



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEXT BOOK



CLASS

9

Published by
**SHARON FELLOWSHIP
SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

THE ALFORD ASSOCIATION

SHARON FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEXT BOOK
CLASS - 9



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SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
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SHARON FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Sharon, Tiruvalla, Kerala, India- 689 101

PREFACE

Sunday school has a great impact in the growth of the church. Because majority of believers accepted Jesus Christ as their personal saviour through Sunday School. Along with believers the servants of the Lord in any generation received their basic bible knowledge through Sunday School. Also it is noteworthy to mention that many of churches were begun through Sunday School.

I am so delighted as the Sunday School activities in Sharon Fellowship churches are striving forward in an active and well-organized method. This is a commendable service as it relates our kids with Lord. Because Sunday School can develop powerful warriors for the expansion of the kingdom of God.

I am so happy as our Sunday School's syllabus is revising by including the contemporary elements to get a quality Christian education for our children. I am so grateful to those who worked hard for including this book of 9th class under our new revised syllabus. I pray that this book may become a great blessing to our kids around the world.

May the God who has revealed Himself be pleased to use this work to lead many into knowledge of Himself.

In Christ,

Tiruvalla
25-11-2016

Rev. John Thomas
(General President)

CURRICULAM COMMITTEE

Pastor Jacob George

Pastor Abraham Manthamaruthi

Brother K. Thankachan

Brother T. Thankachan

Pastor P. A. Chackochan

Brother Koshy Mathew

Brother T. O. Podikunju

INTRODUCTION

Sunday school is doing the great ministry of relating children with Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore there is no wrong in saying that today's Sunday school is tomorrow's church. From this it is clear that the future of church is depending upon Sunday school. It is from this perspective that every church should see Sunday school and encourage its activities.

Sunday School Teaching is neither a trivial task nor simple mission. Rather it is very important like any other service of the Church. It is a mission that God entrusted upon us by considering us as Faithful. Therefore teaching ministry of Sunday school should be done with enough prayer and prayer

Sunday school studies may enable our children to receive Jesus Christ as their personal saviour. It may also help them to grow in Christ and also to become the witnesses of Gospel where ever they are. This new curriculum of Sunday school is helpful to attain the above mentioned aims. Teachers should study it well and teach students with this aim.

Sharon Sunday School Association decided to revise the old curriculum by including the contemporary elements to get a quality Christian education for our children. As a part of it, this text book of 9th class is reaching in your hands. I pray that its learner may be blessed by this text book

Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy
*Director, Sharon Fellowship
Sunday School Association.*

Authors of Text Book

PreSchool-Evg. Babu Thomas Angamaly

Class 1 - Timothy Institute

Class 2 - Timothy Institute

Class 3 - Rev. D. Roy

Class 4 - Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy

Class 5-Pastor Titus Johnson

Class 6-Pastor BijuJoseph

Class 7-Pastor Koshy Oommen

Class 8-Mrs. Jessy Koshy

Class 9-Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy

Class 10-Pastor Shibu Mathew

Class 11-Pastor Sabu Paul

Class 12-Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy

STATEMENT

Sunday School is a necessary aspect of the Church. The growth and existence of a church is depended upon the ministries among the youngsters and the kids of it. If our youngsters and kids get good – quality Christian education surely they will become a great asset to our church and the kingdom of God.

Text books had been published from Sharon Bible College-Tiruvalla and Faith Theological Seminary-Manakala for the Sunday school studies of our children. Since all those books were distributed before few years there was a shortage for the textbooks in these years. Therefore there was a constant search for the text books from our Sunday school ministers.

God enabled us to publish the text books from 1 to 10 standard of Sunday school in 1998 through the leadership of Dr. T. P. Abraham (Acting President of S.F.C.). These text books got a very good response from Sunday school students and teachers of our own churches as well as from other denominations. Since the published text books were distributed completely we were able to publish several prints of text books of all classes.

We taught the 11th and 12th Standards of our Sunday School by depending on some other text books. Later in 2003 Sunday School Committee decided to publish the text books of 11th and 12th standards of our own. As a result God enabled us to publish the text book of 11th standard on 2004 and the text book of 12th standard

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on 2008. Also in 2013 God enabled us to publish new text book for Nursery kids and text book with activity portion for 1st standard. After realising the rapid changes of the educational sector and of the contemporary generation we are re-publishing this text book with revised curriculum.

Through the syllabus that we published, a Sunday school student will get a good study of the Word of God from its beginning to end. Along with this student will get a basic knowledge about the Bible, Bible Survey, other religions, life of missionaries etc. A student who covers this text book will get a thorough knowledge about the fundamental theological elements and an introduction to the heretical cults in this century.

The author of this text book is **Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy**.

English Translation of this book is done by **Zeno Ben Sunny**. We extend our hearty thanks to the precious work behind it timely.

I pray that this text book may become a great blessing to lots of children and to churches. May the name of the Lord be glorified through this text book. May the God who has revealed Himself be pleased to use this work to lead many into knowledge of Himself.

For Sunday School Association

Pastor. Jacob George
(Coordinator, Curriculum Committee)

Brother T. Thankachan
(General Secretary)

Tiruvalla
25-11-2016

CHAPTER 1

The Bible

Reading Portion : Psalms 19:7-11; Isaiah 34:16; Hebrews 4:12,13

Memory Verse : Hebrews 4:12.

Purpose : The Bible is the word of God and has developed in the socio-historical basis and also it is God breathed.

Introduction : The greatest gift ever mankind received from God is the Holy Bible. Though centuries passed by, the moral values of the Holy Scriptures has never deteriorated. Its value has never deteriorated even over the centuries. All the literary works of this world has developed from people's mind based on their thoughts, comments or even experiences. And later on, they have to undergo amendments in order to balance out with contemporary issues, style, language and thought.

But it's not so with the Bible because it is God-breathed. The narration of the Bible is the revelation and intervention of God to man, throughout the history. The men of God who lived in distinctive social backgrounds, different times, and various places had done the stylography of the Bible. Yet the theme and the fundamental teachings of the Bible are one and the same. How it happened? Because, the author of the Bible is Holy Spirit. Men of God were prompted by anointing of the Spirit. This is the uniqueness of the Bible.

Names given to the Bible

When we analyze the word "Bible" etymologically, it is derived from a Greek word Biblia, which means "books". It's singular form

“Biblios” means book. The word “book” is used in different portions of the Bible; for example, Book (Luke 4:17), the Book of Moses (Mark 12:26), the Book of Isaiah (Luke 4:17), the Book of Truth (Daniel 10:21), and the books of the prophets (Daniel 9:2).

Jbeil port, which is situated about 20 miles north of Beirut city (capital of Lebanon and is famous for cedar, and pine trees) exported papyrus papers to different countries from ancient times. Therefore, Greek people named this port as Biblios port. As a result, books were given this name. The Bible is known with different names.

1. **Word of God**

The word of God is called as “dabar” and “logos” in Hebrew and Greek language respectively. Even though the word of God is written by men, it is the word of God to mankind. This word is used more than 2,000 times in the Bible. Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13; Acts of the Apostles 4:31), word of the LORD (Acts 8:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1), the word of Christ (Colossians 3:16), word of life (Philippians 2:15), word of truth (Ephesians 1:13), and word of faith (Romans 10:8).

2. **Scriptures**

Another Greek word, “Graphe” is used in the Bible. The meaning of this word is scripture. It is similar to the word Bible. Even though the word, “scripture” is used to denote a particular passage, verse or a particular word from the Bible; it is also used to represent the Bible as a whole. It is an honorable word given to the words from the Lord to the mankind.

3. **Oracles of God**

This word represents the ownership of God on the word of God. The Holy Bible contains the instruction and commandments of Most High God. Oracles are infallible. Oracles of God (Romans 3:2; Hebrews 5:12; 1 Peter 4:11), living words (Acts 7:38), and commandment of God (Mark 7:13) are some references pertaining to this.

4. **Book of the LORD**

This name is apt for the word of God. Books are generally known by its author’s name. The Holy Bible is written by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, it is called as the book of the Lord (Isaiah 34:16).

Time of writing and the writers

Moses, who was a scholastic giant of Egypt, had begun the writing

of the Bible. He wrote the first five books (Pentateuch) of the Bible in 1500 B. C. Apostle John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, concluded the Bible by writing the last book- the book of Revelation, in A. D. 95 while he had been in the island of Patmos, which is situated in the Aegean Sea. As a nutshell, we can conclude that there is a time span of 1600 years from Moses to John. Moses had begun the work of the Bible, by the inspiration of the LORD, at the foot of Mount Sinai. Occasionally, he mentions in his writings that he had been commanded by the LORD to write a Book (Exodus 17:14, 24:4,7; 34:27; Numbers 33:2).

God used more than 40 people from different walks of the society including kings, ministers, army chiefs, philosophers, lawyers, scientists, prophets, shepherds, farmers, fishermen, and a tax-collector, and a doctor too, in writing the word of God. When we analyze the theme and literary style of various Bible writers, we see any of them exchanging their ideas. But the Spirit of the Lord coordinated everything throughout the centuries. The literary works of the Holy Scripture is done from Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Division of the Bible

Bible is mainly divided into two such as the Old Testament and the New Testament. These names came up by the end of A.D. 2. It is to differentiate the Hebrew scripture from the Christian literary works. Initially, the word 'New Testament' was used by early church father Tertullian.

Old Testament shows the covenant given through Moses to the Israelites (Exodus 24:8) whereas New Testament contains the new covenant established by Jesus Christ (Jer: 31:31; Matthew 26:28). Old Testament consists of 39 books and New Testament has 27 books.

The Old Testament is again divided into five such as:-

1. Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy)
2. Historical books (Joshua to Esther)
3. Poetic books (Job to Songs of Solomon)
4. Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel)
5. Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi)

The New Testament is divided such as:

1. Gospels (Matthew to John)
2. Historical book (Acts of the Apostles)

3. Epistles (Romans to Jude)
4. Prophecy (Revelation)

Chapter vice and Verse vice division

Bible has 66 books with 1,189 chapters and 31,175 verses. But the original text was in continuous running matter without any chapters and verses. Stephan Langton the Archbishop of Canterbury made the chapter division. He died in 1228. Robert Stephens published a Greek New Testament in 1551 and it contained the chapter division pattern that we follow today. In 1555, complete Bible with chapter and verse division (Latin Vulgate) was published. Geneva Bible (1560) was the first English Bible which contained the chapter vice and verse vice division.

Practical lesson

Bible contains the oracles of God. It can guide us in the right path. Read the Bible with prayer and meditate on it. Bible reading and meditation can help us to keep us away from sinful ways and to live close to God. Therefore, take a decision to read and meditate the word of God on daily basis.

Questions

1. How the word of God has got its name as the Bible?
2. What are the different names given to the Bible?
3. How many divisions do the old testament have? Which are they?

CHAPTER 2

Canonization Of The Bible

Reading Portion : 2 Peter 1:20,21; Hebrews 1:1

Memory Verse : Psalms 119:97, 98

Purpose : To understand that the word of God is completed in different situations and different writers, and it is combined together and is given to the church as the scriptures.

Introduction : In the last we studied that The Bible is a compilation of 66 books. These 66 books are selected from among many other contemporary books with prayer and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But there arise a question. What were the criteria behind the codification of these books? Who restricted these 66 books as God breathed? Were there any schisms or any conflicts in the church history about this? In this lesson we are to discuss all these things.

Canon

How do we know the authenticity and credibility of a book included in the Bible? How can we understand the divine nature of a Book? To solve this kind of problems; the apologetic fathers, as directed by the Spirit of God, made a framework of norms and regulations to ratify the authenticity and the verbal plenary inspiration of a book that is to be selected. These regulations are called "Canon".

What is "Canon"?

The Greek word "Cana" and the Malayalam word "Canon" came from the Hebrew word "Khaneh", which means measure, standard

or a measuring rod. The Christian churches use this word as the “regulation of faith”; a standard of beliefs, teachings, customs, practices and mores. Theologically, the word Canon means the framework of regulations to distinguish the holy inspired writings from the instigated unholy writings.

Canonization

Canonic books are the books that are accepted officially with prayer according to the standards of the decrees of faith, and this process is called canonization. The Protestant churches accept 66 books as Canonical books.

History of Canon

There is a long history lies behind the development of Biblical Canon. There are disagreements concerning the framework of canon in different Protestant churches.

Old Testament Canon

The Jews believed that the Old Testament is the revelation from the Creator. It has traditionally been maintained that the sacred books were sacred in themselves from the moment of their completion. Old Testament canon was finalized at the Synod at Jamnia, Jerusalem (presently Jabneh) in A. D. 90 by a Jewish Rabbi. This council is called as Jamnia Council. The O.T. canon was decided at least three hundred years before the Jamnia council. It confirmed what had already been long accepted. There were disputes about canonicity of the books like Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Songs of Solomon. They were accepted as canonical in the Jamnia council. Book of Esther was under suspicion because it had never mentioned the word “God”.

Actually the focus of Jamnia council was to reject the Christian writings and to confer a curse (Anathema) upon the followers of Nazarene.

The fundamental criterions that are used for the OT Canon were three fold as follows

a) Credibility of the Author

The credibility of the author is the first and foremost requirement of a canonical book. The first question was: Who the author is? We can see that the OT writers starting from Moses till Malachi wrote as the Holy Spirit gave them special call and authority to write.

b) Internal evidences

The second criterion was, whether the book itself gives evidence that it contains the word of God. For example, the phrase "The Lord says so" can be seen more than 3,860 times in the OT.

c) Historic evidences

The next criterion was whether the contents of that book are trustworthy or valid. It was thoroughly scrutinized that the history till the Babylonian exile, the history in the Babylonian exile and the history after the exile is true and are based on facts.

When Christian churches formed their own canonical norms they included:-

d) The teachings of Christ

When an O.T. book is under canonical consideration, the church fathers were very keen to observe the approach and the attitude of Christ regarding the book. For this they mainly considered the quotations used by Jesus.

New Testament Canon

Though, the early Christian churches accepted the canonicity of the Old Testament, it took years to publish the list of New Testament canonical books. All the NT books were written by the end of first century A.D., yet, it was by fourth century A. D., the official list of NT Canonical books were affirmed and approved.

The word N T Canon was first used for Christian writings by man named Marcion, who lived in the 2nd century, . He was an anti-Jewish and a Gnostic. In A. D. 140, he formed a church in Rome as per his own teachings. He codified the first N T canon by accepting the gospel of Luke and the 10 epistles of Paul. He was deadly against the OT and accepted only those documents that support his teachings.

By the end of second A. D., four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles and the 13 epistles of Paul were accepted in almost all areas. But in some areas, Hebrews, 1 & 2 John, James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation were accepted. Along with this, the epistle of Barnabas, Didache (Teachings of the 12 disciples), epistle written to Laodicea, and the Revelation of Peter, were widely circulated.

In A. D. 367, Athanasius wrote to all the churches that the NT Canon is accepted and it contains 27 books and he ordered not to add or remove any books to or from this. As a result, the Eastern Churches accepted the NT canon with 27 books in 4th Century. And by A. D.

367, the western churches also accepted this canon in the Synod of Carthage.

The basic criterions that are used in the NT Canonization:

a) Apostolic

Whether the book is written or accepted by any Apostles.

b) Teachings

Whether the content of the book has relationship with the life, and teachings of Jesus Christ.

c) Acceptance

Whether the Christian churches accept that particular book as a whole.

Apocryphal Books

Apocryphal books are the books and parts of books that are not been accepted as canonic by Jews and the Protestants. Apocrypha means things that are hidden, or secret. The God-breathed nature, and the authority of the author, and relevance of these books are under question and doubt or they are hidden. The Catholic Church added and published 14 Apocryphal books in their Bible. Therefore, there came two sects of Bibles as Catholic Bible and Protestant Bible in the Christian community. 1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Rest of Esther, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Song of the Three Children, Story of Susanna, The Idol Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manassas, and 1 & 2 Maccabees are the Apocryphal books. The Protestant Churches never accepted these books as a part of the Bible, but some of them are accounted as contemporary historical books not as canonical.

Practical Lesson

The canon accepted by the first church was given by God Himself. We have to accept it. We have no permission to add or remove anything to or from it but, we are bound to follow it completely. Are you ready to follow the word of God?

Questions

1. What do you mean by "Canon"?
2. Explain the history of OT Canon
3. What do you mean by "Canonization"?
4. What were the criterions used in the creation of NT Canon?

CHAPTER 3

Ancient Biblical Translations (Old Testament)

Reading Portion : 1 Peter 1:10,11; Deuteronomy 8:1-4

Memory Verse : 2 Peter 1:20,21.

Purpose : To understand the ways of God in preserving the original text of the scriptures in the era without any writing techniques and writing instruments, and also how the copies were made and available from the original text.

Introduction : The OT was written in Hebrew language and the NT was written in Greek language. It was a time when the writing technology or even the writing instruments were not easily available. Therefore, the written scrolls were preserved safely. Later on, these were translated to different languages.

The Bible was initially spread to the society orally. Later, the written form of Bible came up. The scriptures in the original language are called as Original Text and the scriptures in other languages were known as translations. The original text of the Bible is not available today. But, the copies of the same are available. Scribes made copies and revealed the truths of the scriptures. So, they were called as “keepers of the home”. The copies of the scriptures were made by the scribes as they write the text read by a chief scribe.

Israel was directed to keep the original text in the Holy of Holies beside the Ark of covenant that it might be preserved (Deut 31:24-26). The Levites who were in charge of the Ark of covenant were

further directed to make copies of the original for various uses (Deut17:18,19).

People used different methods to write things in ancient times. Modern day papers were not available in those times. Therefore, people used parchments (scrolls made of animal skin), clay tablets, wooden tablets and the paper made from papyrus plants, in writing. Papyrus plants were more in places like Syria and Egypt. The delicate layers of these plants were taken and are dried in bundles; then the inner side is smoothened by plain stones or similar instruments. This soft part is used instead of papers.

Manuscripts of the Bible

The manuscripts of the Bible that are available today show the antiqueness of the scroll. It is believed that these manuscripts were written in between 2nd and 15th Centuries. They were written in parchments or in papyruses. They are called by the name of the place from where it is found or the name of the place where it was kept safe, and this name is added as a prefix to the word "Codex". Codex means an ancient manuscript text in book form. Some most important manuscripts are given below:

1. Dead Sea scrolls

This was the most ancient manuscript that are retrieved so far. It was found in 1947 from a cave near Dead Sea which is north to Jericho. They were covered with linen clothes and were sealed in clay pots of 24-inch-high and 10-inch-wide. From the age calculations of the clay pot, it is commonly believed that the scrolls are written around 125 B.C. Almost all the manuscripts of OT were found in this. These text were also known as "Qumran Scrolls" as these scrolls were preserved by the Qumran community.

2. Masoretic Text

Masoretic text was the traditional text of the Hebrew Bible, revised and annotated by Jewish scholars between the 6th and 10th centuries A D. A group of Jewish Scribes made copies of this Text Masorah means tradition. They wrote these with the help of different traditions.

3. Cairo Codex

Moses Ben Asher of Ben Asher family, Palestine wrote these manuscripts in A. D. 845. Prophetic books are included in this. They were found in a Synagogue at Cairo, Egypt.

4. Leningrad Codex

These scrolls were retrieved in A.D. 916 and are kept in Saltykov Shchedrin public library. This contains all prophetic books except the book of Daniel.

5. Aleppo Codex

It is the complete manuscript of OT. The name Aleppo Codex was given to this as it was kept for around 500 years till 1948, in a Synagogue at Aleppo, Syria.

Bible translations

Scriptures that are written to any other languages from the original language is called a translation. Some important translations are:

1. Septuagint (LXX)

Septuagint is the Greek translation of the OT. Seventy (LXX) scholars translated OT from Hebrew to Greek by the order of the Egyptian King Ptolemy Philadelphus. As a result, the name Septuagint, meaning seventy, was given to this translation. This was done between B. C. 285 and 264.

2. Targum

Targum is the Aramaic translations, more or less literal, of portions of the Old Testament used in the synagogues of Palestine and Babylonia. After the Babylonian Captivity in the 6th century bc, Aramaic replaced Hebrew as the generally spoken language. So it became necessary to explain the meaning of readings from the Scriptures. To bridge this, Jewish scholars found a solution by translating the original text to Aramaic language. This is a paraphrased translation. This translation is known as Targum, means translation.

