

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 2

THE FALL OF ISRAEL

Reference: 1 Kings 11 to 2 Kings 17

Aim: God will forsake those who forsake him.

After the death of the great King David, his son Solomon ruled the country for forty years. He had the fullness of knowledge and also wealth. He was also fortunate to build the great temple at Jerusalem. However, during the last twenty years of his reign, he had to accommodate his heathen wives by building places of worship for their gods. He also sometimes joined them in their worship, thus disobeying the commandment of his God. This caused God's anger. Also, he had many enemies. God told through Ahijah the prophet that Jeroboam would rule 10 tribes of Israel.

After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam became the king. But except for Judah and Benjamin, the other ten tribes accepted Jeroboam as their leader. He became king and reigned from Shechem.

Jeroboam feared that if his people went to Jerusalem to worship, they may ultimately forget their differences and join hands with the other two tribes. So he made two calves of gold and set one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and told the people that it was their god. This caused God's wrath to rise.

A man of God came from Judah to dissuade Jeroboam from offering sacrifices to the calves. Jeroboam did not listen to him, but offered his sacrifices to the idols. On that day itself, his son became sick. The prophet of God, Ahijah warned Jeroboam's wife that terrible harm would befall their family and that they would be completely removed from the earth for the great sin Jeroboam brought to Israel.

After the death of Jeroboam, Baasha, Nadab, Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab - all these kings reigned in Israel. Idol worship reached its pinnacle in Israel. In addition to worshipping Baal, they also built many groves and set idols of Ashtaroth, a goddess.

During these days, many prophets reminded the people of God's wrath if they forsake Him, and the many miseries that would befall them. Many repented and turned to the Lord God. When Jezebel, the queen of Ahab, was killing many prophets, Obadiah saved many prophets by hiding them in a cave and feeding them with bread and water. Elijah warned of a severe famine. Elijah went and dwelt by the brook but it dried up. He went to Zarephath, and a widow and her son received him. He stayed with them. Until the famine ended, the meal in her barrel and oil in her jar never ran out. By Elijah's prayer, the life that departed from the body of the son of the widow returned to him and he lived.

Then Elijah visited Ahab the king, and proved to him who is the true God. When Elijah prayed, fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice. The crowd killed the prophets of Baal. Afterwards, there came a torrential rain.

Greedy Ahab took possession of the vineyard of Naboth, as persuaded by Jezebel, his wife. She connived to kill Naboth. As prophesied by Elijah, Ahab was killed in a battle and dogs sucked his blood. In a battle that Jehu led, Jezebel was pushed down from a window and dogs ate her flesh.

Ahaziah son of Ahab, was also an idol worshipper. He fell off the balcony on the roof of his palace and was bed-ridden. He sent down messengers to inquire from Baalzebub the God of Ekron, if he would recover from his disease. The Lord God was angry with this and Elijah was sent to foretell the king that he would not come out of the bed, but would surely die. The king was angry and sent a captain with 50 of his soldiers to kill Elijah. Fire from heaven came down and consumed them. This happened twice. As told by Elijah, Ahaziah died on his sick bed.

Elijah with his disciple Elisha went to the other side of Jordan. When Elijah struck the waters with his cloak, the waters departed and the two went on dry ground. There, Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha returned with the cloak that fell down from Elijah, and showered many blessings to the people.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Joram, Ahab's son was living against the commandments of God. God's anger rose against him. In the war against the Syrians, he was wounded. He went back to Jezerel for treatment. In the vineyard of Naboth, he was killed. Jehu, who was anointed by Elisha, became king and reigned over Israel for 28 years. He broke down several places of idol-worship and killed many of the priests of Baal. After Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea- they all reigned in Israel and continued to do evil in the sight of the Lord. Elisha, the great prophet, died during the reign of Joash. Later, when some people were burying a man, he was put in Elisha's tomb. When his body touched Elisha's bones, the dead man came back to life and stood on his feet. (2 Kings 13:21)

During the reign of Hoshea, the king of Assyria besieged Samaria for three years. He subdued Israel and carried them away to his country as slaves. The children of Israel had sinned against the Lord God, walked in the ways of the heathen and had built high places in all their cities and set them up images and worshipped idols. They had forsaken the Lord God. The history of Samaria points out that the anger of the Lord causes increasing havoc.

Exercise:

1. Why did God tell through the prophet Ahijah that the family of Jeroboam would be completely removed from the earth?
2. God destroyed Ahab and Jezebel. Why?
3. The widow Zarephath and her son gladly received Elijah and he stayed with them. What was the blessing they received during the famine?

A prophet was taken to heaven in body form. Who was it? What is the name of his disciple?

Work for the Class:

1. Write in serial order the names of the 12 tribes of Israel.
2. Write the names of the 12 apostles of our Lord.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 3

CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON

Reference: 2 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 25

Aim: Only serve the Lord who said, "Thou shall have no other gods than Me."

The children of Israel were known as the people of God. There were no other people on the face of this earth who were so blessed by the grace of God. However, they made idols of Baal and Ashtaroah and worshipped them. This caused God's wrath to rise and persecute them. As the Israelites forsook the Lord God, in the 9th year of Hoshea's reign, the king of Assyria conquered them and took them as slaves to his country.

Also, the kings of Judah worshipped other gods and the Lord God left them to be subdued by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at the time of Jehoiakim, the king of Jerusalem. His son Jehoiachin was worse than his father. When he had ruled for only three months, Nebuchadnezzar came to the city and besieged it. The king of Babylon took the king of Judah, his servants, his princes and his officers to Babylon. He also carried away all the treasures of the house of the Lord and treasures of the king's house. He cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord.

Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah the king of Judah. Zedekiah did not listen to the advice of prophet Jeremiah. He made his heart hard and was evil before the Lord. He laughed at the messenger of God and persecuted His prophets. Moreover, all the chief priests and the people transgressed under the influence of the heathens, and polluted the house of the Lord that He had built in Jerusalem. God's wrath rose against His people until there was no alternative.

Zedekiah ruled under Nebuchadnezzar for eleven years and then he rebelled against him. The king of Babylon came with all his soldiers against Jerusalem. They built forts around it. Famine was very severe in the city. Zedekiah and his army fled the city in night. The soldiers of Babylon caught them. They killed Zedekiah's children before him. They made him blind and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon.

The soldiers of Babylon burned the house of the Lord, the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem. They broke down all the pillars and vessels made of brass and took them away. They carried away everything that had any value along with the remaining people left there. The people of Judah remained slaves to Nebuchadnezzar and his sons until the king of Persia became powerful. After 134 years of the fall of Samaria, Judah too was completely destroyed. The Lord's warning was that if the children of Israel turn away from Him, He would wipe them out. Israel would be a proverb and a byword among the people. This was fulfilled by the destruction of Judah.

Exercise:

1. How did the Israelites become slaves of the king of Assyria?
2. What were the damages done by the soldiers of Babylon to the temple of Jerusalem?

"They mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." (Chronicles 36:16). Which prophet was laughed at as stated in the above verse?

Work for the Class:

Write the 10 Commandments.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 4

DANIEL AND HIS THREE COMPANIONS

Aim: If we surrender ourselves to the will of God, He will fulfill great things through us.

In the year 606 B.C., the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar subdued Jerusalem. He carried away all the princes, all the mighty men of valor, and all the craftsmen and work-smiths. The wise king dealt kindly with the slaves. There were craftsmen, work-smiths and children of the nobles who were without any blemish. They were well-favoured, skillful, astute in knowledge and science, and were taught the tongue of the Chaldeans so that they might stand before the king and help him in the governance of the large kingdom.

Some of the noble children who were handsome, intelligent and smart were given quarters in the palace itself under the king's eunuchs. The master of eunuchs was well pleased with four such children. He called them Chaldean names. For Daniel, he called Belrteshzzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abendego.

The four youngsters strictly followed the commandments of the Lord. They refused to eat the food of the Chaldeans, most of which were the meat of pigs. For a trial period of ten days, the master eunuch allowed them to eat only cereals and water. After ten days, they were found to be excellent in health and so they were allowed to take whatever food they wanted.

After a training of three years, they stood before the king and he found them to be extraordinary in all manner of knowledge, and they were placed in high offices of the king. Daniel was blessed with the knowledge of interpreting dreams and to have visions of the things that were awaiting him.

One night, King Nebuchadnezzar saw a dream. When he woke up, he forgot the dream. He only knew that the dream was an unusual one. He called in all magicians, astrologers, sorcerers and the Chaldeans, and requested them to tell him the dream and its interpretation. They all failed miserably and the king ordered them to be executed. Daniel was sure that he would be the next one to tell the king his dream. So Daniel prayed to God with his friends to reveal the dream and its interpretation. Daniel stood before the king and told him that there was a God in heaven who revealed secrets and no man could know them. He said that the Lord God would reveal it to him. Daniel told the king his dream and also its interpretation.

The dream was this. The king was looking upon a great image whose head was of fine gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, feet part of iron and part of clay. A stone, cut out without hands, smote the image upon its feet that was of iron and clay, and broke it to pieces. The iron, clay, brass, silver and gold were all broken to pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away. No place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.



The king said the dream was the same. Daniel interpreted the dream.

The head of the image made of fine gold denotes king Nebuchadnezzar himself. After him, there would be an inferior kingdom and then a third one of brass which would rule over all the earth. The fourth kingdom would be strong as iron and would shatter all previous kingdoms. The mixed feet of iron and clay showed that the kingdom would be divided, and that one part would be strong, and the other weak. The stone cut out without hands denotes the everlasting kingdom that would be established by God. The kingdom of God would remove all other kingdoms established by men, and would remain forever as the greatest kingdom.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

King Nebuchadnezzar was convinced of the truthfulness of the dream and its interpretation. He gave many valuable gifts to Daniel and honoured him by making him ruler of the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

In B.C. 587, king Nebuchadnezzar made a very huge image of gold and proclaimed that all people should fall down before it and worship it when they hear the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer and all kinds of music. Daniel was not there at that time.

