give rest to Your priests among the just
In that kingdom, which has no end among the saints.
Glory to You who raise the dead up from their graves
And clothe them with glory at the resurrection.

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Sunday of the Departed Priests

Lord, may all the priests who departed from this world rejoice in the bosom of Abraham and with the glorious priest, Aaron. On the last day, may the priests who served You bring the talents they have received from You along with the profit

Resolution

Joseph Mar Dionysius rendered great services to the Church. We shall work for the progress of Church and society at large.

Let Us Think

1. What made priest Ittoop to come to be designated as 'Malpan'?
2. Briefly state the devastation caused by Tippu's invasion.
3. Identify the important Ordinances or Malankara Church Edicts issued during the time of Ittoop Ramban?
4. What were the positive effects of the translation of the Holy Bible and liturgical texts into the mother tongue? What are the major 'titles' of Pulikkottil Mar Dionysius I?
5. Which do you think was the greatest contribution of Mar Dionysius I to the Malankara Church? Describe the great services rendered by the Metropolitan Mar Dionysius I to the Church and the society.

6. Who are the other persons who helped the Metropolitan in the translation of the Bible? Find out through additional reading.
7. Explain the need and significance of systematic theological education for candidates for priesthood.

Activities

1. Prepare a brief project on the theme 'Contributions of Mar Dionysus II to the well being and progress of the Malankara Church'.
2. Collect the pictures of the Metropolitan and the Orthodox Theological Seminary established by him.
3. Note down the major events and the related dates with the title 'Key events in the life of Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysious I'.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Timothy 1:1-11
Monday	1 Timothy 1:12-20	1 Timothy 2
Tuesday	1 Timothy 3	1 Timothy 4
Wednesday	1 Timothy 5:1-16	1 Timothy 5:17-25
Thursday	1 Timothy 6:1-10	1 Timothy 6:11-22
Friday	1 Timothy 1:1-18	2 Timothy 2:1-13
Saturday	1 Timothy 2:14-26	*

Lesson 27

Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius II (Dionysius V)

Learning Objectives: To learn about the important Church Fathers who worked tirelessly for the progress of the Church. To try to emulate the qualities of their life.

Verse to be Memorized: For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever (Hebrews 7:28).

Teaching Aids: Encyclopedia of Malankara Church, 'Fathers in Malankara Church' (*Malankarasabha Pithakkanmar*) by Dr. Samuel Chandanappally, Dionysius I Biography by Fr. Dr. Joseph Cheeran.

Introduction

After Pulikkottil Mar Dionysius II (Joseph Mar Dionysius I) we are going to learn about Dionysius V. But, it is necessary to learn the history between the reign of the two Metropolitans also. We learned that Pulikkottil I was designated as Dionysius II. After him two more bishops adorned the throne of the Church as Malankara metropolitans, namely Punnathra Mar Dionysius III (1817-1825) and Cheppad Mar Dionysius IV (1825-1855). Here we are going to study about the bishop who became the Malankara metropolitan after them. Since he was the second bishop from the Pulikkottil family and the fifth among the Dionysius series he was designated as Pulikkottil II as well as Dionysius V. As the Church had only one Metropolitan at that time, his life and work had great influence on the Church.

The Lesson

He was the son of Tharu Kurian who was the son of the younger brother of Pulikkottil I. He was also christened as Joseph and as he was brought up in a spiritual atmosphere; only it was natural that he was attracted towards priesthood. The parish members of Arthat and Kunnankulam churches also encouraged him. He was ordained deacon by Cheppad Mar Dionysius at Kothamangalam church on October 6, 1846, and on August 18, 1853, he was ordained a priest by Metropolitan Yuyakim Mar Kurilos at Challiserry Church. During the same period, Palakunnath Mathews Mar Athanasios who led the Protestant reform movement in Malankara was ordained as bishop by the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch.

