

# MALANKARA JACOBITE SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION



TEXT BOOK CLASS – IX

2009



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## **PREFACE**

We are thankful to our Lord Almighty in helping us and guiding us through the work of these Sunday school books. These books are the translations of the “Padamanjari” published by Malankara Jacobite Syrian Sunday School Association.

Children of our community, unable to read and write Malayalam were finding it very difficult to study and understand the faith of our church taught in Malayalam. Even in Kerala, children studying in CBSE and English Medium schools are not able to assimilate Malayalam. Circumstances forced us to have English version for the text books. Now the syllabus has changed that caused the second edition of the text books.

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

We are also grateful to St.Peters Jacobite Syrian Church Baharin who helped us for publishing these text Books in English.

**Puthencruz  
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# **PART I - PRAYER**

## **ANGELIC HYMN**

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

To you belongs glory, to you belongs praise, to you belongs honour, 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

### **Prayer Upon Confession of Sin Before the Priest**

I confess to God the Father Almighty, and to His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, in the presence of our Lady the Virgin, ever sacred in her virginity, and all the holy angels, of Michael, of Gabriel, both chief of angels, and St. John the Baptist, of the holy apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, the twenty-four prophets, the twelve apostles, the four evangelists and the seventy-two sent forth. I confess the holy faith of the three Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus in the most noble priesthood ascribed unto You, Father Priest, by which You loose and bind. I have sinned through all my senses, both inwardly and outwardly, in word, in deed and in thought. My sin is great, very great, and I repent of it most sincerely, purposing not to fall again into the same ever, preferring death rather than embrace sin. And I ask you, by the authority of the sacred priesthood, that you absolve me and forgive, asking God to pardon me through His grace. Amen.

## **Mavurbo (Song of St.mary)**

My soul magnifies the Lord,  
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.  
For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden,  
For behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.  
And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with His arm:  
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,  
and exalted those of low degree.

He has filled the hungry with good things;  
and the rich He has sent empty away.  
He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy;  
As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His posterity forever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen

**PART II**  
**OLD TESTAMENT**  
**LESSON 1**  
**MINOR PROPHETS DURING EXILE**  
**(B.C.6<sup>th</sup> Century )**

**INTRODUCTION**

We have learned in class VIII about the major prophets and minor prophets before the exile. Prophets who lived during 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. were known as prophets before the exile. We will now study about the minor prophets who lived in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. The 70 year period between BC 605 & BC 535 is considered as the period of exile.

**OBADIAH**

The word 'Obadiah' means 'Servant of Lord' / 'Worshipper of Lord'. We do not know much about his genealogy. In the Holy Bible there are 13 people in the name 'Obadiah'. In verses 10-11 Obadiah states that Edomites were very happy, when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Jerusalem and carried away the wealth in BC 586. Therefore, it can be assumed that this book was written after 586 B.C.

**Background of Prophecy**

This small book which contains only 21 verses give us two important messages: 1. God will struck down Edom 2. God will lift Israel.

Edomites are descendants of Esau who is the brother of Jacob and Israelites are descendants of Jacob. The struggle which started between these twin brothers from the womb of their mother continued for generations. (Genesis 25:19-26; Numbers 20:14-21) Edomites, were later known as Idumaeans. King Herod, who was the king at the time of the birth of Jesus was an Idumaeans.

**Destruction of Edom**

In 586 B.C when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, Edomites rejoiced. The sin of the Edomites was that they were happy at the fall of their brother. Prophet said that it was unfair and therefore, they will be destroyed for ever (verses 10-16). There is no knowledge about any Edomite after AD 70 when Titus attacked and destroyed Jerusalem. Thus the destruction of Edom was complete (verse 18)

**Redemption of Israel**

The prophet gives hope that the Israelites would be redeemed one day of their sufferings and they will occupy the land of their ancestors (Verse 17).

**Vision about Christ**

Obadiah had a clear and definite vision about Christ as the Judge of all nations (verses 15- 16); the Redeemer of Israel (Verse 17 -20); and the Everlasting King ( Verse 21).

**LESSON 2**  
**POST EXILE PROPHETS**  
**6<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY B.C. (AFTER 535 B.C.)**

In the previous lesson we have studied that the Jews were in exile in Babylonia for 70 years between 605 -535 B.C. Cyrus, King of Persia gave them freedom in 535 B.C. Accordingly, the first batch of Jews

under the leadership of Zerubbabel reached Jerusalem in 535 B.C. Though the people had returned from exile with much wealth such as gold, silver, flocks and servants, they were not interested in building the Temple which was in ruin. They also didn't show interest in worships. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah gave their prophecies at this period. Zechariah started his prophecy two months after Haggai started his prophecy in BC 522. The Lord through Haggai (522 B.C.) and then through Zechariah motivated the people to rebuild the Temple.

### **Background of the Prophecy**

We do not know much about Haggai. He was one of the Jews who returned from Babylon under the leadership of Zerubbabel. Zechariah was a priest. The Jews were jubilant on their return to their home land. They showed more interest to build their own homes and to cultivate in their farms. King Cyrus allowed the people to return to Jerusalem in order to build the Temple, but they ignored it and showed more interest in their own personal affairs.

### **Haggai**

Even though the people who returned from exile cultivated farms with hard work, they could harvest only a little. The weather itself was not favourable. The Lord spoke through Haggai to Zerubbabel and the High Priest, Joshua; "Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord's house. Then the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider how you have fared. You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and you that earn wages earn wages to put them into a bag with holes." (1:3-6) "Consider how you have fared. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honoured". (1:7-8)

### **Vision about Christ**

There is no direct reference to Christ in the prophecy of Haggai. But he portrays Messiah in Zerubbabel who was chosen for the rebuilding of the Temple. The Lord has chosen Zerubbabel as the signet ring. "On that day, says the Lord of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, son of Shealtiel, says the Lord, and make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the Lord of hosts." (2: 23) Thus Zerubbabel has become the central point in the genealogy of Messiah connecting Joseph and Mary (St. Matthew 1:12; St. Luke 3:27)

## **ZECHARIAH**

The word 'Zechariah' means 'God has remembered'. He is a contemporary and co-worker of Haggai. He started prophesying two months after Haggai started prophesying.

### **Background of Prophecy**

Like Haggai Zechariah also motivated the people to rebuild the Temple of God. The book of Zechariah containing 14 chapters can be divided into two parts: Chapters One to Eight are prophecies of Zechariah who was the contemporary of Haggai. Rebuilding of the Temple is the main theme.

Some theologians believe that chapters 9 to 14 are written by another Zechariah. Redemption of Israel is the main theme of this part. Zechariah gives hopes that a King will come and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. (9:9-10).

### **Vision about Christ**

The book of Zechariah contains many clear prophecies about Messiah. Angel of the Lord (3:1, 3:8, 6:12) A single stone with seven facets (3:9); Priest by his throne (6:13); Humble king (9:9) Corner stone (10:4); The good shepherd who was betrayed for 30 silver coins (11:4-13); One who was pierced (12:10) Fountain which cleans sin and impurity (13:1); Struck shepherd (13:7); King over all the earth (14:9). All these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

## **JOEL**

The book of Joel was written in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Accurate date it is not available.

### **Back ground of Prophecy**

He is prophesying to console the people who were depressed with the attack of locusts and devastating drought. According to the prophet all these events are the signs of the coming day of the Lord. Hence the prophet call the people to repent and return to the God. Joel says that God will save and shower his blessing on those people who repent and return to the God. Prophet clarifies that there will be destruction on those who do not return to God. The note worthy of his prophesy is that in the end God will send his Spirit upon all the people alike.

### **Vision about Christ**

Joel's vision about Messiah is as the judge who judges all the nations (3:2-12) "Then afterwards I will pour out my spirit on all flesh." (2:28). It was fulfilled on the day of pentecost. At the time of His Ascension Jesus promised to send the the Holy Spirit . This promise was fulfilled on the day of pentecost. What apostle Peter said about the experience on pentecost was that it was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel (Acts 2:16-21).

## **MALACHI**

It is the last book in the Old Testament. Malachi prophesied between 516- 444 B.C., after the Temple in Jerusalem was re-constructed by the Jews who returned from exile and started worshipping God.

### **Background of Prophecy**

After building the Temple, the people began to worship God. Still there was continuous drought, famine and loss of crops. At that time their faith dwindled and they began to doubt the love of God. They even questioned the love of God. This was the background when Malachi started his prophecy.

### **Contents of Prophecy**

It is written in a form of questions and answers. The answers to six questions which doubt the love of God is the content of the prophesy.

1. Do not doubt the love of God
2. Holy sacrifices must be done without polluting the name of the Lord.
3. Do not show unfaithfulness to God.
4. Return to God.
5. Those who love God will be rewarded abundantly .
6. God will send Prophet Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Malachi says these things as an answer to the doubts of the people.

### **Vision about Christ**

After Malachi, the voice of prophets were not heard for a long time. We hear again a prophet, after 400 years, when John the Baptist: declared "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1 :29). Malachi prophesied about a messenger who will come to prepare the way for the Lord.( Malachi 3:1), He also said, "I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes."(4:5)

There are many references in the Bible that John the Baptist is the expected messenger, Elijah. (Mathew 3:3 Mark 1:3 ; Luke 1: 17; John 1:23) , Elijah will again appear at the time of the Second coming of Jesus.

## **LESSON 3 CHRONICLES**

### **Introduction**

Chronicles are included in the historical books of the Bible. They are largely the history of events and persons found in the Books of Samuel and Kings, not its verbatim repetition. The Israelites who returned

from exile did not have full political freedom. But they led a social life based on Law under the leadership of priests, giving importance to the worship and rituals. During this time they look back to their past history. The author observes through this book how God engaged in the life of their ancestors. It is assumed that this book was written around 400 B.C. There is no mention about the author. But it is believed that a Levite might have written it.

### **Message of the book**

Even though the aim of the author is to write the history of their ancestors, he also gives an important message to his contemporary society. "The Lord is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you." (2 Chr. 15.2).

After 70 years of exile when the people returned to Canaan, the middle part of the promised land which was called Samaria that belonged to the sons of Joseph was occupied by gentiles. The main aim of writing this book was to convince and encourage the people who returned from exile that they were the true descendants of Israelites including King David and the whole land of Canaan was their promised land.

The book of I Chronicles containing 29 chapters explains the genealogy, reign of King David, arrangements done by King David for the construction of the Temple, entrusting the duty of construction of the temple to King Solomon, death of King David have rebuilding of the Temple of God.

The second book of Chronicles containing 36 Chapters describes the rule of Solomon, building of the Temple and its consecration, the death of Solomon, division of the kingdom after his death, kings of the divided kingdoms, exile of the people to Babylon, proclamation of King Cyrus, Emperor of Persia, allowing the people to return.

### **Vision about Christ**

David is linked with Christ. The covenant which God made with David is an everlasting one - (1 Chr. 17:1-29). "I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne shall be established for ever" (1 Chr 17:11-15) The never ending dynasty is that of the Messiah. The never ending kingdom of David points to the kingdom of Messiah. Both the kingdom of David and the Temple itself were destroyed, the covenant of the Lord still remains. It is already proved that the actual Temple and the throne are that of the Christ. Jesus himself explained it. In fact, the Temple points directly to Christ: "I tell you, something greater than the temple is here" (Matthew 2:6). Jesus says he himself is the Temple. Nobody can destroy this Temple. He said: "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'" (John 2:19). Ultimately, the permanent temple will be that of the Christ and it cannot be destroyed, so says the book of Revelation. "I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb." (Rev. 21:22) Thus the throne of David is related with Christ in the book of Chronicles.

## **LESSON 4**

### **MACCABEES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

You have learned that with the death of King Solomon, kingdom of Israel was divided into two. King Solomon reigned in the 10th century BC. During the period of 10 centuries between Solomon's death and the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) the Jews remained as a free and united nation only for about 100 years during the time of the Maccabees. The era of the prophets were ended by the end of the prophecy of Malachi in 444 B.C. There after John the Baptist appeared as prophet in 26 A.D. The 400 years in between these are days of affliction for the Israelites. They were subdued by Greeks and Persians. With the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek emperor, his kingdom was divided between his army chiefs. Seleucus I, called Nicator received the vast area consisting of Syria and Judea. (175 B.C.). In 63 B.C. the Roman General Pompey defeated the Greeks. As a result the Israelites came under the Romans. At the time of the birth of Jesus, Judea was under the Roman rule.

#### **MACCABEES**

Maccabees stood up to preserve true faith when the Jews were under Greek rule. An old priest named Mattathias lived in Modein about 27 Km. north west of Jerusalem. He had five sons- John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar and Jonathan.