The image was dedicated most pompously. At the sound of all kinds of music, thousands of people fell down and worshipped the golden image. Three people, Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego, did not kneel before the image. They were questioned. They said that the God they serve is the Almighty God and that they would kneel before Him only. They boldly said they would not kneel before the image the king made.

On hearing this, the king was full of fury and commanded to heat up the furnace sevenfold times more than usual, and to bind up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the burning fiery furnace. When they were thrown into the furnace, the king saw they were walking in the furnace. There was a fourth person along with them whose face was filled with heavenly beauty. The angel of the Lord saved them in that furnace. The astonished king called them out. Not even a single hair on their head was burnt. The king knew the power of the true God. He decreed that anybody who speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would be severely punished. The king honoured them by giving them higher positions in the province of Babylon.

Exercise:

1. Who are the youngsters who found grace with the king Nebuchadnezzar? Tell their Chaldean names.
2. What did king Nebuchadnezzar dream?
3. What was the meaning of the dream?
4. The king was convinced that there is an Almighty true God. Which event proved it to the king?

Work for the Class: Discuss an event that truly happened to show that our God saves us from any danger.

Moral: The Omniscient God knows our wants and helps us to get them.

Memory Verse: As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 5

DANIEL, THE GOVERNOR

Aim: God saves those who are dear to Him from all evils, and gives them higher positions and protects them.

"Pride before fall". To prove this saying, this happened in the life of king Nebuchadnezzar. Once he saw a dream. He saw a huge tree in the midst of the earth full of leaves and fruits. It had fruits for all. An angel called out like this, "Hew down the tree, and cut off its branches, shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from its branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass. Let the dew wet it, let it be like a beast and eat grass for seven years. The Most High gives the kingdom to whomsoever He will, and set up over it the basest of men."

The king asked Daniel the meaning of this dream. Daniel was astonished and his thoughts troubled him when he heard the dream. However, he told the king its meaning. The tree was the king himself. As its leaves, fruits and branches were cut down and removed, the king would be removed from the throne and he would live like a beast suffering from the rain and dew and eating grass for seven years. By seven years, he would know that truly God gives power. Then he would get back his kingdom.

As seen in the dream, it so happened to the proud king. After a year he became mad and went to live with the beasts. He suffered from the rain and dew, and ate grass as oxen for seven years. Then he got back his understanding. He lifted his eyes to heaven and praised the God. He got back his reasoning power. He returned to his throne. He ruled for some more years and he praised, extolled and honoured the King of heaven for the rest of his days.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Belshazzar became king. In BC 583, the king held a grand feast for his lords. The king, his princes, his wives and his concubines drank wine in the golden vessels brought from the temple at Jerusalem. They made merry and praised the gods made of gold, silver and other metals, wood and stone. At that time, the king saw the hand of a man writing on the wall. The king was terribly afraid and called in his magicians and astrologers to read the writing. None of them could read it nor interpret it. As the queen advised, the king sent for Daniel. Daniel read it as, "Mene, Mene, Tekkel, Upharsin." Its meaning was, "God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it. You are weighed in the balance and are found wanting. The kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." In that night itself, the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon and killed the king.

Darius the Median took the kingdom. He appointed Daniel as one of the three presidents in the country and he was the chief of them. Daniel was a man without any blemish and the Spirit of God was in him. So the king wanted to make Daniel the chief over the whole realm. Knowing this, the princes and other high-ranking officers were jealous of Daniel, and wanted to destroy him somehow. They knew that they could not find anything wrong with him except in the matter of the law of his God. So they plotted and made the king sign a royal statute and to make a firm decree that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save the king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

Daniel knew that such a decree had been made. He went into his house, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem. He knelt on the floor three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did before. His enemies informed the king what Daniel was doing. The king wanted to save Daniel. There was no way. So with great sorrow, he ordered Daniel to be cast into the den of lions. A big stone was placed at the opening of the pit of lions and it was sealed. His enemies overjoyed at the fall of Daniel.

King Darius could not sleep that night. He fasted and very early in the morning, he came to the den. He cried with a lamenting voice and called Daniel, "O, Daniel, servant of the living God, is your God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?" Daniel replied, "O, king! Live for ever! My God has sent his angel and has shut the lions' mouths. They have not hurt me. I was found innocent before my God. O king, I have not



Daniel in the lions' den.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

done anything wrong to you." The king was exceedingly glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel out of the den. The king ordered to put all those who accused Daniel into the den with their families. The lions ripped them apart. The king also decreed to all people, nations and languages that dwelled on the earth that all of them should tremble and fear the God of Daniel.

After the reign of the Medes, Daniel continued to hold high positions during the rule of Cyrus, king of Persia. Daniel was a member of the royal family. He was a prophet and a chief ruler in Babylon. He lived according to the law of the Lord. Daniel was a man of courage, self-control, humility, discipline and, above all man, of prayer. Daniel is a great prophet and a model for all in high positions. Daniel, the name means, "God is my Judge."

Exercise:

1. The life of Nebuchadnezzar teaches us that pride is dangerous. How?
2. God found Belshazzar wanting. What was the thing he did wrong?
3. What was the writing on the wall that was a judgment against king Belshazzar?

Work for the Class: "God will save us from all perils." Discuss this saying, narrating an event from the life of Daniel.

**Memory Verse: "For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death."
(Psalms 48:14)**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 6

KING CYRUS AND DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWS

Aim: God protects His people from all perils and gives them a peaceful life.

We have seen that Jews, the chosen people of God, lived a sinful life in their prosperity and abundance, and became prey to the wrath of God. Their slavery in Babylon lasted for 70 years. Due to the influence of Daniel, the chief governor of Babylon, was a great administrator and well liked by the king Cyrus, and also knew that the God of Daniel was Almighty. He felt compassion for the people of Judah.



Once Cyrus had a vision that the Lord God who gave him all the kingdoms of the earth wanted him to build a house for the Lord at Jerusalem. The king proclaimed that all the people of Judah who were in Babylon should return to Jerusalem to build a house for the Lord God of Israel and that those who did not want to return should give gold, silver and other items to help build the temple.

Accordingly, in BC 534, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin along with the priests and Levites, numbering 42, and 360 people returned to Jerusalem. 7337 servants and 200 singers were also with them. Those who did not return gave gold, silver and other items. The king Cyrus gave back all the vessels of gold and silver that were taken by king Nebuchadnezzar when he destroyed Jerusalem. The leader of the people who returned to Jerusalem was Zerubbabel, in Chaldean tongue 'Sheshbazzar'

Exercise:

1. What was God's commandment to King Cyrus?
2. What was the proclamation of King Cyrus?
3. Who was the leader of the people who went back to Jerusalem? How many returned?
4. What were the things they carried back to Jerusalem in addition to those things returned to the temple?

Memory Verse: He who endures to the end shall be saved. (Mathew 24:13)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 7

THE RETURN OF ISRAEL

Aim: God is our shepherd and He makes us lie down in green pastures; and leads us beside the still waters.

By the grace of the God, the people of Israel could return to their own land. They returned with many servants and their maids, singing men and women, horses, mules, camels and asses under the leadership of Zerubbabel, and stayed in their cities. As written in the Law of Moses, they built an altar of the God of Israel and offered burnt offerings there. They also kept the feast of the tabernacles and started the work of building the temple of the Lord. They laid its foundation on the same place where the temple built by Solomon stood.

When they laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their apparel blew the trumpets and the Levites the sons of Asaph played the cymbals to praise the Lord. All the people shouted with a great shout to express their joy. But some elders, on seeing the state of the new temple and the glory of the previous one, wept loudly. As the work was progressing speedily, the adversaries made problems to hinder the work. The prophets Haggai and Zachariah gave courage to the people. During the reign of Darius, who ruled after King Cyrus in BC 511, the construction work of the temple was completed. The children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of the house of God with joy. They offered sin offering for all Israel. They kept the Passover and the feast of the unleavened bread with joy for the Lord had made them joyful. They turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

Exercise:

1. Who built the first temple at Jerusalem?
2. When they started work of the new temple, who cried loudly? And Why?
3. When the Jews returned from captivity, how did they express their gratitude to God?
4. Who are the prophets who encouraged the people in building the temple?

Work for the Class: Discuss the event that allowed the Israelites to observe the Passover.

Memory Verse: Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:22)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 8

CLEANSING OF HEARTS AND SOCIAL UPLIFTMENT

(Read Ezra and Nehemiah)

Aim: For God to live in us, we need purity of heart. We should build our church as best as we can.

Ezra was a scribe. He was well liked by king Artaxerxes who became ruler after king Darius. He authorized Ezra to oversee the activities in Jerusalem and all Judah. As requested by Ezra, the king gave him enough money to look after the needs of the temple. He brought the leftover vessels and implements of the temple that Zerubbabel could not bring. The king also gave orders to the treasurers to give Ezra free necessary wheat, wine, oil, salt, gold, silver, etc. Ezra freed the priests and other helpers in the temple from taxing people for these things. Ezra with some Jews started for Jerusalem. At the river of Ahava, they set camp and stayed for three days fasting and praying to the Lord. In BC 457, they reached Jerusalem. Ezra made the people confess their transgressions and made them swear to keep the statutes and laws of the Lord God. He was in charge of Jerusalem for 13 years.

Nehemiah was the cupbearer of king Artaxerxes, and a leader of the Jews. Even though the Jews who had returned from captivity had rebuilt the temple of the Lord, they lived in great affliction. The walls of Jerusalem remained broken down and the gates were burned. When Nehemiah heard these things, he was very sad. When the king enquired why he was sad, he requested the king to send him to Jerusalem to build the city again. The king granted his request and sent him to Jerusalem with all the help required.

In BC 445, Nehemiah reached Jerusalem and he looked for the places where repair was required. He called for all the elders of the people and told them that they had the permission and help of the king to build the walls of Jerusalem. The people diligently took up the work and finished it part by part, each part by each group.