He argued that because he was ordained by the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, he was eligible for royal recognition. Hence in order to counter the claim, Pulikkottil II also travelled up to Ameer suffering a lot of hardship to get ordained by the Patriarch of Antioch. He and his fellow traveller Fr. Mattummal Geevarghese were infected

with a serious illness and Fr. Geevarghese died there. Fr. Joseph was ordained as Joseph Mar Dionysius by the Syrian Patriarch Yacob II.

When Pulikkottil II returned after being ordained as bishop, another metropolitan was sitting on the throne of the Malankara Church. That was Mathews Mar Athanasius ordained by Patriarch of Antioch. He tried to adopt Protestant faith leaving the age-old faith and traditions of the Malankara Church. However, Pulikkottil Dionysius II stood firmly against any deviation from the Orthodox Faith. So he reversed the changes made by the Protestant reformers in Liturgical Books. In the meanwhile, the Church petitioned the local king to declare Pulikkottil Mar Dionysius II as the legitimate Metropolitan of Malankara. Finally, the judgment of the Royal Court (1889), which recognized Pulikkottil Mar Dionysius II as the legitimate Malankara Metropolitan. However, it led to the formation of another Church in Malankara called the 'Marthoma Church.'

The Synod of Mulanthuruthy-1876

The Synod in Mulanthuruthy in the year 1876 was an important event during the reign of Pulikkottil II. Patriarch Peter III came from Antioch and unlawfully convened the Malankara Synod. He wanted to establish spiritual as well as administrative supremacy over the Malankara Church. The Metropolitan's deep faith in God and ardent prayers helped him overcome the crisis without causing much tension. The Malankara Church was divided into seven dioceses and six new bishops were ordained by Patriarch. Pulikkottil Metropolitan was neither allowed to get involved in these nor did he participate on his own. However, once the Patriarch left, all the newly ordained bishops accepted the leadership of the Malankara Metropolitan Mar Dionysius V and accepted him as the Primate of the Church. St. Geevarghese Mar Gregorios of Parumala was one among the six bishops ordained by the Syrian Patriarch.

In one way the Synod of Mulanthuruthy was beneficial to the development of the Church. It was this Synod that paved way for developing a democratic system in the administration of the Church like the formation of institutions like Malankara Syrian Christian Association, Managing Committee, Priest Trustee, and Lay Trustee. The seven dioceses formed were Kandanad, Kochi, Angamaly, Kottayam, Niranam, Thumpamon and Kollam. The initiatives and reforms effected by the Metropolitan in the Church during the 44 years of reign, that is from 1865 to 1909, helped the Church to progress tremendously. The Parumala Seminary was established, and the Mar Gregorios of Parumala had his head quarters there. The activities of Pulikkottil II extended beyond the limits of the Malankara Church. The establishment of more than 250 schools helped the renaissance of the downtrodden all over Kerala through education. The printing presses, journalistic initiatives, and publication of several books contributed immensely to the cultural progress of Kerala. The activities like Malayali Memorial, Malankara People's Movement (*Malankara Mahajanasabha*) helped in the entry of people other than Brahmins into government jobs.

Spiritual movements like Sunday School, Students' Movement, and Evangelical Society also started during the period of this Metropolitan. Missionary works outside the Church, like Brahmavar-Goa Mission, were initiated by him. A priest from Roman Catholic Church was ordained as bishop as Alvaris Mar Yulios, and a priest from Presbyterian Church too was ordained and designated as Rinivilati Mar Timothios, and posted to Goa and America respectively. Towards the end of his life, the Metropolitan appointed St. Geevarghese Mar Dionysius Vattasseril as his successor and transferred the responsibilities of the Church to him. He left the world on July 12, 1909 and was entombed at the northern side of the Old Seminary Chapel. The Pulikkottil II Metropolitan guided the Church during the emergence of Protestant reformists; and the efforts of Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch for establishing supremacy in Malankara. The fruits of the contributions of the Metropolitan, who was known for deep faith in God, acumen and wisdom, farsightedness, hard work, humanness, keenness in evangelism, and social renaissance are still visible in the body of the Malankara Orthodox Church.