Only a small portion of the many oral Targums that were produced survived. Among these are the originally Judean Targum known as the Targum Onkelos; three late and incomplete Targums, the so-called Jerusalem Targums, on the Pentateuch; the Judean Targum on the Prophets; later fragments of another paraphrase of the Prophets; and Targums on Psalms, Job, Proverbs, the five so-called megillahs (Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Esther, Ecclesiastes), Chronicles, and the deuterocanonical additions to Esther.

3. Peshitta

It is the complete translation of the Hebrew Bible to Syriac. The

word Peshitta means simple. This translation was done in between A.D. 411 and A.D. 435.

4. Vulgate

The Latin translation of the OT is known as Vulgate. The word Vulgate means, "For common use". St. Jerome did this translation. This translation was done in between A.D. 395 and A.D. 405 was accepted as the official Bible by Catholic Church in 1546.

Practical Lesson

Presently we have so many Biblical translations. Comparative study of these can help us in knowing more about the Bible. Let's take a decision to own and to learn these translations.

Questions

1. Who were called as the "keepers of the home"?
2. What all were used as writing medium in ancient times?
3. Write a note on Dead Sea Scrolls.
4. What all are the main Bible translations? Explain.

CHAPTER 4

Ancient Biblical Translations (New Testament)

- Reading Portion** : Deuteronomy 4:1-10; 28:1-14
- Memory Verse** : Psalms 119: 89, 90.
- Purpose** : (1) To give the knowledge about the original texts of NT
(2) To understand the background of the scriptures that we have till now.

Introduction : We have discussed about OT manuscripts and ancient translations in the previous lesson. In this, we will be discussing about NT manuscripts and translations. The whole NT is written between A. D. 50 and A. D. 100. Even though all the manuscripts were not retrieved, the manuscripts that are written in 3rd and 4th century which are accepted as ancient is given below.

1. **Vatican Codex**

This was written in the middle of 4th century and have OT in complete and the NT too. As this is kept in Vatican Library at Alexandria, this is called as Vatican Codex. This has 759 pages of 10-inch-high and 10-inch-wide. This is considered as the most ancient manuscript of NT.

2. **Sinai Codex**

This manuscript was retrieved from St. Catherine Monastery at Sinai Peninsula in 1884 by a German Bible Scholar named Dr. Tischendorf. This was a copy of the Bible written in Greek by around A. D. 330. He found these invaluable treasures from a heap of waste that were kept for fire. In 1933, the British Museum bought this for a

price of 5 Lakh pounds.

3. **Alexandrian Codex**

This was written in Greek in A. D. 450 at Egypt. Some parts of Genesis, 1 Samuel, and Psalms were missing in this, but it contained the rest of OT as well as NT. As this was kept for a long time in Alexandria, this is known as Alexandrian Codex.

4. **Bezae Codex**

Theodore Bezae, a French Bible Scholar and a disciple of John Calvin found this manuscript in St. Irenaeus Monastery in 1562. NT was written in Greek and Latin. Now this manuscript is under safe custody at Cambridge University.

5. **Washington Manuscript**

Charles A. Ferrier bought this manuscript from a merchant of Cairo in 1906. This contained the 4 gospels and few epistles with 187 pages. It is believed that these were written by the end of 4th century or by the beginning of the 5th century. This is kept safe at Ferrier's book collection in Washington.

6. **Claromontanus Codex**

This is a codex from A.D. 5 and contains the letters of Paul only. This is bilingual leather papered book with 533 pages. The Bible is written in Latin on the right side and in Greek on the left side. The real source of this manuscript is still unknown. This is found in between 1565 and 1582. The name "Claromontanus Codex" is given as this was found from a Monastery at Clermont-en-Beauvaisis.

Bible in other languages

With ages, God opened new ways for the easy availability of Bible to everyone. In the last 20 centuries, the Holy Bible is the only book which is translated to many languages and is distributed. By the survey report published by United Bible Society in 2007, Bible is translated into 438 languages. Either OT or NT is translated into 1618 languages. Excerpts of the Bible are available in 848 languages. Bible is available either partially or fully in 2454 languages.

Practical Lesson

The word of God is invaluable and precious. It is a great blessing to avail time to learn the Bible. The word of God gives wisdom and knowledge to us. Therefore, learn the word of God with awe and respect.

Questions

1. Why Vatican Codex is called so?
2. Write a note about Alexandrian Codex.
3. Explain in detail about Bezae Codex.

CHAPTER 5

Biblical Translations: Important Milestones

Memory Verse : 1 Peter 1:23

Purpose : (1) To understand about Bible translations to English.
(2) To know the divine purpose of God in bringing the word of God available to all.

Introduction : The Bibles that we have today had undergone a lot of version changes. Among that the English versions have a long ancient history. By the beginning of A.D. 4, Christian religion have rooted firm in England. German tribes like Angels (Anglo), Saxons and Juju tribe immigrated to Britain. Land of the Angels or the lands procured by the Angels were called as Angles land and later it became as England.

With no time, English language is developed with the mixture of Saxon, Norman and French languages. As a result, people started translating the Bible to English language. Some of the main versions are as follows:

1. Wycliffe Bible

Wycliffe Bible was the first Bible which was being translated completely from Latin to English. John Wycliffe did this translation. He was born in a rich family of England (1320-1380). He completed the translation work in 1382. This translation made the Roman Catholic people in fury. As Wycliffe did Bible translation, he was removed from the church membership after 31 years of his death. His body remaining which was at the London Werth Cemetery was taken out, burned to ashes and they throw them into Swift River.

2. Tyndale Bible

William Tyndale, also called as the father of English Bible was born in 1492, England. After completing his education at Cambridge University, he wanted to translate and publish Bible in English language. In 1542, he fled to Europe as Bible translation in England was banned by law. In 1526, while he was in Cologne, he completed and published NT Bible translation. He was able to import Bibles from Europe to England without being noticed. But, he was caught and sent to prison by the King of England. On 6th October 1536, he became a martyr in the prison.

3. King James Version (KJV)

King James Version or KJV was the most famous English translation from Hebrew and Greek. This was published in 1611. This translation was a milestone in the history of Bible translation. In January 1604, a petition was given to King James I, who became the king after Queen Elizabeth and it was signed by 1,000 people who were led by John Reynolds, a leader of Puritan community. This memorandum was known as “Millinery Petition”. The agenda of this petition was to have an English Bible that can be accepted by all.

As a result, 6 groups of 54 scholars from Cambridge, Oxford, and Westminster University started translating the Bible by the order of King James. By hard works, in 1611, they gifted the Bible to the King. This was the result of an ardent labour of long 7 years. As the King gave testimonial to read this Bible in churches, this translation was also called as “authorized version”. This translation was done in 100% with the Hebrew and Greek text.

4. American Standard Revised Version (ASRV)

In 1901 American Company published the revised version of the Bible and is named as ASRV. This translation was better in many aspects when comparing with the Bible translations published from England.

5. Revised Standard Version (RSV)

This was formulated by 32 American Bible scholars. NT was published in 1946 and OT & NT was published in 1952. The presentation style of this version is so simple.

6. New International Version (NIV)

NIV was translated and published under the guidance of New York Bible Society. This was a direct translation from Masoretic text

and Greek text. NT was published in 1967 and the complete Bible was published in 1978.

7. New King James Version (NKJV)

The 5th edition of NKJV was published in 1975 with the help of more than 100 Bible scholars. This was done by translating the Bible directly from Hebrew and Greek texts. The presentation style and the understandability of this version is much higher when comparing to KJV.

8. Other Versions

There are many other versions in additions to the ones mentioned above. Moffat Bible (1913), New English Bible (1961), Jerusalem Bible (1966), Good News Bible (1966), New American Bible (1970), Living Bible (1972) are some among them.

Practical Lesson

To work in Bible translation field is tedious and hard. As a result of the hard work of many people we have different versions. There are people even today who work in Bible translations. Let us pray for them.

Questions

1. Write a note about Wycliffe Bible.
2. Explain clearly the reason behind the development of King James Version.
3. Write notes about modern Bible Versions.

CHAPTER 6

Bible In India

Memory Verse : Colossians 3:16

Purpose : to know how Bible was translated to Indian languages and about the people whom God used for the same.

Introduction : It believed that St. Thomas came to India in the 1st Century and came to Kerala as well also other parts of the country and planted churches. But, for a few centuries, Bibles in native's language were not available. Syriac Bibles were used in few churches in Kerala. But, now we have Bibles in different Indian languages. In this chapter, we will learn how we had our Bible.

William Carey and Bible translation

The history of Malayalam Bible translation is interlinked with the story of William Carey. This is because he played a key role in the translation of Bible to Indian languages.

William Carey was born in 1761, in Northampton, England. He, as a missionary, came to Calcutta, Bengal with his family in 11 October 1793. He started working with Serampore as the center. Later on he started Serampore college with Joshua Marshman and William Ward. These missionaries were known as "Serampore Trio". In addition to missionary works William Carey was interested in public activities and in education field too. His greatest gift was that he translated and published Bible in Indian languages.

He started to work for the translation work as he found the necessity of Bible in Indian languages is high. He had knowledge in

Latin and French languages from his childhood and this helped in the translation. By the hard work of seven and half years, he was able to publish the first Bengali NT translation. It was in March 1801. Translated the whole Bible to Assamese language, too. In addition to this, he translated Bible to 19 different languages. Later he translated NT and some portion of the OT to 5 other languages. God helped William Carey to translate and to publish Bible either completely or partially to 34 languages.

Ziegenbalg and Bible translation

Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg was another missionary who translated the Bible to Indian language. He was born on 10 June 1682. He was a Protestant missionary and landed in Tranquebar (present Tarangambadi), Tamil Nadu on 9 July 1706. He learned Tamil language and translated and published some portions of NT and OT by 1713. It was the first Bible which was published in an Indian language.

Bible in Malayalam

The Malayalam Bible had a history of 200 years. Before that, churches in Kerala used Syriac or Latin Bibles. The initiation of Bible translation was done by the visit of Claudius Buchanan to Kerala in 1806. He was a chaplain with the Calcutta East India Company. Mar Divannasios, the chief of Syrian church, received Buchanan and gave him a manuscript of Syriac Bible. There were 55 Syriac churches in Kerala at that time. Buchanan took a decision to give a Malayalam Bible to each of these churches. For this, he appointed Thimmappa Pillai, who was an expert in translating Tamil Bible and Philipose Kaseesa (Deacon). They translated Gospels on the basis of Syriac and Tamil Bible. These manuscripts were taken to Bombay and there Malayalam letter foundry was done and in 1811 the first Malayalam Bible was published.

Bayle Bible

Colonel Monroe was appointed as the British Resident for Travancore-Kochi in 1810. He was fond of making a Malayalam Bible without any errors and faithful to the original texts. He appointed Benjamin Bayle (1805-1871), a C.M.S. Missionary to undertake this task. Along with his wife, Bayle came to Alappuzha on November 1816 and came to Kottayam in 1817. There were no Malayalam dictionary or grammar books available. He learned Malayalam, Syriac, and Sanskrit languages with great efforts. His invaluable gifts to us were Malayalam-English dictionary, English-Malayalam dictionary. Bayle completed the translation works with the help of 8 Syrian Priests.

Famous Hebrew scholar Moses Isarpheni helped Bayle in Hebrew language. Malayalam Scholar Chathu Menon and Sanskrit scholar Vaidyanadh Iyer helped Bayle in this task. Bayle made a press with wood and also made Malayalam letter foundary. This was the first printing press in Malayalam. In 1892, NT was published and in 1842, complete Malayalam Bible was published. This letter press was called as C.M.S. press, Kottayam.

Gundert Bible

The language and style of Bayle Bible was not easily understood by the people of North Malabar. To bridge this, Herman Gundert (1814-1893) started another Malayalam translation. He translated OT and NT directly from Hebrew and Greek respectively.

The Holy Bible

The translations of Bayle and Gundert were not accepted by all people. As a result, Madras Bible Auxiliary of the Bible society implemented a committee on 1871 for the states like Travancore, Kochi and Malabar. This committee constituted members from Anglican, Congregational, Reformation churches and Syriac churches. J. M. Freets was the chairman of this committee. They started to translate Bible in 1871. In 1880, NT and by 1910 complete Bible was published. This Bible is translated in pure Malayalam and is widely used by all the churches, except Roman Catholic churches.

Practical Lesson

We should never forget the people who sacrificed their lives in translating the Bible to Malayalam language. Let us praise and thank God for making these people to do such a wonderful thing. Let us pray for the places where those who still do not have a Bible into their own dialect.

Questions

1. Write a note on William Carey's Bible translation.
2. Who did the first Tamil translation of NT?
3. Write a note on Bayle Bible.

CHAPTER 7

Old Testament Books: The Pentateuch

- Reading Portion** : Deuteronomy 28,29,30 chapters
- Memory Verse** : Exodus 19:5
- Purpose** : To give insight about the background of the first five chapters of OT, its writers, and important subject. God's care, and the divine revelations stay intact even from the creation of the universe.

Introduction: We know now that the whole Bible is a compilation of 66 books. To understand the Bible properly we have to learn each book separately; the book's background, names given to it, author, and main subjects. We will be learning the same in the coming chapters. Today, we will be discussing the first five books of OT.

Pentateuch

The word Pentateuch came from two Greek words, "Pente"-Five, and "Teucos"-scroll, which means the five scrolls or books. The Church Father Origen first called these books as Pentateuch.

The Hebrew bible is divided into three. Pentateuch is the first portion. Jews call this as Torah (laws) because, these five books (Genesis to Deuteronomy) contains the laws and doctrines given to Israel by the Lord.

Author

It is believed that Moses is the author of Pentateuch. Ancient Jewish Synagogues and Christian churches, all Jewish and Christian

interpreters believed this. But, later few arguments arise about the authorship of Moses. The theories put forwarded by them are known as “documentary theory”. As a result, there are disputes even today among the Bible scholars about the authorship of Pentateuch. But, the Bible itself says that the Pentateuch was written by Moses. Some important proofs are given below:

1. God spoke to Moses and Moses wrote just as God commanded (Exodus 17:14; 24:4,8; 34:27; Numbers 33:1,2).
2. The other books of the OT give evidences for the same. Joshua gave importance to the laws of Moses and these laws are commanded by God to Moses (Joshua 11:15; 14:2; 21:2). And also, it is clearly said that Moses wrote the laws (1:7; 8:31,32,34; 23:6).
3. NT gives evidences for the same (Mark 10:5; Matthew 19:8; 2 Corinthians 3:15; Acts 15:21).

Genesis

This book is known as the book of creation and stands first among all other books of the Hebrew Bible.

Name

The name Genesis was given to this book during the translation of Septuagint. This name came in Septuagint from 2:4:, “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created” and also, the word “Geneseos” (Genesis) can be seen 10 times (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12,19; 36:1,9; 37:2). Geneseos means genealogy or creation. In Hebrew text, this book is called as “Bereshit” (in the beginning).

Purpose

This contains the gist history of God’s revelation from creation till Israelites reaching the Egypt. Creation of the universe, creation of man, the covenant of God with man, the fall of mankind, the law of grace, and the history of the ancestors were included in this. This book can be divided into two as: 1. From creation to the call of Abraham (Genesis 1-12) 2. The call of the fathers or the choosing (13-50).

Exodus

As Genesis is the book of creation, Exodus is the book of redemption. The history of Israel was begun in Exodus just from where it was concluded in Genesis.

Name

Septuagint translation gave the name as Exodus based on the main theme dealt in this book. The word “Exodus” is seen in 19:1. Jews call this book as “Shemoth” or names.

Purpose

The main theme of this book is, God redeeming the Israelites from Egypt and making them a Theocratic Nation at Sinai. This starts with the emergence of Israelites as a nation. Then, the preparation of exodus is explained. God prepared them in two stages for this; primarily, he hardened the slavery such that the people will thirst for freedom. Secondly, God did miracles amidst of them to make them know that Yahweh is the true God, the redeemer and He is Almighty. Then we can see the advancement of the people through Red Sea and reaching the Sinai plateau (1-19 chapters). This was the main part of Exodus. As the people are prepared to be a Theocratic Nation, laws are to be given to them. These laws have 3 parts. Laws given at Sinai (Exodus, Leviticus); laws given while in the journey through the desert (Numbers); and laws given at Moab plateau (Deuteronomy) Chapter 20-40 describes the laws given at Mt. Sinai.

Leviticus

As the book of Exodus describes how the redeemed Israelites become as the Royal Priesthood, the book of Leviticus explains about the sanctification of the chosen people, worship and the way of worship.

Name

Both Septuagint and the Vulgate named this book as Leviticus based on the content.

Purpose

The main purpose of this book was to give the Israelites insight to come near God through sacrifices, commandments and covenants. God dwelt amidst of the Israelites after giving them the laws and after they built the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. They needed to understand the order of worship in the tent of meeting before they set out the journey to the Promised Land. Such laws were included in this book.

Numbers

Leviticus deals with worship whereas Numbers deals with the service and the works of the chosen people.

Name

As there was two census been taken at the beginning (Chapters 1-3) and at the end (Chapter 26) of this book, this is called as the book of Numbers. This same name was given in Septuagint.

Purpose

This book gives idea about the rest of the journey of Israelites which was explained in the book of Exodus. The journey from 2nd year 2nd month (10:11) to 40th year 11th month (Deuteronomy 1:3) is described in this book. The history between these 38 years can be seen in this book.

Deuteronomy

The book of Numbers gives the picture about the history till they reached the plateau of Moab. In this book we can see the three important farewell speeches Moses delivered unto the Israelites while they are at the plateau of Moab.

Name

This book gives idea about the laws of the Lord and its explanation to the generation that is raised during the journey through the desert. Therefore, this book is called as Deuteronomy.

Practical Lesson

The Pentateuch of Moses is a book of history. The intervention of God with mankind is explained in these five books. History tells us that God uses people who stood firm for the Lord. Therefore, let us submit our life to God's hands.

Questions

1. Prove that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch.
2. Explain the purpose of the book of Exodus.
3. What is the main message of the book of Numbers?

CHAPTER 8

Old Testament: Historic Books

Reading Portion : Joshua 1:1-15; Judges 1,2 chapters;
Ruth 1,2 chapters.

Memory Verse : 1 Corinthians 10:11

Purpose : To know about the existence of God and to prepare to convince those who come with counter arguments that "God really exists."

Introduction: We have learnt about the first five books of the Old Testament in the previous chapter. The books that come after these are classified as prophetic books and writings. In Septuagint, Greek translation, they are classified as historic books, and prophetic books and wisdom literature. The 12 books from Joshua to Esther fall under the category of historic books. Jews call these books as Former Prophets as they were written by the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

Joshua

As it is written, "And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God" (24:26), it is believed that Joshua wrote this book. The name Joshua was given to this book as the key historic person in this book is Joshua. The meaning of the word "Joshua" is "YAHWEH is salvation". The contents of the book is the recorded history of 27 years which includes the defeat of the enemies and giving the Promised Land to Israel under the leadership of Joshua. This book gives a message that God will fulfil all the promises that He had given to their ancestors (21:23-25). The book ends with a warning that the people will have to suffer the consequences if they become unfaithful to the

laws and promises of the Lord.

Judges

There are no evidences about the author of this book. But, it is believed that Samuel wrote this book. This book deals with the history of judges who judged the Israelites during the time between Joshua and Samuel. Therefore, this book is called as the book of Judges. The Israelite Judges carried out two important appointed ministries; first, to protect the people from the enemies; second, to rule and give justice to the Israelites.

This book gives us the history of about 3 centuries starting from the death of Joshua (1375 B. C.) to the time of Samuel (1075 B. C.). This book also gives a warning about slavery and punishment if the people go against the ways of the Lord and followed pagan idols.

Ruth

There are no evidences about the author of this book. But, it is believed by the Jewish Rabbis that Samuel wrote this book. The main character of this book is Ruth. The meaning of the word Ruth is "friend".

This book tells the story of a family who went to Moab when a famine broke out in Bethlehem during the time of the judges and also about Boaz-Ruth relationship which stands as a symbol for the grace of God and redemption. Boaz stands in place of Jesus Christ while Ruth stands as a symbol of the church. As the rich and graceful kinsman Boaz redeemed Ruth, Jesus redeemed His church. Ruth was from among the Moabites, who were forbidden to enter the temple of the LORD even unto the tenth generation, but, the grace and redemption she received symbolizes our redemption (Ephesians 2:11-18).