When Antiochus Epiphanes became King of Judea he persecuted the Jews, and carried away all the valuables from the Temple. He had plundered the Temple and stopped sacrifices in the name of Lord. He installed an idol of Jupiter, a Greek god at the most holy place of the Lord, He set fire to the holy book of Jews and stopped the circumcision and Sabbath practices. He forced Jews to make sacrifices of swine to idols. He put to the death of the Jews who did not obey his orders.

An officer from the king Epiphanes arrived Modein and installed an idol there. He compelled Mattathias to sacrifice to the idol. He refused and killed the officer. Knowing that its consequences would be devastating, he fled to the mountains with his sons and stayed there in dens and started the revolt against the government. Faithful Jews also joined them. Thus in 167 B.C. Maccabees revolution started. The group elected Judas, the third son of Mattathias as their leader. He accepted the name 'Maccabees', meaning 'hammer'.

After the prolonged struggle of five years, the revolutionaries captured Jerusalem. They purified the Temple and rededicated the Temple for the regular worship of God. In commemoration of this rededication of the Temple, a festival was conducted every year. This is the festival of Dedication mentioned in the gospel (John 20:22). In honour of Judas Maccabees, their family line was called Maccabees.

After giving valiant leadership for six years, Judas Maccabees was killed in a battle at Elasa. Then his younger brother Jonathan took up leadership. He reigned for 18 years and in 142 B.C. he was treacherously killed at Ptolemias.

After the death of Jonathan, his elder brother Simon became the leader. In 134 B.C. he was also killed in by his son-in-law, Ptolemy. Eleazar and John, the other two sons of Mattathias were killed in an earlier battle. With this death the first generation of Maccabees came to an end.

#### **THE SECOND GENERATION OF MACCABEES**

After the death of Simon, his son John Hyrcanus reigned as high priest for 30 years. He died in 104 B.C. at an old age. During his reign Judea had annexed all its territories and the country prospered. When John Hyrcanus died, his eldest son Aristobulus became high priest. After a year, he died and his youngest brother Alexander Jannaeus became ruler. He ruled for 27 years. During this period, the Pharisees and Sadducees quarrelled each other and it led to a civil war in the country. In 76 B.C., Alexander Jannaeus died. After his death, his wife Salome Alexandra took over the reign and ruled for 9 years. When she died in

67 B.C., her two children Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II both put up their claims to the throne. At first Hyrcanus II succeeded and he became ruler. After about 3 months, Aristobulus usurped the throne. Hyrcanus sought the help of the Arabs and sent one of his aids, Antipator, an Edomite to negotiate with Arabs. (Herod who was son of this Antipator ruled Judea at the time of the birth of Jesus).

While these two brothers fought each other for the title, Pompey, a Roman General reached Damascus on his journey in BC 63. Both the brothers sought the help from Pompey. Instead of helping them, he defeated both of them and took over possession of Jerusalem. Thus, the rule of Maccabees which lasted for about a century came to an end.

A family which fought to establish true faith and restore the Temple was shattered by their own descendants who fought among themselves for power. In 63 B.C the Romans took over Judea and the Jews lost their freedom.

## **LESSON 5**

### **TABERNACLE**

The people of Israel liberated from the bondage of Egypt, started their Journey to Canaan, the promised land. Tabernacle is the temporary facility to worship the true God made under the leadership of Moses according to the guidance from God in their long journey of 40 years. Since they were moving until they reached Canaan, it was not possible for them to make a permanent place of Worship. The people were also staying in temporary tents. Therefore the Tabernacle was made in such a way that they could carry it along with their tents when they were moving from place to place. The tribe of Levi was set apart for service at the Tabernacle and also to carry it from one place to another.

#### **Making of the Tabernacle**

The construction of the Tabernacle made by Israelites was not according to human intelligence. It was constructed based on the model revealed to Moses at Mount Sinai. Its measurements, color, decorations, methods of worship, people to perform rituals and items to be kept therein were decided by God. God revealed all these to Moses and he carried out it accordingly. "And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so you shall make it." (Ex.25: 8-9., 25:40, 27:8)

#### **TENT OF THE LORD'S PRESENCE**

Tabernacle is also called the Tent of the Lord's presence. Tent of the Lord's presence has its origin from the gentiles. In those days they believed that God lived among his people. They made a tent for their God to live in. This tent is referred to as the Tent of the Lord's presence.

#### **THE TABERNACLE**

Even though the Tabernacle is also called the Tent of the God's presence, the word Tabernacle and its rationale is originated from the Hebrew background. God converses with the people through Moses, the mediator. The Tabernacle is the place where the people gets revelations from God. God reveals Himself to the people at the Tabernacle.

#### **DIMENSIONS OF THE TABERNACLE**

The Tabernacle has a length of 30 cubits, breadth of 10 cubits and a height of 10 cubits. The south, north and west sides were enclosed with frames of Acacia wood (10 cubits height and 1.5 cubits breadth). All the wooden frames were overlaid with gold. The top of the Tabernacle was covered with a tent of cloth made of goat's hair. The entrance of the tabernacle was at the east. It was covered with curtains woven with blue, purple and red wool and embroidered with figures of cherubim. It was hung on five pillars of acacia wood covered with gold.

#### **HOLY PLACE AND MOST HOLY PLACE**

The Tabernacle is divided into two portions. In the 30 cubit long tabernacle a curtain was hung 10 cubit away from western side on four pillars. The inside of this curtain (western side) was the Most Holy Place (Holy of the Holies) and the eastern side was Holy place.

#### **THE COURT**

All around the sacred tent there was a court. The length of the court (east-west) was 100 cubits and breadth (north-south) was 50 cubits. There were curtains made of cotton on south, west and north sides. The curtains of north and south had a length of 100 cubits and a height of 5 cubits and these were hung on 20 pillars. western side curtain was hung on 10 pillars. There were 3 curtains on the eastern side. The breadth at eastern side was 50 cubits. On either side two curtains were hung having a length of 15 cubits each and a height of 5 cubits. Each one were hung on 3 pillars. The entrance was in the middle and this curtain had a length of 20 cubits and a height of 5 cubits and this curtain was embroidered with fine twisted linen in blue, purple and crimson colors.

## **VESSELS IN THE TABERNACLE**

The Tabernacle has three portions, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place and the Court. In each place there were specific vessels..

### **VESSELS IN THE MOST HOLY PLACE**

#### **The Ark of the Covenant**

In the ark there were three items were kept.. They are two stone tablets on which the commandments were written, a golden pot of manna and Aaron's staff that had budded

#### **The Mercy Seat**

It was kept on top of the Ark of Covenant. God came down into the Tabernacle at the Most Holy Place and from the Mercy Seat spoke to Moses. The seat where the Merciful Almighty sits, is the Mercy Seat. It is 2.5 cubit long and 1.5 cubit wide, made of pure gold.

#### **Cherubim**

At the two ends of the mercy seat there were two Cherubims were made of pure gold. The cherubims stretched their wings to cover the mercy seat and they faced each other.

Cherubims are a group of angels who are standing very close to Lord. When man was driven out of the garden of Eden, God ordered the Cherubims to guard the garden with flaming and turning sword so that man may not trespass in to the garden. (Gen 3:24) The Lord of hosts dwells between the Cherubims (2 Sam,6.2 ) And he rides on a Cherub. ( Psalms 18:10).

#### **The Golden Censer**

The censer for burning incense was made with pure gold. A portion of the incense made for each day in the Holy place was saved and kept in a golden pot to be used for offering incense once in a year by the High Priest.

### **EQUIPMENTS IN THE HOLY PLACE**

#### **Table for the Bread of the Presence**

It was a table made out of acacia wood, 2 cubits long, 1 cubit wide and 1.5 cubits high and it was covered with pure gold. Dishes, plates, cups, jars and bowls made of pure gold were placed on table. Bread of the Presence should be kept on the table always.

#### **Golden Lampstand**

The lampstand had a central branch from which three branches extended from each side, forming a total of seven branches. Seven lamps holding olive oil and wicks stood on top of the branches. Each branch looked like that of an almond tree, containing buds, blossoms and flowers. The priests were instructed to keep the lamps burning continuously. The seven branch lamp stand was made of pure gold; its base and its shaft were of pure gold ; It was made as one piece with its decorative flowers, including buds and petals. Six branches extended from its sides, three each on either side. Each of the six branches had three decorative flowers shaped like almond blossoms with buds and petals. The shaft of the lamp stand had four decorative flowers shaped like almond blossoms with buds and petals. There was one bud below three pairs of branches. The buds, the branches and the lamp stand were a single piece gold. There were Seven lamps in the lamp stand, and its tongs and trays were a pure gold. The golden lamp stand was placed outside the curtain of the Most Holy Place.

#### **Altar of Incense**

An altar for burning incense was made out of acacia wood. It was a one cubit long and one cubit wide square and 2 cubits high. It had horns at the four corners and it was covered with pure gold. This was placed outside the curtain which hanged in front of the Ark of Covenant and only priests were allowed to see it. Every morning and evening incense were offered.

## **VESSELS IN THE COURT**

### **Altar of Sacrifice**

This altar was made of wood from the acacia tree and overlaid with bronze, measuring 5 cubits on all four sides and 3 cubits height. Four horns were projected from the top four corners. All the equipments, the pans, the shovels, the bowls, the hooks and the fire pans were made of bronze. The altar was placed at the entrance of the court so that everybody can see it. Animals and birds were sacrificed regularly at the altar. From the altar of incense burning sweet smell of burning incense came up whereas from the altar of burning sacrifices smell of burning meat and smoke came up which was not very pleasant.

This altar was also a refuge to those who had done a crime unintentionally. When a man kills another person, the relatives of the victim would come to take revenge on him. In such an occasion, the person can run to the city of refuge or to the altar of burning sacrifices. He was safe until the crime is proved against him. It was God's command that nobody has any right to kill another man.

### **Bronze Basin (Laver)**

It was a bronze vessel to keep water for the priests to wash their hands and feet before going to the Tent or approached the altar to offer food offering. The basin was placed between the Tent and the altar (water was filled). The priests must wash their hands and feet, before approaching the altar so that they will not die. (Ex.30 : 19 -21).

### **Tent Over the Tabernacle**

The sacred Tent was made out of ten pieces of fine linen woven with blue, purple and crimson wool which were embroidered with figures of winged creatures. There were three other outer covers to protect the beautiful coverings of the sacred Tent.

- 1 Eleven pieces of cloth made out of goats' hair, all of them of the same size, 30 cubits long and 4 cubits wide (Ex.26:7).
- 2 Another covering of tanned rams' skin dyed red (Ex.26 : 14)
- 3 The outer covering of fine leather.(Ex.26 : 14)

## **THE TABERNACLE ERECTED**

After completing all the work of the Tabernacle as commanded by god, they erected the Tabernacle on the first day of the first month of the second year after they left Egypt.

### **GOD'S PRESENCE AT THE TABERNACLE**

After the erection of the Tabernacle the cloud covered the Tent and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on each stage of their journey; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, before the eyes of all the house of Israel at each stage of their journey.

The Lord God spoke to Moses from the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle, from the Mercy Seat, between cherubims.

## **LESSON 6**

### **OFFERINGS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

All religions consider offerings as an inseparable part of worship. They believe that without offerings, worship of God is incomplete. Ancient religions of Mesopotamia and Canaanites offered sacrifices. In both Old Testament and New Testament, offerings have been described as an essential rite. In Old Testament offerings were part of worship. In New Testament, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross is the greatest offering.

## **OLD TESTAMENT OFFERINGS**

In this chapter we will study the Offerings conducted by the Israelites. In the Tabernacle and in the Temple at Jerusalem, the Jews offered many sacrifices. Usually, these are referred to as 'offerings' and 'sacrifices'. There is a slight difference between these two. Offerings include the offerings offered and burned on the altar, the tithe and portion offered from the harvest and so on. While sacrifices include only the offerings offered and burned on the altar.

The Israelites had many types of offerings. Some of them are mentioned below.

### **1. BURNT OFFERING**

It is also known as an offering by fire of pleasing odor to Lord. The animal that is offered as a burnt offering should be a male without blemish. It should be brought before the Lord. The person who offers the beast, put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering and it is accepted as his atonement. Nobody is allowed to take any portion of it. The whole should be burnt upon the altar itself. It is also known as whole burnt offering.

### **2. GRAIN OFFERING**

A voluntary offering to recognize God's good will and gifts. The person who offers this should bring flour or grain, at times with oil, salt, and frankincense to Aaron's sons, the priests. After taking from it a handful of the choice flour and oil, with all its frankincense, the priest shall turn this token portion into smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odour to the Lord. And what is left of the grain-offering shall be for Aaron and his sons, a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the Lord. (Leviticus 2)

### **3. PEACE OFFERING/WELL-BEING OFFERING**

It is also called a 'Thanks Giving Offering'. It is offered for having grace from God and for communion with fellow people. A part of the sacrificed animal will be burnt. The priest can take a portion of the remaining part. Those who offered are entitled for a portion of his offering.

