



COPTIC ORTHODOX
DIOCESE *of* LONDON

Year 3

Part I: Tout – Kiahk
(Mid-September – December)

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Heaven is my Crown

Abanoub the Martyr

Book reference: Synaxarion of 24 Abib

Lesson content: My good behaviour distinguishes me

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** Saint Abanoub's story and the strength of his faith.
- **Feel:** The love of eternal life and the have the desire to gain it.
- **Practice:** Asking for the intercession of Saint Abanoub and adherence to good deeds and refusal of bad ones.

Bible verse: "...*having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*" (Phil 1:23)



The Lesson

- The word Abanoub means “the father of gold”. Saint Abanoub was born in a village called Nahissa in the 4th century (about 1700 years ago). His parents, Makarah and Mariam, loved God so much.
- The child Abanoub often looked at the sky, and would ask his parents: “what is beyond these clouds and blue sky ... outer space, planets and stars, and then what? The Paradise of Joy in which live the souls of the righteous after death, and after that the Heavenly Kingdom in which God dwells, and where the righteous, saints and martyrs will dwell after Judgement Day. This is the place that all humankind desires; there they will dwell in endless joy with God and His angels and saints.
- When Saint Abanoub was 12 years old, his parents died. He was very upset because of their departure, but he knew that they were in the bosom of the Lord Jesus, and wished that he could join them. One day, the child Abanoub entered the doors of the church during one of the feasts and heard the priest encouraging the congregation to endure persecution, saying: the earthly struggles and persecution take us to a very high place in the heavenly kingdom and when we tolerate persecution we become illuminated in the sky as the sun where “the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Mat 13:43). The greatest place in heaven will be that belonging to the martyrs who shed their blood for the sake of Christ. That’s why Saint Paul the apostle says: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Phil 1:21)
- Abanoub went to pray to the Lord that He may grant him the crown of martyrdom. He went to a city called Samannoud and found several churches that had been destroyed by the Romans, and people there were scorning Christians. Abanoub prayed for the Lord to support him, so Archangel Michael appeared to him saying: “God will take care of you personally, and He will always be with you and strengthen you in the tortures, and heal you from all tortures. So Abanoub was very happy that he’ll be granted the crown of martyrdom.
- Abanoub went to the Roman governor in Samannoud who offered Abanoub many promises (toys, food, gold, money and a palace...). So Abanoub surprised him saying that whatever the ruler offered him, he would never deny Christ. So, the governor was very angry and ordered for him to be beaten on his stomach, but Archangel Michael came and healed him, so he was filled with joy and became encouraged. Abanoub went to prison and found there Christian prisoners, so he started to encourage and comfort them, and they became happy when they found the strong faith of that young boy, who gave them more power to withstand tortures. Afterwards, Saint Abanoub prayed with them and told them that they will be rewarded greatly in the Kingdom of Heaven and they will live in endless

joy in the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ, where there will be no fear, torture, worries, sadness, hunger, but joy and peace amidst the saints and angels.

- The following day, the Roman governor slayed 1000 Christian prisoners, and the angels descended from heaven carrying illuminated crowns to place on the heads of the Christian martyrs and carry them up to heaven in great glory.
- The Roman governor summoned Abanoub and tied his feet to the mast of a ship heading to a city called Atrib, where the governor said sarcastically, “let’s see whether Jesus will come and save him.”
- Abanoub cried “O my God” so the governor became paralysed and the cup dropped from his hand, and the guards became blind and the boat was illuminated by the light of Archangel Michael who came to save Abanoub. So, the Roman governor asked Abanoub to pray for him to be cured, but Abanoub told him that he will be healed when he reached Atrib, so all the guards who were on the boat believed in the Lord Jesus.
- The ruler of Atrib tortured Abanoub, but the Lord Jesus appeared to him, as did Archangel Michael and Gabriel, and the Lord cured him from all his pains. Throughout all this, Abanoub became stronger, and many people believed in the Lord Jesus.
- The ruler started to see that the number of Christians were increasing because of Abanoub, so he ordered for Abanoub to be sent to Alexandria bound in chains. Abanoub encountered a woman in Alexandria who was possessed with an evil spirit and he prayed for her and the evil spirit left her, and she believed in the Lord Jesus. One of the guards was annoyed by this, and so he killed her and so, she was granted the crown of martyrdom.
- Armanios, the governor of Alexandria, ordered Abanoub to be thrown into a pit filled with hungry snakes, but the Lord Jesus sent him Archangel Michael to save him. The boy Abanoub came out clutching a few serpents, and one of them wrapped itself around the neck of Aramanios. So, Abanoub prayed for him and the ruler was saved, causing so many people to believe because of this miracle.
- The governor ordered for Abanoub to be beheaded, so he received the crown of martyrdom and deserved to sit with the Lord Jesus with the saints and righteous.
- The church celebrates his day of martyrdom on 24th Abib, which falls on 31st July.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What did Saint Abanoub hear which made him think about martyrdom?
- Before how many governors did Saint Abanoub confess the Lord Jesus?
- How old was Saint Abanoub?