1 & 2 Samuel

It is believed Samuel, Nathan and Gath wrote this book (1 Chronicles 29:29-30). These two books were considered as a single book in the Hebrew and it gives a history about the time between 1050 B.C., and 933 B.C.

This book is called as the book of Samuel as Samuel is the main character in the first portion of this book. In addition to this, Samuel anoints Saul and David who are the main characters in the rest of the book. The purpose of this book is to explain the establishment of Jewish Monarchy and the role of Samuel in the same. Samuel was a judge (1 Samuel 7:6; 15-7) as well as a prophet (3:20). Therefore, Samuel bridged the time gap between the rule of judges and the rule of kings.

Samuel was the last judge (Acts of the Apostles 13:20) and the first prophet of Israel.

The beginning of the prophetic ministry in Israel and the rule of the kings is described in Samuel. Samuel was the founder of these two. He started the school of prophecy (1 Samuel 19:20; 2 Kings 2:3-5, 4:38). And also, Samuel anointed Saul and David as the Kings of Israel. This book narrates the history that Jerusalem was made the political capital city of the nation of Israel and Zion was made the spiritual and religious centre.(2 Samuel 5:7;6:1-17).

Practical Lesson

God's people have always stood firm for the laws of God, irrespective of oppositions or temptations and God has always blessed such people. Therefore, let us submit our lives to stand firm for God as well as for true doctrines and holiness amidst trials and temptations.

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "Joshua"?
2. Why the book of Judges is called so?
3. What is the main theme of the book of Ruth?
4. Who all were the writers of the book of Samuel?

CHAPTER 9

Historic Books (Continuation)

Reading Portion : Jeremiah 25:11,12; 29:10-14;
Nehemiah 2; Ezra 7:1-14.

Memory Verse : 1 John 3:9

Purpose : To know about the background, and authors
of historic books in OT.

Introduction: We were discussing about historic books of OT. We learned about Joshua till Samuel. This chapter deals with the rest of the historic books.

1 & 2 Kings

It is believed that Jeremiah wrote this book. The book is named as Kings because in Hebrew the book begins with the word 'Kings'. And also, this book contains the history of the kings in Judah as well as Israel. These two books were considered as a single book in the Hebrew Bible. The translators of Septuagint split this book into two.

The purpose of this book is to shed light on the history from David till the exile to Babylon. The Jewish kingdom was divided into two during the reign of Rehoboam, son of Solomon. The Northern kingdom compiled of ten tribes was known as Israel; whereas the Southern kingdom, compiled of two tribes called as Judah. Israel and Judah were destroyed in 722 B.C., and 60 B.C. 0, consecutively as the kings of these nations did things that were not pleasing in the sight of the Lord. The book of kings describes this history.

1 & 2 Chronicles

The Jewish Talmud ascribes the authorship of these books to Ezra. We can see the history of priestly order of worship from Saul's death to the end of Babylonian exile in 1 & 2 Chronicles. These books give an exposition of the history of Priesthood at Jerusalem and its growth under protection of David and his posterity. Therefore, the genealogy of priests, the tribes which put allegiance and fidelity to David's rule, and the kings who appreciated the true worship (Example: Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah) are some of the people who are given importance in this book. David and Solomon are given key importance as they labored in establishing true worship.

Ezra

It is believed that Ezra himself wrote this book. Ezra is known in the name of the prime character of this book- Ezra. This same name is given in the Septuagint also. The meaning of the word Ezra is "help". He was a priest under the priestly order of the High Priest Aaron and Phinehas (7:1-6). But, by profession he was a skilled scribe in the Law of the LORD and owned a copy of it. (7:11-14).

Ezra starts right from the history of Judah that ended in the book of Chronicles and explains about the return of Jews from exile and about the construction of the temple of God. This book gives a clear cut picture of God who fulfilled His promise about the return of Jews to their own homeland from Babylonian exile after 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11,12; 29:10-14).

Nehemiah

The author and the main character of this book is Nehemiah. The meaning of the word Nehemiah is "comforted by YAHWEH". Nehemiah was a cup-bearer of king Artaxerxes of Persia in the citadel of Susa (1:11, 2:1).

The main theme of this book is rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the reinstatement of political administration in Jerusalem. While Ezra tried to restore the spiritual things, Nehemiah tried to make changes in the social-moral-political scenarios. This book portrays the unchanging faith, trust and prospect amidst of adverse situations.

Esther

We are not quite sure the author of this book. But, it is named after the main character of this Book-Esther. Esther is a Persian word and it means "star". The Hebrew name of Esther is Hadassah (2:7) and it means "female myrtle tree".

Periodically, the events in the book of Esther happened between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra. i.e., the time between 538 B.C., - the time of the first return of Jews to Jerusalem from Babylon, (Ezra 1-6) and 46 B.C., 7-the second return of the Jews under the leadership of Ezra (Ezra 7-10). As Ezra and Nehemiah gives a picture about the remnant returning to Jerusalem, the book of Esther gives us illustration about the people in exile at Persia and their status over there.

Practical Lesson

God's care for His children is beyond explanation. The life of Jews in exile shows us that He will take care of His children in all situations if we stick on to Him. So, let us put our trust in God.

Questions

1. Who was the author the book of Kings?
2. What is the meaning of the word "Ezra"?
3. What is the main subject of the book of Ezra?
4. What is the Hebrew word for "Esther"?

CHAPTER 10

Old Testament: Poetic Books

Reading Portion : Psalm 119.

Memory Verse : Psalm 45:1.

Purpose : To give an insight about the poetic books of OT, its background, authors and the main subjects of the same.

Introduction : We have seen historic books of OT in the previous lesson. We will learn about poetic books in this chapter. The books from Job to Songs of Solomon are called poetic books. But, in the Hebrew Bible, they are 11 books including some portions from historic books. The book names are given by taking into consideration moral duties, personal religious knowledge and Godly interest of human beings.

Job

The main historical person in this book is Job and this book is known in his name. It is named as “Job” in Septuagint and “Yob” in Vulgate. The meaning of the word Job is “persecuted or hated”. There is one another person with the same name in the Bible. He is a son of Issachar (Genesis 46:13). Job was a righteous man who lived in land of Uz, situated east of Palestine (1:1). He is not a fictitious character, but a historic personality as his name is included along with the names of other historic men in Ezekiel 14:14,2; James 5:11. It is believed that Job lived in the era of the Hebrew fathers, i.e., a time just before the time of Moses. It is believed that Solomon wrote this book.

“Why are the righteous persecuted?” “How can they harmonize with the Almighty and righteous God through their sufferings?” are the main questions in this book. The three friends of Job gave similar answers (3-31 chapters). Their advice was that sufferings are the outcomes of sin (4:7-9). Persecution is not God’s anger on us, instead it is the chastity of a loving father (32-37 chapters). Job humbled before the Lord when God spoke to him out of the whirlwind (42:1-6). And at last he was compensated twice as much as he had before (42:7-17)

Psalms

Psalms is a compilation of prayers and hymns that were popular among the Jews. It is named as “Tehillim” in the Hebrew language which means “songs of praise”. It is called as “Psalmos” in Greek and it means a hymn by playing a lyre. The word Psalms came from Psalmos.

The 150 psalms are classified into 5 books. The Israelite fathers who lived in different eras wrote this. According to chronological order, Psalm 90 was written at the earliest (1500 B.C.) and Psalm 126 was written at last after the return from Babylonian exile (536 B.C.). Psalm 137 was written during the exile. So, people who lived between 1500 B.C., to 500 B.C., (1,000 years) wrote Psalms. Among these, 73 are written by David as the titles show his name. 12 are written by Asaph (50, 73-83), 10 by the sons of Korah (42, 44-49, 84, 87, 88), 2 by Solomon (72, 127) one (88) by Heman, the Ezrahite and one (89) by Ethan the Ezrahite and one (90) by Moses. We don’t have any evidences about the authors of the rest of the Psalms. Psalms is a book of prayers, praise and adoration.

Proverbs

“Mashal” and “Paroimies” are the words used for Proverbs sequentially in Hebrew and Greek languages. These words mean analogy and comparison. The main content of this book is wisdom thoughts for daily life. Solomon is the main author of this book. But, wise men like Agur (30:1), and Lemuel (31:1) were also involved in the writing of this book (1:2-6). The key verse of this book is, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (1:7). This book was written between 1000 B.C., and 700 B.C.

Ecclesiastes

Solomon wrote this book. The scroll of this book was read by the Jew during the festival of Tabernacles. According to Jewish

tradition, Solomon wrote Songs of Solomon in his youth. He wrote Proverbs in his middle age and Ecclesiastes towards the end of his life. The author finds the meaning of everything in God as he returned to God after he had tasted emptiness and nothingness in all walks of his life. He teaches us to be content with the blessings we have and to fulfill the responsibilities we are entrusted, with fear of God and to enjoy the fruit of the same. He also warns us that all works will be in vain, without the help of God.

Songs of Solomon

This book is known as the “Song of Songs” in the Hebrew Bible. It is believed that Solomon wrote this book before 876 B.C. We can see this book as a symbolic narration of the marital relationship between God and Israel. In a Christian perspective, this book is an example of the love of God that He exhibited through Jesus Christ.

Practical Lessons

We must be content with what we have. Discontentment led Solomon to sins and temptations. God will lead us to bigger opportunities if we are faithful in the small things we have now. So, let us take a decision to be content in all our situations.

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word “Job”?
2. Give evidences that Job was not a fictitious character.
3. Which Psalm was written first?
4. What is the message of Ecclesiastes?

CHAPTER 11

Old Testament: Prophetic Books

Reading Portion : Acts of the Apostles 7:1-53; Hebrews 1:1-12.

Memory Verse : 2 Peter 1:19.

Purpose : To give an idea about prophets and prophecies. Understand about OT prophetic books, its background, authors and the important prophecies.

Introduction : The books from Isaiah to Malachi (17 books) are called as Prophetic books. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel are called Major Prophets while Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are called Minor Prophets (12 books). These prophets can be classified into three, based on the exile.

1.Pre-Exilic Prophets: - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Hosea, Amos, and Jonah. They lived during. 9,8,7 century B.C

2. Exilic Prophets: - Ezekiel, and Daniel. They lived in B.C. 6.

3.Post Exilic Prophets:- Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. They lived during 5 and 6 century B.C

Prophet

The English word prophet came from a Greek word “profetes” which means a spokesman, or mediator. The word “Nabi” is used for this in the Hebrew language. Foreteller or prophet is the meanings of this word. According to the BIBLE, the person who reveals the will

of GOD upon a person's life and interprets the same are known as Prophets.

Call and appointment of a prophet

God calls people directly as prophets by giving them visions or by revealing HIMSELF to them in a trance and separating them for the prophetic ministry (Amos 3:8; Jeremiah 1:6; Isaiah 6:5; Ezekiel 1:3; 3:4; 8:1,3). They stand between GOD and man as mediators proclaiming the oracles of God by saying, "thus says the Lord". They encouraged the people to return to God and to rectify their lives as the prophets interpreted the divine provisions of the Lord from the past based on the present situations and advised them about the consequences that would happen in future on the basis of this."

Major prophets

The major prophetic books, its authors, and their background are given below.

Isaiah

The name of this book is given after the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah means "Jehovah is salvation". He prophesied during the reign of the Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (Isaiah 1:1). This lies between 740 B.C. and 680 B.C. Isaiah is the author of this book.

The purpose of this book is to give an insight about the truth that salvation is through grace and this comes from God and not from man. Calling and commissioning of this prophet was to save the people of Judah from the spiritual downfall that happened as a result of idol worship. The prophet warns that if the people are not returning to God Judah shall be doomed eternally and a remnant shall be saved (6:7).

Jeremiah

This book is known after the prophet Jeremiah. "May Jehovah exalt" is the meaning of the word Jeremiah. Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin (1:1). God called him for the ministry while he was a young boy (1:5,6). He prophesied in Judea for 40 years. He is also called as the "lamenting prophet" and "prophet of solitude". He wrote the book of Jeremiah.

The judgment on Judah was the gist of his prophecies. He made it clear that this judgment will happen very soon and the Babylonians from the North will carry this out. He also prophesied that the reason for it was that the people left the true God and went after idols.

Lamentations

Jeremiah wrote this book. This book contains 5 lamenting songs that were written, on seeing the downfall of the holy city, Jerusalem, as the enemies conquered it in 587 B.C. Septuagint named this book as the “tears of Jeremiah” and Vulgate named this book as the “Lamentations of Jeremiah”. So, the same name was given in English too.

Ezekiel

This book is named after its author Ezekiel. The meaning of this name is “God strengthens”. No other books of the Bible give any hint about this prophet except in this book. He was born in a priestly family just like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. His father was Buzi (1:3). His ministerial time lies between 592 B.C. and 586 B.C. He ministered unto the people in Babylonian exile prophesying consolation and future hope.

Jeremiah prophesied to the people of Jerusalem about the coming destruction, but, Ezekiel continuously prophesied about the same fall to the people who were in Babylonian exile (1-24 chapters). But the main part of his prophecy had a word of comfort and admonition for the people in exile (37:11, 15-24).

Daniel

This book is named after its author Daniel. The meaning of this name is “God is my judge”. In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. They took people of Judah as slaves to Babylon and Daniel was one among the young men (Daniel 1:3-6). As he showed integrity in his worship towards the true God in a foreign land, he was appointed as chief among the three provincial governors during the reign of King Darius (Daniel 6:1-3). He was blessed to see the return of the Jews to Judea from the exile after the 70 years (Daniel 6:28; Ezra 1:1-11). According to Jewish historians, as Daniel was old, he never returned to Jerusalem and he died in Babylon and was buried over there itself.

The motto of this book is to tell that the God of Israel is Almighty and is High above all other pagan gods. Even though God used Gentiles to punish Israel, they all were destroyed at the end. This book also gives eschatological message that the God of heaven shall set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed and shall remain forever (2:44).

Practical Lessons

Prophets are the ministers unto who reveals the will of God to

the people. Therefore, do not underestimate prophecies. At the same time, discern whether the prophecies are from God or not. Let us humble ourselves to true prophecies that are delivered by the servants of God.

Questions

1. List out the major prophetic books.
2. Who all were the post exilic prophets?
3. What is the main message of Isaiah?
4. What is the meaning of the word “Ezekiel”?

CHAPTER 12

Prophetic Books (Continuation)

Memory Verse : 2 Peter 1:20,21.

Purpose : To understand about the background, author, written era, and the purpose of OT minor prophets.

Introduction : The 12 Prophets from Hosea to Malachi are called as the Minor Prophets. They were called so from the time of Church Father Augustine as these books were small compared to the size of major prophetic books. Nevertheless, they were not less in the inspiration and authenticity. These 12 books were combined as one book in the Hebrew Bible. Let us learn more about each of these books.

Hosea

Hosea was the author of this book. Hosea means “Salvation”. He was the son of Beeri (1:1), who was a contemporary of Amos and Isaiah. The era of his prophetic ministry can be seen from the introduction of the book. He ministered during the reign of Judean kings like Uzziah (767-739 B.C.), Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.) and Israelite king like Jeroboam (781-753 B.C.) (1:1).

It is not wrong to call Hosea as the “apostle of unchanging love of God”. The purpose of this prophecy was to show the abundant love of God to the sinning and rebellious Israel.

Joel

The NT gives evidence that a prophet named Joel lived and the book of Joel was written by him (Acts of the Apostles 2:16). The word Joel is formed by the combination of two words, YHWH

(Jehovah), El (God), which means YHWH is God. None can tell the exact time bound of his ministry. There are conflicts about the time of this book, too. It is believed that the book was written in 8th century B.C, or 6th century B.C or 5th century B.C. But, it is commonly believed that he had done his ministry between 835-795 B.C. His prophecies were mainly for the southern nation i.e., Judah. He proclaimed the prophecies by calling out the names of the nation: Zion and the children of Zion (2:1-23); Jews and Jerusalem (3:1-16). "The day of the Lord" (1:15; 2:1; 11:31; 3:14) is the key phrase of this book.

Amos

Amos wrote this book. He was one of the shepherds of Tekoa, 12 miles south of Jerusalem and was a gleaner of sycamore (wild fig) fruits (1:1; 7:14). From such a situation, God anointed him for ministry. The word Amos means "burden bearer". He was a person who ministered in Israel for a short span of time i.e., from 765 B.C to 750 B.C.

Mainly God used Amos to prophesy to the northern nation, Israel (7:14-15). He prophesied to the northern nation, and especially to its idol worship capital, Bethel (7:10); capital city, Samaria (3:9-12, 4:1-3) and Gilgal (4:4, 5:4). He condemned the sins of Israel.

Obadiah

Obadiah wrote this book. Obadiah means "servant of God". This is the shortest prophetic book of OT. There are no other evidences about the life and the background of Obadiah in this book. Therefore, the time of its writing is still a controversial issue. But, generally it is believed that this book was written during the reign of King Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat (848-841 B.C).

The prophecies of this book are about Edom. Edomites were the sons of Easu, brother of Jacob (Gen: 36:1). They dwelt in the mount of Seir, which is south of Palestine (Genesis 36:8-9). Petra was their capital city. This city was built upon the pinnacle of mount Seir, which is rugged and rocky. Thence Obadiah prophesied about Edom, "you who live in the clefts of the rocks and make your home on the heights" (3:4). The purpose of this prophetic book is to tell that Edom will be punished utterly for their attack and unlawful acts against Judah; but, at the same time Judah will be restored to a glorious future.

Jonah

Jonah, son of Amittai, wrote this book. Jonah lived in Gath-Hephar,

6 miles north-east of Nazareth, Israel. This place is presently known as el-Meshed. Jonah prophesied in Israel during the reign of King Jeroboam II, i.e., between 790 B.C - 750 B.C (2 Kings 14:25).

This book is primarily the autobiography of a man. But, this book contains prophecies about the nation of Israel and Christ Jesus that will happen in the near future.

Micah

Micah wrote this book. Micah was younger than Isaiah but was his contemporary. His ministry was centered on Jerusalem. He ministered during the reign of Judean kings like Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He was born in Moresheth, near Gath 20 miles west of Jerusalem (1:14). The meaning of the word Micah is "who is like God?".

The purpose of this prophecy was to tell Samaria (1:5-7), especially Judah (1:9-16) about the intensity of judgement that God will pour on them because of their sins. Micah warned about the terrible fall of Jerusalem to the people and their leaders who lived in sins boasted that they have nothing to fear about any disasters (3:12).

Practical Lessons

The people had suffered, in all ages, when they went away from the Lord. But, life with God can bring honor and respect. Therefore, let us submit our lives to live a life with God.

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "Hosea"?
2. Write about the content of the book of Obadiah.
3. Where was Micah born?
4. What is the present name of Gath-Hefar?

CHAPTER 13

Prophetic Books (Continuation)

Memory Verse : Psalm 19:12.

Purpose : To understand about prophetic books, authors and the purpose of writing the same.

Introduction : We were studying about Minor Prophets of OT. We have studied about 6 Prophets-Hosea to Micah in the previous lesson. We will be studying about the rest of the prophets in this lesson.

Nahum

This book is known after the name of its author. The meaning of Nahum is “comforter”. There is no further information about the author in this book. It was known from 1:1 that he was an Elkoshite. This could be the birth place of Nahum. Elkosh is a place situated 20 miles west of Jerusalem. We can assume that Nahum lived around 650 B.C and 612 B.C.

The main theme of this book is destruction of Nineveh. They were warned to return to God through Jonah. But, they sinned again and as a result they became guilty before God. This city was situated at the headwaters of river Tigris and was built by Nimrod, an ancient mighty hunter. For a long time from 1100 B.C., this city was the capital of the Assyrian dynasty. This city had 1,200 towers each 100 feet high. The fort near the city was 8 miles long and was wide enough for the passage of 3 chariots at a time. The total circumference of the fort was 60 miles. ‘Plunder and conquer’ was the slogan of Nineveh, the fortified city. But Nahum prophesized against the city that bloody city looted many will become loot (3:1-4). The prophecies of Nahum

happened during the reign of Nineveh's last king, Esarhaddon. Babylon from south and Scythians and Medians from north besieged the city and destroyed all the great walls (3:12).