### **4. SIN OFFERING**

This is offered for getting atonement for committing any unintentional sin. The same offering is offered, even if the whole congregation has committed an unintentional sin. A portion of the sacrificed animal is burnt and the remaining part can be eaten by the male members of the priests' family.

### **5. GUILT OFFERING/TRESPASS OFFERING**

When anybody commits a trespass and sin unintentionally in any of the holy things of the Lord, he shall bring, as his guilt-offering to the Lord, a ram without blemish from the flock, convertible into silver by the sanctuary shekel and he shall make restitution for the holy thing in which he had erred, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. The priest shall make atonement on his behalf with the ram of the guilt-offering, and he shall be forgiven.

The same offering is also offered for getting atonement when anybody committed a sin by deceiving a neighbour in a matter of a deposit or a pledge, or by robbery, or if anybody has defrauded a neighbour, or has found something lost and lied about it. He would repay anything taken by robbery or by fraud or the deposit that was committed and shall add one-fifth to it. He should bring to the priest, as his guilt-offering to the Lord, a ram without blemish from the flock, or its equivalent. The priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the Lord, and he shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and incur guilt thereby. (Leviticus 5:14; 6:7; 7:1-6)

The Israelites offered mainly the above five sacrifices. In addition to these there are other vows and offerings related to the above. Some of them are described below:

### **1. CONTINUAL BURNT OFFERING/DAILY BURNT OFFERING**

This is the regular burnt offering. Two lambs a year old regularly each day. One lamb shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb shall offer in the evening; and with the first lamb one-tenth of a measure of choice flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink-offering. And the other lamb shall offer in the evening, and shall offer with it a grain-offering and its drink-

offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing odour, an offering by fire to the Lord

## **2.VOTIVE OFFERING/FREE WILL OFFERING**

The votive offering was made in performance of some vow which a man made. The voluntary offering was often in supplication for some special mercy which a man was requesting. It is similar that of peace offering. But if the sacrifice one offer is a votive offering or a freewill-offering, it shall be eaten on the day that he offer his sacrifice, and what is left of it shall be eaten the next day; but what is left of the flesh of the sacrifice shall be burned on the third day.If any of the flesh of his sacrifice of well-being is eaten on the third day, it shall not be acceptable, nor shall it be credited to the one who offers it; it shall be an abomination, and the one who eats of it shall incur guilt.

## **VOLUNTARY OFFERING**

A person may offer a sacrifice, not for any particular purpose, but for the blessings of the Lord. It is a voluntary offering. For this sacrifice, rules for peace offering and offering for a vow is applicable

## **4. BURNT OFFERING**

This is not a special sacrifice. All the sacrifices which are burnt on the altar are burnt offering.

## **5. ELEVATION OFFERING**

The portion of the sacrificed animal allotted for priests during other sacrifices are offered before the Lord in a peculiar way is the Elevation offering.(Exodus 29: 26-28) “You shall consecrate the breast that was raised as an elevation offering and the thigh that was raised as an elevation offering from the ram of ordination, from that which belonged to Aaron and his sons. These things shall be a perpetual ordinance for Aaron and his sons from the Israelites, for this is an offering; and it shall be an offering by the Israelites from their sacrifice of offerings of well-being, their offering to the Lord.

## **6. FOOD OFFERING**

The priest offers a portion of the Grain offering (flour, olive oil and incense) and burn them on the altar. This is called food offering. “The priest shall remove from the grain-offering its token portion and turn this into smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odour to the Lord.And what is left of the grain-offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the Lord. “(Lev. 2:2-9).

The main sacrifices in the Old Testament are described above. These offerings were made either of the flesh and blood of a oxen, a ram or dove, with flour, olive oil and incense or wine. Some offerings are fully burnt and some are partly burnt and the remaining was given to the priest. All these sacrifices were a pointer to the incomparable sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary. These sacrifices brought temporary benefits and are incapable of bringing permanent salvation or forgiveness of sin. Jesus the Lamb of God, with out any blemish, offered his own flesh and blood as a sacrifice before God, the Father. Through His sacrifice the human race received permanent salvation and forgiveness of sin. All the sacrifices in the Old Testament points to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary .

### **Questions :**

- (1) What were the important sacrifices of Old Testament times.Explain.
- (ii) Write in brief note about the sacrifices of Old Testament and the sacrifice at Calvary.

## **PART III NEW TESTAMENT**

### **LESSON 7 - THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

The sum and substance of the four Gospels are the life of Jesus Christ in this world, his Death and Resurrection. The main theme of the Acts of Apostles deals with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and later the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and also the spread of the Church to the many parts of the world. Luke who has written the third Gospel is the author of this book. Both these books start with a salutation to Theophilus. Same language and expression of ideas can be found in both. The Gospel according to St. Luke concludes with the Ascension of Jesus and the promise of the Holy Spirit. The Acts of Apostles begin with the Ascension of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit. St. Luke vouches that Acts of Apostles is the second part of his gospel (1:1-4)

#### **HEADING OF THE BOOK**

It is known as the book of Acts. The Greek word for Acts is *Praxeis*. The activities of St. Peter and St. Paul are narrated in this book. The works of Jacob and John are also stated briefly.

#### **INTENTION AND GOAL**

The Christian church which had its birth shortly was led by the power of the Holy Spirit. The intention of the book is to proclaim the universality of the church. The commencement of Christian faith and its gradual growth and how it has spread in Rome are explained in detail. More than the history of the individuals, importance is given to the Christian message.

#### **CONTENTS**

It is the history of the church between the Ascension of Jesus Christ and the death of Peter and Paul and an eye witness account of how they propagated the Christian faith and the life of the early Christians. It was believed that salvation is only offered to the Jews. But breaking all barriers it went to all people, gentiles as well as Jews, to the whole world and all races.

#### **This book has two parts**

1. The activities in Jerusalem and nearby places under the leadership of Peter (Chapters 1-12)
2. The activities in places outside Jerusalem under the leadership of Paul (Chapters 13-28)

St. Luke has written it as an eye witness account. There are many passages which state that St. Luke was an associate of St. Paul. (16:10-17; 20:5-21; 21:18; 27:1-26; 28:16). Wherever Paul has taken leadership, Luke preferred the word "we" therefore, it can be assumed that he was with Paul in all those occasions.

The activities of Peter and Paul are narrated in this book. However, the author has written more about Paul, his preaching and his many journeys. It is explicitly explained how the gospel has changed the lives of the believers and this in turn brought forth changes in the social structure. The group of believers were one in mind and heart. None of them claimed anything of their own, but shared everything they had. Another noteworthy change was that the apostles engaged in prayers and preaching. To look after temporal matters they elected helpers who were full of Holy Spirit and wisdom. St. Luke reveals another important fact that Christianity took an independent route other than Judaism. The declaration that circumcision, the inviolable rite of Jews, is not necessary for Christians (Jerusalem Synod) makes way for this departure. The apostles made it clear that more than the bodily circumcision, the purity of heart is more important. Likewise, the social practices and rituals of Jews did not find a place in the life of the Christian. The Temple of Jerusalem and its many sacrifices were not pertinent in the Christian life. All around we can see that the believers were of one mind and they shared their properties for the common good. It is also seen that all disputes were solved then and there by the Holy Synod. A major part of this book describes the persecutions and afflictions

suffered by early Christians. In spite of all these the church grew day by day to greater glory, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The writer does not reveal his name anywhere. But St. Paul talks about Luke in Colossians 4 :14 and 2 Timothy 4 :11 Luke was a physician. He was not a Jew. Church historian Eusebius has revealed that Luke was a Greek. A picture of St. Mary drawn by Luke is kept in the Mansion of Mark at Jerusalem.

## LESSON 8

### WAITING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### Election of Matthias

After the Ascension of Jesus, as told by him, the disciples were waiting and praying for the Holy Spirit in the Mansion of Mark. There were 120 in that group. At the suggestion of St. Peter, they decided to ordain a person to the position which was vacated by Judas Iscariot. The address of St. Peter in this regard is noteworthy. He quoted psalms 69: 25 ;109: 8 to explain the fall of Judas Iscariot and declared that the person to be chosen to fill the vacancy should have two important qualities.

- (i) He should have followed Jesus from His baptism at Jordan River to his ascension ;
- (ii) He should be an eye -witness to the Resurrection of Jesus. They could have picked up a person ,but they left it to the will of God. They proposed two names - Joseph, who was called Barsabbas( also known as Justus) ,and Matthias. They prayed and drew lots to choose between the two men and the one chosen was Matthias, who was added to the group of 11 Apostles. The “Matthias” means the gift of God.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the Ascension of Jesus, as promised, Holy Spirit was bestowed upon the 120 people tarrying for the gift . It was the day of Pentecost, which was one of the festivals of the three important festivals of the Jews. It occurs on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after passover. Pentecost means 50<sup>th</sup>. It was known as the festival of first fruit and also festival of harvest. In Old Testament it is mentioned in Tobit 2:1 and 2 Maccabees 12 : 32. A great multitude of people from different parts of the world, speaking different languages had come to Jerusalem to Participate in the festival.

Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the spirit enabled them to speak. The worshippers who had come from every country in the world heard this thunder like noise and they came together. They were amazed and marvelled when they heard the believers speak in their own tongues. It was the beginning of the Holy Spirit reaching up to every person. The Upper Room (Mansion at Sion) is considered as Second Babel. In the First Babel language was mixed up and in the Second Babel the languages were united.

The people gathered there talked in different manner as to what has happened. Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd. This can be considered as the first sermon in the Christendom. This speech can be divided into four parts:

1. Acts 2 :14 -21, He explains that the event was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel. It was the third hour of the day. In festival days it was the time to begin the service .Jews would not drink nor eat anything before that prayer. Therefore, it is illogical to think that they were drunk.
2. Verses 22- 28: Peter Explains the events and how God in accordance with his own plan had already decided that Jesus would be handed over to the Jews and they in turn let sinful men to crucify him. God raised him from death, setting him free from its power, because it was impossible for death to hold him a prisoner. : Peter then quotes Psalms 16: 8-11.

**3** Verses 29 -36 : As stated in Psalms 13 : 11, Jesus is the descendant and heir to the throne of David and God has raised him and made him Lord and Messiah. Peter convinced them that Jesus is the Messiah whom Jews were waiting for.

**4.** Verses 38 - 41 : Peter appealed to them to turn away from sins and urged them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ so that they may receive the Holy Spirit.

The preaching of St. Peter was so effective that about 3000 people were baptised and added to the church.

### **The first Church**

A picture of the first church can be seen in verses 41 -47. Four special features are noted :

1. Entry into the church is through baptism only.
2. Those who were added on to the church were engaged in prayers with the apostles and they participated in the Eucharist.
3. They participated in prayers in the Temple at Jerusalem
4. They considered their belongings common.

## **LESSON 9**

### **THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

#### **Church in Jerusalem : (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> chapters)**

Even though believers used to assemble together after Pentecost they have not abandoned their relation with Jerusalem Temple. Many miracles and wonders occurred through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. One day Peter and John went to the temple at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour (3.p.m ) for prayer. There at the Beautiful Gate, they cured a person who was lame from birth. Later Peter spoke to the people at Solomon's Porch, told them to get atonement for the grave crime they committed through ignorance by repentance and turning to God. As Peter spoke about resurrection, Sadducees were angry at him; because they did not believe in resurrection. Some priests, the officer in charge of the Temple guards and some Sadducees came and arrested Peter and John and put them in jail until the next day. When released, Peter preached again and about 5000 people joined the church. Next day Sanhedrin met and questioned Peter and Paul. The members of the Council were amazed at the learning of Peter and John; who were ordinary men with no education. It was impossible to punish them because the people were all praising God for what had happened. So they warned them strictly not to speak in the name of Jesus and set them free.

The apostles returned to their group and told them all that had happened. They all prayed together. When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness. (We should have this attitude in our lives)

The group of believers was one in mind and heart. They all shared with one another everything they had. There was no one in the group who was in need. However, Ananias and Sapphira were deceitful in their dealings. (5:1-11) They were unfaithful to the Holy Spirit. They were punished not for keeping a part of the money with them, of the sale of their property, but for hiding it and for lying to the apostles. Sapphira got one more chance to repent but she did not make use of it. St. Peter observed it as a grave mistake. It was necessary to remove all deceit and lie from the early church. It reveals God's attitude to those who are deceitful and wicked.