Hymn

Fraction Hymn on the Sunday of the Departed Priests, Bovootho of Mar Jacob

Christ, the Bridegroom, call Your servants from destruction
And awaken all your priests from within the tombs
Because they did not take pleasure in passing joys
Reward them for the torments they bore for your love.

Let Us Pray

Special Prayer on the Sunday of the Departed Priests

O Heavenly King, may Your mercy make the priests who served You dwell among the firstborn in heaven. As You promised, make them rejoice in the bridal chamber with You, and through their prayers, have mercy upon us. Amen.

Resolution

We learned about the life and contributions of Joseph Mar Dionysius Pulikkottil II to the Church and society. We hold his memory high and shall work for the development of the Church.

Let Us Think

1. How was Dionysius II related to Pulikkottil Dionysius I? What are the 'titles' of Pulikkottil Joseph II?
2. Who were the Metropolitans who sat on the throne of Malankara Church between the Pulikkottil I and Pulikkottil II?
3. Why did Fr. Joseph approach the Patriarch of Antioch for getting ordained as bishop?

4. Explain the background of the formation of the 'Mar Thoma Church.'
5. What were the important decisions at the Mulanthuruthy synod? Evaluate the merits and demerits of the Council at Mulanthuruthy.
6. What was the circumstance that led the Metropolitan to get ordained in Antioch? How did that influence the history of the Church? Discuss in groups.
7. How do you evaluate the contributions of the Metropolitan Pulikkottil II in the development of Parumala?
8. How do you evaluate the contributions of the Metropolitan to the society as a whole?

Activities

1. Note down the contributions of Metropolitan Pulikkottil Joseph II.
2. Visit the tombs of this Church Father and other Church Fathers and pray.

Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Romans 1, 2
Monday	Romans 3	Romans 4
Tuesday	Romans 5	Romans 6
Wednesday	Romans 7	Romans 8
Thursday	Romans 9	Romans 10
Friday	Romans 11	Romans 12
Saturday	Romans 13	*

UNIT 8

GOOD HABITS

Lesson 28

Civic Responsibilities

Learning Objectives: To understand that we have a responsibility to the whole humanity and not only to our own nation and society in which we live. Also to help students to live by serving the society as a responsible citizen.

Verse to be Memorized: 'Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good (1 Peter 2:1-3).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible and the Service Book of the Common Prayer.

Introduction

We are living in a society. It is the society that has brought us up. We have a responsibility to our family, church, society and to the whole world. We need to check whether we carry out this responsibility properly. Can we fulfill this responsibility just by paying tax and making offerings? Civic responsibilities consists of spiritual life as well as the duties and responsibilities we have in our social life. Let us think about Civic responsibilities.

The Lesson

What does the Bible say about Responsibility of Citizens?

The Holy Bible teaches us about the love of God for the world (John 3:16). The incarnation of the Son of God and redemption of humankind was for the whole creation. A Christian cannot limit his/her responsibilities to community alone. When the tax collector from Jerusalem Temple approached Peter and asked him whether Jesus pays tax or not (Matthew 17:24-27), Jesus does not come under the purview of tax because he was the Lord of the Temple. But he behaves as a model citizen, by paying tax. Roman officials wanted to accuse Jesus for not obeying Caesar. They asked Jesus whether it is right to give tax to Caesar or not. Jesus does not say anything negative about paying tax.

Teaching of St. Paul

The question whether we should obey wicked power or not is relevant here. It may be difficult to have an ideal and just political system in this world. The systems we are part of in this world, may be good or bad. Till the time we experience the reality of Kingdom of God, our journey in this world shall be through good and bad systems. There may be practices which seems bad to us in our home, parish, Church or in the society. But we should not take it as a reason for not fulfilling our responsibility to the society. We should not give up our responsibility to the society even while fighting injustice. Jesus reminds us this by paying tax to the Roman government. Citizen's responsibility is part of spirituality. This is the lesson we get from words of Jesus Christ and from the Holy Bible.