Habakkuk

This book is named after its author itself. The word Habakkuk means "embrace". There are no evidences about Habakkuk in any other books. He was a prophet (1:1) and he was a Jew who lived in Jerusalem for most of his life time (1:3,4). We can assume that Habakkuk had done his prophetic ministry in around 603 B.C.

He starts the book with a complaint that God was silent when the wicked looted, destroyed and persecuted the righteous (1:2-4). The answer for this can be seen in 1:5-11. Then arise another doubt in the mind of Habakkuk. How long will God watch the persecution and destruction that the wicked have done upon the righteous than himself? (1:12-2:1). God answers him in 2:2-5.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah son of Cushi is the author of this book who prophesied during the reign of King Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah (1:1). Zephaniah means "the Lord has protected". Zephaniah did his prophetic ministry during the reign of Josiah (640 B.C -608 B.C), and especially before the reformation in 621 B.C, by King Josiah. As he was a member of the royal family, he had influences in the palace too.

His prophecies were to warn the Jewish tribe about the coming judgement. The main theme of this book is that the day of the Lord is at hand.

Haggai

This book is known after its author's name, Haggai. Haggai means "festal". He was the first prophet from the Jewish people who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian exile. The purpose of this prophetic book was to encourage people to start the neglected construction of the temple of the LORD and to finish the same. The prophet reminded them that, they have not yielded the expected blessings and their works were in vain as they left the temple construction and went after their own fields and works (1:10,11).

Zechariah

This book is known after its author's name, Zechariah. The name Zechariah means "the Lord has remembered". Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo (1:1-7). It is understood that he carried

out the prophetic ministry between 520 B.C. and 516 B.C. Like Haggai, Zechariah too prophesied to the Jewish people who returned to their own country from Babylonian exile. The purpose of this book was to encourage the people in the construction of the temple just as Haggai did.

Malachi

Malachi is the author of this book. Malachi means “my angel or my messenger”. He was the last prophet of OT. It is widely believed that this book was written after the exile and about 100 years (520 B.C.) after the prophetic ministry of Haggai and Zechariah. This book includes details about the worship and sacrifices done by the people after they came back to their own land from exile (1:7, 10; 3:8). But he rebuked them as they were careless and despising the worship.

Practical Lessons

It is dangerous to ignore warnings. God gives warnings about wrong doings. But, if we ignore these warnings, God’s wrath will come upon us. Nineveh is a good example for the same. So, let us accept the warnings and humble before them.

Questions

1. Write the meaning of the word “Nahum”?
2. Write a note about the city of Nineveh
3. Which era did Zechariah do the ministry?

CHAPTER 14

Gospels of New Testament

- Reading Portion** : Mark 1:1-20; Matthew 28:18-20;
Acts of the Apostles 2:22-42.
- Memory Verse** : Romans 1:16,17
- Purpose** : To give insights about the gospels and to understand the purpose and message of each book.
- Introduction** : We were discussing about OT books in the previous lessons. New Testament is the fulfillment of the OT, and the realities of the prophecies, which are shadows of that to come. NT includes twenty seven books which is divided into four, namely; Gospels, History, Epistles and Prophecy. In this lesson we will be discussing about the first part, i.e., the gospels.

Gospels

The word Gospel came from a Greek word “Evangelion”. This means good news, or glad tidings. Gospel is the good news about the salvation through Jesus Christ. The word gospel is used around seventy seven times. And it is seen twelve times in the Gospels itself. It is Justin Martyr who lived in the second century, for the first time, called these books are Gospels. He quoted that during those days, the history of Jesus Christ was read in the church congregations. Even though there are four gospels, the Gospel is one. In short, Gospels are the

books and Gospel is the message of salvation that came through Jesus Christ.

The development of Gospels

The disciples who witnessed the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ proclaimed the gospel orally. The realization of the fact that as the years passed by, the generations who have actually met Jesus and worked with him wouldn't be there anymore. This made them write down the teachings, life and ministries of Jesus in full authenticity for the future generations which led to the development of the gospels.

Gospel according to Matthew

The first book in the NT was written by Matthew who was a disciple among the twelve disciples of Jesus. He was a tax-collector for the Roman empire (Matthew 9:9; 10:3). He was also called as Levi (Luke 5:27). Alphaeus was his father (Mark 2:14). Jesus called him as an Apostle while he was on duty. Matthew means "gift of YAHWEH".

It is believed that this book was written during A.D. 80-85 in Antioch. Matthew wrote the Gospel for the Jewish Christians. This is because, after the establishment of the church, many Jewish people joined the church. As a result, the church faced persecutions from the Jewish leaders. They stoned Stephan to death. The severe persecutions continued under the leadership of the Jews. Matthew wrote the Gospel to the persecuted people so as to encourage and to make them firm in the faith. Gospels are never in contradiction to the OT, but for the of Jewish Christians it was necessary to prove that Jesus Christ was the Messiah King that was been promised in the OT and also that it was the completion of the promises that God gave to Abraham and David. As a result, the genealogy of Jesus Christ starts with Abraham, presented Jesus as the son of David and he wrote about the wise men, who accepted Jesus as the king. He illustrated Jesus as king in this book.

Gospel according to Mark

Mark alias John wrote this Gospel. John was a Jewish name and Mark was a Roman name. The first church gathered and prayed for the deliverance of Peter in the house owned by Mark's mother (Acts 12:12-17). Peter called him as son (1 Peter 5:13). Paul was his spiritual father (1 Corinthians 4:15). He accompanied in the Barnabas and Paul in their missionary journey (Acts 13:5; 13:13; 15:36-40).

It is believed that this book was written in about A.D. 70 in Rome. Mark wrote this Gospel for the Romans. In this Gospel Jesus is portrayed as the servant. He wrote in accordance to the proclamation of Jesus, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). In this Gospel Jesus is represented as the suffering servant. To the suffering church, the notation about the suffering servant -Christ- was a timely consolation. Jesus taught that the cross is not only for him, but also for all those who follow Him (8:34-38). This helped the believers who suffered severe persecutions and martyrdom, to be rooted firm in their faith by reading this Gospel.

Gospel according to Luke

This Gospel was written by Luke, a doctor. He was a Gentile from Antioch, Syria who came to Christianity. It is clear from the scriptures that Luke accompanied Paul in his second missionary journey (Acts 16:8-17). The Acts of the Apostles was also written by Luke.

This book was completed in nearly A.D. 58. He wrote this for the Greek Christians. In this book he pictured Jesus as the Son of Man. The purpose of writings this book was to reveal the truths of Christian faith to the Gentiles and in turn to make them believe in Jesus Christ who was sent by God the Father as the Savior and Redeemer of mankind. He began the genealogy of Jesus Christ not from Abraham but from Adam so as to proclaim that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind (Luke 3:23-38).

Gospel according to John

John the Apostle of Jesus Christ was the author of this book. He was from Bethsaida, Galilee and son of Zebedee (Mark 1:19,20). His family had fishing-boats and servants. His mother was Salome. She served Christ by spending from her savings (Luke 8:3; 23:55; 24:1). John loved Jesus so much and it is written that he was the one who reclined to bosom of Jesus (John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7,2).

It is believed that this Gospel was written between A.D. 85-90 in Ephesus. John wrote the gospel for the Church of God. He pictured Jesus as the Son of God. He wrote about the purpose of his gospel in John 20:30,31. The purpose to write this Gospel was to make the believers aware about the false teaching prevalent at that time that Christ had never manifested in the flesh; and to make the believers firm in faith.

Practical Lessons

Gospel transforms people. It even transformed us, too. Let us take a decision to spread this Gospel which can revamp any sinner. Let us submit ourselves for the same.

Questions

1. What is the Greek word for Gospel?
2. What are the reasons behind the evolution of the Gospels?
3. What was the of Matthew in writing the Gospel?
4. For whom did Luke write the Gospel?

CHAPTER 15

Historic Book Of New Testament

Reading Portion : Acts of the Apostles chapters.1,2,8 &13.

Memory Verse : Acts of the Apostle 1:8

Purpose : To understand about the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which is the one and only historic book of N.T. this book deals with the birth and growth of the early church.

Introduction : We have learned about the first part of NT; the Gospels, in the previous class. Gospels deal with the doctrines that Jesus proclaimed before He was taken up. The four books narrate about the birth of Jesus, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. But, the next book, the Acts of the Apostles begins with the ministry of Jesus after the resurrection, ascension in the sky and the things Jesus began to do and to teach through the Holy Spirit are included in this book. Now we are to learn all those things.

Acts of the Apostles

Acts of the Apostles is one of the most important books in the NT. It is the only historic book of the NT. This book gives us the information about the birth of the church, and its growth. If this book was not included in the Bible, we would have been totally blank about the history of the early church. This book is known as the Acts of the

Apostles because this contains the work of the apostles who followed the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. This book is also called as the “Acts of the Holy Spirit” as the Holy Spirit worked through the Apostles and it is recorded in this book.

Author

It is believed that Dr. Luke, who wrote the gospel according to Luke, is the author of this book too.

Evidences

1. The gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are addressed to Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts of the Apostles 1:1).
2. The name of Luke is not mentioned in this book as the author but, he was a companion with Paul as he used “we” in instances related to the missionary journeys. We can see this usage in Paul’s second missionary journey from Troas to Philippi in Acts 16:10-17 and also in third missionary journey which is stated in 20:5-21:18.
3. The things that were concluded in the gospel of Luke is mentioned in the beginning of Acts of Apostles (Luke 24:48-53; Acts of the Apostles 1:1).

Date written

There are many opinions about the date of writing of this book. But, it is widely accepted as this book is written before A.D. 90.

Context and Purpose

The focus to write this book is to give Theophilus and other Christian believers a systematic account (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5) about the beginning and the growth of the early church. The description of this book is the authentic history of the miraculous growth and the rapid expansion of the early church. And also, the authentic works of Peter, John, Paul and James, brother of Jesus are included in this. It was the duty of the church to prove that Christian beliefs are Godly. This books also gives evidences about, “God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will” (Hebrews 2:3).

Content

We can see in Acts 1:8 that, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”. We can understand four things from this verse.

1. Christ is the center of Christian witnessing,
2. Church is the cause for the Christian witnessing,
3. The reach of this witnessing is to the ends of the Earth,
4. The unending power behind the witnessing is the Holy Spirit.

The historic facts of this book are built around these thoughts. The way of presentation of the book is centered on the word witnessing. And on the basis of this word each chapter can be divided.

Witnessing in Jerusalem (Chapter 1-7)

The beginning of Christian Church

The historic foundation day of the church is on the day of Pentecost, on which the down pouring of Holy Spirit came upon around 120 persons, who had been praying and tarrying in the upper room of Mark at Jerusalem, for the promise of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:5; 1:1-4; 41,42). This denotes the beginning of the visible earthly church. The beginning of witnessing in Jerusalem can be counted from the first sermon of Peter who addressed the multitude those rushed to the place in bewilderment, where the wondrous deeds of the Holy Spirit is exhibiting. As a result of this witnessing, around 3,000 people took baptism and they became members of the church. With no time, the message of the gospel spread spontaneously to different parts of Jerusalem. Thousands of people cherished faith and salvation. And the Lord added them daily to the church (Acts 2:47). Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts, but broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

Witnessing in Judea, Samaria (Chapters 8-12)

The power of the Holy Spirit was poured on the disciples to be witness to the uttermost parts of the Earth. But forsaking this, the disciples continued in Jerusalem, worshipping. The martyrdom of Stephen and the aftermath made the disciples to scatter into different places from Jerusalem. The people who were scattered preached gospel in their places, built small congregations in villages and in towns. Thus the gospel reached to various parts of Judea. And also, this scattering helped Philip to reach Samaria (8:4,5). The doors of church were widely opened even to Gentiles as God send Peter to Cornelius' home in Caesarea (chapter 10).

Witnessing to the ends of the Earth (Chapters 13-28)

The conversion and missionary zest of Paul made the church to have a universal outlook and nature (Acts 9:15; 22:15; 26:16). He

was chosen as the Apostle of the Gentiles and the three missionary journeys through Asia Minor, and Europe helped in spreading the gospel as well as church planting.

Practical Lessons

In the book of Acts we see the history of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. They were illiterate but the Holy Spirit helped them to turn the world upside down.

Even today the Spirit of God can do greater things through them those who submit and long for the power of Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us thirst for the Holy Spirit and let us submit ourselves.

Questions

1. Why the Acts of the Apostles is known as the works of Holy Spirit?
2. List out the evidences which proves that the author of this book is Luke
3. Explain the content of Acts of the Apostles.

CHAPTER 16

The Epistles Of New Testament

Reading Portion : Romans 16:17-20; 1 Corinthians 1:1-12; 5:1; 7:1; Galatians 1:1-12

Memory Verse : Colossians 2: 6,7

Purpose : To understand about the authors and the content of epistles in which the fundamental doctrines of the New Testament is dealt with.

Introduction : The epistles are the letters addressed to certain churches. But they are relevant to all churches of all the ages. Later on after reading in the designated churches, these letters were circulated among other churches, too. Actually these letters carry on the Christological doctrines and the teachings of the church. One-third of NT is epistles. Out of 27 books, 21 are epistles and they were written by 5 writers. It is believed that 14 epistles (including Hebrews) were written by Paul and the rest were by James, Peter, John and Jude respectively. Peter wrote 2 epistles, whereas John wrote 3 and the rest, one each. The epistles are broadly classified as Pauline epistles and general epistles.k;

Pauline Epistles

We have seen that many churches were established during the missionary journeys of Paul. He moved from place to place amidst of his busy schedules with missionary journeys. At times, he visited the churches that he had planted. But as the church faced different troubles, he wanted to make them firm in faith as well as to make them aware of the fast spreading false teachings, Paul wrote the epistles. Pauline

epistles can be divided chronologically into three based on his first imprisonment in Rome.

1. Pre-Prison Epistles: 1,2 Thessalonians, 1,2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Hebrews (total 7).
2. Prison Epistles: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians (total 4). These were known as prison letters, because Paul wrote them from Prison.
3. Post-Prison Epistles: 1,2 Timothy, Titus (total 3). These letters were also known as Pastoral Epistles.

Epistle to Romans

This was one of the most important epistles of Paul because it contains all the basic and foundational truths of the Bible. We can see the step-by-step explanation from justification to glorification in this book.

Date written

It is believed that this letter was written between A.D. 53 and 56 in Corinth on his third missionary journey.

Purpose of writing

The main reason for writing this epistle can be seen in verse 23-28 of chapter 12. To expand the missionary work in Europe, Paul was badly in need of financial support. For that he wanted the support of the church at Rome.

And also, he tried to teach the believers of the Roman church the fundamental doctrines of salvation and to make them firm in faith against the wrong and erring teachings of Jewish legalists (chapters 1-8). He put forward the example of Israel's unbelief's and its consequences as a warning to the church (chapters 9-12). He admonishes them to be submissive to governing authorities and to love each other (chapter 12).

1,2 Corinthians

These letters were written by Paul to solve conflicts developed in the Corinthian church and to bridge the gap that was created in the relationship between Paul and the church.

Date written

It is believed that these letters were written between A.D. 54 and 55 while he was in Ephesus.

Purpose of writing

After returning from Corinth, Paul wrote a letter to the church advising them to keep on the holy living. But, unfortunately this first letter was lost somehow. This is called as the former letter in 1 Corinthians 5:9. Paul heard about the schisms, and the scandals going on in the Corinthian church. Seeking solutions and settlements about the doubts concerning the church living, a delegate of the church representatives had been sent to meet Paul. In accordance with this, Paul wrote the first letter; whereas, the second letter is to make a conducive relationship with the church that was broken down.

Galatians

This letter was written to the believers in Galatia and was written between A.D. 53 and 55. The legalists in the Galatian church were of the view that the Gentiles who practiced pagan mores should first observe the Law, before coming to the faith. They taught it as a doctrine of the church. To refute this false teaching, Paul wrote this letter. Paul explained that the faith in Christ gives freedom from the Jewish laws and firmly acclaimed that we are saved by faith and not by deeds of the Law. He try to prove his view through his own life experience (1;1, 2:21), and also through theological perspective (3:1-4:31). This epistle deals with the commissioning of Paul by God (chapters 1,2), his zeal towards the gospel (3-4), and the ethics of life founded on love.

Ephesians

He wrote this letter from Rome, when he was in prison in A.D. 62. The purpose of this epistle was to reveal the mystery to unit all things in heaven and on earth under Christ in the fullness of time (1:9,10). i.e., Christ is the center and administrator of everything. The divine purpose of God is that the whole creation be united together in Christ; and to re-establish the relationship between the created beings each other and to Christ, too. The Apostle is vehemently of the view that church is that mystery in which and through which the whole world is restored unto God. Church is the only agent for this restoration, Paul announces.

Philippians

This epistle was written in A.D. 63 from Roman prison. One of the reasons of this letter was to convey his gratitude to the church at Philippi as they send financial support to Paul through Epaphroditus, while Paul was in prison (4:10, 14-18; 2:25). And also, he added solutions

for the disputes raised in the church. So, this can also be considered as another purpose of this epistle (4:2,3). The church sent Epaphroditus to minister Paul in the prison (2:25) but, he was caught with a deadly disease and Paul was forced to send him back to his home. Paul advised the church through his letter to accept Epaphroditus wholeheartedly (2:28,29).

Colossians

This letter was written in his imprisonment in A.D. 62. There were 3 reasons for writing this epistle.

1. To make the believers firm in faith and Christian life (1:3-13).
2. To raise awareness about the false teaching spreading in Colossian church.
3. To admonish the relationship of church, the body of Christ; with Christ, who is the head of the church and to enable them to lead a victorious Christian life.

1,2 Thessalonians

It is assumed that these epistles were written in A.D. 50 or 51 at Corinth. These epistles were written to make the Thessalonian church stabilize themselves in faith and to solve conflicts among them. The main objective to write these letters was to appreciate them as they were standing firm in faith (3:16), to make the relationship of Paul with them firmer (3:6-9), to give advice about holy life (4:3-8), and brotherly love (4:9-12), to encourage them to show endurance during persecutions (2 Thess. 1:5, 3:3,4) and to make them to exceed in the hope of His second coming.

Practical Lesson

Epistles contain doctrines that are helpful for our day-to-day Christian life. It is our duty to read and to follow the same. So, let us take a decision to read and follow them regularly.

Questions

1. How can we classify Pauline epistles? Which are they?
2. What is the purpose of the epistle to the Romans?
3. Write a note about the epistle to the Galatians.

CHAPTER 17

The Epistles New Testament (Continuation)

Reading Portion : 2 timothy 3:10-17; 2 Peter 1:3-14

Memory Verse : James 1:2,3

Purpose : To give general awareness about the letters, which contains the doctrines of the Christian church and the motif behind it.

Introduction : We are learning about the epistles which contain deep Christian doctrines. We have learned few of Pauline epistles in the previous lesson. We will be discussing the rest in this lesson.

1,2 Timothy

This epistle is included under the category "Pastoral Epistles" and it is believed that they were written between A.D. 65 and 66. The main reasons for writing these epistles are: to encourage Timothy to handle bravely the false teachings that were rising in Ephesus (1:3-7, 18-20; 6:3-5, 20, 21), to explain the qualities of an overseer and church deacons (3:1-13), how to behave orderly in the church (3:14,15), and to instruct Timothy to carry out the duties in the church (4:12-16).

Titus

It is believed that this epistle was written in A.D. 65. The main reasons for writing this epistle were: to encourage Titus to put everything in order in the church in Crete (1:5), to make Titus aware of the qualifications of elders (1:6-9), to take strong actions against false teachers (1:10-16; 3:9-11), to motivate the believers to do good deeds (2:11-3:6) and to advise his co-worker.

Philemon

This epistle has connection with the epistle to Colossians. So, it is understood that both the epistles were given almost in same time and was written along with the epistle to Colossians i.e., A.D. 62 in his imprisonment at Rome.

Onesimus, who was a slave in the house of Philemon, eloped from the home to Rome and somehow he got in touch with Paul (verse 10). The Apostle brought him to Christ. Then, Onesimus became a helper to Paul in the prison. But, Paul was well aware that it is necessary to send him back to Philemon. For this, Paul wrote this personal letter. We can see Paul requesting Philemon to forgive the misbehavior and wrong doings of Onesimus and to accept him as a dear brother.