The walls took shape very fast. On seeing this, the heathen leaders and the army chiefs of Samaria grew jealous and tried to stop the work. Sanballat their leader wanted to kill Nehemiah. Nehemiah did not fall into their trap. The Jews continued to repair the walls. In one hand the people held a weapon and with the other hand they worked. In 52 days, they completed the work on the wall. The heathen leaders sent a complaint to king Artaxerxes against Nehemiah. When the king came to know that king Cyrus gave Jerusalem back to the Jews to build the temple at Jerusalem, king Artaxerxes sent an order in favour of Nehemiah. The enemies of the Jews were put to shame.

All the Jews celebrated. In a great procession, the people reached the temple. Then Ezra stood on the pulpit and read the laws of the Lord to them. They swore that they would live according to the law of the Lord. Ezra reminded them of the many perils they had because they transgressed against the God; and by His grace they were freed and returned to their own land.

Exercise:

Who was Ezra? What role did he play?

Why was Nehemiah sad?

3. What did Nehemiah do to build the walls of Jerusalem?

4. Who were the Persian kings who were inspired by God to send declaration in favour of the Jews?

Work for the Class: The Lord God was always willing to protect His people.

Discuss two incidents when the Lord protected His people.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Memory Verse: *Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more reproach.*
(Nehemiah 2:17)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 9

ESTHER

(Love of Esther to her own people)

Aim: God will destroy those who try to harm His chosen people. Esther was prepared to give her own life for her people.

During the reign of King Cyrus, the Jews got their freedom. Most of them returned to Judah. A few of them still remained in Babylon. Esther was a daughter of one such Jew. As her parents died at her childhood, she was brought up by Mordecai, her father's brother, as his own daughter. Mordecai was living in the city of Shusan, which was the capital city of the Persian kings.

Ahasuerus, the Persian king, ruled the very large Persian kingdom from BC 484 to 465. This vast empire extended up to India in the east and Ethiopia in the west, and consisted of 127 states. King Ahasuerus held a grand banquet, and while he was in a very happy mood after drinking wine, he told his chamberlains to bring Vashti the queen before him with the crown royal, so that the people and princes could see her beauty. The queen refused to come and was angry with the king's chamberlains. The king's anger knew no bounds, and as advised by his princes, he removed the queen from her position and decided to choose a virgin who was beautiful and obedient as his queen.



The most beautiful virgins were invited into the king's palace. The king found Esther the most suitable person to be his queen. She earned the affection and goodwill of all by her conduct. As advised by Mordecai, she did not reveal who her people or her kindred were. Mordecai also did not tell anyone about his relationship with the queen. He used to get acquainted with the officers of the palace.

Mordecai came to know that two chamberlains of the king plotted to kill the king. Mordecai informed the king through Esther of this plot. The king conducted an enquiry and found out the two chamberlains. He ordered to hang those two and write in his chronicles about Mordecai and the information he gave which saved him.

Haman was the chief of the princes of the king. All the servants of the king, who were at the gate of the palace, bowed and gave reverence to Haman, because the king had commanded so. Mordecai alone did not bow down before Haman nor gave reverence to him. He bowed down before his God only. Haman was looking for an opportunity to destroy Mordecai who did not bow down before him, and all his people, the Jews. He consulted his astrologers and found out that the month of Adar (March) 13th was the suitable date to destroy them. Haman persuaded the king and obtained a decree for all the states in their languages in the Persian kingdom that all the Jews in all the places should be plundered and executed.

When the Jews came to know about this, there was great mourning among them, and fasting and weeping and wailing; and many lay in sack clothes and ashes. Mordecai wanted Esther to go before the king and make him revoke his decree to save her people. She informed Mordecai that if any one goes before the king without being invited, he would be executed. Mordecai sent her word, "Think not with yourself that you shall escape in the king's house more than all the Jews. For if you altogether hold your peace at this time, there shall be deliverance from other quarters and you and your father's house shall be destroyed, and who knows whether you are come to the kingdom from such a time as this."

Esther was thoughtful and sad. She sent word to Mordecai that all the Jews in the city of Shusan should fast and pray for three days for her. She and her maids would also do likewise. And afterwards she would go to the king's presence for good or bad. All the Jews accordingly fasted and prayed for Esther for three days. On the third day, Esther put on her royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's house. When the king saw

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Esther, the queen standing in the court, he held out to her the golden scepter that was in his hand. She drew near and touched the top of the scepter. The king asked her what she wanted. He said whatever she asked, even half of the kingdom, would be given her. She said that the king and Haman should come for the banquet she had prepared for the king. At the banquet, the king told her again that he would grant her anything she wanted. She only said that the king and Haman should come for the banquet for the next day also.

Haman went home happily. At the gate he saw Mordecai who did not bow down before him. Haman wanted to hang Mordecai. So he built a gallows of 50 cubits high. The next morning, he went to the palace to speak to the king about Mordecai.

In the morning, while the king was thinking that he had not done anything for Mordecai, Haman came in. The king asked him what the king should do to a person whom he delights to honour. Haman thought the king would be intending to honour him. So he said that the person whom the king delights to honour should be arrayed in royal apparel, and the royal crown should be placed on his head. He should then be led through the streets of the city on king's horse and the chief prince should proclaim before him that it was the way the king honoured a person whom he favoured. Then the king said to Haman to do everything he said for Mordecai. Haman was shocked as if struck by a thunderbolt. What could he do! He had to do as commanded by the king.

Later in the evening, the second banquet was held. The king asked her again what she wanted. The king promised her even half of his kingdom. She requested the king to save her and her people from the adversary who tried to destroy her and her people. The king asked her who was that evil enemy. She pointed her finger to Haman and said he was that man.

In his wrath the king stood up and went into the garden. When he returned, he saw Haman fallen upon the bed where Esther was. Then said the king, "Will he force the queen also before me in the house." As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. On the same gallows that Haman prepared for Mordecai, Haman was hanged. Haman's house was given to Esther. Mordecai went out in the presence of the king in royal apparel and with a crown of gold. He was next to the king and great among the Jews. The king revoked his former decree and sent another one in favour of the Jews. On the same day, March 13th, the ten sons of Haman and many other enemies of Jews were executed.

Exercise:

1. How did the queen Vashti lose her position?
2. What was the event that was written in the chronicles of the king, praising Mordecai?
3. Who was Haman? Why did he make the gallows?
4. To save themselves from the imminent great danger, what did the Jews do as requested by Esther?
5. On commandment from the king, in what ways Haman had to honour Mordecai?

Discuss in the class: "In the pit he has prepared for others, he himself will fall." How did it happen in the case of Haman?

Memory Verse: They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. (Psalms 34:5)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 10

RUTH

(A model of true affection)

Aim: Honour your father and your mother so that your days may be long.

Let us learn the story of a woman whose name finds an honourable place in the Bible. She was from the tribe of Moab, considered to be a heathen. Her name is Ruth. She was fortunate to be the grandmother of the mighty king David.

Ruth lived in BC 1300 or so. Once there was a severe famine in Israel. Judges were rulers in those days. Due to the famine, a certain man of Bethlehem, Elimelech with his wife Naomi and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion went to Moab and stayed there. Moabites are the descendents of Moab, the son of Lot. Elimelech died at Moab. Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion Orpah, both Moabites. After a few years, both Mahlon and Chilion died. Naomi told both her daughter-in-laws to return to their home, marry again and settle down. Accordingly, Orpah left. But Ruth said to Naomi, "Wherever you go, I will follow you; wherever you stay, I will stay with you, your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die, I want to die and be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part you and me."

Naomi and Ruth returned to Judea and reached Bethlehem. It was the beginning of the harvest season of Barley. Ruth wanted to find food for her mother-in-law and so she wanted to go to the field to glean. With Naomi's consent, Ruth went to a field and gleaned after the reapers. The field belonged to Boaz, a noble man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech. Boaz had heard the sad story of Naomi and that her daughter-in-law had come with her. He had not seen her before. When Boaz saw a strange woman gleaning in his field, he enquired who she was. When he knew that she was the daughter-in-law of Naomi, he dealt with her kindly and allowed her to continue to glean in his fields. He also told his workers to leave deliberately handfuls of corn for her to glean. He arranged food for her with his reapers. On that day, she gleaned about 10 kg of barley. Naomi asked her and knew that she gleaned in the field of a close kinsman of her family. She advised Ruth to approach Boaz humbly and to request him to redeem her. Boaz told Ruth that there was another kinsman closer to her family. After consulting him, he would do what he could.



Boaz called in that kinsman and ten elders of the people and requested him to buy the properties of Elimelech and also to marry his daughter-in-law Ruth and thus redeem that family. He did not agree to this and gave all his rights to Boaz. As was the custom, he plucked off his shoe and gave it to Boaz in confirmation of giving all his rights in the matter. Boaz accepted Ruth as his wife and redeemed the house of Elimelech.

Her fear of the Lord, her humility and her love for her mother-in-law gave her the great fortune to be a person in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Exercise:

1. Who are the Moabites?
2. When Naomi told Ruth to return to her own house, what did Ruth reply?
3. In what way did Boaz help Ruth in the field?

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

4. What are the characteristics that helped Ruth enter the genealogy of Jesus Christ?

Work for the Class: Organize a group discussion on how we can help our parents.

Memory Verse: *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. (Isaiah 11:1)*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 11

JOB

Aim: The Lord God will protect us from all our afflictions.

Job was a man, perfect and upright, one who feared God, and eschewed evil. He was from the land of Uz, which was at the south side of Palestine.

Satan was cheerless at the blameless life of Job. On the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan too went among them. He said to God that Job feared God because God had given him plenty of luxuries. God did not agree. With the consent of God, Satan began to test Job. One by one, Job had great losses. All his cattle were stolen. Wicked men killed his servants. There was a great wind which caused the building in which his sons and daughters were having a party, to fall upon them and kill all of them. When Job heard all these, he rose up, tore his mantle, shaved his head and fell upon the ground and worshipped God. He said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21). In all these Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Then Satan again tried Job and smote him with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and he sat down among the ashes. His wife asked him why was he still holding on to his integrity. She told him to curse God and die. He answered her that she was speaking as a foolish woman. He said that as we received good from God, we should receive the bad too. In all these, Job did not sin with his lips.