- Which angel appeared to Saint Abanoub more than once and healed him?
- What's the secret behind Saint Abanoub's strong attachment to Christ, his faith, and his fearlessness of the governors?



Exercise...

- To adhere to good deeds, like not hitting or cursing at school or with his friends regardless of the situation, because by doing good, it shows his willpower to behave like children of God and have strong belief in our Lord Jesus.

- Pray that God provides strong faith like that of Saint Abanoub.

- Ask for the intercession of Saint Abanoub in prayer



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

My Lord and beloved Jesus, I ask You to help me to adhere to my faith and to behaviour which pleases You even if the devil tries to make me misbehave. Help me God to overcome him so I can enjoy being with You and be joyful with You in eternal life. Amen.



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	Saint Abanoub's story and his strong faith	
Feel	To love eternal life and have a desire to be in Heaven	
Practice	Ask for the intercession of Saint Abanoub Adhere to good deeds and refuse the bad ones	



The second week of the month of Tout
(September)

The Day of the Feast of the Cross

Lesson purpose: To learn that the Cross is a subject of glory to the Christians. We must look at the Cross and meditate on the love of God for us.

Bible verse: *"But God forbid that I should have glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world."*
(Galatians 6:14)



Background information to servant

THE APPEARANCE OF THE CROSS IN THE SKY

This happened THREE times:

- The **FIRST** time it appeared in the sky, was to the Emperor Constantine The Great to assure him of victory in the prospective war. He and his officers saw it like a pillar of light in the sky surrounded by the following words: "With it (the Cross) you will conquer". Constantine was encouraged, became a Christian, went to war and was victorious.
- The **SECOND** time the Cross appeared to Julius Caesar on the doors of the city of Antioch. It appeared in the East like a pillar of light which startled all those who saw it.
- The Cross appeared again for the **THIRD** time to all the people of Jerusalem. This happened in the sacred days of the Pentecostal Feast, to be exact, on the 8th of May, A.D. 351 at 3:00 pm (about 9:00 am our time). A big Cross appeared in the sky on Golgotha stretching to Mount Olive. It was very clear and was seen not only by one or two, but by all the people of the city. It remained for many hours shining brighter than the rays of the sun. All the people of the city came out to see the apparition. They were astounded, and scared, but with great joy they witnessed that heavenly scene. Old and young, men and women of all ages, Christians and non-Christians, from all places praised Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THE DAY OF THE FEAST OF THE CROSS

- On the feast of the Cross, we recognize the discovery of the glorious Cross of Jesus Christ our Lord. When the Jews noticed the very large number of miracles done by Jesus, they got angry and asked everyone in the Jewish country to collect all the dirt and the rubbish and put it at the top of the Cross. The Jewish people continued to do so for over 200 years until a very large pile of dirt was formed. Saint Helena, the mother of King Constantine went to Jerusalem and asked about the location of the Cross. Nobody told her, until she met an old man who told her that the Cross is underneath the pile of dirt. She dug out the Holy Cross of Jesus Christ from beneath this dirt. She then built a

church on the Cross and the Christian people had the opportunity to visit the Cross and the church. St. Helena did this, because she loved the Cross since it appeared to her when she was with King Constantine before he went to war and was victorious.

The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions

1) What does the cross remind us of?

2) Why do we sign ourselves with the sign of the cross at all times?