Hebrews

There are lots of arguments about the authorship of the letter to Hebrews. But, almost all Bible scholars accept the fact that Paul wrote this epistle. It is believed that this was written between A.D. 63 and 67. Because of severe persecution and loss of personal property the Jewish Christians were pulled down to a decline stage in faith and thus lost the hope of His coming. They started thinking about what they had left behind; the Jewish Synagogues, the sacrifices and the priests, which they found better than what they have. Paul wrote the epistle during this time. The prime purpose of this book was to prove the temporary nature of OT sacrifices and to prove the glory of Jesus Christ and Christian beliefs (1:1-10:18). He reveals that Jesus Christ is higher than angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and Melchizedek

General Epistles

There are seven other epistles included in the N T than that of Saint Paul. They are known as general epistles or catholic epistles.

James

James, brother of Jesus, wrote this epistle between A.D. 46 and 49. At that time, the Christians had to undergo severe persecutions (1:2-12; 2:6; 5:10,11). As a result, they scattered into various places. This epistle was written to exhort them not to become weary in such instances. In addition to this, believers are admonished to keep on the spiritual values and qualities. Keep away from segregation and favoritism (1:1-3), controlling the tongue (3:1-12), not to slander your fellow brothers (4:11,12), to show patience in suffering (5:7-12), and

pray fervently (5:13-18) are some of the practical Christian morale to be exercised in the day to day life.

Epistles of Peter (1,2)

This epistle was written by Peter, a disciple of Jesus and prominent among the Apostles. It is believed that the first epistle was written in A.D. 64 and the second was written in A.D. 68. The persecutions to the church were still continuing even when Peter was writing this epistle. He wrote this to encourage the persecuted and to console them; to make them firm in their faith and hope, and to be people of obedience and forgiveness. Just as Peter said, "I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it" (5:12).

Epistles of John (1,2,3)

Apostle John, whom Jesus loved, wrote these epistles. It was written between A.D. 85 and 90 when he was in Ephesus. He wrote 1 & 2 John to defend false doctrine of philosophy, especially Gnosticism, which crept secretly into the church and made strong ramifications in the church. He explains the glory of the faith in Christ Jesus by taking similitudes like life, love and light. The writer gave emphasis on two subjects: love God and love fellow brethren. The third letter was written to Gaius, the church leader.

Epistle of Jude

It is believed that Jude, brother of Jesus wrote this epistle in A.D. 66 or 67. He wrote this epistle to advice the believers to contend for the faith that was entrusted to God's holy people once and for all; as ungodly people have slipped in among the believers (Verse 3). The word "faith" is used in this epistle is as a creed of faith; not as the reverential trust in Christ Jesus. Warning against false teachers are also seen in this letter.

Practical Lesson

Epistles make us firm in our faith. The learning of these will enable us to have strong Christian life. Therefore, let us submit ourselves to keenly read, learn and to follow the verses of these epistles.

Questions

1. Write the background of the epistle by Philemon.
2. List out the general epistles.
3. Write a note about the epistle to Hebrews.

CHAPTER 18

Prophetic Book Of New Testament

- Reading Portion** : Book of Revelation 1,2,3,22 chapters
- Memory Verse** : Revelation 22:11,12
- Purpose** : Book of Revelation is the only prophetic book in the N T. this lesson to understand about its author, the subjects dealt with and so on.

Introduction : We were discussing about the books of NT. Now, we are going to learn about the final book of N T, the book of Revelation. This book fulfils the future hope of the church. In Revelation, we can see the completion of many things that were initiated in Genesis.

The book of Revelation

The word “apokálypsis” is used in Greek for Revelation. This means uncovering, or lifting the veil. By context, this means unveiling the cover of something and showing the same. The book of Revelation unveils the things that must soon to take place. It was given to Jesus to show it to his stewards. So, He sent His angel to reveal the same to John. These visuals (revelations) are recorded in the book of Revelation.

Date Written

There are different opinions about the date of writing of this book. But, this was written during the time of Christian persecutions under the rule of Roman Empire. It is widely accepted that Apostle John wrote this between A.D. 95 and 97 in the island of Patmos during the reign of a Roman emperor, Domitian.

Different Names of this book

Four names are mainly given to this book.

1. The book of prophecy: The writer himself addresses this book as the book of prophecy (example: 1:3; 22:18).

2. The book of sevens: This book is called so as the main theme of this book is divided as sevens of seven (for example: 7 churches, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls of God's wrath, 7 plagues, 7 judgments, 7 idols and 7 new things).

3. The book of closure or conclusion: It is called so as it is the final book of the Bible.

4. The book of completion: As we can see the completion of many things that were initiated in Genesis the book of Revelation is called as the book of fulfilment.

Purpose

This book was written with different purposes. Some important purposes were listed below:

1. It is written in the introduction of the book that the book is written to make John as well as the readers aware about the things that must soon take place (1:1). The word "soon" may points to the things that are to happen in the near future.
2. To awaken the churches who had spiritual downfall as the worldliness entered in them (ex: Sardis, Laodicea) and also to bring them to repentance.
3. To give assurance of hope and victory for those who were undergoing persecutions. This book tells about the final defeat of Satan and his followers and the ultimate victory to the holy people whose weapons are truth and righteousness.
4. This book teaches that God controls and leads the history, and he judges all people as per His own will.

Interpretation Methods

We can interpret the book Revelation in different ways. Scholars mostly use four methods to interpret this book. They are:

1. Preterits View: The word 'Preterits' came from a Latin word, Praeteritum, which means past. As per this perspective, the content of the book of Revelation had happened in the past, i.e., during the time of the author and its readers.

2. Historicist View: According to the Historians, a detailed observation of the Church history from the period of Apostle John to the end of this age has been described in the book of Revelation. Therefore, the Godly promises to the church are still being fulfilled according to the prophecies of this book.

3. Idealist View: This view claims that the book of Revelation explains the fight between good and the evil. i.e., the fight between the Godly power and satanic power.

4. Futurist View: The prophecies from the 4th chapter of Revelation have not happened yet; it is acclaimed to happen in the future. So, this approach is called as futurist view. This approach is widely accepted.

Specialties and Content

Jesus Christ is the center point of the book of Revelation. Just as Christ revealed God the Father when He was in the Earth, God the Father reveals the resurrected Christ to the church. In Revelation, we can see the restoration of everything that were lost in the first book, Genesis. Both the books have lot of similarities.

Genesis

The earth is cursed
Paradise lost
Adam - the First Man
Sin, curse and judgment

Victory of Satan
Beginning of death

Revelation

New heaven and new earth
Paradise regained
Christ - Last Adam
Sin, curse and judgment are taken away forever

The defeat of Satan
The end of death

We can divide the main subject of Revelation into three.

1. What John had seen (the vision of the Son of Man in the midst of the 7 lampstands).
2. The things of the present time (the 7 churches and the writings to them (Rev. 2:1-3:22)).
3. The things yet to come (the things that will happen in earth after the church is taken up (Rev. 4:1-22:5))

This is the only Malayalam book where we can see the word "Hallelujah" (19:1,3,4,6). This book proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God, in remembrance of the sacrificial death of Christ shedding the

blood. The slain the Lamb of God, the redemption through His bloodshed, true worship, the victory of the Lamb, the reign of the Lamb and the marriage of the Lamb, are the themes of this book.

Practical Lesson

The book of Revelation tells about the hope of the church and the future of the church. It might seem bit difficult to understand at the first reading, but, careful and keen learning of this will do well. Therefore, let us take decision to read and learn the book of Revelation.

Questions

1. What are the different names given to the book of Revelation?
2. Write about the purpose of the book of Revelation.
3. What are the different interpretation methods?

CHAPTER 19

World Pentecostal History

Reading Portion : Acts of the Apostles 2:1-42

Memory Verse : Joel 2:28,29

Purpose : To understand about the works of the Holy Spirit over the last 21 centuries amidst of all the troubles faced.

Introduction : Pentecostal movement is the movement which has the highest growth rate. Around one-fourth of Christians are Pentecostals. The fire of Holy Spirit that was poured on around 120 people on the Pentecost day is still spreading even after more than 20 centuries. Today, we will be learning about this huge movement and the different phases of its growth.

What is Pentecost?

Pentecost is a Jewish festival. However, this word is not there in the OT. But, it was known as festival of weeks or festival of harvest. This is celebrated in May-June months and is called as “Shavout” in Hebrew language. It is called as “Pentikostí” in Greek which means fifty or fiftieth.

The festival of harvest is celebrated after fifty days from Pesach (Passover), i.e., a day after 7 Sabbaths and is celebrated with grain offerings (meal offering). Later on, the festival of harvest was also called as feast of Pentecost. As the Holy Spirit was poured on to the early church and the beginning of the church was on the day of Pentecost; those churches that has the experience of the Upper room

are known as Pentecost churches.

Pentecost in the history

The outpouring and the spiritual experience were common in the first century. Though there had been enlightenment of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they were not strong and also they didn't spread much. By 4th century, the church got political authority and worldly pride. Due to this, the church became a religion making it to have less spiritual experiences. This continued even till 16th century.

The church is brought back to the doctrinal truths in 16th century as a result of reformations started under the leadership of Martin Luther. In history, this reformation movement was known as "Protestant Reformation" and started as a breakthrough at a time of certain ceremonies and teachings in Catholic Church. This movement was led by a German named Martin Luther (1483-1546). He translated and published Bible into German language. His revolutionary thoughts struck the Europe as a typhoon.

The age of Revival

After the reformation, in seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, many reformation movements and Evangelical groups were formed. Many native revivals were also taken place before the Pentecostal revival took place, which is a specialty of this time period. George Fox (1624-1691), a preacher from England believed in the power of Holy Spirit. He started a community called "Society of friends" and they were a group who were experiencing the power and the demonstrative actions of the Holy Spirit.

There was a revival which spread in the colonies of America in the 18th century. This started in 1720 and was called as "The Great Awakening". God used people like Jonathan Edward, George White Field, Charles Finny, and D. L. Moody for this revival. This revival had four stages. The revival began in 1720 at America during the meetings led by a pastor T. G. Frelin Gwes. Jonathan Edward, and George White Field became the leaders and promoters of the revival. The second phase started in 1790. The revival initiated in England spread to America too. Timothy Dwight (1802) led this revival. The third phase was in 1830-31 under the leadership of Charles Finny. The fourth phase was led by D. L. Moody and was in 1857-58. Student Volunteer Movement and Keswick Convection are the fruits of these revivals. In some instances, D. L. Moody was unable to read or preach from the Word of God due to the tremendous outpouring of Holy Spirit.

Modern Pentecostal Movement

In 1896 at Unicoi mountain ranges, in Camp Creek, North Carolina, USA, a great revival was broken out under the leadership of William F. Bryant, who was a bootlegger – converted. Many church historians believe that Unicoi mountain revival is the foundation stone of modern Pentecostal revivals and movement. This had happened clearly ten years prior to the great Azusa street revival and nine years before the Mukti Mission revival in India. Many classical Pentecostal/ holiness movements sprout out from this revival.

Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929) is known as the Father of modern Pentecostalism and Pentecost Movement. Parham was a Methodist pastor and he started Bethel Bible College at Topeka, Kansas City in October 1900. Bible was the only textbook that was used in this college. Parham was the teacher.

Forty students were in there. Within three months of their study, they started to learn from Acts of the Apostles chapter 2. They learned about Holy Spirit and the clear sign of which was speaking in tongues. Though Parham had faith in the doctrines about baptism in Holy Spirit, he didn't have the gift of speaking in tongues.

On 31st December 1900, Parham and the students gathered together for the year ending meeting. The meeting continued till the next day. On 1st January 1901, a student named Agnes N. Osman came to Parham requesting prayer so that she will be filled with the Holy Spirit. Parham prayed and that 18-year-old girl was filled with the Holy Spirit. That girl spoke Chinese language. Day after day, each student of that college started to speak in tongues. This marked the beginning of Modern Pentecostalism.

The revival started in Topeka under the leadership of Parham spread to many regions. This movement was later on known as "Apostolic Faith Movement" in the church history. This movement became a big breakthrough and William J. Seymour, a young preacher joined the Bible College for studies. Seymour's entry marked a new history of Pentecostalism. In 1906, after getting baptized in the Holy Spirit, he went to preach in a church at Angles (Anglo), which was the beginning of a great revival. After this meeting, the revival started in the Azusa Street which sustained for three years. More than 10,000 people were filled with the Holy Spirit. Seymour, a Black by origin, became the godfather of Pentecost movement.

As a continuation of the Azusa street revival, in August 11, 1908 another revival burst out in Cleveland, USA. This revival lasted for

one year. Hundreds of people are converted and being baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is reported that when the revival had its beginning, people rushed to Central Avenue-where revival was conducted-emptying a circus tent nearby. It is this revival that made Cleveland the International Headquarters of Church of God and Cleveland a big city in the US.

Practical Lesson

People had conviction about sins whenever a revival happened. God used people who had strong prayer life for the revivals. God used those people who prayed with heavy burden, to change the world. Let us have the burden for our India. Let us give some time in each day to pray for the same.

Questions

1. What is Pentecost?
2. Name the reformation movement led by Martin Luther.
3. Write a note about the “great revival”.
4. Describe about the beginning of modern Pentecostal movement.

CHAPTER 20

Pentecostal Movement In India

Reading Portion : Matthew 28:18-20;
Acts of the Apostle 4:19-35

Memory Verse : Acts of the Apostles 2:33

Purpose : To know about the Pentecostal revival in India and to know about the services of foreign missionaries.

Introduction : We have learned about Pentecost movement and its growth in the previous lesson. The works of the Holy Spirit which began when the power of the Holy Spirit poured on around 120 people, who gathered at the house of Mark, spread across the world. The history says that there was immense demonstration of the power of Holy Spirit in India during the beginning of 20th century.

Pentecostal Movement in India

Though there were many revivals in India by the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, but the anointing that was outpoured at Mukti Mission, Pune on 29th June 1905 is recorded in history as the beginning of Pentecostal revival in India. There were around 2,000 members including widows, and orphans in the orphanage (Mukti Mission) operated by Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922). She invited people who were waiting for a revival to pray along with her. 70 people gathered on the first day of the meeting and the number kept on growing on the consecutive days. The revival in Mukti Mission started as a senior girl was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues at 3:30 AM on July 29. Next morning, while Ramabai

was doing the Bible study from the gospel of John chapter 8, a revival spread to the listeners. The class ceased due to the loud cry and prayers of girls who were attending the meeting.

Foreign Missionaries in India

The people who were involved in the Mukti Mission revival travelled to middle India and North India. But, an organized form of Pentecostalism in India was structured by foreign missionaries. A. G. Ghar was the first missionary who came to India with the Pentecostal message. He took decision to come to India as he was filled with the Holy Spirit in the revival at Azusa Street in 1906 led by the Revival Leader William J. Seymour. Ghar reached Kolkata in 1907. After taking part in a meeting where he talked about the baptism in Holy Spirit and then went to Pandita Ramabai's Mukti mission, he went to Bombay as messenger of the Pentecostalism.

Thomas Barrett (Norway) was the first missionary from Azusa Street who came to South India. He was called as the Pentecostal Apostle of Europe and was the first person to go with the message of Pentecost to Sweden, Germany and England. Barrett came to India in 1907. He was able to make lot of disciples through the revival meetings conducted for the missionaries in Kunoer, Madras. People like Miss. Bouncil, and Alde Vinckle, brethren missionaries, were filled with the Holy Spirit and they came to South Travancore with the Pentecostal message.

Around the same period, George Berg, German by birth, came from America to Bangalore with the message of Pentecost. The missionaries who came before Berg limited their works within the English knowing people or within the Western missionary group. But, Berg worked among the native people and was able to start Pentecostal congregations among them.

Another American missionary who came to India in 1907 was Christian Shoon Maker. He came to India as a Missionary of Christian and Missionary Alliance. He strongly exhorted the people about the importance of Holy Spirit baptism and the need of waiting for the same. He continued ministering with healing and other Spirit gifts.

There was a great flow of missionaries to India after 1910. Along with this, many natives were equipped for the Pentecostal ministry.

Practical Lesson

The role of foreign missionaries can never be neglected when we remember about the missionary works in India. They spread the

message of Pentecost by giving up all the luxuries they had in their own countries. There are many people who are like this. Let us pray for them.

Questions

1. Name the orphanage owned by Ramabai?
2. Describe the first Pentecostal revival.
3. Who was the first missionary who came to India with the message of Pentecost?
4. What was the specialty of George Berg?

CHAPTER 21

Pentecostal Movement In Kerala

Memory Verse : Zechariah 4:6

Purpose : To understand about the Pentecostal revival in India and the Pentecostal works.

Introduction : In the previous lesson, we have learned about the beginning of Pentecostal works in India. We have seen that the foreign missionaries gave the organized form to the Pentecostal movement in India. Due to the works of the Western missionaries, Pentecostal churches were established in Kerala also. We will learn the same in this lesson.

George Berg in Kerala

George Berg was the first missionary from America who came to Kerala with the Pentecostal message. He came to preach in a Brethren Convention in 1909 at Thrikkannamangal, Kottarakara. Along with Berg, missionaries like Bird, Lang, Maynard, and Arthur were invited. But, among them Berg was the only person who was baptized in the Spirit. Though Berg preached about the experience of Holy Spirit, the Brethren community rejected it as they considered it as a contradicting doctrine.

On the next year also, Berg came to preach in the Thrikkannamangal convention. The Brethren members were not ready to accept Berg's Pentecostal doctrines. Some missionaries who came along with Berg opposed the teachings about speaking in tongues. So, Berg left the Brethren congregation and started independent meetings. The

meetings conducted at Kottarakara and Adoor were the first independent Pentecostal meetings.

Pastor Robert F. Cook in Kerala

In the spring of 1912 when the first Pentecost camp meeting was held in Los Angeles, California Robert F Cook and his wife attended the meetings. During the camp, the testimony of George Berg, a missionary came from Kerala inspired the Cook family to go to India as missionaries. In October, 1913 the Cook family came to India together with George Berg. Initially in Tamil Nadu and then in Bangalore, Cook started mission work and later he decided to go to Thuvayoor in 1914 when he came to know about the great awakening there. A native Pentecostal leader Paruthippara Oommachen, who was an out put of Berg's ministry, carrying on a prayer at Thuvayoor. After the meetings in Thuvayoor Cook baptized 63 people which was his first baptism service. After this, Cook conducted meetings in Paranaad, Shuranad and Adoor due to which many people were attracted to faith. In 1914, due to the first world war, many foreign missionaries were forced to leave to their homelands and hence Cook also went to his homeland. But in 1917 when the war ended he returned to India. In places like Punalur, Ranni, Kottarakara, Kumbanad, Perumbatti, Ezhumatoor, Mavelikara he started church ministries. In 1919, under the leadership of Cook the first Pentecostal church in Kerala was built and the worship started in Thuvayoor.

Mary Chapman

Mary Chapman was a the lady missionary to India sent by Assemblies of God church that was founded on 1914 in America. She came to India in 1915. Initially she lived in Madras and spread the gospel to Tamil Nadu and Southern Travancore. But, in 1921, she moved to Trivandrum. She was 64 years old at that time. She worked without considering her age and health which helped a lot in the growth of Pentecostalism in Travancore. Miss Bouncil and Alde Vinkle and their independent congregations joined hands with her. Consecutively, she went to Mavelikkara and stayed there till her death, doing fervent and vibrant ministry.

Native Leadership

Even though the works of foreign missionaries were significant in the growth of churches and Pentecostal teachings in Kerala, the lack of good trained native leadership was a great setback for Kerala Pentecostal groups. Meanwhile, in 1923, K. E. Abraham became a

Pentecost believer. He was a school teacher, at Mulakuzha, Chengannur. He resigned his job and came forward for the gospel works. He became a powerful native Pentecost leader and great organizer. In addition, Manasseh Prasangikar, A. J. John, K. C. Cherian, P. V. John and A. R. T. Athisayam, led the Pentecostal movement in Kerala.

Church of God in India

Church of God was started in Kerala by the work of Robert F. Cook. Its International headquarters is in America. In 1927, they bought land in a place called Mount Zion, Mulakuzha and started a Bible school. Today in 2016, Church of God has more than 1200 churches in Kerala under Mulakuzha administration itself.