How can We Fulfill a Citizen's Responsibilities?

First and foremost obey rules. There are certain rules in every country which are to be followed by all its citizens. Such rules are essential for the functioning and well being of a society. Rules though unwritten are applicable in homes as well. Members of a household cannot act as per their whims and fancies. This will lead to chaos. Obeying traffic rules is a significance example. Large number of people die in road accidents. Drunken driving, over speed and violation of traffic rules lead to road accidents. One should drive a vehicle without proper license. Driving carefully and obeying traffic rules are signs of order in society.

Ecology: The world is facing a disaster because of over exploitation of nature. Depletion of water sources, new forum of ailments, and the presence of deadly virus are the results of spoiling nature. Misuse of energy sources (electricity, petrol, and diesel) also is adding to the risks of life on earth.

Respect Other Cultures and Religions: Our society consists of people belonging to different languages and religions. We need to hold the message of unity in diversity. All individuals have the freedom to follow their own faith, but with due respect to other religions.

Love Your Nation and Respect its Constitution: Every citizen should love his/her own country and its culture; and respect other countries also. Some people like everything that belong to other countries, but hate one's own county. There are some others who hate other countries and like only their own county. Both these attitudes are to be avoided.

Serve the Deprived: We are not to neglect the tribal, less educated, disabled, mentally challenged, poor, and the people with incurable diseases. Working for the welfare of such groups of people, and bringing them to the main stream of society is an essential characteristic of a responsible society.

Not, 'What I will get from society' but 'What I can give to society': In his acceptance speech after getting elected as US President, John F. Kennedy told Americans; "You think not what America can do for you but what you can do for America". In the present society, people always think what they would receive from the society and not about what they could do for the society. The Sabharathnam His Grace Dr. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios used to say, "I could not serve the society to the extend of what society had given me". He continued his work even at old age only because he maintained this attitude. We can do many good things at spiritual and social levels for ourselves and society, only if we ask a question 'What can I do for Christ?'

Let Us Pray

O Lord, make us aware of our social responsibilities. Teach us to be merciful. So that we would help the poor. Amen

Resolution

We shall live as responsible citizens and work for the welfare of others.

Let Us Think

1. Explain 'civic responsibilities' on the basis of Holy Bible.
2. Give examples of fulfilling civic responsibilities.
3. Give examples of a few great people who are models in fulfilling civic responsibilities.

Activities

1. Get involved in the charity works of your own parish and Church as a whole.
2. Participate in the prayers conducted at the houses of sick and dead.
3. Save money by avoiding luxuries and observing fast. Use this money for helping the poor and needy.
4. Celebrate your birthday at orphanages or old age homes by providing food for the inmates there.

Lesson 29

Reading Habit: The Best Source of Knowledge

Learning Objectives: To improve reading habit in children to effect changes in their behavior and to improve students interest in reading Holy Bible.

Verse to be Memorized: ‘Wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her’ (Proverbs 8:11).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, the Book of Common Prayers, some good books written by great personalities (e.g. *Wings of Fire* by Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam)

Introduction

Do you have the habit of reading? There are many advantages of reading. The most important among them are acquiring knowledge, experience and maturity. Our Lord Jesus Christ had good knowledge on the Holy Scripture. At the age of 12, Jesus came to the Temple with His parents and He stayed back there without informing His parents. After two days when His parents went back to the temple searching for Him, they found Him interacting with Jewish leaders. All who heard Him were amazed at His intelligent answers (Luke 2:47). When Satan tempted him, Jesus defeated Satan by quoting Holy Scripture. Jesus used to quote from Holy Scripture in His teachings. He was well-versed in the Scriptures. Here we are learning the importance of the habit of reading.