Many miracles and wonders were being performed among the people by the apostles. All the believers met together in Solomon's Porch. Sick people were brought in to the streets and placed on beds and mats so that at least the shadow of Peter might fall on them, as he passed by and they were all healed. The High Priest and his companions and members of the local unit of the Sadducees became extremely jealous and they arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. That night an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates and set them free. At dawn they entered the Temple and started teaching. A full meeting of the Sanhedrin was convened and the apostles were brought before them for questioning. Peter by the power of the Holy Spirit

## LESSON 10

### ST. PAUL

St. Paul is the architect of constructed the church of the Lord in the important centers of the world in that age. He was born at Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia. His father was a rich Pharsee. He was a Roman Citizen by birth . He was influenced by Hebrew, Greek and Roman culture. He completed his education at the university of Tarsus. He learned Law from Gamaliel, a teacher of Law and a highly respected person. It was the custom of the Jews that all the youth must learn a trade. Saul learned tent making. At the age of 28; he became a member of the Sanhedrin, the supreme council of the Jews.

He was zestful in observing the Law of God. He was enthusiastic in persecuting the Christain Church. The martyrdom of Stephen would have caused uneasiness in his mind. Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the followers of the Lord. He set out with a few people with letters of introduction to the synagogues in Damasscus, so that if he could find out any followers of the church, he could arrest and bring them back to jerusalem. As soul was approaching the city of Damascus, he had a vision. A dazzling light from the sky flashed around him. He fell down to the ground and heard a voice, “Saul, Saul! Why do you prescute me?” “Who are you, Lord?” he asked. “I am Jesus whom you prescute,” the voice said. “But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do”. When he got up he could not see anything. He was led to the house of Judas at straight street. For three days he fasted. At God’s guidance a disciple named, Ananias came to Saul and placed his hands on him and prayed. His vison was restored . He received baptism

After his baptism Saul wet to the desert for keeping communion with God and for meditation for some time. He learned many things from the Lord. Saul returned to Damascus a totally changed man and full of enthusiasm. He went into the synagogue and preached the good news. Jews were very angry and wanted to kill Saul. One night Saul’s followers carried him to the city gate and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket. From there he went to Jerusalem.

Saul reached Jerusalem and desired to meet the believers. They were afraid of him and could not believe that he is a disciple. Then Barnabas, a co-worker of Saul, explained to the apostles what had happened to Saul. He stayed with St. Peter for 15 days. Saul went all over Jerusalem preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. He also talked and argued with Greek speaking jews. Here also the Jews tried to kill him. So the believers sent Saul toCaesarea and then away to Tarsus. After a few days Barnabas went to Tarsus to bring Saul to Antioch. From Antioch Saul started his missionary works.

The afflictions of the church started with the martyrdom of Stephen. Saul repented and joined the church. St. Luke gives great importance to the repentance of Saul. He describes it in two occations Acts 22: 1-21 and 26: 2-29. Saul is equally important as other apostles, who had seen Jesus. Like other disciples Jesus himself appointed Saul and ordained him an episcopa. He received the gift to do miracles and wonders. Thus Saul great scholar became apostle St. Paul. He was a the church so far consisted of members without much education. Paul’s entry into the church changed this situation.

## LESSON 11

### ACTIVITIES OF ST.PETER

The leadership of St. Peter in the church is quite explicit. He did everything in accordance with the trust Jesus had in him. We have seen in previous chapters how he had carried out his activities as the leader, in choosing Matthias, on Pentecost, in Jerusalem Temple, picking up helpers for the church, bestowing Holy Spirit to Samaritans, and so on.

The church expanded in the nearby places of Jerusalem and Peter went all round to strengthen the believers. At Lydda he cured a paralysed person, Aeneas (9: 32-34). Lydda is a village west of Jerusalem. It is very near to the harbour of Joppa. While in Joppa Peter raised a woman, Tabitha. Peter stayed with Simon, a tanner in Joppa. Many began to join the church due to his activities at Lydda and Joppa which were

predominantly a places of Gentiles. It is how St. Luke explains the spread of the gospel among Gentiles.

On Pentecost day the Jews in and out of Israil received the gospel. Later, Samaritans, Etheopeans and other gentiles received the gospel.

St. Peter went toCaesarea to baptise Cornelius who was a captain in the Roman army. Through his preaching Gentiles also received grace, as did the Jews. This has become an important event in the activities of St.Peter.

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he was accused of admitting believers to the church without circum-cision. He explained everything that has taken place; and convinced them that it was the will of God. They all praised God for giving repentance and salvation to Gentiles.

Later Peter went to Antioch and established divine regalia. Here it is there the belivers were first called as 'Christians'. Antioch was the centre of Greek learning and culture. It was also famous as a trade centre. It has business relations with Greece, Egypt, Syria and other important countries of the world. Business groups from different parts of the world used to come here. It was easier to travel to other parts of the world from Antioch. These facilities might have influenced Peter to establish the headquarters of the church; i.e.divine regalia in Antioch.

Herod Agrippa put Peter in the jail during the time of the Festivsal of Unleavened Bread. Herod planned to put him on trial in public after Passover. The king had taken precautions that Peter should not escape at any cost. The people of the church were praying earnestly to God for him. In the night before the public trial, while Peter was sleeping between two guards. An angel of the Lord woke him up. At once the chains fell off. The angel led him out through the first and second guard-post. When they came to the iron gate which opens into the city, it opened by itself. While they were walking through the road angel left him. St. Peter went to the Mansion of mark where the people were praying for him. He explained to the people what had happened there.

Peter travelled through Tyre, Sidon, Caesarea and other places and talked to believers to remain true to their faith. He reached Antioch and in 51 A.D Jerusalem. He was a key person in the synod of Jerusalem. There were many arguments and counter arguments at the Synod. When Peter stood up and spoke to them, they all kept silent, and accepted his opinion. Peter remained in Antioch for a long time and looked after the church. Later for his apostolic visit he went to many places including Corinth and Rome. Roman Emperor Nero was perscuting Christians in those days. Peter was arrested and imprisoned. He has written two epistles to the church from the prison. In29<sup>th</sup> of June 67 A.D, he was crucified at Rome. He requested that he be crucified upside down so that he can due kissing the feet of Jesus. Accordingly, he was crucified upside down.

## **LESSON 12**

### **THE CHURCH EXPANDS - THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST.PAUL**

(Acts Chapters 13&14)

When Barnabas and Saul reached Antioch, the prophets and teachers, by the inspiration of the Holy spirit, fasted and prayed, placed their hands on them and sent them off for preeching gospel. Thus Saul started his missionary journey from Antioch.

From Antioch, they reached the port of Selucia and sailed from there to the city of Salamis in the island of Cypress. There along with John Mark they preached the Word of God in the synagogues. Here St.Paul took his new name Paul means Small. They went all the way across the island to Paphos, the main city. The Governor of the island, Sergius showed interest to hear the word of God. A friend of the governeor, Elymas opposed it. An angered Paul rebuked him and made him blind for a short time. Seeing this, the governor heard the Word of God and became a believer. Paul and his companions sailed from Paphos and reached Perga, a

city in Pamphylia, where John Mark left them and went back to Jerusalem. They continued their journey from Perga and arrived in Antioch in Pisidia. When they Preached in the Synagogue good news, many became believers in the Lord. Some Jews were filled with jealousy and disputed what Paul had said and they insulted him. Barnabas and Paul then left for the cities of Lystra and Derbe in Konium. Where they preached the Good News.

In Lystra, one of the Listener man who had been lame from birth. Was cured by Paul looked straight at him and said in a loud voice. “ Stand up straight on your feet!” The man jumped up and started walking around. The astonished crowd believed that Paul and Barnabas were gods in human form. They called Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes. They prepared to Offer sacrifices in their honour. Paul and Barnabas told the people that they are ordinary human beings like them and the lame man was made well because of the power of God. They preached the Good News to them and many believed. Some Jews who came from Antioch and Pisidia and from Iconium; won the crowds over to their side, stoned Paul and dragged him out of the town, thinking that he was dead. When the believers gathered around him he got up and went back into the town. The next day he and Barnabas went to Derbe. They preached the Good news in Derbe and won many disciples. They went back to Lystra, to Iconium and on to Antioch in Pisidia. They strengthened the believers and encouraged them to remain true to the faith. In each church they appointed elders (priests), and with prayers and fasting they commended them to the Lord, in whom they had immense faith. They went to Pamphylia to Perga, to Attalia and from there they sailed back to Antioch. In Antioch they gathered the people and told them about their experiences and how God had opened the way for Gentiles to the faith. They stayed a long time there with the believers.

### **LESSON 13** **JERUSALEM SYNOD** **(ACTS 15: 1-33)**

The main point of disagreement in the early church was about Gentiles who accepted the faith. One Greek of the Gentiles who joined the Church has to undergo circumcision and follow all the Laws of the Jews, before they are Baptised. The other group opined that those who believed in Jesus Christ can become Church members without circumcision. Those who were being Baptised should keep away from idol worship and immoral life. To take a decision, elders of the church and Apostles convened a conference in Jerusalem in 51 A.D, known as the Jerusalem Synod. It was convened after the first missionary journey of Paul, but before the second journey started. St. Peter described his own experiences that the Gentiles received Holy Spirit as they heard the Gospel, even before they were Baptised. Then James brother of Jesus spoke supporting St. Peter. Family, the Synod decided that the believers from Gentiles need not take circumcision, but have to keep the moral laws. To convey this decision, they sent Judas and Silas along with Paul and Barnabas with a letter to Antioch. It was also decided in the Synod that Paul and Barnabas would work among the Gentiles and Peter, James and John will work among the Jews (Gal 2: 7, 8)

### **LESSON 14** **THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL**

**(Acts 15: 34-18 :22)**

After the Jerusalem Synod, St. Pauls discussed with Barnabas about visiting the same places they visited last. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark also along with them who on mid way had left them in the previous journey. Paul was against this. So without Paul, Barnabas and John Mark went to the island of Cypress. Paul decided to take silas and went through Syria and Cilicia. They travelled to Derbe and Lystra. There they met a christian, Timothy. His mother Eunice and grand mother Lois were Jewish; who had accepted the faith earlier. His father was a Greek. Timothy was a good man to the believers in Lystra and Iconium. Paul took Timothy as his co-worker. They wanted to go to the province of Bethynia, but the Holy Spirit led

them to Mysia and to Troas. Here Paul saw a vision in which he saw a Macedonian standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" Knowing that it was God's intention to preach the Good News to the people there, they left by ship from Troas and sailed straight across to Samothrace and the next day to Neapolis. From there they went inland to Philippi, a city of the first district of Macedonia.

Paul talked to the women who came to the river bank there. This was the first preaching of the gospel in Europe. Lydia from Thyatira, who was a dealer in purple cloth, accepted faith and was baptised. She was the first Christian to be baptised in Europe. She accepted Paul and his companions at her residence. There was a young servant woman who had an evil spirit that enabled her to predict the future. She earned a lot of money for her owners by telling fortunes. Paul sent the evil spirit out of her. When her owners realized that their chance of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the authorities. They tore the clothes off Paul and Silas and ordered them to be whipped and imprisoned.

At about midnight, while Paul and Silas, listened by other prisoners were praying and singing hymns to God, a violent earthquake shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the doors were opened, and the chains fell off from all prisoners. The stunned jailer saw the prison door opened. He thought that the prisoners had escaped; so he pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul shouted at the top of his voice, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!".

The jailer was astonished, He rushed in, and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. He asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved." They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your family." (Acts 16 : 30-31) The jailer took them to his house and treated them well. The jailer and his family believed in Jesus Christ and they were baptised. In Europe the first Gentile family who was baptised is that of the jailer. Next morning the authorities decided to set them free. When they knew that they were Roman citizens, they were afraid of treating them cruelly without trial. The authorities apologised to Paul and Silas and asked them to leave the city. They visited Lydia's home once again, and travelled on through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica.

They stayed in the house of Jason and preached in the synagogue regularly. Many Jews and Greeks accepted faith. There also, the enemies of the Gospel made troubles and attacked the house of Jason. To avoid further troubles, the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. There the people listened to the message with great eagerness and accepted faith. Those people who made troubles at Thessalonica came to Berea also. So Paul was sent alone to Athens, the cultural centre of Greece. He preached in the synagogue there and also in the city council, Areopagus. There a council member, Dionysus and some others accepted faith.

Next Paul went to Corinth, a centre of business and higher education. Paul stayed with Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who were also tent makers like Paul. Silas and Timothy joined Paul there. There their work among the Jews did not go well. So they left and went to live in the house of a Gentile, named Titus Justus, and worked among the Gentiles.

One night Paul had a vision in which the Lord said to him, "Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking and do not give up, for I am with you, for many in the city are my people." So Paul stayed there for a year and a half, teaching the people the Word of God. During this time Paul wrote the first letter to Thessalonians.

From Corinth Paul and his friends including Aquila and Priscilla boarded a ship from Cenchrone, an Aegean sea port to Ephesus, the most important city in Asia Minor. Before long they sailed from Ephesus and arrived at Caesarea. From there they reached Jerusalem by road and greeted the church there and went to Antioch. There is not much information available about the last leg of the second missionary journey of Paul, obviously because Luke was not in the group.