Assemblies of God

This church became strong in Kerala as Mrs. Mary Chapman, a missionary of Assemblies of God came to stay in Kerala. This church has thousands of churches under it.

India Pentecost Church

This church was founded under the leadership of Pr. K. E. Abraham. They also have thousands of churches around the world.

In no time, the Pentecostalism spread throughout in Kerala and was able to establish lot of churches too. God used His ministers who were filled with the Holy Spirit for this. Today also, these works are continuing by the help of the Holy Spirit.

Practical Lesson

Gospel changed the face of Kerala. Many missionaries came here to spread this gospel. Let's thank God that He was pleased to send these messengers. In addition, let us pray for the people who have not yet accepted the truth of the gospel.

Questions

1. Who was the first missionary to Kerala with the Pentecost message?
2. Where was the first Pentecostal church hall built in Kerala?
3. Mary Chapman was a missionary of which Church?

CHAPTER 22

Pentecostal Movement In Kerala (Continuation)

Memory Verse : 1 Corinthians 2:5

Purpose : To understand about the growth of Pentecostalism in India after 1950.

Introduction : We discussed the growth of Pentecostalism in the previous lesson. We came to know that many revival meetings and churches were established in Kerala before 1950. But, the years after 1950 were a golden period in the growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala. The formation of new church movement without any doctrinal difference was one of the salient features of this time.

Sharon Fellowship Church

The present land property of Sharon fellowship churches in Thiruvalla was purchased by Pastor. P. J. Thomas. He was staying there after he returned to Kerala from America, soon after his Theological education. In 1953, a Bible study center was started here to train the evangelists. At the end of that year, a revival meeting was conducted in Tiruvalla Sharon by the famous Dawood couples from America. This meeting first started in a room of Pr. P. J. Thomas' house. As the public became more interested in the Spirit-filled meetings, the meeting was moved to the courtyard of Sharon. These meetings lasted for 23 days and during the last days, especially in the night meetings, more than 80,000 people gathered. Patients who came on stretchers got healed and walked home. Demons were cast out, blind were healed, the lame walked and the deaf heard. Newspapers reported news about these along with the photographs too.

People who attended these meetings felt the Grace of God and they travelled to different places spreading the Gospel. They started small fellowships also. The students who passed out of the Sharo Bible School went to different places, worked and started many fellowships. These fellowship groups came to form the Sharo Fellowship church. In addition to this, along the same time, some independent churches also joined Sharon church. Pr. J. Varghes (Kochu Sir), T. K. Thomas (Sidhan Kuttiyachan), P. K. Abraham (Aamaloor), K. C. Cherian (Mezhuveli), P.V.Varghese (Patuthodu K.T.Thomas (Kottanad) Sadhu John, K. C. Samuel, Mrs. Aleyamma Thomas, and Sis. P. V. Saramma worked along with Pr. P. G. Thomas in the fellowship.

The Fellowship was growing by and by. Today, we have more than 1,000 churches and many pastors in Kerala, different states of India, and outside India. Dr. T. G. Koshy worked as the president of this church after Pr. P. J. Thomas. Thereafter, Rev. John Thomas son of Pr. P. J. Thomas succeeded him. An elected church council assists the president in general church administration.

World Missionary Evangelism Fellowship

World Missionary Evangelism is a very well-known church group. It is abbreviated as W. M. E. This was founded by Pr. C. S. Mathew who was a Brethren church minister and later was baptized in the Spirit. They started the work in 1947. Now, they have hundreds of churches. Pastor O. M. Rajukutty is leading the church now.

New India Church of God

New India Church was founded in 1967. God used Pr. V. A. Thampi for the establishment of this church. In 1968, Tengeli Achan (Fr. M. K. Thomas), got baptized from the Knanaya church and started to work along with Pr. V A. Thampi. This helped in the development of new churches in Central Travancore and other parts. Pr. V. A. Thampi is leading the church even now.

New India Bible Church

This church group was founded by George Philip and Thomas Philip, two natives of Paippad, after they were baptized. Founded in 1973, New India Bible College helped a lot in the growth of this organization. This church has hundreds of churches in and out of Kerala.

Church of God (Kallumala)

Church of God Kallumala is another Pentecostal church that

cling on to the true and sound Pentecostal doctrines. Pr. M. E. Jacob was the founder of fellowship. It was established in 1968 and now has lot of local churches.

The Pentecostal Gospel Church

This church was established as a result of the revival that broke out in 1971 amidst of a prayer group near P. M. G. office, Trivandrum. Most of the Pastors do the ministry along with their work.

There are more independent churches in Kerala. Mannamvila Church of God, Evening light Church, Church of God in India trust and Philadelphia Church are some examples.

Practical Lesson

Sharon Fellowship church is a blessed church group in Pentecost. Let us praise God that we are a part of this. In addition, let us pray for our church leaders and believers.

Questions

1. Describe the origin, and growth of Sharon Fellowship church.
2. Who was the founder of W. M. E?
3. Write a note about New India Church of God.

CHAPTER 23

Religions In India - Hinduism

Memory Verse : Acts of the Apostles 26:29.

Purpose : To understand the origin, growth and the fundamental teachings of Hinduism.

Introduction : Hinduism is one of the complex and oldest religions of the world. Like other religions, Hinduism doesn't have a proper founder. And also, we can't point out a particular beginning of this religion. Hinduism is one of the important religions that emerged from India around 4,000 years back. It is really difficult to do the ministry in India without having a basic knowledge about this religion. So, let us learn about Hinduism in this lesson.

Arrival of the Aryans

It is believed that Aryans came to India around 4,000 years ago from Middle Asia. They defeated the Dravidians who lived in north India and started dwelling in the Saptha Sindhu area. Gradually, the Dravidians fled to south India and the Aryans flourished in the north India. Their culture was related to river Sindhu. Persians called this river as Hindu river. In Persian language, the sound "Sa" is replaced by "Ha". So, the land of Sindhu river turned as Hindu land and the residents nearby were called as Hindus. In the book of Esther in Bible, we can see about the Hindu land (1:1, 8:9) and it is the first evidence in the history too. The Arabic people called all the religions in India as Hinduism.

Hindu religious books

There are lots of Hindu religious books. They can be divided as

“Sruthi” and “Smrithi”. Sruthi means “that which was heard”. Vedas are included in this category. Vedas include Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda.

1. **Rig Veda:** This Veda is the ancient and the important of all other Vedas. This is a collection of hymns praising deities. It includes 1017 verses. And this includes 10,000 sukthas. Totally it has 10,000 slokas. All the sukthas are further divided into 10 mandalanga
2. **Yajur Veda:** It contains the hymns and mantras for different yagnas(sacrifices).
3. **Sama Veda:** It contains musical rule specific hymns made exclusively for the priests performing the yagnas(sacrifices). Most of them have been taken from Rig Veda. There are 1549 slokas in this.
4. **Atharva Veda:** Different from the other 3 vedas, this veda contains mantras for personal needs.

Smrithi means memory. Smrithi doesn't have the inductiveness such as Vedas. The Vedangas, ethics, epics, puranas, agamangals, visions are included in this.

Faith in God

From Charvakas (people who didn't believe in any God) to the normal folks who believed in more than 33 crores of deities were part of Hinduism. So, we can say that Hinduism doesn't have a clear theology. They do not have a widely accepted theory about the creation of the universe, and the creation of human beings. Brahmav, Vishnu, Shiva, Mother Earth, Aadipurush (the first man) and many such were considered as creator. However, it is believed that Brahmav creates, Vishnu protects, Shiva destroys.

Indra, Fire, Rudra, Ushas, Pushav, Sun, Moon, Air, and Varuna were given importance in the Vedic era. But, in the modern Hinduism Vishnu, Shiva, Sarasawathi, Lakshmi and Kali are worshipped the most. Present Hinduism follows polytheism.

Salvation (Moksha)

Hinduism doesn't have a widely accepted common theory about the life after death and salvation. The religious books of Hinduism have some writings about the heaven and hell, but these don't have any similarities with the heaven and hell described in the Bible. They

teach that the heaven and hell is not permanent, and a person who enters the same will leave it after a while.

But, Mukti or Moksha is considered as the true salvation. It means to be free- Freedom from birth and death. According to Advaita belief, Parabrahma is the absolute truth. Every one of the world is a part of this. If we consider Parabrahma as a sea, the water taken in a vessel is the life of the organisms. And, emptying this vessel to the sea is Moksha. As a result, the person becomes free from birth and death.

Practical Lesson

It is necessary to have the basic knowledge about Hinduism to do the ministry in India. We have the responsibility to pray for the people who are following polytheism. Let us submit ourselves for the same.

Questions

1. How the name 'Hindu' come into being?
2. Which are the four Vedas? Explain.
3. Describe the perspective about the faith in God under Hinduism.

CHAPTER 24

Religions In India: Islam

Memory Verse : 1 John 5:1

Purpose : To learn about the origin, growth and the main teachings of Islam.

Introduction : After Christianity, Islam is one of the biggest world religions. There are around 47 crore people who follow Islam. Pakistan and Bangladesh are Muslim nations in the Indian sub-continent. The word 'Islam' means to capitulate or slave. Allahu Akbar (Allah is great) is the slogan of Islam. Everyone should capitulate before the great Allah. Those who don't surrender to Allah should be brought down through Jihad (holy war). A true Islam is a person who is a slave to Allah.

Muhammad Nabi

Islam was founded by Muhammad, born in A.D. 570 at Mecca. His father Abdullah was a member of a powerful tribe called Qureshi. Abdulla died before the birth of Muhammad. At the age of 6, his mother Amina also passed away. At his younger age, he started travelling with Caravans - merchant groups. At the age of 25, he was married to Khadija, a wealthy woman. She gave birth to 3 boys and 4 girls. All the male kids died at the childhood. His daughter, Fatima alone lived even after the death of Muhammad.

The marriage alliance with Khadija gave him financial settlement and gave more time to rest and to think. He was through spiritual trouble. He used to go to a cave in Hira Mountains, around 3 miles away from Mecca, to meditate and to think. At the age of 40, during

such a meditation, he had a revelation. It is claimed that Gabriel, Arch Angel, came to him and commanded him to read in the name of the Almighty. Thus the word Quran (meaning: read) was given to their holy book.

He revealed about his vision to Khadija. And she strongly agreed it as divine visions. She was the only person who accepted Muhammad as the prophet of Allah. She was also convinced that he is the Nabi (Prophet) and Rasool (apostle) of the none other but one and true god- Allah. He started preaching his visions in the name of Allah. His visions and prophecies were against idolatry and polytheism. During that time in Middle East, tribal culture was prevalent. They fought each other. The people who worshipped in Kaaba that had lot of idols and the people who came as pilgrims to this place once in a year never accepted Muhammad. They became his enemies.

The people who lived in Madeena city, who were in constant war with Mecca, also opposed Muhammad's teachings. By the philosophy, 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', they accepted Muhammad. When Muhammad found that his life was in danger when he stayed in Mecca, he fled to Madeena with his friend, Abu-Bakr. This eloping gave way to the formation of Hijra calendar.

People of Madeena accepted Muhammad wholeheartedly. He became their leader. As the Mecca people were defeated in the battle between with Madeena, Islam began to flourish. Mecca people accepted Islam. All the idols were removed from Kaaba. This became as a holy place for Muslims. According to Muslim beliefs, Ibrahim and Ishmael built Kaaba.

Islam become powerful as Mecca and Madeena united under the leadership of Muhammad. Slowly, the adjacent city states and countries also were under Islamic hegemony. After the death of Muhammad, Caliphate system of rule came into existence and was ruler is designated as Caliph. There still exists a schism even today about the true successor of Muhammad, which divided the whole Islamic world into two major groups as Shia and Sunni.

Four fundamentals of Islamic faith

To get the right solution for the problems which a Muslim face in his day to day life, he relies on a codified dogmas. They are four in number and named as usool.

1. Quran

Quran is the eternal word of God. The Quran is brought to the

world by Gabriel, on the month of Ramadan; which was kept safe at the throne of God in written form. The angel wrote them through the hands of Muhammad. So, Quran is considered as unique and everlasting.

2. Hadith

Hadith are the collection of Islamic traditions- that were not in Quran and that were exemplary in the life of Muhammad. These were called as Hadith. This is considered as the second law as some answers that were not present in the Quran were sought out in Hadith.

3. Qiyaas

These are the logical solutions that are not found in Quran and Hadith. They are in harmony with the fundamental creeds. Qiyaas is bound by the law and also logical in nature.

4. Ijma

It is a ruling that if there arise a dispute and schism among Islamic scholars, then a deliberative assembly be summoned and settle the issue amicably.

These four rules are the fundamentals that decide the Islamic life and faith.

Fundamental beliefs

The unity of God and the prophetic power of Muhammad are the basis of Islamic fundamental beliefs. They were proclaimed through simple doctrines of faith called "Khalima". One who believes it and profess the same were considered as Muslims. According to these doctrines of faith, we can see five fundamental beliefs in the Islamic theology. They were also called as the five pillars of faith.

1. Allah

The faith in the one and only one almighty god is one of the important fundamental beliefs. Islam is a person who follows the rules of the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient god, Allah. Though Islam believes that Jesus Christ (Isa Nabi), the honored prophet will come at the end of the world and will judge the world. But, they never believe Jesus as God.

2. Angels

Angels are heavenly beings and were created to worship god all the time. They intercede for the human beings in the presence of god. They are the overseers of heaven and hell, and also the protectors

of human beings. The arch angels are Gabriel, Michael, Izrael, and Israfil.

3. Religious books

Through Gabriel God reveals the revelation to his prophets. They all are religious books. Quran is the 104th and the final book. Torah given to Musa, Psalms given to Davood, and the Gospels given to Isa Nabi are all holy books. When Quran is revealed, all other books become irrelevant.

4. Prophets

Prophets or Nabi are the one who get divine revelations. Names of twenty-eight prophets from Adam to Muhammad through Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, and Isa are added in the Quran. But, they believe that Muhammad was the final messenger sent by God.

5. Resurrection and final judgement

One day, the world will have its end. Before that the Dejjal Massih (anti-Christ) will come. To destroy the Anti-Christ, Isa Nabi will come. He will restore Islam and will destroy the evil. The one who does good will go to heaven and the one who does evil will go to hell.

Practical Lesson

We have to pray for the Islam community. Let them also know the true Gospel and be partners of the heaven.

Questions

1. Write a note about the life of Muhammad Nabi.
2. What are the four fundamentals of Islamic faith?
3. What are the fundamental beliefs of Islam?

CHAPTER 25

Religions In India : Buddhism

Memory Verse : Ephesians 3:20,21

Purpose : To give basic knowledge about Buddhism, that originated in India and became a worldwide religion. To know its origin, growth and doctrines.

Introduction : Buddhism originated in India in sixth century B.C., and has influenced the world when it became a world religion. Though Buddhism does not have more followers from India, it is widely accepted as the prime religion in many countries like China, Tibet, Nepal Japan and Korea. We will be learning about this religion in this lesson.

Sri Buddha

Gautama Siddhartha, later known as Buddha was born in 560 B.C., at Lumbini forest in Kapilavastu, nearby Nepal. He was the founder of Buddhism. Gautama is his family name. His father was Suddhodana of Shakya race. The legend says that, at Buddha's birth, the foretellers told that this baby will become either a world king or he will leave all the things of the world and will become Buddha. Suddhodana gave all the comforts without any fail as he wanted his son to become a world famous ruler. His father thought that as Gautama doesn't know the troubles and problems of the outside world, he will never become a monk. He built three palaces for his son to live in at different seasons of the year. At the age of 16, he was married to a princess, Yashodhara. Suddhodana was keen in casting away the poor

and the sick from the ways of Siddhartha that he may not know illness, old age problems and death. But, what happened was opposite. All the things done by the father to make his son to fall into the pleasure went in vain. He was caught with the thought of ageing, illness and death as he saw an old man, a patient and a dead body. To find the mystery behind all these, he left his home in 537 B.C. This incident was later known as the greatest renunciation.

In the next years, Gautama went in search of the truth. He tried strict fasting and meditation and stooped them as he found them unworthy. But, while he was sitting under a Bodhi (Banyan) tree at Gaya, he was illuminated with the ultimate truth. From that day onwards, he was called as Buddha. His first public addressing was in Varanasi. From there, he got some disciples. Later, he worked in Magadha, Kosalam and Kasi. He died in 487 B.C., after a lot of years of religious speeches.

Teachings of Buddha

Buddha's teachings were based on four noble truths. They are:

1. The material life is full of sufferings,
2. Desire is the cause of all suffering,
3. We can be happy, if we can destroy desire,
4. Through 8-fold path, we can destroy the desire.

The 8-fold path includes: 1. Right view; 2. Right intention; 3. Right speech; 4. Right action; 5. Right livelihood; 6. Right effort; 7. Right mindfulness; and 8. Right concentration.

Buddha's way was a way between asceticism and hedonism. He taught that through this, one can attain moksha. He defended caste system and taught that anyone can attain moksha through the noble truths. He rejected Vedas, sacrifices, chants and sacraments. He advised that no worship is necessary.

Religious books of Buddhism

The teachings and advices of Buddha were not recorded. They were passed on orally from generation to generation. After centuries, they were written. Later it was published as a book called 'Tripitka'. Tripitaka includes Vinaya pitaka, Sutta pitaka and Abhidhamma pitaka.

Vinaya pitaka: Rules and regulations of monastic life that range from dress code and dietary rules to prohibitions of certain personal conducts.

Sutta pitaka: This is the most important of Tripitaka. This contains the sermons of Buddha. It has 5 parts.

Abhidhamma pitaka: This was collected later, after the completion of Vinaya pitaka and Sutta pitaka. This includes philosophical and psychological discourse and interpretation of Buddhist doctrine.

Buddha spread his noble teachings in common man's language, simple and easy to be followed by a common man. This was one of the reasons why Buddhism became a world religion. Also, a group was established to spread the Buddhism across the world. The work done by this group in spreading Buddhism is really great. It was the golden era of Buddhism during the reign of Asoka, Kanishka and Harshavardanan.

After Buddha

After the death of Buddha, Buddhism was split into two. Hinayana, a group followed exactly what Buddha taught. Mahayana, a group who made Buddha as a god, built idols and are worshipping them.

Practical Lesson

Though Buddhism is small in its birth place- India, it is fast growing in countries like Ceylon, Nepal, Burma, China and Korea. Let us pray that all who follow Buddhism know about Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. Describe the childhood of Buddha.
2. What is called as the greatest sacrifice? Explain.
3. What are the religious books of Buddhists?
4. What were the main teachings of Sri Buddha?

CHAPTER 26

Religions In India : Jainism

Memory Verse : Acts of the Apostles 4:20.

Purpose : To give basic knowledge about Jainism, originated and still growing in India.

Introduction : The word Jain came from the word Jinan. Jinan means winner. Jinan is a person who overcomes his own desires and will to achieve the victory. Vardhamana Mahâvîra is considered as the founder of Jainism. But, according to Jains their religion is eternal. In each era, the religion is spread by Tirthankara of the religion. Twenty four Tirthankaras helped in the growth of this religion. The first was Rishabha. And Vardhamana Mahavira was the twenty-fourth one. They consider the twenty third Tirthankara Parshva Nadh and Mahavira as historic men. We can assume that the Jainism existed even before the time of Mahavira. But, Mahavira gave new strength to that faith.

Vardhamana Mahâvîra

Mahavira was born in 599 B.C., at Vaishali in North Bihar. His father was the king of the local province. As usual Mahavira grew up as a prince, married Yashoda and became the father of a girl child. But, the life in the palace made him tired. At the age of 30, he left his family and accepted the life of a monk. He left everything except the dress that he wore. He searched for the mysteries of the world and at the age of 42, he acquired the ultimate wisdom. Thereafter, considering him as the winner he was known as Jinan. For the next 30 years, he

travelled around the world proclaiming what he had found. He died in 527 B.C., at Pawa, a place in Bihar.

Main teachings

Jainism divides everything in the universe into live and dead. Jeevam is sense-filled soul and ajeevam is senseless and have no soul. The world is filled with souls. Not only human beings, but also, animals, plants and even the stones have soul. It is forbidden to hurt any of these. Every organism is circling around in the birth-death cycle. Escape from this cycle is moksha. For that, one has to cleanse their deeds. This purification can be done with three-diamond (three Perfect) duties- right faith, right wisdom, and right deeds. Do not kill, being obedient, do not steal, and being poor are some of the things followed by the followers of Parshva Nadh. Mahavira added celibacy along with this.