On hearing the evils that had fallen upon Job, three of his friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite came to mourn with him and to comfort him. They recognized Job only when they came very close to him. As his grief was very great, they raised their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven. Job cursed the day he was born, but never blamed the Lord. His friends could only think that those evils fell upon him because of the sins of Job. So they told him to repent to get blessings. Another friend of Job, Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite said that the self-righteousness of Job himself was a great sin. At this time, the Lord God appeared in a whirlwind and spoke. It now became clear to Job that he was ignorant, imperfect and feeble. He became aware that his self-righteousness was a sin.

The Lord was angry with the friends of Job. Job prayed for them, and the Lord accepted it. The Lord reversed his condition and blessed him. God gave him double of what he had earlier. He had seven sons and three daughters. There was nobody else in the land as beautiful as the real friend who delivered him from all his difficulties. The story of Job tells us that when we have trials and tribulations in life, we have to be closer to God, as Job did in his life.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

Exercise:

1. What kind of a man was Job?
2. What were the trials and tribulations of Job?
3. What did Job's wife tell him to do? What was his reply?
4. What was the sin hidden in Job's life?
5. What does the story of Job teach us?

Discuss in the Class: In what way you will help a lone/old man, waiting for his death, who stays in a hut into which rain water leaks.

Memory Verse: *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. (Psalm 34:19)*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 12

THE PRIESTS OF ISRAEL

The word priest is first said in the Holy Bible about Melchizedek. He was known as the priest of the most high God. (Genesis 14:18-20). He offered sacrifices unto God with bread and wine. As God's intermediary, he blessed Abram and as Abram's intermediary he praised the Lord of the most high, possessor of heaven and earth.

The priests of Israel were called apart to serve the Lord and to perform services between the Lord and the worshipper. They offered sacrifices unto the Lord of the worshipper and blessed the worshipper for God.

The tribe of Levy was set apart for the services of the Lord. All the people of the tribe are not priests. God gave priesthood to Aaron and his house only. The other people were engaged in the services of the temple. The priests were anointed. There were three groups in them - a) Chief Priests, b) Priests, and c) Levites.

There was one chief priest at a time. Aaron was the chief priest. His main duty was to offer sin offering and burnt offering. For sin offering, a bullock and a ram were sacrificed as a burnt offering. Once a year, this sacrifice was offered for the sin of all the people. Nobody else was authorized to make this sacrifice. Moses anointed Aaron and his sons Eleazar as chief priests.

Priests conducted sacrifices for a person or more persons. They were set apart for such services. For a sinner, there was sin offering and for others, burnt offering. They had no right to enter the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat. They did the sacrifices only at the altar.

The third group was the Levites. They had no right to conduct any sacrifice. Melchizedek and received blessings from him. Priesthood is greater than kingship. King Uzziah went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense and he became a leper. Kingship has power only in this world. Priesthood has power both in heaven and earth.

Jesus is the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek and He is considered a pointer to Jesus Christ.

Exercise:

1. Who are priests?
2. How did king Uzziah become a leper?
3. Why is priesthood greater than kingship?
4. Who is the Priest of the most high God?

Memory Verse: *No man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. (Hebrews 5:47)*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 13

THE FALL OF JUDAS

Reference: Matthew 26: 45-56, 27: 1-8

Aim: To understand the circumstances of the betrayal of our Lord.

Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve disciples of our Lord. He betrayed his Master to His enemies and later hanged himself.

Immediately after the supper with Jesus, Judas went to the elders of the Jews. They were all waiting for him, having done all the preparations. Judas told them the sign he would use to identify Jesus. The person whom he kisses would be Jesus.

After His prayer at Gethsemane, Jesus told His disciples, "Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." Then they could hear the multitude coming from Jerusalem. Judas, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came with the chief priests and elders of the people.

When Judas entered the garden, Jesus was talking to His disciples. The guards of the temple were just behind Judas. He came to Jesus and told Him, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed Him.

Jesus looked at the face of Judas and asked, "Friend, why have you come?" The soldiers might have been startled when Jesus called him friend. They also might have felt that Judas committed a grave betrayal.

Jesus asked him again, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Judas did not reply.

When the signal to identify Jesus was seen, the guards came forward. Jesus left His disciples and moved towards the guards and asked them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." When they heard the reply, they looked at His radiant face and fell to the ground. After a while, they got up.

Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He." Pointing towards His disciples, He said, "If you seek Me, let these go their way." Even at this time, He was more concerned about the safety of the disciples. They bound Jesus. On seeing this, the disciples resisted. Peter drew his sword and struck Malchus, a servant of the high priests, and cut off his right ear. Jesus told Peter to put his sword in the sheath and touched Malchus' ear and healed him.

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, leaders of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." They did not pay any attention to Him.

They bound Jesus and brought Him before the chief priest and later before Pontius Pilate, the governor. Pilate questioned Jesus. He could not find any fault with Him. He wanted to free Jesus. The pressure from the people was so high that he consented to crucify Jesus.

Judas Iscariot felt extremely guilty and shameful. He knew that he had betrayed innocent blood. He brought back the money to the chief priests and elders. They did not accept it. He threw down the pieces of silver in the temple, and went and hanged himself.



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

The chief priests decided not to put those 30 pieces of silver into the treasury, because it was the price of blood. With that money, they bought the potter's field to bury strangers. Therefore, the field has been called the Field of Blood or "Akel Dama."

Judas is known in the history of the world as the betrayer of his master.

Exercise:

1. How did Judas betray Jesus?
2. With what preparations did the Jews come to arrest Jesus?
3. When Jesus was arrested, Jesus was more concerned about the safety of His disciples than His own. How can you prove it?
4. What is "Akel Dama?" What is the meaning of this?

Discuss in Class: With participation of all, enact the scene of those coming to arrest Jesus.

Memory Verse: Romans 2:6 - For God will reward every person according to what he has done.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 14

THE TRIAL OF JESUS

Aim: To learn that Jesus was questioned on behalf of us.

Jesus was bound and was led to the mansions of Annas and Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the high priest of the current year and Annas was his father in law. The questioning was done in two parts. Two kinds of charges were brought against Him. The high priest and the council questioned Him about religious matters. They could sentence Him to death but they had no power to execute it. They required the consent of the Roman governor. They submitted political matters before him.

Before meeting the council, Annas questioned Jesus. His intention was to prove that Jesus plotted against Caesar. Jesus told him that He had spoken publicly only and he could verify it with those who heard Him. A soldier was angry at His reply and hit Him on His cheek. Jesus asked him to prove if His reply was wrong, and if it were not so, why he had hit Him. The soldier had no reply. On seeing the unusual calmness and kindness on His face, Annas stopped his questioning and sent Him to Caiaphas.

In the meanwhile, as foretold by Jesus, Peter denied Jesus thrice. When Jesus was arrested and taken, Peter and John followed Jesus. As John was known there, he could easily enter into the mansion of the high priest. As John recommended, Peter could also enter there. Peter sat outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." He denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." When Peter had gone out to the gate, another girl said to those who were there that he was with Jesus of Nazareth. Again, he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man." A little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know that Man." Instantly, a rooster crowed. Peter remembered the words of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.



The next was the questioning by Caiaphas who was the president of the council. They brought in false witnesses. Their submissions were contradictory. So Caiaphas directly questioned Him. Jesus kept silent. Caiaphas asked Him, "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand side of the Almighty and coming on the clouds of heaven!" Immediately, Caiaphas and all the council members condemned Him to death. Then some began to spit on Him and to blindfold Him and beat Him. The guards struck Him.

Early in the morning all the chief priests and the elders made their plans against Jesus to put him to death. For a crime deserving death, the rule was that the questioning should be done on a day, and judgment should be pronounced on the next day. They had plotted beforehand to put Jesus to death and took Him to Pilate.

Exercise:

1. What was the motive of Annas in questioning Jesus?
2. Who was the high priest at that the time?
3. When Caiaphas asked Jesus if He was the Christ, Son of God, what reply did Jesus give?

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

4. Why did the council meet early in the morning?

5. It so happened in the case of Peter as Jesus had foretold. What did Jesus tell him? How did it happen?

Work for the Class: Discuss. Both Peter and Judas did wrong. What did they do? How did Peter find out the way of salvation and Judas the way of damnation?

Memory Verse: *And I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did. (Luke 13:3)*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 15

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Aim: To learn that Jesus suffered all afflictions on our behalf.

The council of the chief priests and Jewish elders condemned Jesus to death. They took Jesus to the mansion of Pilate so that their judgment might be executed. And then Pilate examined Jesus. During the Passover festival, if the Jews visited any house of heathens, it was believed that the Jews became unclean. The uncleanness would be over after seven days. So they did not enter into his mansion.

Pilate asked them what their accusation was. Their reply that if he were not an evildoer, He would not have been brought before him. Pilate did not like this answer. So he told them to take Him and judge Him according to their law. They told him that they had no power to put a man to death. Their accusations were that He cheated people, He told them not to pay taxes to Caesar, and He committed other offences against the empire of Caesar. Then Pilate asked Him if he were a king. Jesus replied, "My kingdom is not of this world. You say rightly that I am a king. I was born to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." Pilate told the Jews that he found no fault in Him at all.

By this time, the chief priests and others also reached there. They accused Jesus of many things. Jesus kept silent all through. This made Pilate wonder and he felt compassion for Jesus. He could not do anything due to the outcry of the Jews. When he knew that Jesus is from Galilee, which was under the jurisdiction of Herod, Pilate sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad as he hoped to see some miracles done by Him. Herod asked Him many things, but Jesus kept silent because He knew there would not be any good coming from a man of immoral character. Herod did not judge Jesus. He treated Him with contempt and mocked Him. He arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.