The Lesson

Reading Improves Knowledge

Reading is essential for those who would like to improve their knowledge. As the proverb says, ‘reading makes a full human.’ Different kinds of books like history, biographies, autobiographies, travelogues, stories, novels, dramas, and poems are helpful in improving knowledge.

Reading Helps in Value Based Growth: Religious books have been available for long. The objective was to inculcate values in human beings. The Holy Bible contains verses of wisdom like ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge’ and fatherly advice like ‘do what your father tells you, my son, and never forget what your mother taught you’. Holy Bible helps us to live according to the will of God. Reading good books helps us to lead a good life. It will also help us to think freely, and to lead a mature life.

Reading is a Learning Tool: Education leads a person from darkness to the light of knowledge. Good books are like sources of light. Good books enrich our mind.

Reading helps to expand the boundary of knowledge of an individual beyond a curriculum and give a fullness to life.

Reading Improves the Dignity of a Person: Happiness and creativity are the characteristics of a mature personality. Stability and welfare of a society depend on people who are selfless, well-adjusted and magnanimous. An individual's happiness is decided by his/her relation to self, others and to God. Good books have a great influence in this regard. Reading prevents a person from committing crimes by providing moral insight. It will teach about the consequence of committing a crime.

Reading Purifies the Soul: Reading helps an individual to distinguish between good and evil. There are several parables in the Holy Bible that provide us with new insights (e.g. Parable of the Prodigal Son and Good Samaritan). Such stories help us to make our lives better.

Reading Habit-To be a Routine in Life: Reading should be a routine activity. Reading costs us less but provides more benefits. Reading is also as an entertainment. We should choose good books for reading. The advent of electronic media has affected the reading habit of people. But reading is essential to inculcate good values in life. The Malayalam poet Kunjunn Mash says 'People grow whether they read or not. If people grow by reading, they bear fruits; if they grow without reading, they will be skewed'. The Sunday School students should enjoy in reading the Holy Bible. By reading the Bible daily, we establish a strong relation with God and avoid evil temptations. It will also help to take decisions as per the will of God, avoid worries in life, improve faith, keep up a Christian outlook and also enable us to give good advise to others.

Acts 8:26 narrates the change that comes in the life of a eunuch by reading the Bible. He was an official in the palace of an Ethiopian queen. He was reading the Bible during his travel in chariot. An angel of God told Deacon Philip to go near the chariot and ask the official whether he understood what he read. The official replied that he could not understand it unless explained by someone. Philip explained the verse to him which lead to the baptism of the eunuch. While reading the Bible we should try to understand the meaning of what we read. This will help us to strengthen our relation with God and improve our character.

Let Us Pray

Our Lord, please send Your Holy Spirit to us and improve our wisdom. Help us to read the Bible and other good books, and get advanced in knowledge and wisdom. Amen

Let Us Think

1. What are the benefits of reading?
2. How can reading make a human mature?

3. How could reading purify the soul?
4. What are the benefits of reading the Holy Bible daily?

Activities

1. Conduct a group discussion in the class on 'the reading habit.'
2. Prepare a note after reading a good book.
3. Prepare a chart of the books you have read (Name of author, title of book, date of reading, and place of publication). And the new books you read to this list.

Lesson 30

Time Management

Learning Objectives: To understand the importance of utilizing time effectively.

Verse to be memorized: 'Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil' (Ephesians 5:15-16).

Teaching Aids: The Holy Bible, placards showing the importance of time, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Introduction

How do we spend the time? We can use our time profitably. Some people waste their time. Let us understand and appreciate the importance of time and time management. Time is an invaluable, precious treasure which provides opportunity to improve. Time is the creation of God. Everyone in the world get same amount of time a day, but different people produce different output. Many people do utilize time effectively. Let us learn the importance of time and punctuality.