- The feast of the Cross is 16 days after the Nayrouz Feast. Our church celebrates the feast of the Cross twice: first feast is on Tout 16 (Tout is the first month of the Coptic Year) and on Baramhat 10 (Baramhat is the seventh month of the Coptic Year).
- In the first feast, we celebrate the finding of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by Saint Helena the mother of Emperor Constantine the great. This happened in the year 326 AD. When the people could not recognize our Lord Jesus' Cross from the three crosses that they found, they put each of them on a dead person and only with Jesus' Cross did the dead person rise from the dead. (Please tell the details of finding the Cross of the Saviour using the attached material.)
- In the second feast, we celebrate the second finding of the cross in the year 628 A.D. by Emperor Heracles which happened as follows:

When St. Helena found the Cross in the year 326 A.D., she built a very nice church in Jerusalem and kept the Cross in it. When the Persian army was defeated by Emperor Heracles and while they were passing by Jerusalem, a Persian king saw a very luminous light coming out from a piece of wood surrounded by God's glory inside the church. The king stretched his hand to touch the Cross and a fire came out of it and burnt his fingers. The Christians in the army informed him that only Christians can touch the Cross. He found two Christians (who were not actually true Christians) and gave them a lot of money and asked them to carry the Cross to his homeland and they did. Then, King Heracles heard of what happened and sent a big army to the Persian country and defeated them and went around searching for the Cross because the king of Persia had buried the Cross in his

garden. Then with the help of God he was able to find the Cross. He took it to the city of Constantinople and built a church on it.

- Focus on the Cross as a sign of glory for Christians (because salvation happened through the Cross). Therefore, Christianity without the Cross is not Christianity at all. St. Paul, as we can see in the memory verse, would like to emphasize that the only glory of his life is the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the Cross our Lord Jesus paid the price for our salvation. The price was His precious Blood. Since then we became entitled to be the children of God.
- This means that we have to focus on the Lord Jesus and His love towards us and not on loving the world.
- On the Cross our Lord Jesus proved His love for us. When we carry the cross with us we remember the power of the Cross in our life and what our Saviour did for us. Let us have a cross (or more than one) hung on the walls at our homes.
- The sign of the cross is a sign of victory over Satan and death. This is the reason that we put the sign of the cross on us during the day several times. Explain.

Application



Exercise...

We gain great peace every time we look at the cross

- Every time I look at the Cross, I remember that Jesus died on my behalf so that I can live and have a share in eternal life. He died not only for me but for all who believe in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of God.
- Let us make the sign of the cross on ourselves several times during the day.



An Introduction to the Book of Genesis

Abraham

Bible reference: The Book of Genesis

Lesson content: Faith and obedience in the life of Abraham

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** General overview of the book of Genesis and Abraham's personality.
- **Feel:** Obedience is an expression of one's love for God.
- **Practice:** Obeying God's commandments in the Holy Bible.

Bible verse: *"Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Gal 3:6)*



The Lesson

The book of Genesis tells us about the beginning of everything created by the Lord God, who has no beginning. The book was written by Moses the Prophet by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Main events:

- 1- God created heaven and earth and everything therein. (ch 1-2)
- 2- The fall of Adam and Eve as a result of their disobedience. (ch 3)
- 3- The life of Adam and his children on earth. (ch 5)
- 4- Noah obeys God and builds an ark and is saved from the flood (ch 6-11)
- 5- Abraham descends from the lineage of Shem, the son of Noah. He obeys God and leaves his land and family. (ch 12-14)
- 6- Abraham waits on God's promise for Sarah to conceive, and the birth of Ishmael. (ch 15-18)
- 7- The birth of Isaac and the fulfilment of God's promise. (ch 19-21)
- 8- Abraham's obedience and his offering of Isaac as a sacrifice, and God providing an animal sacrifice instead. (ch 22)
- 9- Sarah's death and Isaac's marriage to Rebecca and then Abraham's death. (ch 23-25)
- 10- The birth of Jacob and Esau, and Esau sells of his birth right. Jacob steals the blessing and escapes from his brother and goes to his Uncle Laban. (ch 25-28)
- 11- Jacob's marriage to Lea and then Rachel, and his 12 children.
- 12- The selling of Joseph, his imprisonment in Egypt, becoming ruler over all of Egypt, arrival of his brothers and his father, and their dwelling in the Egypt.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Who wrote the book of Genesis?
- How did Noah survive the flood?
- Of which of Noah's sons is Abraham grandson?
- Who was the son that God had promised Abraham?
- What was the most difficult thing in which Abraham obeyed God?