**LESSON 15**  
**THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST.PAUL**  
(Acts 18: 23-21 :26)

Paul returned to Antioch after his second missionary journey. He stayed there for some time. He desired to visit the churches he established. From Antioch he went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia strengthening all the believers, and reached the city of Ephesus. A Jew named Apollos had come to Ephesus and preached the good news. Apollos learned more about Jesus from Aquila. He then went to Corinth. When Paul reached Ephesus, he prayed for the believers and put his hands on them. They all received the Holy Spirit. Paul was in the synagogue for about three months. When some Jews turned against him, Paul went to the lecture hall at Tyrannus and preached there for two years. Here Paul wrote the First letter to the Corinthians. God was performing unusual miracles through Paul. Even handkerchiefs and aprons he had used helped to cure the sick and to drive evil spirits. Many magicians also repented and brought their books together and burnt them in public.

In Ephesus there was a great temple of goddess Artemis, Silver models of the goddess were made and were sold at great profit. The leader of the silver smiths was one Demetrius. Paul had preached that hand made gods are not gods at all as a result the demand for the idols diminished and this ruined their business. So Demetrius and his friends caused a riot in the city. The town clerk was able to calm down the mob, telling that the believers have not robbed the temple nor said anything against their goddess. After the uproar died down Paul called together the believers and with words of assurance left for Macedonia. Here he wrote the Second Letter to Corinthians.

After visiting the churches in Phillipi, Thessalonica and other places, Paul reached Corinth where he stayed for three months. Here he wrote letters to Galatians, Romans and 2 Thessalonians. He was getting ready to go to Syria. When he discovered that the Jews are plotting against him; he decided to go back through Macedonia. Paul reached Berea, Thessalonica, Phillipi and reached Troas in Asia Minor and they stayed there for a week. They were to return on a Monday. On the previous day, they gathered together for the Holy Communion. Paul talked to them until midnight as they were leaving next day. A young man named Eutychus got drowsy and fell down from the third story and died. Paul went down and threw himself and hugged him. The young man regained life and they took him home and were greatly comforted.

From Troas Paul went to Assos by land. From there he sailed to Miletus, not touching Ephesus to save time. The elders of the church at Ephesus went to Miletus and met Paul. He was sad and spoke to them emotionally that he would not get an occasion to see them again. He warned them to keep watch on those preaching false doctrine. When he finished he knelt down and prayed. They were all crying as they hugged him and kissed him good-bye. He reached Tyre by sea. There Paul found some believers and stayed with them for a week. By the power of the Spirit, they told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Paul, however, continued his journey and reached Caesarea. Here a prophet, Agabus told Paul that in Jerusalem he will be arrested and handed over to the Gentiles. Paul said he was prepared not only for the arrest in Jerusalem but even to die there for Lord Jesus.

Paul was received warmly by the believers at Jerusalem. Paul visited James, brother of Jesus and chief of the believers in Jerusalem. Other elders also came there and Paul gave a complete report of every thing that God had done among the Gentiles through him. Here the third Missionary journey of Paul ended.

## LESSON 16

### THE LAST DAYS OF ST. PAUL

(Acts 21: 27-28 :30)

Some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the Temple, along with Trophimus of Ephesus. They assumed that Trophimus had also entered the temple along with St. Paul. They stirred up the whole crowd. The commander of the Roman troops received information that the whole city was rioting. At once the commander took some officers and soldiers and rushed down to the crowd and rescued Paul. With the permission of the commander, Paul spoke to the people and described to them, the experience he had in Damascus. The crowd shouted to kill Paul. So the commander decided to whip Paul to prove his crime. When the commander came to know that he was a Roman citizen, he was afraid and released Paul. To save him from the crowd, Paul was kept at the fort. That night the Lord stood by Paul and said, "Don't be afraid! You have given your witness for me here in Jerusalem, and you must also do the same in Rome." (23:14).

Some Jews met and took a vow that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. But the son of Paul's sister came to know of this plot and informed Paul and also the commander. In the night itself Paul was sent to Governor Felix with a letter under guard of the soldiers.

The High Priest Ananias went to Caesarea with some elders and a lawyer named Tertullus and appeared before Felix and made their charges against Paul. The Governor understood that Paul had not committed any crime against Roman laws. He did not punish Paul. He did not either set him free. Paul remained in prison in Caesarea for two years. Parcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor. Felix wanted to gain favour with the Jews so he left Paul in prison. The chief priests and the Jewish leaders brought their charges against Paul before Festus, and begged him to bring Paul to Jerusalem. Festus asked Paul about it. Paul knew that he would never get justice in Jerusalem. So ultimately he used his right as a citizen of Rome to appeal to the Emperor. His appeal was granted. In the meantime King Herod Agrippa reached Caesarea to visit the Governor Festus, and he desired to listen to Paul. When Festus heard the speech of Paul before King Agrippa, he was astonished and shouted that the great learning of Paul was driving him mad (26:24). King Agrippa knew that Paul had not done anything for which he should die or be imprisoned. Festus could not release Paul as he had appealed to the Emperor.

Festus sent Paul and some other prisoners to Rome from Caesarea by the sea under Julius, an officer of the Roman regiment. When the ship reached Phoenix, a harbour in Crete, Paul warned them that further voyage would be dangerous; there would be great damage to the cargo and to the ship, and loss of life as well. Without giving much attention to this warning, they continued their voyage. Soon a strong wind blew down and the ship lost control and was afloat for 14 days without knowing where they were heading. The passengers were so afraid that they would perish. They could not eat any food. Paul strengthened them saying that the God whom he worships, had told him that no one would perish there. Paul took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, broke it and began to eat. They took courage, and every one of them ate some food. The ship hit and broke in the Island Malta. Some swam to the shore. Some held on to the planks and broken pieces of the ship; and they all reached safely on land. It was so cold that they made a fire and were warming themselves. Paul gathered a bundle of sticks and put them in the fire. A snake came out and fastened itself to his hand. The natives who saw it said Paul was a murderer and fate would not let him live. Paul shook the snake from the wrist without being harmed. They were waiting to see Paul's death. But nothing happened. Now they said, "He is a God." Through his prayers many people were cured including the father of Publius, the chief of the Island.

From Malta they travelled in another ship and passed through Syracuse, Rhegium and Puteoli and reached Rome. Paul got permission to stay in a rented house along with a soldier. He had freedom to receive guests and also to preach. He stayed there for two years and later he was set free. (In the Acts of the Apostles the events that have happened in the life of St. Paul up to his stay of two years in Rome have been recorded.) During his stay there, he wrote the Epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and to the Philippians.

It is believed that when St. Paul was set free in 63 A.D., he travelled to Asia Minor, Macedonia and so on. During this time, he wrote the First Epistle to Timothy, to Titus and the last Second Epistle to Timothy, in 65 A.D. St. Paul was again arrested and imprisoned. During the persecution of Nero, it is recorded that St. Paul was beheaded in 67 A.D. and became a Martyr.

## PART IV HOLY FAITH

### LESSON 17

#### ST. VIRGIN MARY : MOTHER OF GOD

St: Mary is reckoned at the Mother of God from the very beginning. She earned that title “Mother of God” by giving birth to God. God - the Son - the II<sup>nd</sup> in the Trinity, has taken human form from Virgin Mary and was born as human being. “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God”. Indeed Virgin Mary who was the mother of this word that was God deserves the title “Mother of God”.

It is Elizebeth, the mother of John the Baptist, filled with Holy spirit, firstly reckoned Virgin Mary “The Mother of my Lord”. (In the Old Testment God is adressed as Lord). (“Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?”) From the above statement one can deduce that it is perfectly proper to adress St: Mary as the Mother of God. If it is not done it is the negation of God’s plan of redemption.

“From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed” (The moment she concieved God Luke 1:48).

It is God’s Justice that all generations should praise St:Mary blessed. It is not wilful comment made by Mary that “all generations will call me blessed”; it is the work of the Holy Spirit. The angel of the Lord informed her that “the Holy spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”. Indeed sacred God dewlles only in sacred places”.

Believing the words of the angel, when Mary surrendered herself as the maid servant of the Lord, she should live according to the liking of the Lord rather than her own interest, so Mary’s words that all generations will call me blessed is God’s desire. Otherwise she had to utter a lie carrying God in her womb, we know the experience of Eve telling a lie carrying God in her mind. Mary has not done any such vices.

Mary conceived, from he Holy Spirit, without breaking her virginity (Luke; 1:35; Mathew: 1:20; Isiah: 7:14) When Joseph doubted all these things the angle of the Lord appeared and told him “Joseph the son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call him Jesus”.

Mary who had given birth to the Son of God have had no other children. The brothers of Jesus on whom Bible speaks (Math :12:47, Mark :3:32) are the children of Joseph by his I<sup>st</sup> marriage.

If She had other children, While Hanging on the Cross, Jesus would not have entrusted her to St:John and he would not have accepted her in his house. Her children would not have agreed to it.

The I<sup>st</sup> Christian Church established by the disciples in Jerusalem is named after St:Mary. Historical records tells us that she departed from this world in 63 A.D.

#### SAINTS

The aim of incarnation itself was to provide purity to the impure human race. God had commanded that “Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, you shall be Holy: for I the Lord your God am Holy”. (levi: 19:2). “You shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an Holy Nation”, (Exod: 19:6)

This purification can be attained only through Jesus Christ, and those who are purified through Jesus Christ are known as saints: Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet. Jesus advised Peter that “If I do not wash you, you have no part with me”. Then Peter begged Jesus to wash not only his feet but also his hands and Head” (John 13:10)

Saints are those who are purified by God and merged with the Lord. The saints who attains purity in this world and dies, continues, to be saints after death; because God has commanded Moses that” I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob” (Ex:3:6) and Jesus has said “For he is not a God of the dead, but of the Living” (Luke: 20:28)

So death is not an end, it is a change from one state to another. Those who leads a pure life in this world

can continue the same in the other world. Since God is the God of the living, the departed ones also continues to live Jesus has said “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad” (John: 8:56). Abraham died generations before and that immaculate Abraham saw and rejoiced the days of Jesus.

Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. They were departed saints. They talked with Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem and the Cross. From this one can conclude that the departed saints are alive and they can see and speak about future events in advance.

The saints in the earth are noble, Says Psalms (16:3) Saints abideth in the Lord, because they are sanctified in the words of Jesus (J:15:4). Saints are the light of the world, because they followed the Lord. Saints have no death since they have attained eternal life Born again, not of Corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lived and abideth for ever. (I Peter : 1:23)

From all this one thing is clear, the saints of the Lord who lived in this world are his dear ones and after death continues as saints, and remains, dearest to the Lord. They know in advance the things that are happening in this world and advice us in advance. “Let the memory of the just be for Long Life”.

#### **PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTED SOULS**

There is no prayer in the church for the dead. By death we mean departed. Departed means a transfer from one place to another. All the prayers in the church are for the departed souls.

The death of a believer is compared with a sleep, a slumber. Lazarus died and was buried. After 4 days, standing near his grave, Jesus told Martha and Mary that Lazarus “shall rise again”. When they were going to the house of Lazarus Jesus told his disciples that Lazarus is sleeping (J:11:11). Jesus told them “I am the resurrection and life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live (J: 11:25)

So when a believer dies, the inscription behind his grave reads thus “So and so sleeps in the Lord”. Never it is written dead. One can awake the man who is sleeping, that is why Jesus said” I go, that I may awake him from sleep” (J: 11:11)

It is because Lazarus was sleeping, that he came out of the grave when Jesus summoned him.

In certain books and communion rites, one can see dead. It is only spoken language. It is indeed means departed “The Lord always keeps his promise to the living and the dead”. “Whether we live or die, we are the Lords”. “Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lords. For to this end Christ both died and rose” (J: 14:8-9) In that case the departed ones are still alive in other world.

Those who are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God. (R: 8:14) If we are the children of God, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (R: 8:17). If we have hope in Christ only in this life, we are most miserable of all men (I :Cor: 15:19)

St: Paul tells us that all men should pray for each other and enquire the goodness of others. Even though he was absent in flesh, he could be with them in spirit and enjoy their steadfastness in faith:

“Be joyful always, pray at all times. Be thankful in all circumstance. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus”. (I Thess: 5: 16:16-18)

“God did not choose us to suffer his anger, but to possess salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us in order that we might live together with him, whether we are alive or dead when he comes”. (I Thes 5: 9-11)

It is the duty of every believer to pray for the spiritual growth and welfare of others. St: Paul usually prayed for the spiritual growth and welfare of thers. He prayed for his dear departed ones”

“May the Lord show mercy to the family of Onesiphrus May the Lord grant him his Mercy on that day” (II Timothy 1: 16-18).