A second examination of the case was done before Pilate, even though he did not like to take up the case again. He tried to explain to the chief priests and elders of the people that he could not find any fault in Jesus. He told them that Herod too did not find any fault with Him. So he said he would reprimand and punish Him and release Him.

In the Passover festival season, the governor used to set free a prisoner whom the people wanted. Pilate thought he could set Jesus free in this way. There was a notorious criminal, Barabbas who was imprisoned for rebellion in the city and murder. Pilate asked the people whom they wanted - either Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ. While Pilate was sitting at the judgment seat, his wife Claudia Procula sent message to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." Pilate was in a dilemma. The chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude to ask for Barabbas and crucify Jesus. The multitude vehemently told Pilate they wanted Barabbas. Pilate asked them what was to be done to Jesus who is called Christ. They said, "Let Him be crucified." Pilate said in vain that Jesus did not do anything wrong.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail, but rather a revolt was rising, he took water and washed his hands before them, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. You see to it." All the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children." Pilate released Barabbas to them, and sentenced Jesus to be whipped and crucified.

The soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium. They smote Him with a whip that split His back and His blood flowed out. They twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head. They put a stick in His right hand and they bowed before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of Jews." Then they spat on His face, and took the stick and struck Him on the head. Then they stripped Him and put on a scarlet robe on Him.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

They brought Jesus out with the scarlet robe and the crown of thorns. Blood was flowing from the wounds caused by the whipping and the crown of thorns. Pilate said, "Behold that Man, I do not find any fault in Him." The elders of the people cried loudly to crucify Him. They argued that as He made Himself the Son of God, He deserved to be killed.

When Pilate heard that He was the Son of God, he became more afraid. He noticed how calmly Jesus suffered the cruel beating of the whip, the assault and mockery. Pilate examined Jesus again. Jesus kept silent. Jesus knew that Pilate was a coward who could not act according to his conscience. When Pilate talked about his power, Jesus replied, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above." This worried him more. He wanted to free Jesus. The multitude intimidated him. They cried out, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

Pilate did not want to earn the displeasure of both the Jews and Caesar. He put away all other considerations and brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called 'The Payment', in Hebrew, 'Gabbatha.' He said to the Jews, "Behold your King." They cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." He delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away.

Exercise:

1. Why did the Jewish elders bring Jesus before Pilate?
2. What were their accusations?
3. Who was Herod? What did he expect from Jesus?
4. Who was Claudia Procula? What was the message she sent to Pilate?
5. Pilate knew that Jesus had not done anything wrong. What were his statements and deeds to prove so?

Discuss in Class: Read Isaiah 53 and discuss how this prophecy was fulfilled.

Memory Verse: *He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his strips we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 16

CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

Aim: The whole world was saved by the death of Jesus through crucifixion.

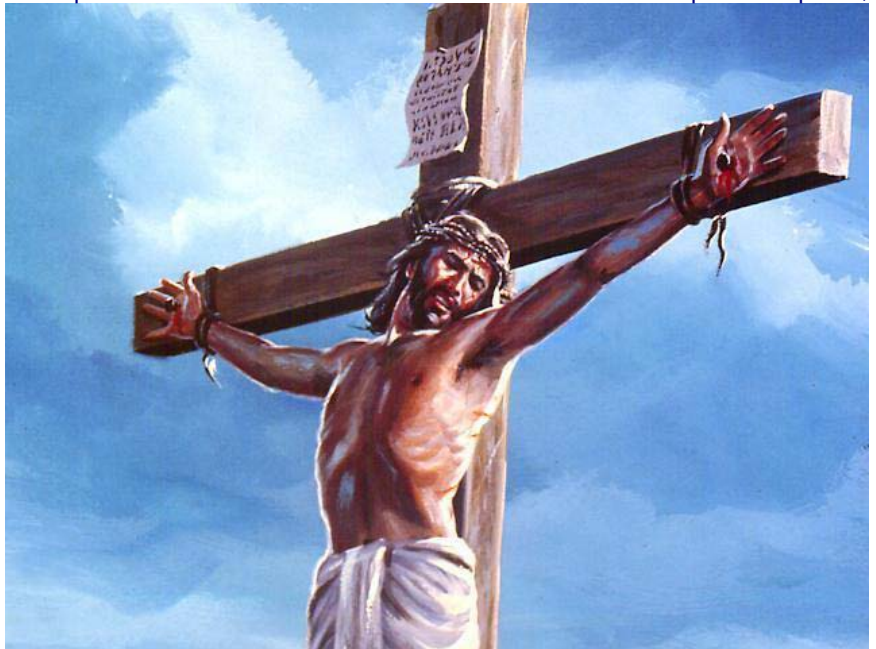
After the judgment of Pilate, Jesus was handed over to a centurion for crucifixion. The chief priests, the elders and a large gathering of others were there. The soldiers kept the cross on His shoulders for the condemned was to carry it to the place of crucifixion. From the previous day itself, Jesus was being assaulted, and He was too weak to carry the cross. Jesus walked slowly. To climb up the hill was almost impossible. The soldiers were impatient and they beat Him, kicked Him and rebuked Him. At last the soldiers found a man, Simon of Cyrene, (Libya) and they compelled him to bear His cross.

On seeing the pitiable condition of Jesus, the women who followed wept bitterly and lamented about Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children." Jesus was warning them about the havoc that was to fall on Jerusalem. Jesus asked, "For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" Dead tired and exhausted, Jesus reached a place called Golgotha, that is, Place of the Skull. The soldiers gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. This was obviously to reduce the death pangs at the cross. But when He tasted it, He would not drink it.

The soldiers made all arrangements for the crucifixion. They stretched His hands on the cross and nailed them. They put together His legs and hammered a long nail to hold them. Then they raised the cross and put it in its pit. They also crucified two thieves, one of His right side and the other on the left. Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." It was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write it". He answered, "What I have written, I have written." The soldiers took His garments and made four parts and for His tunic that was woven from the top in one piece, they cast lots for it.

On the cross while He was suffering the terrible pain of death, He prayed for those who crucified Him, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." His enemies sneered at Him in many ways. They said, "He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also mocked Him offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save Yourself."

One of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If you are the Christ, save Yourself and us." The other criminal rebuked him and said, "Do you not even fear God? We indeed justly receive the due rewards of our deeds, but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus said to him, "Assuredly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."



There stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His disciple John. He said to His mother, "Women, behold your son!" Then He said to John, "Behold your mother." Later, John took her to his own home.

From the sixth hour until the ninth hour, there was darkness over all the land. Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Some of those who stood there, when they heard His cry said, "This Man is calling for Elijah." Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled,

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

said, "I thirst". Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a stick, and offered it to Him to drink. Some of them said to wait and see if Elijah would come to save Him. When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." Having said this, Jesus breathed His last. Then, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks split. Graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly, this was the Son of God!" Seeing what had been done, the whole crowd beat their breasts and returned.

It was the Preparation Day. The bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath. Therefore the soldiers came and broke the legs of both the criminals. When they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. The commandment of God, "Neither shall you break a bone thereof" was fulfilled. (Exodus 12:46) To ensure that He was dead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. Another passage says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." (John 19:37).

Exercise:

1. Who was the person lucky enough to go with Jesus carrying His cross?
2. What did Jesus say to the Hebrew women who were weeping?
3. What was the title Pilate wrote and put on the cross?
4. What was the first prayer Jesus said on the cross? For whom was it?
5. Explain the meaning of "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani".
6. When Jesus gave up His Spirit, what happened?
7. Who said this: "Truly He was the Son of God!"

Discuss in Class: The seven sayings Jesus said on the cross. Point them out in the Bible.

Memory Verse: *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptances, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15)*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 17

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

Aim: He who is life was buried as dead.

Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, also a member of the council of Jews, took the initiative for the funeral of Jesus. He too was a disciple of Jesus, but kept it secret for fear of the Jews. Another rich person Nicodemus, who for fear of the council of Jews had kept his acquaintance with Jesus secret, also helped Joseph.

Joseph asked Pilate for permission to take away the body of Jesus. Pilate was astonished to know that Jesus was dead so soon. He called for the centurion and understood from him what had happened. Immediately, he gave consent to the request of Joseph. Nicodemus had brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 100 pounds. They took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews for burial. They laid Jesus in a new tomb that was hewn out of the rock where no one had lain before. A large stone was rolled against the door of the tomb. The pious women who followed Jesus observed where He was laid.

On the Sabbath Day, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate and told him that Jesus had told earlier that He would rise on the third day. It might be possible that His disciples would steal Him at night and spread the news that He had risen. So they wanted Pilate to arrange guards for the tomb. He told them to take some guards and make the tomb secure. They went and made the tomb secure.

The disciples of Jews stayed in Jerusalem most sorrowful and anxious about what would happen next.

Exercise:

1. Why did Joseph of Arimathea keep his closeness to Jesus a secret?
2. Who was Nicodemus?
3. Describe the funeral of Jesus.
4. What did the chief priests and Pharisees want Pilate to do? What were the precautions they took?

Discuss in Class: Versus - Mathew 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42

Memory Verse: *The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7)*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 18

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS



Aim: Jesus Christ conquered death in this world.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, and Salome bought spices and went to the tomb. They talked to each other as to who would roll away the stone for them. Other women also followed them. When they reached there, they saw an empty tomb. Jesus had resurrected before they had reached. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and there was a big earthquake. His countenance was like lightning and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook in fear of him and became like dead men. They ran to the city.

With much hesitancy, the women approached the tomb. They saw the stone rolled away. Mary Magdalene with anxiety ran to Peter and John. She suspected that the Jews had encroached upon the tomb and taken away the body of Jesus. She told them so. Soon Peter and John ran to the tomb.

After Mary Magdalene left, Mary mother of James and Salome went into the tomb. They saw an angel clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side. They were alarmed. The angel told them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples - and Peter - that He is going before you to Galilee; then you will see Him, as He said to you." They went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed.

Peter and John reached there. Peter went into the tomb. He saw the linen clothes lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head was folded together and kept there. John also went in and looked around. They remembered that He had told them that He would resurrect. They returned quickly.