The Lesson

'Time management' means the intelligent and profitable use of time which calls for intelligence, skills, patience and determination. God has arranged everything in nature with a schedule. Laws of nature teach us many important lessons regarding time. Perfect schedule is observed in the rotation of earth, climate changes, growth of vegetation, and birds singing. All these in nature tell us that human being also is bound to use time productively by following a schedule.

Punctuality and diligence are the symbols of competence. These qualities are sustained by the sincerity and self control of an individual. In the primitive society, people had lots of time. They were never in a hurry. The measure of time was the Sun or the length of shadow. Today time is very precious. Every activity is time bound. Success and achievement depend on how we utilize our time. Benjamin Franklin said, "If you love your life, don't waste time". The movement of life is made up of time. An individual starts managing his time when he takes a decision to follow a 'system' in utilizing time.

It is important to see how much you achieved within a time limit, no matter how much you worked hard. This shows that managing time is related to achievement. When you withdraw your entire deposit, the balance in your account becomes zero. When a day starts, 86400 seconds are deposited in your time account. It becomes zero by next day whether you use it properly or not, and you get a new time deposit for the same amount. It would be excellent if you become aware of the withdrawal

of time from your time account. So we need to have a 'time budget' similar to a finance budget.

Get SMART with Time

SMART stands for 'Small Measures that Ascertain, Resourceful usage of Time'. Certain points are to be considered for effective time management:

1. **Take Responsibility:** We have to be responsible for using our time. If we don't take the responsibility, somebody else will use our time. Let us give up the habit of postponing activities.

2. **Pray for God's Guidance:** We have so many things to accomplish everyday. We should seek God's help to identify these activities.

3. **Prepare an Action Plan:** Let us have a plan with details as to what is to be done? how? And for how long?

4. **Proper Organization of the Activities:** Look at God's creations, how they are organized (see book of Genesis). Our activities also should be organized in the same way.

5. **Learn to Say 'NO':** If you are struggling with more responsibilities than you can do, try to say 'no' to tasks which are not beneficial and ennobling.

6. **Assign Priority:** If you have a number of jobs to do, then assign priority to your tasks. Start with activities which are most important, and complete all the tasks.

7. **Write down Your the List of Activities for the Day:** It is difficult to remember the tasks when there is more number of tasks to do.

8. **Analyze our Strength and be Ready to face Challenges:** Let us analyze our strengths, opportunities, identify the problems, hurdles, challenges and weaknesses. Make changes in schedule, wherever required.

9. **Do not Intervene in Others Activities:** Do not try to interfere in others' activities and waste time. Instead, try to complete our own job. If another person seeks our help, then let us not hesitate to provide it.

10. **Reflect on the Activities:** Reflect on the job on completion of a stage of work or on completion of the whole activity. This will help to identify the drawbacks and ensure that the job is progressing as per plan. This type of evaluation will help to plan future activities.

Let Us Pray

Compline Prayer Kolo, Book of Common Worship

O Lord, teach us Your commandments, that we may learn them and live according to Your grace. Appoint guards at the opened doors of our limbs, that the treasures of Your mercy may not be plundered. Barekmor.

Resolution

We shall utilize every moment of our life usefully and do our duties punctually.

Let Us Think

1. Define 'time'
2. What is meant by 'time management'?
3. How do the laws of nature guide human beings to manage time?
4. What is the importance of time?
5. 'Time and tide waits for none'. Explain this on the basis of present lesson
6. Mention the factors that help better time management
7. One of your friends is lazy. Prepare a letter to correct him

Activities

1. Discuss how effectively we manage time in our life.
2. Prepare a chart showing all the activities you have to do for the next one month.

<u>Sl No.</u>	<u>Activity to be done</u>	<u>Date of completion</u>	<u>Priority number</u>
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3. Prepare similar chart for every month.
4. Collect good captions on time management and hang them in your room.