Due to the above reasons the prayers that are performed by the church for the departed ones is proper and scriptural.

#### **4). THE CROSS**

Cross is the symbol of salvation. It is the symbol of the Lord who died and resurrected on Good Friday, we salute the cross on Good Friday with a supplication “We salite the Cross that has given salvation for our soul”. It is Jesus who had achieved salvation for our souls through the cross The sacrificial death of God - the

son - in the gallows is the plan of salvation prepared by God to save to and retain the human race who had violated Gods commands and had become a slave to the sin. The human race was saved from death by the sacrificial death of Jesus, the unblemished Lamb of God,

### **WHY DEATH IN THE CROSS WAS SELECTED**

The plan of salvation that God had prepared for the redumption of human race was noble and congruent with God's Justice. When man committed the sin there was a tree in the form of a matter, the tree of knowledge, that distinguishes the vice and virtue. So a matter, a tree, was selected to cure a sin that was committed by means of a matter, is perfectly justifiable. Eve-an women was responsible for the fall of the human race. So God decided that there should be a woman in the redumption plan, ie, virgin Mary. God had commanded that man should not eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. But he violated that command and ate and succumbed to death. So God decided that only a man who obey's Gods command can bring redumption for the Human race. That man is Jesus Christ.

"He that is hanged is accured of God" (Duet: 21:23). When Jesus voluntarily, bearing the sin of the human race accepted the cross, he became accursed before God. When Jesus voluntarily took over the sins of the human race, man received salvation from sins. Sacrificing one's own life for his friend is the greatest manifestation of love. Sinless Jesus, took over the sins of the humanity, fulfilled the laws of justice, obeyed all the commands of God; with his stainless blood, offered sacrifice to God and the curse of mankind was removed forever.

If one who is hanged is accursed before god, Jesus has to hang over the tree to take over the curse of the Human race and to become accursed before God. Then only human race will get permanent total salvation. The Prophets had mentioned earlier on the death of Jesus on the Cross."My servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astoined at thee. His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isaiah: 52:13, 14). "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath born out griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. His soul an offering for sin" (Isaiah : 53:3-6; 10)

Isaiah has prophesied here on the torments and death of Jesus. Jesus has stated in advance on the nature of his death. Just like Moses had lifted the serpant in the wilderness, the son of man must be lifted up. "That who ever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life". (John 3:15)

Moses had lifted up a brass snake in the wilderness in a wood (stick) at the centre of the encampment, so that every body could see it. When a person bitten by a snake looked on the brass snake with faith, escaped from death. Just like if a person looks upon a cross with faith shall escape from death; "They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed". (Paslms 34:5)

Jesus performs this redumption rite as per the Divine will, by his death on the Cross. Even the worst accused is entitled to redumption through the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. That is why the Church respects the cross as symbol of redumption.

## PART V HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

### LESSON 18 :IMPERFECT UNITY AND ITS RESULTS

The Hon: High Court of Kerala, gave judgements in favour of the Patriarchate community in its judgements in 1946, 51 and 1956, in the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church litigations. However the Hon: Supreme Court invalidated these judgements on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1958. To achieve perpetual peace in the sacred church, His Holiness Yacob III, The Patriarch of Antioch issued a command to end the 50 year old litigations. The union between the two parties have been formally declared achieved on December 16<sup>th</sup> 1958 in the Old Seminary Kottayam. The representative of His Holiness in Malankara, His Grace Elias Mor Julius handed over to His Grace Geevarghese II<sup>nd</sup> of the Catholicose party the command of His Holiness recognising the latter as the Catholicose of the East. The Acceptance letter from the Catholicose was also handed over to the Patriarch through H:G:Mor Julius.

The sudden unity that was achieved without farsighted thinking, or clear procedures or proper action plans failed to produce perpetual peace. Several insults and many incidents defying the Holy see of Antioch from the Catholicose party produced uneasiness in the Church again. The Antiochean Syrian movement was started in June 5<sup>th</sup> 1959 to protest the stance of the Catholicose party.

Baselius Geevarghese II<sup>nd</sup> expired in 1964. In the very same year itself H: H: Yacoob III<sup>rd</sup> visited Kerala and withdrew the suspension against Augan Themothius, Catholicose elected and elevated him to the Prelacy.

Augan I<sup>st</sup> and his supporters began to move against the Holy see shortly after the return of H:Holiness to Antioch. It was a shock to those who expected peace and unity in the Church.

The Catholicose party tried to impose 3 important ideas.

1. Malankara Church is an independent entity with a Head of its own but as per the decision of the Holy Synod of Nicene, Malankara Church is an inseparable part of the Apostolic throne of St:Peter in Antioch and all the East.
2. The Catholicose has ascended the throne of St:Thomas just like the Patriarch has ascended the throne of St.Peter.

No doubt, we are the children of St:Thomas. However there is no tradition to prove that St: Thomas has established any Holy See or any priestly followers in Malankara. On the contrary there are many evidences to prove that from ancient time onwards Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church have had priestly and spiritual succession from the Holy See of Antioch.

3. The Patriarch and the Catholicose are Equals. In the priestly order Catholicose is subordinate to the Patriarch.

The Catholicose party tried to impose a constitution, which they have drafted, on the churches belonging to the Patriarchate Party. It has had no approval from the traditions and canons of the Church. H: Grace Geevarghese Mor Gregorious, Metropolitan of Angamali (Vayaliparambil) was a powerful and capable governor for the honest believers. He departed from us in 1966, inflicting a heavy blow to the Holy Church. He was buried in the Thrikunnathu Seminary at Alwaye. After his departure the Catholicose party began to impose their ideas and programmes more vehemently in our churches and publicly began to deny the powers and authority of the Holy See of Antioch. The Catholicose issued an order that the Malankara representative of the Holy See H. Grace Aprem Thimothious should not be received in the churches in Malankara. However the representative of the Holy Church was given tumultuous welcome in the churches of the honourable believers. Stunned at this, the Catholicose party demanded that His Holiness should recall the representative. However due to the meddling of the Catholicose party, the application given by H:G:Aprem Thimothius for the extension of his visa was rejected by the Govt: and he returned to the Holy See. Those Churches, Priests and believers who opposed these actions of the Catholicose were ill treated and intimidated by Civil and

Criminal litigations.

In 1972, the true believers formed an association for the protection of true faith; the Jacobite Syrian Christian Association. This association regularly informed His Holiness the developments in the Malankara Church. The leading Priests of the church and the leading citizens of the state tried their best to solve the crisis. But the Catholicose party was adamant in their stand and refused to make any concession in their stand or to adjust themselves with His Holiness. This forced His Holiness, the true shepherd of the Church, to take necessary steps for the existence of the Malankara Church.

## **LESSON 19**

### **RESSURRECTION OF THE CHURCH**

Eventhough His Holiness, through paternal warnings had advised repeatedly to correct their mistakes like the anti-Nicene stand or Malankara see and hostile advises, they refused to do so. All the Bishops except H.G.Paulose Mor Philexenos and Abraham Mor Clemis had crossed over to the Catholicose side from the mother church. As a result H:Holiness being the supreme head of the church took decisive decisions. His Holiness consecrated learned scholar Kadavil Dr: K.P.Paul Ramban as Paulose Mor Athanasius in September 1<sup>st</sup> 1973 at Demascus and appointed him as the missionary Bishop of Evangalestic Association of the East as per the request of the Malankara Church, His Holiness consecrated on 24<sup>th</sup> February, most Rev: P.M.Geevarghese, the vicar of *Simhasana* church Perumpilly as Geevarghese Mor Gregorious, and most Rev: C.M.Thomas, the chaplin of the Medical Mission Chapel and the organising secretary of M. M Hospital Kolenchery as Thomas Mor Dionasious on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1974 at Damasuss. V: Rev: George Kurian was consecrated as Kuriakose mor Koorilos on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1975. His Holiness consecrated Madappat Yacob Ramban as Yacob Mor Julius and appointed him as the Bishop of the Simhasana Churches. His Holiness also consecrated . Fr.C.M. Thomas Seetharkuzhy as Thomas Mor Osthateius and appointed him as assistant Bishop for Kandanad Diocese.

A new suit was filed by Kottayam Catholicose and his associates against the prelates, priests and the leading personalities of the Holy Church. His Holiness repeatedly tried to convince Kottaym Catholicose and his associates about their wrong teachings and guidences. Since they refused to recant their stance against the Holy Bible, Canons and traditions. His Holiness suspended H.G. Augan Catholicose and his associate bishops from the Church, subject to the decision of the Holy Synod of the Syrian Church.

The universal Synod of the Syrian Church presided over by Patriarch His Holiness Ignatios Yacob III at Demascus on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1975. H.Holiness had sent summons notices to H:G Augan I and the associate bishops to attend and explain their stance before the Holy Synod. They refused. The Holy Synod was attended by H:G:Abraham Mor Clemis, H:G:Paulose Mor Athanasius, H.G.Geevarghese Mor Gregorious and H:G: Thomas Mor Dionysious from Malankara.

St. Thomas has never established a Holy See, from which springs out priestly virtuous boons from a conventional priestly traditions. Such a Holy see is the apostolic see of Antioch and all the east established by St.Peter and Jacobite Syrian Church in Malankara is a branch of that Syrian Orthodox church and has no independent entity. The Holy Synod further decided on the administrative arrangements in the Malankara church and the punishments that are to be given to H:G Augan I and other Bishops.

His Holiness has given one more chance to H:G Augan I and his associates to repent and return to the Holy Church. Since they refused to avail that opportunity, His Holiness issued command to remove them permanently from the Holy Church.

As per the decision of the Holy Synod H.H. Yacob III elevated H.G. Paulose Mar Philexenos as the Catholicose of the East, on 7<sup>th</sup> September at Damascus and renamed him as H.B. Mor Baselius Paulose II. The Church developed under the able leadership of his beatitude, the Arch Catholicose.

However so many criminal and civil suits were filled by the Methran party against the Arch Catholicose and the Bishops. They hoped to destroy the church through legal suffocation. Their aim was to destroy the

Patriarchate faction who stood firmly in the Holy Faith. By the grace of God without exhaustion, the Church developed.

The Sunday School Association was rejuvenated in 1974 and was given the name M.J.S.S.A. All other movements that existed before 1958 were received. The newly consecrated Bishops gave these movements able leadership.

## **LESSON 20**

### **THURUTHISSERY MEETING**

Malankara Jacobite Syrian Christain Association - a meeting of the representatives of all churches in Malankara was held in the Simhasana church at Thuruthissery, near Angamali on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1975. This meeting elected His Beatitude, Mor Baselius II, the Catholicose of the east as the Malankara Metropolitan. In addition it also elected a managing committee, working committee and other office bearers of the church and brought the church under an organised system. On the very same day at Thuruthessery, the Catholicose consecrated Rev. Samuel Ramban as Samuel Mor Philaxinos.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE MALANKARA CHURCH**

The administration of the Knadanad and Cannanite dioceses were under His Beatitude, the Catholicose and H:G:Abraham Mor Climis respectively. His Holines had already appointed Kadavil Paulose Mor Athanasious and H:GYacob Mor Julius as metropolitans for Evangelestic Association of the East and Simhasana churches respectively. Now Thomas Mor Dionysius, Geevarghese Mor Gregorious and Samuel Mor Philaxinos were appointed as Metropolitans for Angamali, Cochin and Malabar Dioceses resapectively. H.G Kuriakose Mor Kooriloos had already taken charge of Niranam, Thumpamon and Quilon diocese and Kottayam and outside Kerala diocese were under the control of His Beatitude. H.G. Thomas Mor Theophilos, Yacob Mor Thimotios and Philipose Mor Ivanius were also consecrated as Bishops by His Beatitude in St: Simons Church at Velloor on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1979.

#### **ALWAYE SCARE**

Under the supreme chairmanship of His Holiness teh Patriarch, under the control of H:B: the Catholicose, and under the strong leadership of the honourable prelates, the believers stood firm in their true faith. The most important incident of this period was the Alwaye scare of 1977- 78. The true believers staged an enduring strike to protest against the negation of the adoration before the tombs of the blessed Fathers in Thrikkunnathu Seminary Alwaye, one of the most important Holy places for the true believers in Kerala. It began with the arrest and torture of H:G: Thomas Mor Dionysius, without any provocation on 6th December 1977. On the same day itself, the believers who had assembled in Alway from various parts of Kerala were ruthlessly tortured by the police influenced by the Methran party. Many priests and believers who received injuries on that day are still alive in Kerala.

The hunger strike that was started on that day by H: G:Thomas mor Dionysius ended after 44 days, when the Metropolitans of the true Church entered and performed worships in Thrikunnathu Seminary Church. As a part of the strike, the mass rally organised by the true believers all over Kerala are definitely unforgettable and the sacrifices behind it is worthy to be remembered.