It was quite clear without any doubt to Peter and John that Jesus had resurrected.

Exercise:

1. Who all went early to the tomb of Jesus with spices?
2. What did Mary Magdalene tell Peter and John?
3. What did the angel tell the women?
4. How were Peter and John convinced that Jesus had resurrected?



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Discuss in the Class: Seeing the empty tomb of Jesus, who all believed that Jesus had risen? What were the circumstances that led them to go there?

Memory Verse: *There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:5)*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 19

THE TRUTH THAT DRIVES AWAY FEAR

Aim: Christ is the Truth that drives away our fear.

Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb again. By that time, both Peter and John had gone. As she wept, she stooped down and looked into the tomb. She saw two angels in white sitting there. They asked her why she was weeping. She said they had taken away her Lord and she did not know where they had laid Him. Then she turned around and saw Jesus there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking". She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her "Mary!" All at once she understood that it was Jesus. She said, "Rabboni!!" and knelt down and worshipped Him.

Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she saw Jesus and spoke to Him. They were worried at the delay for Peter and John to return. They did not believe her. Other women also went to the tomb and saw the empty tomb and the angels. The angels asked them why they were looking for the living among the dead.

The guards ran to the chief priests and told them of the dreadful events such as the earthquake, appearance of angels, etc. The chief priests gave them a large sum of money and wanted them to keep these a secret and publicize that while they were asleep, His disciples came and stole His body away.



On the same day, two disciples were going to a village called Emmaus from Jerusalem. They were talking about all things that had happened. Jesus drew near and went with them. They did not recognize Him. They told Him about Jesus of Nazareth, His crucifixion and His resurrection on the third day. They also said that a few disciples and some women saw Jesus. Jesus expounded to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. When they reached the village, Jesus pretended to go forward. But they invited Him to stay with them. When they sat at the table, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. They rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem.

When they reached Jerusalem, the other disciples told them that Jesus had certainly risen. They explained their experience to them. While they were talking, Jesus appeared before them. Apostle Thomas was not among them. He showed them His hands and feet and told them to touch them. In their presence He ate a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb.

The risen Jesus appeared to many ten times and blessed them.

Exercise:

1. Who was the lucky person to see the risen Jesus first?
2. How many times did Jesus appear before His disciples?
3. What was the experience of the disciples who went to Emmaus?

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

4. How did Jesus convince His disciples that the risen Jesus is living?

Discuss in the Class: Read the chapters - Mathew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20 and find out who all had seen the risen Jesus.

Memory Verse: I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. (John 8:12)

LESSON 20

THE SCATTERED ARE BROUGHT TOGETHER

Aim: We are bound to the vine that is Jesus.

The disciples who went to Emmaus returned to Jerusalem on the very same hour when they had seen Jesus. The other disciples also reached Jerusalem. They had seen for themselves the risen Jesus. At different places, Jesus appeared and affirmed them in their faith. He appeared to many women and showed them His pierced Hands and Feet with nails and His side that was pierced by a spear. He ate before them and they became convinced that Jesus lived with them.

Jesus who appeared in the midst of the disciples told them that He would send them just as the Father had sent Him. He breathed on them and told them to receive the Holy Spirit. He said, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." This power is the apostolic succession we have in our church.

Apostle Thomas was not with them. When others told him that Jesus had risen, he did not believe it. Jesus appeared another time when Thomas was there. Jesus told him, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." The apostle answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" It was his complete surrender and declaration of his faith.

Again, at the shore of the Tiberius Sea, Jesus appeared to His disciples. They had gone there to fish. The whole night they toiled and they did not get anything. While they were returning to the shore, they saw someone standing there. They did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus told them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. They did so and they were not able to draw in the net because of the multitude of fish.

John told Peter that it was Jesus. Immediately, Peter removed his outer garment and plunged into the sea, and reached near Jesus. Others drew the net and came. They saw a fire of coals there. Jesus told them to bring some fish that they caught then. Jesus told them to eat breakfast and He gave them bread and fish.



Jesus made Peter, who had denied Him thrice, to affirm his love to Jesus thrice, and established his supremacy in the group of apostles. Jesus told him thrice, "Feed my lambs," "Tend My sheep," "Feed My Sheep," and

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

entrusted them to him. Jesus gave him strength and established him to follow His footsteps and to be the leader of the apostles.

When Jesus appeared again to them, He delegated to them the task of continuing His work of salvation. They received the calling, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." He affirmed His everlasting presence with them - "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." After His resurrection, in forty days, the disciples knew for certain that Jesus lives. They were convinced in their hearts that the presence of Jesus was there always in this world.

Exercise:

1. How did the disciples know that Jesus lives with them?
2. How did Jesus give the Holy Spirit to His disciples?
3. How was the complete surrender of Apostle Thomas?
4. How did Jesus give the leadership of the apostles to Peter?
5. What was the message Jesus gave to His disciples?

Discuss in the Class: The scene of Jesus entrusting Peter the right to look after the disciples.

Memory Verse: *You are my hope, O, Lord God: You are my trust from my youth. (Psalm 71:5)*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 21

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

Aim: The living presence of Jesus is with us always.

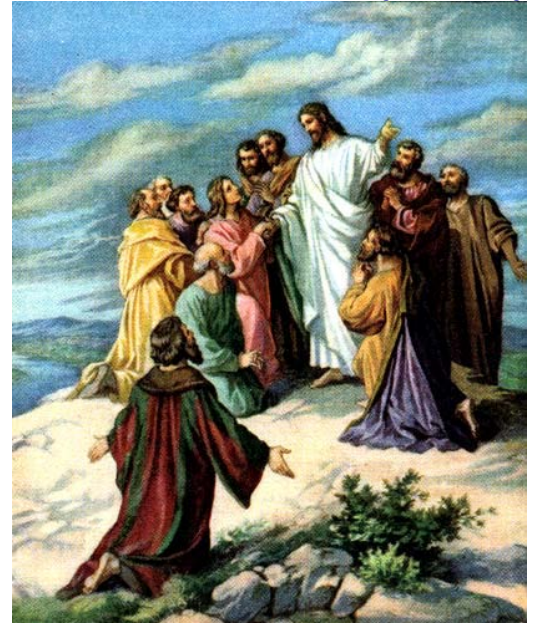
After His resurrection, for forty days Jesus appeared to His disciples and others, and assured them of His presence. The disciples were certain that no power, even death shall not deter them from this love of Jesus. They whole-heartedly believed that Jesus is with them always. It strengthened them.

Jesus opened their understanding so that they might comprehend the Scriptures. He gave them wisdom and it became clear to them that all things written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning Jesus must be fulfilled. He was to suffer the afflictions and was to rise from the dead on the third day. Jesus reminded them that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. He told them that they were witness of what had happened. He commanded them to stay in the city of Jerusalem until they were strengthened with Power from above.

Jesus led them to Bethany. They asked Him, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" Jesus answered, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive Power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Later, they reached the top of Mount Olive. Jesus stood there. He raised His hands and blessed them. As he was blessing them, the Son of God ascended. A cloud concealed His human form from their sight. They faithfully looked toward heaven.

As the disciples were still looking toward heaven, two angels of God stood by them in white apparel, who said to them, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." With great joy and amazement, they returned to Jerusalem and went up into the upper room and continued in prayer and supplication.



Exercise:

1. After His resurrection, when did Jesus ascend into heaven?
2. From where did Jesus ascend into heaven?
3. How was His ascension into heaven?
4. What did the angels tell the disciples?

Discuss in the Class: When Jesus was arrested, His disciples were scattered. But later they gathered together in the upper room and prayed in one accord. Discuss the conspicuous difference in their attitude.

Memory Verse: Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! (Revelation 22:20)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

LESSON 22

THE PENTECOST

Aim: We should pray for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

After the ascension of Lord Jesus Christ, as He had commanded them, the disciples waited for the Holy Spirit. They had gathered at the upper room of Mark, which is also known as the Mansion of Zion. On the tenth day that was a Sunday, they were all in prayer. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, and a rush of a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared to them divided tongues of fire, and it touched each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterances.

With this event, the apostles were filled with knowledge, power and love. This occurred in the city of Jerusalem. On hearing the mighty sound like thunder, many devote men who were from different countries gathered there. They were amazed and marveled as the disciples were speaking in their tongues.

The chief of apostles, St. Peter, preached to those who assembled there. He quoted from the prophesy of Joel to point out the importance of that day. "It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh: your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young man shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18) Peter reminded them of the prophesy of David foretelling the resurrection of Christ. He said, "God has raised Jesus, of which we are all witnesses. Being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear." He added, "Therefore, let all the houses of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."



When they heard this, they were cut to the heart and they asked Peter what they should do. Peter told them to repent and for the remission of their sins, they should take baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. They would then receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Those who accepted his word were baptized. On that day, about three thousand people were added to them. Those who were baptized continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The Lord added to the church everyday those who were saved. We should also pray to receive the Holy Spirit.

Exercise:

1. After the resurrection of Christ, where did the disciples receive the Holy Spirit? How did the Holy Spirit come upon the disciples?
3. Why were the people who gathered there amazed and marveled?
4. "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly." What was to be known?

Discuss in the Class: In one God, there are three Persons -1. Father, 2. Son, 3. The Holy Spirit. What does our Church teach us about the three Personalities of God?

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Memory Verse: *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.*
(Acts 16:31)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

TRUE FAITH

LESSON 23

INCARNATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Heresy of Dual Natures of Jesus Christ was groomed in the beginning of the 5th Century AD and this not only paved the way for an everlasting schism in the Holy Church, but also subjected the churches of Antioch and Alexandria to the severest form of persecution.

Heresy of Nestorius

Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople was the main preacher of the doctrine of Dual natures of the incarnated Jesus. The content of his preaching was Virgin Mary could not be called Mother of God (Theotokos) as she is merely a woman and hence could not give birth to God where as God do not require a Mother. Mary gave birth to the man Jesus. Godhood descended on him and made him his temple. Nestorius maintained two persons and two natures for Christ, and spoke of Christ to be two Christs, one of them the Son of God and the other the son of Man. It was the Man who was persecuted and undergone death since God could not die.