Exercise...

- Obey God in a specific commandment, for example, not using bad words or inappropriate expressions.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

My Lord Jesus Christ, as Abraham the forefather loved you and obeyed you, please help me to listen to you and do by all your commandments and your word in the Bible. Amen.



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who wrote the book of Genesis? • How did Noah survive the flood? • Of which of Noah's sons is Abraham grandson? • Who was the son that God had promised Abraham? • Which was the most difficult thing in which Abraham obeyed God? 	
Feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act the joy of Abraham upon the birth of Isaac. • Draw how Abraham looked like when he left his land. 	
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not speaking in an inappropriate manner. • Arranging with friends under your supervision to read together one of the books from the Holy Bible. 	



Jealousy

Joseph and His brothers

Bible reference: Genesis 37

Lesson content: Jealousy

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The meaning of jealousy.
- **Feel:** That jealousy and hatred have many disadvantages.
- **Practice:** To be thankful, content and to love others.

Bible verse: “...love does not envy...” (1 Corinthians 13:4)
“If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.” (Mark 9:35)



The Lesson

Role Play in the Court:

The Play: We will do a role play with the children and we will distribute the roles as follows:

A servant plays the role of the judge and another lays the blame on Joseph's brothers (prosecution) and a group of kids play Joseph's brothers, another child plays Joseph and another Joseph's father. We start the play with the judge seated and another servant standing beside him. Joseph's brothers are standing on the left, and Joseph himself on the right.

The judge starts: Court case number 37: the book of Genesis - Joseph and his brothers. If the prosecution put forward the accusations, and present the case.

Prosecution: Your honour, our case today is repeated every day of our lives, which is the case of jealousy between a brother and his siblings, but today's case reached the point where the siblings planned to kill their brother, Joseph, capturing him despite his kindness towards them as he was bringing them food. They plotted together and threw him in a well, forgetting that Joseph was their brother who loved them, but their jealousy of him was more powerful than anything else.

The judge: Joseph's brothers, what do you make of these accusations made against you?

One of Joseph's brothers: We did this because Joseph the dreamer, whom our father loves so much, and the only one to whom he gave a multicoloured robe, and because he always told us about his strange dreams which annoyed us a lot.

The judge: Are these the reasons that made you want to kill him and then sell him?

Joseph's brothers: Joseph used to tell us about his dreams which made us so annoyed from him, even our father was annoyed by them. These dreams would make us feel that he is better than us, and if you don't believe me, then ask our father who will tell you all the details.

The judge: We agree to the request of the first of those accused from Joseph's brothers, and we summon the witness: Jacob, the father to hear his statement.

The judge, looking at Jacob, asks him: What do you think of what Joseph's brothers say about Joseph's dreams and how these dreams offended them and that you favoured Joseph more than them?

Father: Yes, Joseph is the one who had strange dreams, where he dreamt two dreams. The first dream in which it was harvest time, and we were all collecting sheaves and Joseph's sheaf stood in the middle and all the other sheaves bowed to Joseph's sheaf. However, I didn't think much of the dream, but after that he told us about another dream, in which the Sun and Moon and 11 other stars bowed before him, but this time I was offended about his words and reproached him, saying "Do you want me and your mother to bow down to you as well? However, his reply was full of love saying that he didn't mean it to be like that, but it was just a dream.

Prosecution: Joseph, you are accused of offending your brothers with your dreams, what do you have to say about that?

Joseph: I didn't mean it, but if I knew that telling them about my dreams offends them, I would have stopped doing it.

The Judge: After hearing the prosecution and witnesses, the court has decided that jealousy of others is a bad feeling, and can lead to many dangers, just like what has happened in this case. As being jealous of Joseph led to him being thrown into a well, and then after that sold as a slave and lying to their father.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What were the reasons which caused Joseph's brothers feel jealous of him?
- Did Joseph mean to offend his brothers?
- What were Joseph's dreams?
- What did Joseph's brothers do to him because of jealousy?