The Govt. constituted a special court to hear the false litigations that were filed by the Methran faction against the true believers.Honourable Justice T. Chandrasekara Menon heard the cases in High Court of Kerala The Judgement that was handed down after examining traditions and the History of the Church, justified the stand of the true believers. That important judgement which was pronounced on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1980

rejected the stand of the Methran party.

**LESSON 21**  
**MALANKARA VISIT OF**  
**H.H.MORAN MOR IGNATIUS ZAKKA I PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH**  
**H:H:Moran Mor Ignatius Yacob III passed away on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1980**

H:G:Severios Zakka, the Metropolitan of Bagdad was elected to succeed to the office of the Patriarch. He was elevated to the Apostolic see of St:Peter and to the Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East by His Beatitude, the Catholicose of the East, Baselius Paulose II, with the title Moran Mor Ignatius Zakka I. It is first time in the history of the Syrain Orthodox Church, that the Catholicose of the East, presided over the election and elevation of the Patriarch of Antioch.

After assuming office His Holiness has taken important decisions with respect to Malankara church. His Holiness summoned a meeting of the Universal Synod of the Syrian Orthodox church on 17-24 November 1981. His Beatitude the Catholicose and other important Bishops from malankara attended the meeting of the universal Holy Synod of the Syrian Orthodox church. The Holy Synod took important decisions for the betterment of the Malankara Church. These decisions were aimed to maintain the unity and progress of the Church. It also stressed the importance of maintaining the special relationship and obligations of the Malankara Church with the Holy see of Antioch which existed from the early centuries of Christianity.

The Malankara visit of His Holiness in February 1982 is an unforgettable event . The most important programme of this visit of His Holiness was to participate in the observance of the 50<sup>th</sup> memorial day celebrations of His Holiness Elias III, who is laid to rest at Manjinikara. His Holiness performed the Mooran Sacrement in St: Mary's church at Manarcadu Kottayam. His Holiness also consecrated :Fr: A C Abraham as Abraham Mor Severius at St: Thomas Church (Cheriyapally) Kothamangalam. In addition to that the Managing committee of the church presided over by His Holiness, formed an expert committee to prepare and draft a constitution for the church.

The II<sup>nd</sup> Malankara visit of His Holiness took place on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2000. This second apostolic visit was in connection with the Golden Jubilee celebrations of *Koobar Neethe Hakkemo* Abraham Mor Clemis, the Great Bishop of the East.

His Holiness visited Malankara for a third time in connection with the inauguration of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the consecration of His Holiness. The Mooron koodasa at St: Thomas Church (Cheriyapally) Kothamangalam, the inauguration of the Patriarchate centre at Puthencruz, and the Episcopal synod at St:George's Church Karingachira, are the important events of this visit.

The meeting of the central committee of the M.J.S.S.A held at Patriarchate centre Puthencruz on 24 September, 2004 under the chairmanship of His Holiness was a significant event in the history of the Sunday School Association.

**II<sup>ND</sup> Synod Of Mulanthuruthy**

The Syrian Christain Association was held at St:Thomas Church, Mulanthuruthy on 27 September 2004 and it was presided over by His Holiness This association is popularly known as the II<sup>nd</sup> Mulanthuruthy Synod.

**LESSON 22**  
**CONSECRATION OF ADDITIONAL BISHOPS**

Kunnankulam Panackal Joseph Ramban secretary to His Holiness was consecrated on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1984 as Benjamin Joseph Mor Osthathius and was given charge of Simhasana churches.

His Beatitude the Catholicose, Baselius Paulose II, with the permission of His Holiness consecrated Yuhanon Mor Philexenos as metropolitan for Malabar Diocese on September 12 1985 and Thomas Mor Themothios for outside Kerala on June 3 1991. His Holiness consecrated on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1990, Geevarghese

Mor Policarpus as Metropolitan for Evangeletic Association of the East and Joseph Mor Gregorius as Metropolitan for Kochi Diocese on January 16 1994 at Damascus. Kuriakose Mor Julius was consecrated for Simhasana church on September 27 1998.

The "Light Tower of Malankara" His Beatitude the Catholicose, Baselius Paulose II departed to the heavenly abode of Glory on September 1 1996. His Holy remains were laid to rest at Malecruz Dayara near Puthencruz. Due to the departure of His Beatitude the Catholicose, the episcopal Synod elected H:G: Geevarghese Mor Gregorios as the president of the synod in Malankara for maintaining the day to day administration of the church.

H:G:Geevarghese Mor Gregorios, the president of the episcopal synod expired on February 22,1999 and is laid to rest in the Simhasana church Perumpilly. Subsequently HG Thomas Mor Dionysius was elected as the president of the synod.

Meanwhile, Thomas Mor Athanasius, Yuhanon Mor Militius and Zacharias Mor Nicholavos betrayed the mother church and crossed over to the Methran Party.

His Holiness later consecrated Mathews Mor Ivanius, Markose Mor Koorilose on January 14, 2001 and Geevarghese Mor Athanasius, Kuriakose Mor Dioscoros. Yuhanon Mor Melitios and Geevarghese Mor Dionysius as Metropolitans on December 8 , 2002 at Damascus. Again late His Beatitude the Catholicose, Baselius Thomas I.consecrated HG Kuriakose Mor Theophilos and HG Elias Mor Athanasios at Puthencruz Patriarchal centre and HG Mathews Mor Theodosios, HG Pathrose Mor Osthatheose, HG Mathews Mor Aprem , HG Kuriakose Mor Eusebios and HG Dr.Geevarghese Mor Coorilose at St.Thomas Church North Parur. Hg Yeldho Mor Thethose, HG Markose Mor Chrisotomos, HG Kuriakose Mor Clemis, and HG Paulose Mor Irenios were later consecrated by His Holiness the Patriarch.

HG Benjamin Joseph Mor Osthatheos and HG Markose Mor Coorilose were expired and laid to eternal rest.

## LESSON 23

### ORDINATION OF HIS BEATITUDE THE CATHOLICOSE BASELIUS THOMAS I

The Malankara Association met on 27 December 2000 at Puthencruz elected H:G: Thomas Mor Dionysius as the Catholicose designate. The Malankara association which met again on July 6th 2002, elected the Catholicose designate as the Metropolitan trustee and requested His Holiness to ordain him as the Catholicose of the East. The Association also approved the constitution of the church. Later His Holiness the Patriarch, Ignatius Zakka Evas I elevated HG Mar Dionysius as the Catholicose on 26 July 2002, with title name H:B:Baselius Thomas I.

#### **101 Mass (*Nootiiyonninmel Qurbana*)**

The *101 Mass* is an event that is to be recorded in Golden letters in the history of Jacobite Syrian church. This unprecedented Holy mass was offered in connection with the centenary celebrations of St.Gregorios of Malankara (100th *dukhrano* of St: Gregorius Geevarghese Chathuruthil -Parumala Thirumeni) in the specially arranged 101 altar<sup>2</sup> at the Patriarchal centre, Puthencruz on November 2, 2002. The chief celebrant of this 101 Mass was H:B:Catholicose Baselius Thomas I.

## LESSON 24

### CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS

Cappadocian Fathers are the spiritual scholars contributed by Cappadocian church in the second half of the 4th century, when the church in Asia Minor was vexed by heretical teachings. They are Basil of Caesaria, his brother Gregory of Nyssa and his close friend Gregory of Nazianzus. Basil of Caesaria was an expert in work, Gregory of Nyssa was an expert in philosophy and Gregory of Nazianzus was an expert in preaching .

## **ST. BASIL OF CAESAREA**

St: Basil, was the greatest among the Cappadocian fathers, popularly called Second Athanasius. He was born in a rich Christian family in Caesarea in 330. A.D. His father Baselius was very popular in Cappadocia as a great preacher and his mother Emmelia was the daughter of a Christian martyr. His grandmother Makrina was a disciple of St: Gregory, *the wonder worker*. Basil who was a brilliant from his childhood earned primary education in native and foreign countries. There after he began his career as a language teacher. Due to lack of interest he relinquished his job as a teacher and dedicated himself to God. He sold his properties and distributed the amount to the poor and started a monastery at Arnase. He was the founder of the first monastery. When the number of disciples increased, he made rules and regulations for the monastery and invited his close friend Gregory of Nazianzus to the monastery. He became the Bishop of Caesarea in 372. A.D. His administration gave more importance to protection of true faith and social service. He was very keen in establishing hospitals for the sick, constructing homes for the poor and honouring the foreigners.

St Basil was a great writer. He wrote many books on liturgy , church regulations, interpretations and essays. Baselius rules and regulations are still followed by Greek monastic orders. His published letters are a proof of his deep knowledge.

## **ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS**

St: Gregory was born in Ariyansus near Nazianzus in Cappadocia in 330 A.D. Like St Basil, Gregory was born in an aristocratic and educated family. After the primary education in Caesarea, he went for higher education in foreign countries. While undergoing higher education in Athens, residing with Basil, he helped Basil to codify monastic rules. His aged father nominated him as his assistant.

St. Gregory, who reached Constantinople as per the invitation of true believers, succeeded in bringing back many believers who had crossed over to the false teachings of Arius. He was elected as the Bishop of Contanople in 381 A.D. However, to avoid a split in the church he decided to relinquish his office, due to the opposition of few opponents and retired from church administration. Until his death in 390 A.D, he was engaged in meditation and prayers.

His literary works in lecture, discourses and articles maintains world standard and many of these works are translated into various langiages.

## **ST. GREGORY OF NISSA**

St.Gregory was born as the second son of Emmelia and the renowned Baselius. His eldest brother St: Basil was his first teacher. He became the bishop of Nyssa in AD 372. Eventhough he couldn't shine as an administator he succeeded in retaining believers in Nicene faith. . He took an active part in the Holy Synod of Constantinople in 381 A.D.

St.Gregory has wrotten many books on faith. He has written more books than any other Cappadocian Fathers. He believed that christian life is an imitation of Divine character and since man was made in God's image, He also believed that Divine words are path finder to Divine thoughts. Any person who learns and copies the Divine thoughts, that has been presented by St:Gregory in his life can ascend to Divinity.

## PART II

### HOLY QURBONO SONGS

1. Dhaivajanani Dhanye Kanyaka Mariyam  
Thanu Poondoru Megham Nee Than ! Neethi-yin Sooryan  
Ujvalamai Sobha Parathiyorambaravum Nee !  
Dhrishttandhamathai Mosavarachadhivya-varanam Nee  
Bhoovanam- Samvahippone  
Periya Sa-reerika Radhavum Nee  
Karthruhithathal Thanmathavaythee-rnnoru Tharuni.  
Barekhmore Subuho.... Haleluyya
2. Dhaivajanani Kanye Nanadhisayil  
Ninnengal Melalarunnoralakal Neekkaname  
Sarvesasavidham Dhairamullorambe  
Thirusuthanarulum Dayayengalilaka-narthikka  
Soukkyam Ro-ghathurarelkkatte  
Vishamippo- raswasathayum  
Dhoorasthar Prathyaghamanam Moch-anamengalkkum
3. Nin Valsalar Panthirusleehar Prarthanamoolam  
Vazhthuka Natha Kripayale Pandhiru Masangal  
Vanneeduka Kalakalam Venal, Varsham  
Nanmakal Nathan Nalkatte, Vilabhoo-mikal Vilavum  
Bhalamoola-dhikal Valaranayi  
Vazhveerum - Vrishttiyumekaname  
Nirdhanaravasar Bhakshichu Nin Sthu-thi Padatte
4. Sthepanosin Vadhanerathettoru Peeda  
Kashthakal Chinthichen Njan Vismi-thanay Param  
Kallerukalelkkumpozhum Prarthichevum  
Ariyathivarithu Cheyyunnu Kshama Nal-kuka Natha  
Mrithinera- tharikalkkai Prarthi-  
choru Nath-nanuyojyan Dasan  
Thanprarthanayil Cherkkaname Karuna-mayanesu

5. Natha Nin Varavuvareykkum Sabhayil Ninum  
Makkalil Ninum Mor Thoma Smrithi Ma-ngeedaruthe  
Dayarakal Pallikaleenum Nanadisiyil  
Sthuthiyuyaratte Ninperkkay Vardhi-thamayenum  
    Sthuthiyuyare - Erenmar Vrintham  
    Bhoovi, Manujer-Sthothravumarppikkum  
Bhakthar Smrithi Visthreamakkum Thirunamathinnaye
  
6. Natha Mughapaksham Thellum Nin Vidhinera  
thillathathinaleepapi, Khedhi-kkunnattam  
Beekaramam Granththeenum Ninnude Neethi  
Enpizha Prakhyapikkumbol Nin Kri-padaya Cheyka  
    Ninkripa Nin - Neethiyodarthikkum  
    Enkuttam- Mochanavum Nedum  
Papam Cheythannelkkunnen, Dayatho-nnanamenmel.
  