The heresy of Nestorius was based on the evil sense of 'impossible' and shows the limitation of human sense. Whereas the True Faith depends on the dedicative sense of "With God all things are possible" (St. Luke 1:27, St. Mathew 19:26)

We learn more about Nestorius and the first and second Councils of Ephesus in the Church History.

In AD 431, the Holy Fathers of the first council of Ephesus studied the heresy of Nestorius thoroughly and ruled that it was wrong and against the truth.

The Council decreed without any doubt that Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Logos), is perfect God and perfect Man with a rational single soul (kyono) and single body (knuma). Since Virgin Mary conceived this perfect God and perfect Man, she is the Mother of God (Theotokos = God Bearer).

Heresy of Eutyches

The second Council of Ephesus in AD 449 condemned this teaching and affirmed that there was two perfect Natures in the one Person of Christ unified 'unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, and inseparably'. But a new problem arose in that Council as laid by Pope Leone of Rome and his supporters. He insisted to say that 'two natures after union'. But the holy Fathers of the Antiochene and Alexandrian Churches resisted this and pleaded that the nature of Christ should not be termed as two natures after the union.

As per St. Paul's conversation to St. Thimotheos, "Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is perfect God and perfect Man" and is the "Unique Mediator". The teaching of 'Two Natures' back again is contradicting the principle of this 'Uniqueness'. St. Dioscorus of Alexandria proclaimed that this 'Union' is beyond the control of the Universe and is amazing also as perfect God and perfect Man are inseparably united it could be termed as Single united Nature only and it is wrong and against the doctrine to say or believe there exist two Natures for Jesus after union.

The second Council of Ephesus accepted the declaration of St. Dioscorus and the decisions made by the Holy Fathers on the 'True Faith' about the Nature of Jesus Christ is as follows. (Content of the doctrine)

- 1) Lord Jesus Christ who was incarnated in the womb of St. Mary is perfect God and perfect Man.
- 2) Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and in essence unified to the God himself.
- 3) In the incarnated Son of God, the Nature of God (Godhead) and the Nature of Man (Manhood) is convened.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

- 4) The Nature of God after the amelioration neither becomes Nature of Man nor one mixes with the other.
- 5) One mixes with the other and forms any one of it or after the union one of it get destructed.
- 6) The Nature of God and the Nature of Man unified inseparably in between Godhood and the perfect Manhood without the sin of Man.
- 7) After unification of neither the two Natures nor the Bodies could be separated
- 8) And of single Nature, single Body; single Face, single Likes and single Communion.
- 9) During the Death and while the Soul is departed from the Body, the Godhead never separated from the Soul and Body and was existent in both.

The basis of the Faith is that 'those which are impossible to Man are possible for God'. It is clear from the clauses 4,5,6 above that Monophysitism of our Church is not that of Eutyches.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 24

HOLY QURBANA (HOLY EUCHARIST)

Substance Transformation

In the 13th Century the Roman Church adopted the Doctrine of Faith of 'Substance Transformation'. In their opinion the blessed Bread and Wine after blessing transforms to the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The Faith of our Holy Church is as follows

Bread made of wheat was in the hands of the Lord. He declared "it is My Body". There was no change to the bread in taste or appearance for the Apostles. While it was Bread itself it transformed in to the Body of Jesus through His words. Likewise the Wine itself without changing its taste or other characters got transformed to His Blood by His Words. Without the change in the Human Nature (Manhood), the Nature of God (Godhead) existed in Jesus Christ and similarly, without change in substance, Bread and Wine got transformed to His Body and Blood. The ordinary substances of Bread and Wine after consecration transform to the original Blood and Body of Jesus Christ.

It is not true that this transformation in to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is only applicable to the believers. Whether one believes or not, these are Body and Blood of Jesus. "There for, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the Body and the Blood of the Lord.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

Holy Qurbana is the Sermon which was conducted by Jesus himself and handed over to the Apostles. It was on Passover Thursday that our Lord introduced this mystery. (it is also known as Rose Secrets). The Passover represents the lamb of safety. 'For Christ is our Passover Lamb' (1 Corinth 5:7). In the Palace of Sehiyon and sitting with the disciples, Jesus completed the Old Testament Passover. After that Jesus Christ founded the Holy Qurbana and handed over to Apostles (St. Mathew 26:26-29, St. Mark 14:22-25, St. Luke 22:19-20). 'Attained from Jesus and entrusted to you' says St. Paul.

The authority to minister the Holy Qurbana lies with the Priest and the Head Priest (Episcopa). Jesus Christ handed over this responsibility to the Apostles only. He never handed over this responsibility to His numerous disciples but only to those who were selected by Him. During the years of the Apostles itself, Holy Qurbana was being ministered by the Apostles themselves or by those entrusted by them. To wait on the Table seven were chosen. Apostles gave blessings to them and gave responsibility (Acts_of Apostles 6:1-6) Episcopas are transferring this authority to Kassisos (priests).

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 25

THE PRIESTHOOD

We learned that Priests are those who are selected and given responsibility.

The selection of Apostles

- Jesus prayed the whole night. Jesus spent the night praying to God. "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God "(St. Luke 6:12)
- Jesus called to him those he wanted. "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: And Simon he surnamed Peter; (St. Mark 3:13 -16)
- Designated them as Apostles. "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; " (St. Luke 6:13)

The purpose behind this selection

They might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. (St. Mark 3:13)

The responsibilities and authorities given to the Apostles.

1. Gave Power and Authority to them.
2. Gave responsibility to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. (St. Luke 9:1-2)
3. Gave Authority to forgive sins (St. Mathew 16:19, 18:18, St. John 20:22)
4. Became the servants of the Church (1Corinthians 4: 9-10)
5. Breathed on them and gave the Holy Spirit (St. John 20:22)

We got the tradition of blowing over the head of those who accepts priesthood from the Head priest (Bishop). Jesus had blown over the Apostles and gave His Godly breath to them. This Godly breath, which Apostles obtained from Jesus Christ, was blown over to those who were consecrated by them. Those who have accepted the positions did likewise for others who accepted priesthood from them.

ECCLESIASTIC ORDINATION (Laying of Hands = Kaiveppu)

The information about the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests during the days of Old Testament Church were revealed by God in Chapters 28 and 29 of Exodus especially in chapter 29. In the book of Numbers 20: 22-28 the incident about the appointment of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron as the priest is written. In both the instances God decide Moses as the Minister.

One can see how our Lord Jesus Christ gave the priesthood to His Apostles of the New Testament Church in St. John 20:22-23. The Acts of Apostles and the epistles clearly show that the 'ordination and laying of hands' (priesthood) existed during the days of Apostles itself.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

- 1) To wait on tables seven were chosen. They presented them to the Apostles. They prayed and laid hands on them (Acts of Apostles 6: 1-6)
- 2) Barnabas and Saul were set apart for God's work. Priest fasted, prayed and placed their hands on and send them off (Acts of Apostles 13: 1-3)
- 3) St. Paul instructs Timothy about laying of hands (1Timothy 4: 14, 2 Timothy 1: 6,2: 2)

Three Stages of priesthood

Episcopa (Bishop), Priest (Kassiso), Deacon (Smamsono)

St. Paul describes about the different positions of priesthood in the holy Church. (1Corinthians 12:28, 29; Ephesians 4:11.) St. Paul reiterates that for each position separate ecclesiastic blessings and responsibilities were given. (1Corinthians 12:29-30) Distribution of positions and responsibilities were clearly implemented even during the years of Apostles. Names of positions were changed. Responsibilities would have varied. All these minor changes were only due to the expansion of the Church and for the requirement of administrative arrangements.

St. Paul orders what would be the responsibilities of Titus and Timothy in Titus 1:5 and 2 Timothy 2:2 respectively. Their responsibility was to choose those who have sanity in life and disciplined character to be appointed as the Priests. But they shall not be as equivalent for Episcopacy of Titus or Timothy. They were the Heads of the Congregation (parish) of each town. They should be reliable, believers of Gospel and be very efficient to preach. (2 Timothy 2:2, Titus 1:9). It is evident that they are equivalent to Kassissos (Kassiso= Chieftain). Similarly St. Paul orders about the Sextons (Kapiar) 1Timothy 3: 12

The special responsibilities entrusted to St. Peter:

The special powers and responsibilities of St. Peter were given by Jesus Christ himself and it was not undertaken by St. Peter by himself.

Jesus ordered "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." (St. John 1:42)

He offered the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven " And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (St. Mathew16: 18-19).

After returning from the temporary deviation of Faith, St. Peter was entrusted with the responsibility of strengthening his brothers in Faith. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. (St. Luke 22: 32)

He entrusted St. Peter to look after His lambs (other Apostles) after asking the question", Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." For the second time He asks "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" For the third time He asks ".Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep". He gave the duties of a good shepherd to St. Peter by commanding him to "Feed my Sheep".

See how St. Peter fulfils the duties entrusted on him.

- He led the election for the replacement of Judas Iscariot as the twelfth apostle. (Acts of Apostles 1: 15)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

- He preaches the Gospel first and conducts Baptism. (Acts of Apostles 2: 14)
- He conducts the first recorded healing ministry (of Apostles') (Acts of Apostles 3:1-7) and the first Baptism of Gentiles (Cornelius) (Acts of Apostles 10: 48)
- Makes sensible opinion in the Council of Apostles (Jerusalem Council) (Acts of Apostles 15: 7-11)
- St. Peter stayed in Antioch and controlled the activities of the Holy Church and established the Holy Apostolic Throne of Antioch in the year AD 37. We study in Church history that in AD 60, St. Peter went to Rome after consecrating his successor St. Evodius and St. Ignatius Noorono to succeed him. The Supreme Head of our Church, the Patriarchs of Antioch and all the East, H.H. Moran Mor Ignatius Zakka I Iwas is the true and legitimate successor of St. Peter , the chief of Apostles.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 26

HOLY BAPTISM

Adam was created in a divine situation. But he became guilty of sin due to his disobedience to God. Those who originate from the circumstance of Sin will have Sin upon them. The Sin, which is transferred from generation to generation, is called Birth Sin.