Exercise...

Train the children to thank God for His gifts to them, by writing on pieces of paper the blessing that God gave them throughout the week, and placing these papers in a box.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

My Lord Jesus Christ, Who created me and knew me by name. Who granted me many talents. I thank you Lord. Please help me to identify these talents and how I may use them to serve you.

O Lord, I am sure that You granted me many talents. Help me to appreciate the talents in others, without getting jealous of them. Amen. (Mother Theresa)



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mention Joseph's dreams • Describe the jealousy of Joseph's brothers • Explain how to avoid jealousy • Jealousy is defined as the reason behind being unaccepting and not being thankful • Recite the verse of the lesson 	
Feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's love to them, so He gave him many blessings • Appreciate the talents that God has given to them 	
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To love their friends 	



The first week of the month of Baba
(October)

God Sent an Angel to Defend King Hezekiah

Bible reference: 2 Kings 19:1-37

Lesson purpose: To learn that God uses many methods to help us. God appointed an angel to help king Hezekiah. We only have to present our needs as they are to God and He has His ways to help us.

Bible verse: *"The angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand" (2Kings 19:35)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions

- 1) If we are in a moment of need, would God ever forsake us?
- 2) To whom should our prayers be directed when we need help?
- 3) What does the word intercessor mean? Introduce the story of King Hezekiah and how in his moment of need, he used the intercession of Isaiah the Prophet to ask God for help.

- The events in detail that led to the need for the angel to come and help king Hezekiah.
- In the first feast, we celebrate the finding of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by Saint Helena the mother of Emperor Constantine the great. This happened in the year 326 AD. When the people could not recognize our Lord Jesus' Cross from the three crosses that they found, they put each of them on a dead person and only with Jesus' Cross did the dead person rise from the dead. (Please tell the details of finding the Cross of the Saviour using the attached material.)
- The king of the Assyrians did not worship God. He was an enemy to Hezekiah the king of Israel. King Hezekiah was a good man and he loved and worshipped God.
- The king of the Assyrians sent a letter to Hezekiah saying that he was going to attack Jerusalem and the "God" of Hezekiah cannot defend him.
- This means that we have to focus on the Lord Jesus and His love towards us and not on loving the world.
- Hezekiah was afraid and sad, but he went to the house of God and prayed. Then Hezekiah sent a message to prophet Isaiah saying "Lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left" (2 Kings 19:4). This teaches us that we can ask other believers to pray on our behalf whenever we have a problem. Most important, we can ask for the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the prayers of other Saints (like Saint Mark, Saint George, and Saint Mina) on our behalf.
- God sent to Hezekiah a message through Isaiah "the man of God" and told him that God is going to defend him and that he should not worry about it.

- Hezekiah believed the message of Isaiah and waited for God to work.
- Let us review Hezekiah's prayer and learn from it (2 Kings 19:15-19). He started his prayers by praising God saying "God of Israel, the one who dwells between the cherubim You have made heaven and earth". So, let us learn to start our prayers always by praising the name of the Lord. Then Hezekiah presented the situation to God with regard to the king of the Assyrians and his request to the Lord. "Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God. You alone." (2 Kings 19:19), So let us learn from Hezekiah to leave the method of our plea to God. God will choose the method as deemed fit. Our methods are usually limited and may only fit some respects. God's solutions are total,
- God sent his angel to the camp of the Assyrians at night and killed 185,000 men; God allowed this to happen because these people were non-believers who insulted Him and His people and were going to kill them; Moreover, "that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you are the Lord God. You alone." (2 Kings 19:19) In the morning Hezekiah and his people knew that God defended them.
- Later, the king of the Assyrians, while he was worshipping the idols, was killed by his two sons. He was an old man.
- When we are sad or when we need anything, we must go to our heavenly Father and pray. He will quickly help us. He might use an angel to do what we need.
- Remember St. Peter in the prison (Acts 12:6-14): the Lord sent an angel who opened the doors of the prison and saved his life, Please tell what happened in a story fashion.
- Every one of us has his own guardian angel with him all the time to protect and guard him or her.