Mahavira taught that there is no person or force called god and prayer and worship are not necessary too. He was unable to explain about the origin of the universe and the origin of the soul. He believed that one can attain moksha if he/she torment own body and die of starvation. He taught that horizon is equal to cloth, hence he walked naked.

He also taught that if one has to be stable in the journey to the moksha, they have to undergo twenty two sufferings, including hunger, thirst, cold, warmth, and disease. The person has no right to enjoy the comforts of life.

After Mahāvīra

Just like Buddhism, Jainism was also split into two. Svethambaar, the followers of Parshva Nadh and they wore white dress. Digambara, they were like Mahavira, gone naked. They lead an ascetic life, tormenting their own body, and followed strict celibacy.

Though Jainism is not a world religion like Buddhism, it spread to Malwa, Kalinga, Madura and other southern parts of India. Jainism had a group in spreading the religion, but it was not strong enough. Chandragupta Maurya left his kingship, accepted Jainism and became a religious propagator. He died of starvation according to the tradition of Jainism.

Though Buddhism and Jainism came to existence almost at the same time, Jainism never became a world religion. The reasons for the same are many. Firstly, Jainism was not simple as Buddhism. Buddhism accepted an intermediate way between asceticism and

worldly life. But, Jainism included strict rituals and was unable to be followed by common people. Secondly, Jainism didn't get the royal support like Buddhism. Thirdly, Jains never tried to spread their religion as Buddhists did. Buddhist missionaries were sent to foreign countries, but Jainism tried to focus only on India. As a result, Jainism never became a world religion. But, Jainism always had influence in India. In North India, especially in Rajasthan, this religion is growing strongly.

Practical Lesson

Let us pray for the followers of Jainism, one of the leading religions in India. Let them also know the truths of the gospel and become partners of the eternity.

Questions

1. Prepare a note about the history of Mahavira.
2. What are the main teachings of Jainism?
3. Why Jainism never grew as a world religion?

CHAPTER 27

Religions In India : Sikhism

- Memory Verse** : Acts of the Apostles 14:15
- Purpose** : To give the basic knowledge about the origin, growth and teachings of Sikhism, a leading religion in India.
- Introduction** : Sikhism is the youngest of all religions in India. Guru Nanak is the founder of this religion. Sikhism started as a reformation movement within Hinduism to cleanse it from polytheism, idolatry and pilgrimage. When all other Reformatory movements in Hinduism, as time passed by, merged into orthodox Hinduism; Sikhism stayed identical.

Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak was born on 1469 at Talvanthi village, around 30 miles away from Lahore, to a Kshatria family. He was interested in religious matters from his childhood itself. Though he was married, he left his family. He accepted the job at the office of Sulthanpur governor as a store keeper. Though he tried to be punctual in his responsibilities, his mind was unrest within him. One day, after a bath, he went to the forest. He had a vision of being taken up to the presence of god. He got an order to recite Hari (god's name) and to tell others to do so. After three days, he came out as a Guru. After being silent for a day, he proclaimed that, there is no Muslim or Hindu, but, there is only one God and one way.

He moved within for many years singing and praising the true and one God along with his best friend, but Muslim- a singer Mardhana. He preached in the streets and roads neglecting the oppositions from religious leaders. He opposed caste system, external ritualism, idolatry and pilgrimage. He had a few followers wherever he went. It was in Punjab he received great successes. He got lot of followers from there. In 1538, he died.

Doctrines and teachings

a. God

Sikhism follows monotheism. Nanak called the true one God as 'True Name'. he addressed God as Hari (Dayavan) because Nanak believed that it is God's nature. There is no god other than the true god. He is the only god. He is highest, almighty and there is none like him. Everything happens according to his will

b. Man and salvation

Just like other religions born in India, Sikhism also believes in rebirth. After death, the body decays and the remaining soul will take another body according to their past deeds. As per Sikhism the departed soul will become a tree, animal, snake or a bird. This cycle continues till the soul reaches God. The ultimate abode of a soul is to get freedom from the cycle of rebirth and to reach the true god. This is moksha. This is the reaching back of the souls to its origin to attain moksha, one has to submit their life to god and have to worship him alone. Apart from doing pilgrims, doing atman or showing mercy and sympathy, this religion teaches that it is important to hear the god from one's heart and follow his teachings.

c. Guru

The guru of Sikh religion is given importance. The faith of Gurus from Nanak to Govind Singh is unavoidable. Sikhs are the followers of Guru. Guru has two roles. First, to share the word of god; second, to lead and to bind all the Sikh groups of different places together and to be involved in the religious rituals of Sikhs. Govind Singh dedicated the 'Gur Granth Sahib' as the guru after his death. This is the holy book of Sikhs. He declared that this book will be their permanent guru. After that, no other gurus came up in Sikhism.

d. Religious acts

The major religious act of Sikhs is to exercise god's presence through reciting and meditation. This has to be done alone at home

and as a group at the temple. Their religious book is given importance even at the worship at the home as well as at the temple. They have to read from the opened book daily. They have to read anything from the top of the left page when they open the book. They have preset passages to read every day- in morning, evening and before they go to bed. The temple of Sikhs is known as Gurdwara. Group prayer is compulsory in Gurdwaras.

Practical Lesson

Around 2% of India's population follows Sikhism. Most of them dwell in Punjab. Let us pray that they will also become the partners of the eternity.

Questions

1. Write a note about Guru Nanak's life.
2. What are the teachings of Sikhism about God?
3. Name the main religious book of Sikhism.
4. Write a note about the religious acts in Sikhism.

CHAPTER 28

Zoroastrianism

Memory Verse : Galatians 5:1

Purpose : To give the basic knowledge about Zoroastrianism, its origin, founder, growth and teachings.

Introduction : In India, Parsi people are few in number. There are around 1,30,000 are in India. Most of them are settled in Mumbai. They follow Zoroastrianism. This religion originated in Iran (Persia). The Indian Parsi people and the Gaber, a small community in Persia, follow this religion. But, just like Judaism and Islamism, Zoroastrianism had influenced the world religion.

Zoroastrian

Zoroaster was the founder of Zoroastrianism. The scholars do not have a common stand about the date of birth of Zoroaster. By the Persian traditions, he was born in 660 B.C. Most of the scholars accept this. We cannot say about the birth place of Zoroaster. It is believed that, he was born in Media, Persia and started his works. Due to the oppositions, he moved to Bactria and continued his works successfully. He was fond of religious affairs even from his childhood. He left his home for the search of truth at the age of 20. He roamed around different places. At the age of 30, he had the revelation from Ahura Mazda, the God of goodness. By the traditions, a person that is nine times bigger than a normal human being appeared to him. This was an arch angel. The angel led Zoroaster to Ahura Mazda and he explained about true religion and its character, and teachings to Zoroaster. Also, he appointed Zoroaster as his prophet. In the next 8

years, Zoroaster had talked with 6 main angels. At the age of 77, he was killed in an encounter with the priests of the keepers of ancient faith.

Main teachings

God

Zoroaster tried to give the truths of Ahura Mazda, the God of goodness, to the Iranian people who believed in many gods. He revealed that Ahura Mazda is the true god. He is the beginning and the end. Almighty; complete in goodness. Everything was created by his will. Both light and the darkness are his creation. He knows the future. His will is revealed through the clean spirit. These were the teachings of Zoroaster about God.

Good and evil

Life is a battle; the battle between goodness and the evil. Man can never stay away from this battle. While he created the human beings, Ahura Mazda gave them the freedom to choose his own deeds. So, man can choose good or evil and truth or false.

Life after death

Zoroaster taught that at the end of the world, a common resurrection happens. Everyone, both good and the evil people will be tested through a bath of molten metal, melted by fire. Evilness is revealed in the fire. The flames and the molten metal will never harm the people who did good deeds. The evil men will rot in hell eternally. After death, the souls of everyone reach 'Chinvat Bridge'. The souls of the evil men and good men are separated here. Chinvat is the connecting bridge between heaven and the earth. The unfathomable hell is underneath. Good people walk to the heaven without any troubles. But, the evil people can never reach up to the half of the bridge. They will fall into the depths of the hell due to their evil minds.

Parsi in India

In A.D. 651, the Sasanian empire dilapidated by Muhammadan attack. This was a hard blow on the followers of Zoroastrianism. Initially, they had no attack from the Arabs, but later, they started the attacks. Many were forced to accept Islam. People who stood firm in Zoroastrianism planned to leave Persia. The first group reached Gujarat in A.D. 716. Later on, more people came. There were no hindrances for them to follow their religion in India. They were called as Parsi in India. They were one of the prospered groups of the independent

India. Most of them were successful businessman and entrepreneurs. They were famous not only for their business, but also for their kind giving too.

Practical Lesson

Though the people who follow Zoroastrianism are few in number, they also have to hear about Jesus. Let us pray to God to open their eyes to see the truth of gospel.

Questions

1. Where do the majority of Parsi live in India?
2. Write a note about Zoroaster.
3. What are the teachings of Zoroastrianism about the life after death?
4. Write the history of the Parsi in India.

CHAPTER 29

Evangelisation

Reading Portion : Matthew 10:1-42; 28:18-20.

Memory Verse : Matthew 28:18-20

Purpose : To understand about the church's main mission-evangelization and to equip students to participate in the same.

Introduction : Evangelization is first and foremost responsibility of the church next to worship. This is for the fulfillment of the final commandment of Lord Jesus Christ. So, we will be learning this in the coming lessons as they are very important

What is evangelism?

The word mission came from the Greek word for Apostle, i.e., Apostolos, which means "to send". This word has many shades of meanings. 'A person sent on behalf of someone else with a mission', 'a person sent to a particular place', and 'to profess the religious faith of a community to another community' are some of the meanings of this word.

The main mission of the church

The main mission of the church is written clearly in the Bible. "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18), these words of Jesus Christ is the root of the church's mission. As 'that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:19), gospel is the good news for the whole world. Testifying this gospel is the main mission of the church.

The God of the Bible is a Missionary God. In every age, God has His own missions. Or else, mission is of God. God accomplishes the same through man. Or we can say, God uses man to be part of his mission and accomplish His mission in the respective ages.

The first missionary was Jesus Christ. It is very important to know why Jesus came to the world is very important in Evangelism.

Why Jesus came to the Earth?

The main reasons why the Son of God, Jesus Christ came to the Earth are as follows.

1. Jesus came to the Earth as the savior of the world. He came to offer His life as an atonement for our sins and to give us eternal life (1 John 4:9, 10, 14). Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10).
2. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus served the people by words as well as by actions. Example: he served the hungry; he washed the legs of his disciples, healed the sick, consoled the hurt, and gave life to the dead.
3. Manifested in the flesh found in appearance of a man, Jesus; though he was in the foam of God did not count equality with God- humbled himself obedient unto death—even unto the death on the cross! (Philippians 2:8-9). In every aspect he reconciled with human beings.
4. Jesus had come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10).

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 is known as the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. These were the commandments given by Jesus Christ before He ascended up to the heavens. Just as God the Father send His Son, Jesus to the world; the Son is sending His disciple to accomplish His mission. Twelve disciples were chosen initially and then a group of 70 and after the resurrection, everyone who accepts salvation is considered as disciple and they are entrusted with the mission. The Great Commission has the following commandments:

1. Go into the world and preach the Gospel to all creation (Mark 16:15).
2. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and

teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Evangelization and social commitment

Evangelization is the duty of all that are Evangelized. The Great commission charges this responsibility. At the same time, we have some social commitment that we ought to deliver as we live in a society. Doing charity work as a social work by rejecting Evangelization and doing Evangelistic work without social work are drifting away from the essence of the Great Commission. As both are interlinked, we have to give importance to both of them. We should consider social work as a medium to share the Gospel. Social commitment was not given much importance before, but now people have considered it as important. This is the introduction to the gospel works. Saving the souls is the important part of evangelism.

Practical Lesson

If a church avoids Evangelization, the existence of the church is in danger. Each believer of the church has responsibility in this. We should be ready to accept that responsibility. Let us submit ourselves to accept the great commission of Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. What is the Greek word for Apostle?
2. Write a note about the main mission of the church.
3. Why Jesus came to the world?

CHAPTER 30

Evangelisation (Continuation)

Reading Portion : Acts of the Apostle 1, 26 chapters, Mark 16 chapter

Memory Verse : 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Purpose : To understand the importance of evangelism and the qualities of a servant of God.

Introduction : In the previous lesson, we learnt that evangelism is the prime motto of the church. Necessity is laid upon every person who is saved. When we do so, the church grows. There are many things that compel us to do the mission. We will be learning the same in this lesson.

Why we should share the Gospel?

Go into the world and preach the gospel to all creation was the commission given by Jesus to the disciples. This charge is transferred to the church. Church is called to be His witness (1 Petr 2:9). “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an Apostle and set apart for the gospel of God” (Romans 1:2) By these words of Paul, we can take this as a personal priority too. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:16,17, “For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me”. All these verses show the importance of sharing the gospel with others. In addition, there are few more reasons.

1. The lost estate of Mankind

The overall situation of mankind is that they are lost sinners. A

person who is not in Christ is in the lost sinner. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:12). As they are spiritually dead, they need life. They can be saved only if they believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2. We realize this situation

Those who deny Jesus Christ, the only savior of mankind, are condemned to spend their eternity in hell. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God (Psalm 9:17). Jesus said about the hell as a place where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched (Mark 9:4). We must work to save the souls from the fiery furnace of the hell; as if we rescue a person caught on fire or fall into fire.

3. This is a commandment from above

Go and preach the Gospel to the ends of the world is a command from Jesus (Matthew 28:18,19; Mark 16:15; John 20:21). As a soldier cannot bypass the order of his immediate commanding officer, we can never bypass the commandment of Christ.

4. This is a plea from around

As Jesus said, “open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest”. The fields in India are ripe for the harvest. Untold millions are still untold. Unreached ethnic groups are still unreached. They are inviting us just as people called Paul, “come and help us” (Acts: 16:9). So we have to have every effort to reach these people groups.

5. We are accountable unto God

We all are accountable before the Eternal God for all of our life and for all of our deeds (Prov: 24:11,12). We are saved by the grace of God; but someday He will judge us according to our deeds (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Qualities of an Evangelist

The motto of every evangelist should be soul winning. Every evangelist requires some qualities.

1. Have a holy life

What is a holy living? We mean having daily spiritual checkup of one's own life, correcting the mistakes and coming back to the complete and absolute surrender for a new life. The importance of leading a holy life can be seen as Paul advises Timothy to lead a holy life by

fleeing from the passions of the world and carnal desires and to follow the paths of Jesus Christ.

2. Have prayer life

Bible teaches that the prayer is an integral part of Christian life. Prayer is like a charger that recharges a battery that lost its energy due to the use. Prayer recharges a Christian worker who is fully engaged in the field lost the energy.

3. Should know the sword of the Spirit, the word of God

To reveal the truths from the word of God, the Biblical knowledge and the discerning power to choose the right verse according to the situation are included in this.

4. Have a Bleeding heart of souls

Paul explains about his mission as, I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of you (Acts of the Apostles 20:19,31). We can cry for the perishing souls only if we have the burden for them.

5. Be ready even to sacrifice own life

Mission work is a ministry of denying oneself. As a missionary Christ sacrificed His life to save the human souls and died a vicarious death.

6. Should dwell in Jesus

Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit" (John 15:5). As a branch connected to the vine produces fruit, one can produce fruit while dwelling in Christ.

Practical Lesson

Evangelism is not a mission that is set only for a particular community; it's the duty of each and every believer of Jesus Christ. So, let us pray that God equip us to spread the Gospel in our schools as well as anywhere God places us.

Questions

1. Explain the need of sharing the gospel.
2. What are the qualities required by a person who is to win the souls?

CHAPTER 31

Personal Evangelism

Reading Portion : John 4 chapter; Acts of the Apostles 8:26-40

Memory Verse : Daniel 12:3

Purpose : To make the students aware of personal evangelism and to equip them for personal evangelism.

Introduction : We have various methods to carry out fruitful evangelism. One among them is personal evangelism. By this we mean that sharing the Gospel to a selected person as per his needs. When Jesus called His disciples for the ministry, He called them for personal evangelism. “Come, follow me, and I will send you out to be fishers of people” (Matthew 4:19). This verse gives the insight about that truth. There is no supreme job for a Christian other than to be a fisherman of people. Christ called us for this glorious duty.

The New Testament example

Andrew is the best example for personal evangelism. He led his brother Peter to Christ. Later, Andrew was able to see 3,000 people accepting Jesus in a single sermon of Peter. Another example is Philip. He led the finance minister of Ethiopia to Christ through personal evangelism. As a result, the whole Africa heard the Gospel.

A shoe seller, Edward Kimball led one of his young customers to Jesus Christ through personal evangelism. That young person was later became a famous revival preacher - D. L. Moody. William Carey, the father of modern missions, was brought to Christ by one of his co-workers, William Var.

The example of Jesus

The best example from the Bible for personal evangelism is Jesus Christ Himself. We can see this in John 4. In this passage, we can see Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman by the side of Jacob's well. He talks about true worship and led her to self awareness and ultimately to have confession.

The peculiarities of personal evangelism

1. Anyone who accepted Jesus as their personal savior can do personal evangelism. All are not talented to preach, teach and to sing. But, without any ability or age barrier, anyone can do personal evangelism. Willingness to communicate the Gospel with others is the only requisite. Spending more time in prayer, Bible meditation and the trust in the Holy Spirit will make a person well equipped.
2. Apart from any other media, the opportunity for personal evangelism is quite high. But the problem is that we are not well aware about the chances, and not availing the chances properly. Those who have the passion to bring the souls to Christ will carry out their duty in their homes, schools, journeys or in picnics.
3. We can impress people via personal evangelism. Everyone likes to get individual attention and we can utilize this for personal evangelism.
4. Counter questions will never arise when preaching from a pulpit. But, in personal evangelism, asking questions and giving answers can be the method. Even we can understand their personal problems which could be carried out.
5. When all other approaches fail, personal approach becomes more successful. Nothing happened when John the Baptist said to a community: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!". But, when he said the same to two of his disciples, they followed Jesus. Personal approach makes all change.

How can we do personal evangelism?

1. Social interaction

Social relationship is an important criterion in personal evangelism. By the relationship, three things can happen.

- a) We can understand others and their needs,
- b) We can convince them about their needs,

c) We can show them what Gospel really is.

2. Interact with a subject of their interest

How to begin a conversation is always a problem. For that, after acquainting with them, try to understand their field of interest and talk from it. Remember, Jesus brought the Samaritan woman through the water issue.

3. Create more interest in others

Our approach, way of talk and the reflection of joy on our face should create comfort in others. For that, be natural.

4. Deal with maturity

Talk to them with maturity by knowing them- their ability and situations. Remember that we have a little time to deal with them. Don't think that we can cover everything within a short while. Share the important things only.

5. Never blame

Never blame the other person based on their religion or works. Hate sin and love sinner should be our attitude.

6. Avoid arguments

Satan never likes us to share Gospel. He uses all weapons to prevent. The best device he always uses is argument. Be sober and cool at that time. Explain things in simple manner.

Practical Lessons

Personal evangelism is the most effective method of all ages. Age limit is not a barrier to do personal evangelism. So, let us submit ourselves to share the gospel with our friends and colleagues.

Questions

1. Write an example about personal evangelism from New Testament.
2. What are the peculiarities of personal evangelism?
3. How can we do personal evangelism? Explain.

CHAPTER 32

Adoniram Judson

Memory Verse : Philippians 2:16

Purpose : To understand the life of Adoniram Judson who swayed the flag of Gospel in Burma.

Introduction : Burma, which is adjacent to India, is the center of Buddhist thoughts. Buddhist monks with their heads bald and wearing yellow dress, walking through the streets of Burma is a common. Buddhism entered to Burma centuries ago and it is accepted as the official religion. God chose a man to preach the truths of Gospel in this area when there was not a single Christian there. He was Adoniram Judson. He proclaimed that, "I will not leave Burma until 'The Cross' is planted here forever!" He preached the Gospel and translated the Bible to their language. We will be learning about him in this lesson.