7. Nyayesan Nishkkarunam Vidhi Cheytheadum  
Illa Thellum Mughapaksham Kaikkoo-liyumivide  
Shodhithamam Swarnnathekkal, Rathnathekkal  
Bhashakanangalkkanallo Thirumu-mbil Preethi  
    Nathayen- Kanneer Kaikkondi-  
    tten Papam - Kadavum Mochikka  
Kri-payalenmel Kaniyaname Dhaya Che-yyuka Natha
  
8. Njangalkkayavatheernnanathaye Naranaye theernnu  
Peedakalettiha Rakshicha Natha- Devesa  
Edanilekkadhamin Punaragamanam  
Nalkanaye Sapthamatham Bhoo-vil Nee Mevi  
    Nin Sarane- Vidhritharay Ninte  
    yuthanam-kamkshikkunnil  
Kanmashmellam Neekkaname Prabha-yil Cherkkaname

## SECTION 8

### STUDY OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

#### **F: OPEN CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST**

The open celebration of the Holy Eucharist begins with the unveiling of the Sanctuary from south to north. The prelate who offers the Holy Eucharist puts incense in the censor and fumigates the Holy Eucharist, and then around the Altar (*Thronose*) and Kisses all the four corners of the Altar. Nobody, not even the deacon who engages himself in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, is allowed to kiss the Altar at this time. The Deacon who assists the prelate in the celebration of the Holy Mass has to hold a candle in his left hand and places his right hand close to the chest and walk backwards in front of the prelate. If there are sufficient servers are present in the Sanctuary two should hold *Marvahthos* and they have to join the procession, one in the front and the other in the back. Both of them have to walk forward.

#### **DEACONS**

Deacons assist the priests in the Holy Eucharist. A full deacon (Mshamshono) should assist the prelate in the Holy Eucharist. If he is not present other deacons (Afudyaqno or Quroyo) in their order should assist the priest in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. If they are not available altar assistants who do not have any rank of deaconhood can assist the priest.

#### **Mzamrono**

They are a group of singers trained to sing liturgy hymns and they are in the control of the church choir. They should have taste in music and interest in worship. However the whole congregation is expected to say the response. Mor Yacob of Uraha has stated in the 95th rule that those who do not possess a sweet sound or are not versed in song should not make chaos by singing liturgy songs.

#### **DO NOT WALK TURNING YOUR BACK TO THE PRIEST**

Since the priest is celebrating the Holy Eucharist as representative of Jesus, Jesus himself is present in the Sanctuary. So no one is permitted to walk turning his back before Him. When frankincense is put in the censor, the Deacon with all respects has to kiss the right hand of the priest. While fumigating nobody is allowed to walk across the sanctuary except the Deacon. Every other person has to go around the Altar or to step down from the sanctuary to go to the other side. Whenever a person enters a sanctuary, he has to go around praying and kissing the Altar. One has to enter the sanctuary through the south and leave through the north.

At the time of fumigation if a highpriest is present in the sanctuary he has to fumigate at the Highpriest, and should kiss his hand or Sleebea.

The Deacon with censor has to stand a little north away from the priest during the Holy Mass. He has to be very careful on coal burning always in the censor. The spoon that is used to take frankincense from the incense pot should not be made dirty by using it, for stirring burning coal and thereby pasted by charcoal and melted frankincense.

#### **LINE UP IN THE SANCTUARY**

Every person has to stand in the sanctuary according to their order and seniority except the priest and the deacon who assist the priest. If those who are attending the sanctuary are of the same order, they have to stand according to age seniority, elders in the north and youngsters in the south. Bishops always stand in the northern side. If the Patriarch or the Catholicos are present they are also standing in the same order. If there is more than one Bishop they also have to follow the same rule. All the priests are also expected to follow the same rule. While reciting the prayers also the same rule should be followed.

## **RULES REGARDING RINGING OF BELLS**

Ringing church bells are not permitted under any circumstances when the open celebration of the Holy Eucharist is started. However ringing of small bells and *Marvathos* are permitted inside the sanctuary. Ringing of bells and fireworks during procession of the Mysteries, is highly objectionable and wrong. They are petty traditions insulting the Holy Eucharist and a crime against priests and faithfuls, who are immersed in prayers expecting salvation in the 2nd coming of the Lord and disturbance to their concentration.

## **EPISTLE READING**

While the priest says the Trisagion, the congregation should bow their head, sign cross on them, by saying sings “thou that was crucified for us, have mercy upon us”.

Before the reading from the Gospel there are two epistle readings. After singing “*Bhoovilasesham*”, (*the apostles elect.....*) the reader descends one step down in the northern part of the sanctuary, facing west, reads that day’s reading from either Acts of the Apostles or any one of the epistles written by one of the Apostles except St:Paul. The reader has to kiss the northern corner of the Altar before reading. Then he begins the reading by saying :” From the Acts of the Holy Apostles ( Or from the gebeal epistle of Name) *Habibai* (my beloved ones) *Barekmore*”. The deacon with a lighted candle in his lefthand, should stand on the left side of the reader and wave the censor

After singing the song ‘*Paulose Sleeho*’ ( Paul the apostle blessed) the reader reads the 2nd epistle reading from one of the epistles of St:Paul. Standing one step down in the southern corner of the sanctury, he reads the reading by saying ,” From the Epistle of the blessed apostle Paul to ( Name of the epistle) *Ahai* ( my brethern) *Barekmomore*. The deacon with a lighted candle in his lefthand, should stand on the rought side of the reader and wave the censor.

*Barekmore* means ‘Grant us Father ’/Bless us Lord. By saying *Barekmore*, one is begging the permission to make special requests or rites. So one cannot proceed with the prayers by letting out *Barekmore* wherever it should be said except those who has the the power to say ‘*Subaho...*’ (Glory be to the Father , Son and Holy Spirit). At the end of every Epistle reading before closing the book, the deacons has to kiss it and should say *Barekmore*.

## **READING OF THE EVANGELION**

Evangelion means Gospel (Good news). It is read from the four gospels of the New Testament. The words that are spoken by our Lord is read in the Evangelion. So everyone is must reach the church befor Evangelion.

The declaration by the deacon before Evangelion (“*Barekmore* .With calmness, awe and modesty we must listen and hear the living word of God that is in the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ that is read to us”) illustrates the greatness of its importance.This request is made to all who attends the worship except the celebrant. The celebrant offers blessings of peace to the congregation before and after the reading of the Gospel. This indicates that one who listens to the words of God gets peace, love and satisfaction “Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart”(Heb:4-12). This declaration of the deacon reminds us the importance of the ‘Word of God’ which saves us from the fall in evil.

This summons are made to save believers from falling into the trap of Satan by for getting that truth.

After receiving frankincense in the censer the deacon has to stand one step down in the northern side of the Lectern (Evangelion table) with his left hand in his chest, till the end of the Evangelion.

If there is higher order priest in the sanctuary than the celebrant he can be requested to drop incense in the censer. Two candles are to be lighted and placed in the Lectern; and if there is no facility for that two altar assistants can hold lighted candles and if no one is present other than the thurifer, he has to hold the lighted candle, the bell and the censer, the censer and the candle in the right hand and the bell in the lefthand. He can fumigate and ring the bell simultaneously.

## **Post Gospel Hymn**

After reading from the Gospel the congregation sings a hymn “*Yajamanan Varumannerathunarvulloray than*”(Blessed are those servants.....) or any other appended appropriate songs. The hymn that are not meant for any particular day can be sung on any day.

When *Barekmore* is heard either in the end of song or at any other time the congregation is not permitted to make a sign of cross. However if ‘*Subaho*’ is followed the *Barekmore* one has to make a cross sign. In *Subaho*... we remembers the Holy Trinity. When the Holy Trinity is mentioned everyone has to bow their head and sign a cross.

## ***Stomen Kalos***

At the end of song when the deacon orders ‘*Stomen Kalos*’ the congregation must repond by saying ‘*Kurielaison*’ The word ‘*Stomen Kalos*’ means ‘Let us stand well’ and ‘*Kurielaison*’ means ‘Lord have mercy upon us’. It is not needed to say *Barekmore* before *Stomen kalos*.

## **Promion**

*Promion* means preface. It is the perface of the Sedro, the prefortory prayers that are used in Holy Qurbana and other ivarious worships. While *Sedro* is lengthy *Promion* is short.

## **Sedro**

Means ‘row’ or ‘series’. It is a prayer which is arranged by uniting many small prayers.

## **Hoosoyo**

*Promion* is followed by *Hoosoyo*, means propitiatory prayer. It is an invariable prayer. The priest on behalf of the penitent congregation, beseeches the Lord for mercy and absolution. If a prelate is present for the Eucharist, he has to drop the incense in the censer and to say extolment.

## **Blessing of the Censer**

*Sedro* is followed by the blessing of the censer. It is done by the celebrant. If a prelate is present the blessing of the censer is done by him. If he permit the celebrant can do it. The thurifer has to be very careful to keep live coal in the censer. There are certain things that are to be cared by both celebrant and Thurifer (1) They have to be very careful to stand on either side so as not to cover the Eucharist from the congregation. (2) The censer is to be lifeted so us to come on the line of the Eucharist.

The Thurifer has to be very careful on certain things at the time of the blessing of the censer. He has to keep his left hand close to his chest and the censer has to be lifted in the right hand. He has to lift the censer in three fingers closing the other two, so that the ring shall be below the hook. There are specific rites for the blessings of the censer. The celebrant holds one chain with his left hand and the three fingers of the right hand joined together touches the hook and recites “Holy is the Holy Father” and then holding two more chains and repeating the sign of the cross over them, proclaims “Holy is the Holy Son”, and then holding the last chain and again repeating the sign of the cross and proclaims “Holy is the Holy and Living Sprit”. Then at once he passes the right hand round the censer three times ( first two anticlockwise and third one clockwise), then fumigates the Eucharist, the Sanctuary and lectern and the public and then returns and after kissing the altar, hands it over to the Thurifer. The Thurifer receives it after kissing the hand of the celebrant, kissing and fumigating the Altar, moves around and goes down the sanctuary and wait for the absolution by the celebrant. At the time of absolution prayers the congregation is not allowed to sign the cross mark.

After handing over the censer to the Thurifer, the celebrant washes the tip of his fingers, and after kissing the altar and kissing the hand of the prelate if present, and after offering peace to associate priests turns to the west with a request to pray for his absolution. “Teachers and brothers pray to the Lord to accept my prayers”. The celebrant washes the tips of his fingers, illustrating that he washes away his sins and make him worthy to enter into the Holy of Holies to handle the Divine mysteries and offer the living sacrifice.

## **Nicine Creed**

The Nicene creed is to be recited one step down at the northern side of the Sanctuary. It is recited on behalf of all, including the celebrant, deacons and the whole congregation. All are expected to say “We believe” loudly. When we hear “came down from heaven and was incarnate” “was crucified” and “the third day he rose” we should sign the cross.

## **Prayer of Mediatations while kneeling**

The celebrant after requesting the absolution, turns and kneels in front of the altar and remembers in silent prayers, the Mother of God, all the saints, martyrs and those who have specially requested his intercession..

### **Incenses to the west**

There are certain meaning for the incenses to the west by the deacon. In the early church two types of people attended the church. One group was those who studied the faith and baptised and became believers in Jesus Christ. The other group was undergoing lessons in faith. But they didn't receive baptism. They are nicknamed caechumen. They can enter the church and attend to the spiritual words; But can attend the communion only up to the recitation of the Nicene creed. Only those who accepted faith and baptised are eligible to declare Nicene creed and attend Ananahora (holy sacrifice) because it is the divine sacred service of Holy Eucharist

In ancient times when the deacon moved to west incensing he used to shout that those who have not received baptism should go out of the church. Then the doors were closed after the catechumens went out of the church. A top secret sacred service conducted and attended by baptised men, now will be staged inside. However presently, there are only baptised attending the church. When the deacon or priest incenses towards the west, the whole congregation is expected to bow their head and make a sign of cross on them.

If the meditation of the priest take longer time than the Creed, then the hymn, "*Yachikkendum samayamitha*" ("Behold the time ...") is sung in part or full. No other song is allowed to sing at this time. Deacon returned from the west after incensing, should stand outside the southern end of the sanctuary holding censer in his right hand and chain, hook and ring in the left hand. When the celebrant completes the meditation prayers the deacon says "*Barekmore : Stomen Kalos*" and enters the sanctuary. The congregation respond to this by saying : "*Kurialaison*". The celebrant then enters the Durgo (Alter step) and continues his prayers.

Preparatory prayers and Gospel service of the Holy Eucharist ends here. Now is Anaphora, for those who have faith in the Lord and baptised.