- Sin through one man and death through Sin.....(Romans 5:12)
- We were by nature the children of wrath.....(Ephesus 2:3)
- Who can bring what is pure from the impure. No one! Job 14:4
- Sinful from the time my mother conceived me.....Psalms 51:5

Birth Sin is being wiped out through Baptism only. Remoteness from God had made all Creations under Sin. Holy Baptism is the ritual to fulfil the effectiveness of the safety obtained through the incarnation of Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection to individuals.

Holy Baptism is the Holy ritual established by Jesus Himself and made the Apostles to conduct and endorse themselves. St. John 4:1-2. Jesus makes the Apostles to have Baptism.

St. Mathew 28:19. The Apostles were endorsed to Baptise 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'.

Holy Apostles conduct Baptism on the day of Pentecost.

The things achieved through Holy Baptism

- The entry to the Holy Church. The entry to the Holy Church is possible only when one 'Baptises in the name of Jesus Christ'. Acts of Apostles 10:47; 19:5; Romans 6:3
- Rebirth to New life. St. John 3:5; Romans 6:4, Titus 3:6; Colossians 2:12
- Holy Cleansing. Ephesians 5:26
- Forgiveness of Sins. Acts 2:38; 22:16
- United (clothed) with Jesus, becomes sons of God. Galatians 3:26-29

One Baptism

Baptism is only one and once. " One Lord, one faith, one baptism", Ephesians 4:5

The bodily birth of man is only once and hence the divine rebirth is only once

The tub of Holy Baptism is the representation of the Tomb of Jesus Christ. By Holy Baptism we are cremated along with Jesus Christ. Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12. Since Holy Baptism is considered as the rebirth to the Holy Church, the tub of Baptism is termed the Womb of the Holy Church.

Water shows the cleansing and purification actions. Israel passed across the middle of water of Red Sea and were saved from the Pharaohs. Noah was saved over water in the Ark. Both these anecdotes depicted the saving act of the Holy Baptism.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

Hot water points out the liveliness of Holy Spirit. The water for Baptism is prepared by mixing Hot water and Cold water.

Holy Oil illustrates the weapon to fight against Satan (Devil). This is the oil of Olive (Saith). Hence denotes the ' If some of the branches have been.....' (Romans 11:17)

Holy Oil (Mooron) demonstrates the pleasant smell of Jesus Christ, the symbol and seal of the True Faith and the completion of the spiritual blessings.

Holy Fathers like St. Dionysius Fagos, St. Tertulian and St. Theophilos testify that the use of the Holy oil in Baptism since as early as 1st and 2nd century.

Adoptive Parent (God Fathers)

For a boy a male and for girl a woman touches the head (adopts) during the Baptism. They act as the mediators in front of God for these Children.

They confirm the Faith on behalf of these Children.

They are responsible for these children with regard to teaching of True Faith while they grow up. They have the responsibility to train the children in the right way of life.

Those who 'touches the head' (adopt) the children should be firm believers of True Faith and lead right practises in their life.

The Baptism, which was given in the River or in Pond

It was not possible that the Holy Baptism was given only either in the river or in the pond during the days of Apostles. On the day of Pentecost, there was no facility available in Jerusalem to have an immersion either in River or in a Pond for 3000 people. The River of Jordan was very far. Cornelius and the house owner were baptised in his house only. The Apostles and those who took responsibility from them have baptised thousands of people worldwide. Hence, we have to assume that a suitable method came in to existence for Baptism in those days itself. Holy Syrian Church adopted that method for Baptism.

Child Baptism

It can be wisely assumed that the Baptism to Children were existent even during the days of Apostles.

Evidence :

- Cornelius and his household were baptised (Acts of Apostles 10:48)
- Lydia and house owner got baptised. (Acts of Apostles 16:15)
- (Acts of Apostles 16:35)
- Crispus the Synagogue ruler and his entire household believed in the Lord (did the same) (Acts of Apostles 18:8)
- The household of Stephanas also were baptized. (1 Corinth 1:16)

In these families there would have been children. The inheritance from Apostles and St. Ireneos tell about the child baptism. Hence it is to be understood that the baptism of children were existent in the early Church and this tradition was inherited from the Apostles.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 27

ST. MARY – THE VIRGIN

It was believed by the Holy Church from the very beginning that St. Mary is the perpetual Virgin and she had no other children other than Jesus Christ. She was only engaged to St. Joseph, she never got married. Jesus was her only son. That is why Jesus Christ entrusted the apostle John with the responsibility of looking after His mother while on the cross. The apostles knew St. Mary very closely and we follow their teachings about Mother Mary.

St. Ignatius Noorono says that 'the Virginité of St. Mary and her conception of Jesus Christ and the death of our Lord Jesus Christ are the three inimitable mysteries'.

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" St Luke 1:26-27

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel". Isaiah 7:14

"Without affecting any thing to the virginité of St. Mary by Holy Spirit" (St. Luke 1:35, St. Mathew 1:20.), the prophecy of Isaiah is thus fulfilled. St. Mathew 1:12-23

It is an unnatural thing for a virgin to become pregnant. Those who have doubts, the answer is 'every thing is possible with God'. In addition to that the Holy church points out three unnatural examples from the Holy Bible.

- The tree, which generated the ram. Genesis 22:12
- The rock that generated water. Exodus 17: 6
- The fish that gave coin (Esthira). St. Mathew 17:27

Serious doubts about the Virginité of St. Mary were expressed since 4th Century. It was evil (satanic) doubt that the purified and blessed womb, which carried the Son of God who could not be confined even in Heaven, conceived again and gave birth to children. The punishment, which Jehovah has given to King Belshazzar for utilizing the sacred Gold and Silver Goblets, which were used for the Holy Sacraments in God's Temple for his personal use while he was in a state of hysteria was of sudden and severe nature. (Daniel 5: 2-5). Jehovah, who has much zeal even about the gold utensils of His Sanctuary would be much more sharp about the womb where He stepped down and lived!

His Mother and the beloved disciple of Jesus were standing nearby to His Cross. If St. Mary (Merriam) had other children, St. John would have mentioned about them also while he spoke about other Merriam's during this time. It was even during this time of great agony that Jesus was thinking about His Mother and gives the responsibility to care her to St. John. It would not have happened if Jesus had brothers whom his Mother gave birth to.

Holy Fathers praises St. Mary as the shut Gate of the Sanctuary as told by Ezekiel 44: 1-2. "Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.", is the prophecy.



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5

The brothers who were termed as the 'brothers of Jesus' in the Gospels were the children of Merriam of Cleopa, sister of St. Mary, says St. Jerome and it was the children of the first wife of St. Joseph as per St. Epiphanius.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 28

SAINTS – WHAT IS THEIR POSITION?

"I am the God of your Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," tells God to Moses. Exodus 3:6

Our Lord declares that 'For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him' (St. Luke 20: 38.) 'Those who have lived by expecting the fulfilment of the promise and they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance'. 'Hence God is not ashamed to be called their God' says the author of Hebrews (Hebrews 11:16)

"Your Father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day and he saw it and was glad" (St. John 8:56.)

During the time of transfiguration of Jesus, St. Peter saw Moses and Elijah were talking with him.

We understand from all these the following

1. Death is only for the body. After death saints (we also) live without body. "For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him'. Saints keep contact with God after their death. They can see, talk and enjoy.
2. After death also saints are dear to God.

St. Paul also testifies "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far". (Philip 1:23)

Holy remains of Saints

The bones, their tombs, the things which they used, were respected in the New Testament Church as well as in the Old Testament Church. The bones of Joseph were taken respectfully by Moses from Misraim (Egypt). Even though Israel was caused to wander several years in the desert, they kept these bones with reverence. These were interred in the Promised Land. (Exodus 13:19, Joshua 24:32, Hebrews 11:22)

In 2Kings 13:20-21 we read 'Once while some Israelites were burying a man, suddenly they saw a band of raiders, so they threw the man's body in to Elisha's tomb. When the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet'

Even the inert things, which were used by Saints, were also respected by God. Examples were the Staff of Moses and the Cloak of Elijah (2 Kings 2: 14), the shadow of St. Peter (Acts of Apostles 5:15), the Hand kerchiefs and the Aprons of St. Paul (Acts of Apostles 19:11).

The Bone of Elisha had the power to give life to a dead, the ability to perform lots of miracles with the Staff of Moses, the strength of Elijah's cloak to divide the river Jordan and the powers of the shadow of St. Peter and the handkerchiefs and the Aprons of St. Paul to cure the sick were given by God Himself. God loves and respects His saints. 'As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight' Psalms 16:3

The Holy remains of saints are the sources of blessings. The God Who loves them do miracles through their Holy remains.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
CLASS 5**

LESSON 29

VOWS (OFFERINGS)

To make offers and fulfil them are absolutely as per the Holy book. Holy Bible testifies that Holy Fathers and Saints were administering Offers.

Holy Father Jacob's vow while in Bethel (Genesis 28:22).

Judge Jephthah (Judges 11) Hannah (1 Samuel 1st Chapter) also vows.

David talks about Vows in several occasions in the book of Psalms. He attributes 'Vows' as the means to reveal his prayer of gratitude and respect to God in front of every people. (Psalms 22: 25, 50:14; 56:12; 66:14; 96:8).

The 'Vows' of St. Paul were seen in Acts 18:19

'Vows' should not be termed as bribes to God and it is known to everybody that it could not be possible to bribe the Almighty to please him. Those who undertake vows and fulfil them do the following.

- 1) Shows the willingness and humbleness to dedicate to God.
- 2) Shows the sincerity of their prayers.
- 3) Since they received from God everything, it shows their obligation, gratitude and obedience to God.
- 4) Praising the God

Those who worship God do vow and the Vows alone will not constitute worship.