Birth and education

Adoniram Judson was born on August 8, 1788 in Massachusetts, America. His father was a pastor with the congregational church. He was brought up by devoted parents and he had extraordinary talents from the childhood itself. He was fond of reading books and was able to excel in Mathematics and Science. And also, he chose to learn Greek and Latin too. At the age of 16, he got admission in Brown University and completed the degree with first rank.

He had a friend during his college Days-Jacob Aims. Aims was an atheist and Adoniram's friendship with Aims decreased his faith in God. Adoniram started arguing that prayer and faith were useless.

The change in their son's attitude made the parents were broken in heart and they started praying for him fervently.

Repentance

Adoniram wished to become either a playwright or a lawyer. But, he was unable to be so. He was haunted by depression and disturbance. During that time, one day, he had to stay in a hospice. In the nearby room a man was struggling with death. The groaning and loud cry from that room affected even the sleep of Adoniram. On the next morning, he went to the other room to see the patient. He was shocked to see his college mate, Jacob Aims there. Adoniram realized that Aims were under the fear of death. He understood that the end of the people who denies God will be hopeless. This set him into repentance. On 2 December 1808, he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior.

After salvation, Adoniram had the enthusiasm to lead a life pleasing in the eyes of God. So, sharing gospel with others became a part of his life. He was ruled by the thought of going as a missionary in places where the Gospel had not yet reached. But, he was doubtful about his sponsorship. At that time, no organizations in America were ready to send people as missionaries to other countries. Therefore, Adoniram, along with his four colleagues, who had the missionary vision, started praying for the guidance of God. As a result, on 5 February 1812, they established a movement called 'American Mission Board'. On 5 February 1812, Adoniram married Ann Heseltine.

To Burma

After two weeks of their marriage, Adoniram couple started their journey to India for evangelism. As they had enough time during the voyage, they learned the Bible in deep. They came to know the truth that infant baptism is wrong and as they reached India, they took water baptism.

He was full of passion to serve the Lord in India, but was not allowed to preach the Gospel in India by the rulers of India, the East India Company. They ordered to send Adoniram and his wife back to America. But, they were not willing to go back to their native place. At this time, Adoniram was filled with the burden for Burma. So, through difficult ship journey, they reached in Rangoon, Burma.

At that time, Burma was under monarchy. As king is the supreme leader, people had no freedom at all. Superstition and pagan ceremonies dragged the people of Burma to the darkness. War and poverty

weakened them. There was not a single Christian in those areas at that time. The burden for Burma, who had not even heard the name of Jesus, intensified in the Adoniram couple. They found time to learn native language as the initial step of the evangelization. In between, his wife became sick and was admitted in Madras, but Adoniram continued his language learning. Shortly after this, they were blessed with a baby boy. But, as the climatic conditions were unfavorable, the child caught disease and died in the eighth month. Though this hurt them badly, yet, still they stayed focused.

Bible translation

Adoniram realized that, to share the Gospel with the people in Burma, they need a Bible translated in the Burmese language. That's how he started learning Burmese. He spends around 14 hours daily in learning the language. He had knowledge in Hebrew and Greek languages, and he started to translate the Bible to the native language. As a result, he was able to publish the New Testament in Burmese language in 1823. In 1839, complete Bible was published in Burmese language. In addition, he started publishing tracts and books in Burmese language, to spread the Gospel. Also, he published books regularly and made an English- Burmese dictionary to develop the knowledge and the culture of the people.

Expansion in the ministry

It took around 6 years to see the output of these couple's works. Mong Naav, the first native, accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior. He was the first fruit of Gospel in Burma. Mong Naav was ready to accept the truth even though he knew the persecutions and troubles. After this, the Gospel spread widely in Burma. Within a short while, there were 18 believers in Rangoon itself. In 1840, around 100 people were baptized.

The end

After 33 years, Adoniram went back to America for rest as he was ill. But, the burden for the people in Burma made him to get back to Burma immediately. He continued the ministry in Burma for some more time. As his illness became intense, he was sent back to America. During his journey back, on 12 April 1850, he went to be with the Lord. The ship crew buried his body into the seas. The candle that burned for Burma for a full lifetime ended up.

Practical Lesson

The works of Adoniram Judson who left all his comfort life and

came to a foreign land were not in vain. Today, there is a strong Christian group in Burma which was once the center of Buddhism. Let us pray for the repentance of the rest of people in Burma.

Questions

1. Describe the incident that led Adoniram Judson to repentance.
2. Describe the works of Adoniram in Burma.
3. Write the end of Adoniram Judson.

CHAPTER 33

Graham Stanes

Memory Verse : Acts of the Apostles 20:23,24

Purpose : To understand the life and works of Graham Staines who left his comfort life, came to India and was turned to ashes

Introduction : Graham Staines left all his comforts and enjoyment of his country, came to India as a missionary to serve the lepers, lived with and cared them. His selfless works were rewarded by some cruel people by taking his and his two children's lives. Let us learn about Graham Staines who was burned to ashes in the Indian soil.

Birth and family background

Graham Stewart James was born in 18 January 1941 in Palmwoods, in Queensland State of Australia. Joseph Williams and Elizabeth were his parents. They had three kids other than Staines. Their life was miserable as their father was a drunkard. But, their mother led a Godly life and she brought her children up in discipline and godly standards. She wanted her children to be able servants of God.

Graham was brought to repentance and submission to God as he got an opportunity to hear the Gospel from a famous Evangelist-Alan Cunningham. He preached the unending love of God on that day.

They moved to Beaudesert due to their agricultural job. Staines took water baptism while they were in this place. So, he became a

member of the Baptist church.

His fellowship with that church was a turning point in the life of Staines. Great men of God were members of that assembly. During this Staines realized his calling to ministry and he totally submitted before the will of God. He started his ministry with door-to-door evangelism, distribution of tracts, and by conducting public meetings.

Meanwhile, he was connected by mail to Santhanu Sathpathi of Orissa (present Odisha). This helped him to know more about India. After his secular education, he joined at Queensland Institute, for theological education during 1962-1964.

To India

Graham Staines wanted to come to India to do the missionary works. He had been convinced regarding the location of his ministry through the letters of Santhanu Sathpathi. On 18 January 1965, at the age of 24, Graham Staines came to Santhanu Sathpathi's native place Baripada, Orissa. There was a leprosy sanatorium in Baripada since 1894 under the guidance of Evangelical Mission of Baptist church in Australia. This was one of the reasons why Staines chose Orissa. He started living for the lepers whose wounds were in adverse condition, some of those men's fingers on legs and hands were lost due to the disease. He fed them with his own hands, and shared the love with them.

His works were filled with love of Christ and his presence gave new life to the lepers. The lepers saw the love and care of Christ, who touched a leper first time in the history of mankind- two thousand years ago. He treated these forsaken and rejected folks as his own brothers. So they called him 'Saibo'.

On 6 August 1983, Graham Staines married Gladys, an Australian girl. This couple learned Oriya and Santali languages and they were not a foreigner to the people of Orissa. They adopted the culture and life of the natives and lived among them as one among them. God gifted them three Kids-Esther, Philip and Timothy. They too were interested in the works of their parents even from their schoolings.

Along with the leper care, Staines and family were involved in other activities that were helpful to the people. The dairy farm initiated by them gave job opportunity as well as enough milk to the inmates of the campus. Also, Staines was active in conducting Gospel meetings and Bible classes in the nearby places.

End of life

On January 1999, Graham Staines prepared to attend a Christian meeting conducted every year at Manoharpur. His friend and a teacher of Botany at Cuttack, Subhakar Ghosh and Graham's relative and missionary from Australia-Gilbert, joined him for the meeting. And also, the kids, Philip (9 years) and Timothy (8 years) joined them as they came for vacation from Hebron School, Ooty. To care and help the lepers, Gladys and Esther stayed back at Baripada. When they were about to leave, Graham said to Gladys and Esther, "I am leaving, look after everything well". They never thought that these would be the last words of Graham Staines.

22 January 1999, Friday! After the meeting and the dinner, everyone went to sleep. Graham and his two sons decided to sleep in their jeep. They were unaware of the plans by which they were to be killed by the cruel fanatics. At midnight, under the leadership of Dhara Singh and Rabeendra Singh, a group of religious fanatics approached Staines' vehicle with spears and lighted lamps. They circled the jeep and started attacking Graham with spears and stones. Graham, who woke up from the sleep, pleaded them for mercy by holding his children close to his bosom. But, the cold-blooded wicked men never heard these words. Philip and Timothy cried out. The attackers frightened the villagers with weapons who tried to come near when they heard the cry. At the next moment, they emptied a can of petrol on to the jeep and put it into fire. To save the kids, Graham tried to come out, but they never let him to do so. Instead, they speared them and put them back to the fire. As the fanatics danced around the jeep which was on fire, Graham Staines was holding his kids and was dying inside the jeep. They were burnt alive in India for the forsaken and untouched lepers, whom he loved and cared.

Response of Gladys

The martyrdom of Graham Staines and the kids terrified the world. Gladys, holding her daughter Esther, stood near the bodies of her husband and two kids that were charred beyond identification. The response of this widow and mother revealed the power and the spirit of Christian vision. "We loved India unfathomably from our hearts. But, someone misunderstood it. That is why this had happened. God knows everything. Let the will of God be done. I have forgiven the killers and have no bitterness because forgiveness brings healing and our land needs healing from hatred and violence. God taught me to love even the enemies. I pray for the murderers of my husband that

they will know the love of God.” These words melted the hearts of the people around the world. The world knew the love of Jesus through her words. Many people came forward to accept the Jesus of Gladys Staines. In no time India heard the Love of God through the words of Gladys. She availed the opportunity even in a most saddening and heart breaking moment.

Practical Lesson

The death of Graham Staines and the kids, the life of Gladys and the daughter stands as a challenge before us. The lives that burned in Indian soil are an example before us. Let us submit ourselves to carry-out the evangelism even by giving our lives.

Questions

1. Write about the birth and family background of Graham Staines.
2. What were the factors that compelled Staines to come to India for mission works?
3. How did Gladys respond to the death of her husband?

CHAPTER 34

George Muller

Memory Verse : Matthew 25:44, 45.

Purpose : To understand the life of George Muller who fed the orphans.

Introduction : George Muller was a famous missionary. The life of Muller is really a motivation to all. He protected orphans and trained them for the Kingdom of God. He travelled around the world preaching the Gospel and lead many to Christ. We will be learning that history in this lesson.

Birth and repentance

Muller was born on 27 September 1805 as a son of a tax collector at Kroppenstedt, Prussia, in Germany. He acquired the habit of drinking alcohol at his younger age itself. Unfaithfulness also accompanied him at this young age. He was even send to the juvenile prison for three weeks as he did some serious crime when he was at the school. He was unable to mend his character even after coming out of the juvenile prison. After the school, he joined Hale University and his character remained the same.

At this time, he went to a prayer meeting with his friend Betta and this transformed his life completely. He was amazed to see an old man named Kaiser, praying on his knees. It seemed that he was speaking to some very close to him. He was shocked to see people worshipping God in fear and adoration. He was ruled by the thought of emptiness of human life. At that night itself, he kneeled at the side of his bed and accepted Jesus as his personal savior. It was on 1825, and he was 20 years old. On that day itself, he submitted himself as a missionary.

His father became angry when he shared his decision to become as a missionary. His parents wanted him to be a priest in the Lutheran church. He stayed strong in his decisions in the middle of all pressures. And also, he took another decision that, he will never ask for financial aid from his father, instead, he will rely completely on God.

To evangelism

He prayed for the proper guidance of God as he was fond of doing the mission works. After getting trained from London Mission Society, God send Muller to Devan to preach the Gospel among the fishermen. He started as a pastor in Exeter and was married Mary Groves.

Once, Muller was invited to preach in the chapel in Bristol by one of his friends. While he was preaching there, he had strong conviction from God that the Lord has prepared Bristol for him to do the missionary works. So, Muller couple moved to Bristol in 1832 and started a new pioneer work. Slowly, the work grew and by the end of the year, they had around 109 believers in their church. Muller, an enthusiastic worker, started working hard to start new works like education, literature and charity programs by 1834.

God's guidance

At this time, cholera broke out in Bristol and spread in all area. Many people died. The rich evacuated the city and the poor were left in the city. Muller and his wife cared and prayed for the patients during this time. Cholera subsided after three months. As a result of the cholera, the number of orphans in the narrow streets increased. It was common in the street that kids fight with dogs for a piece of bread. Most of these children either lost both of their parents or some lost their father or mother. The people at the homes were not healthy enough to do job and feed the family. Muller's heart began to throb for these children and he wanted to do something for them. As a result, on 1836 April, by faith, he started an orphanage. They housed 30 girlchildren who were between the age of 7 and 12.

As he walked down the street, he came to understand that some children were thrown to the streets even before the age of 7. For them, he hired a building in Wilson Street and started a new orphanage. After 9 months, Muller started an orphanage for boys alone. All his works were result of faith. They took a decision that, they will never borrow money from anyone and they will ask only God to provide their needs. Due to this, God opened miraculous ways for Muller who trusted in God alone. During the first two years, they received money at the right time to meet the needs of the kids, but, they had to undergo

severe trials for the next ten years. Muller and family prayed on their needs till the needs were satisfied by the Lord.

One day, they struggled as they didn't have food or even money to buy the food. By faith, he placed empty plates in front of the children. He asked the children to pray to the Lord, and Muller started praying to God: Lord, the children whom you gave me is now at the table for their breakfast. We thank you that you are going to feed them in plenty. Amen. Soon after the prayer, a bakery owner came to see Muller. He said, "Yesterday night, God told me to give food to the children in here. I have come with the bread for them. Please accept this." At the same moment, another person came. He was a milk vendor from the city. On his way, his vehicle damaged and was unable to repair. He could move further only if he reduced the load on the vehicle. At that time, he remembered the children of this orphanage. "Please give this milk to the children." Muller would have praised God in abundance for the miracle just like God fed Elijah with a raven.

Shortly, they purchased a piece of land in Ashley Brown, nearby Bristol city and built a beautiful building and shifted the orphanage. By 1870, they had 5 huge buildings and a school with 2,050 students. The money spent on this was all the result of prayer.

End of his life

The time from 1875 onwards was a new chapter in the life of Muller. He travelled around the world preaching and conducting Bible classes. People who heard him were moved with faith and the love of God. In his long mission trip around 17 years, he landed in America, Australia and New Zealand 3 times, India 2 times and preached in 42 countries. He travelled around 2.5 lakh miles and preached about Jesus for around 30 years. On 10 March 1898, at the age of 92, the father of the orphans went to be with the Lord. Not only Bristol, but the whole world mourned when they heard the demise of George Muller.

Practical Lesson

By faith Muller run his mission. He was able to save the souls of the orphans in addition to protecting them. There will be no one like him in the history, who cared and supported this much orphans. Let us be motivated by the life of Muller and submit ourselves to care and feed the poor and the orphans.

Questions

1. Write a note about the repentance of George Muller.
2. Write in not less than one page about the evangelism done by Muller.

CHAPTER 35

John Wesley

Memory Verse : Matthew 9:35

Purpose : To understand the life of John Wesley, the leader of revival.

Introduction : John Wesley worked really hard for spreading the Gospel. He quoted, "I look upon the entire world as my parish" and he shared the Gospel to millions of people. He travelled throughout the world for the sake of Gospel. The life of this missionary is a great example before us.

Birth and family background

John Wesley was born on 17 June 1703 in Epworth, north-west of Lincolnshire, England, as the fifteenth child of Rev. Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna Wesley. His father was a rector of Anglican Church and his mother was a true believer. They had 19 children, but due to their poverty and their life, 9 died. Susanna stayed intact in her faith in the Lord, prayer life and to bring up their kids in Christian stature and spiritual maturity even amidst of these struggling situations. They had the proper vision about how to care and protect the family and also to bring up the kids in the right way. She made them to have daily Bible study, directed and reminded the kids to be people of good conduct.

At the age of five Wesley's home caught fire. Everything was burning down in the fire, and John was trapped in the upper room of the house. He stood nearby a windows crying and waving both hands to the outside. A villager saw this and by taking risk with his own life,

helped John out of the house before the roof collapsed. He always quoted and preached that the verse “Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” (Zech: 3:2) happened in real in his life by recollecting this incident. This miraculous way in which God saved him out of the fire touched his heart and he took a decision to live for the God who saved him.

Education

John studied in Charter House School in London till the age of 17. Then he went to Christ Church College which was under Oxford University. He was selected as the “Fellow of Lincoln College”. After the education, he was appointed as the Greek lecturer in the same college. At this time, his brother, Charles Wesley too joined the college. Along with another Gospel lover, Morgan, John and Charles started spending time in Bible meditation, prayers and to share the Gospel with others. By 1735, this group became a group of 14 with George Whitefield, and James Hervey. People called this gathering as “The Holy Club”. Later on this name was evolved as Methodist. John became an expert in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French before leaving this college.

Evangelization

John Wesley received the conviction that God has called him for the missionary work. He was interested in going to a new colony in Georgia, America, which had Indians as the inhabitants. In 1735 October, he reached at Georgia. He started the mission work in that Indian colony, but no improvement or growth was visible. His message about definition of sin- which were the common day to day practices of the folks- and the new insights about leading a holy life made it difficult for them to accept the Gospel. He was forced to go back to England by 1738 due to the opposition of the people. But, his works over there were not utter failure. George Whitefield, his co-worker said, “the strong foundation for Gospel laid down by John Wesley in America can never be shaken off by either man or the devil.”

On 24 May 1738, John Wesley attended a convention conducted by Moravian Community in Alders gate Street. Someone read few portions from the book “Preface to Romans”, written by Martin Luther. This made a transformation in John’s mind that was down with the mission works in America. This motivated him to develop a congregation based on the theology; “Justification by Faith.” In turn gave birth to the Methodist Congregation.

After this, John went to preach to the nook and corner of the place. His preaching was pointed to “Justification by faith” and this provoked traditional believers. As a result, the church doors were closed for John Wesley. So, he used fields, markets, parks, places nearby mines, and public places where he could meet people, to preach the Gospel.

On 1 January 1739, John Wesley along with his friends were praying and meditating the word of God. At 3 A. M., they were filled with the immense power of the Holy Spirit that was beyond control and some started to praise God loudly, and few fell down. It was the starting of a revival. From that day onwards, John Wesley experienced a change in his ministry level. Stages became place of exhibition of the power and Holy Spirit. It became usual sight where people cried out for forgiveness as they were convinced of their sins during John’s sermons. Through him, God send revival to England as well as to other countries. As a result, Methodist church was formed under his leadership in 1784.

He travelled far and wide for the sake of Gospel. The missionary who said that the world is his parish travelled to different places even without any rest. He crossed the Irish channel 42 times to complete his mission trips. He travelled around two lakhs fifty thousand miles in his ministry time of 52 years. On an average, he used to travel 20 miles daily on horseback to preach. He wrote many spiritual books. He handled 10 translations. He made around 40,000 sermons. At the age of 83, he complained, “I’m unable to write not more than 15 hours due to eye problems. Also, I am unable to do no more than two sermons daily. As I am tired, I am unable to get up before 5:30 AM”.

John Wesley’s personality and the vision about life were as strong as his vision for the Gospel. Six decisions he took in his life were so interesting.

1. Will not take interest in hearing and knowing malicious rumours or scandals about a fellow being;
2. Will not believe or keep it in mind anything that is told scandalous or humiliating about a person by another person;
3. Will inculcate those things truthfully to the concerned person if the heard things invite difficult situations to the concerned person;
4. Will never tell these kind of things to anybody else which may invite trouble to that person or write about this that will cause trouble to that person;

5. Will be confidential whatever heard;
6. Will never compromise in any of these without the permission of self conscience.

End of life

From 1798 onwards John Wesley became weak due to old age. But he preached and wrote and published articles even few days before of his death. He wrote around 200 articles. He raised his hands to heaven and said loudly, “the best of all is, God is with us” and died. It was on 2 March 1791. He moved from the shores of England to the heavenly shore.

Practical Lesson

The life of the people whom God used for the reformation is always an encouragement to us. God wants us also to be used just like them. Let's submit ourselves for the revival of India.

Questions

1. Write about the family background of John Wesley.
2. What is “Holy Club”?
3. Explain about the mission works done by John Wesley?



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