Application



Exercise...

(1) There is a great power attached to our prayers. God uses many methods to solve our problems. He may choose to send an angel to serve us and respond to our needs.

(2) Lord, teach us how to pray. Teach us to praise your Holy Name and in complete faith present all our needs to You and leave it in Your Hands to satisfy it according to Your Divine wisdom.



Angels in Heaven

An Angel on a mission

Tobias

Bible reference: The Book of Tobit

Lesson content: He always saves me

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** God sends His angels to serve and save His loved ones all the time.
- **Feel:** Feel safe, not afraid, because angels are beside you.
- **Practice:** Ask the intercession of the angels when afraid.

Bible verse: *"Blessed be God...who sent His Angel[a] and delivered His servants who trusted in Him..." (Daniel 3:28)*

"...If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." (Mark 9:35)



Background information to servant

- The book of Tobit [or Tobias] (which falls directly before the book of Nehemiah), is a beautiful, and poignant sermon. It is deservedly considered to be a spiritual and literary masterpiece, demonstrating the piety of God's people during captivity, exiled away from Jerusalem the mother, home of the prophecies and the prophets, the center-point of all the nations' gaze. The book represents a special quality during the period of development for the Jews following the captivity.
- The events in the book occur in a very similar environment to that of the first Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The book describes two Jewish families living in exile, the first being Tobias's family who lived in Nineveh, and the second is Raguel's family who lived in Ecbatana (currently Iraq and Iran).

Authorship of the book

- It appears, as mentioned in Tobias 12:6,7,20, the book was written by both Tobit the elder, and Tobias the son. Prior to departing from them, the angel advised them to "...Bless God, praise Him, and magnify Him, and praise Him for the things which He hath done unto you in the sight of all that live. It is good to praise God, and exalt His name, and honourably to shew forth the works of God; therefore be not slack to praise Him. It is good to keep close the secret of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of God. Do that which is good, and no evil shall touch you." (Tobit 12:6-7). "Now therefore give God thanks: for I go up to Him that sent me; but write all things which are done in a book." (Tobit 12:20).
- It is possible that Tobias the son, may have taken on this holy mission [of writing the book] upon his shoulders, especially that his part contributing to the events in the book is bigger than the part of his father the elder, it is therefore difficult to determine which of them the book had been named after, it is likely that it was attributed to both of them.

Date and Location

- The book was written in the 7th century BC, precisely a few years after the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC. The events of the book occurred during the presence of Nineveh, Tobias

lived through the destruction, he recorded the angel's advise a little while after the destruction of Nineveh, before his death.

Summary

- Both families [Tobit and Raguel's daughter Sara], underwent trials. The pious Tobit lost his wealth followed by his sight. When he felt his death approaching, he called his son who is also named Tobias, and handed him a list of good advice. Tobit informed Tobias that he had left him a large sum of money in a place called Rages, and gave him the written deed to enable him to obtain the money. As for the second family, their daughter Sara underwent a difficult trial, she had been married seven times and all seven husbands had been killed by a devil called Asmodeus on the first wedding night [before any of the marriages were consummated].
- The angel Raphael appeared in the story, wherein he takes on a leading role. Tobias was met by the angel Raphael, disguised as a man named Azarias, who offered to guide Tobias the son in his journey to the town of Rages in the land of Media. [Along the way, while Tobias was washing in the river, a fish tried to devour him. Raphael instructed Tobias to capture the fish, remove its heart, liver and gall bladder, and keep those safe for later. When they arrived at Ecbatana they lodged at Raguel's house, a relative of Tobias. Raphael told Tobias of the beautiful Sara, whom Tobias has the right to marry because he is her cousin and closest relative. The angel explained that Sara had been reserved for Tobias since the beginning. The angel instructed Tobias to burn the fish's liver and heart to drive away the demon when he attacks on the wedding night. Tobias stayed for some days at the wedding feast and sent Raphael to recover his father's money.] After the feast, Tobias, Sara and the angel returned to Nineveh to Tobit the elder. There, Raphael told Tobias to anoint his father's eyes with the fish's gall in order to cure his father's blindness. Raphael then revealed his identity and prior to departing, he advised both Tobit and Tobias to record these events in a book, and to tell of God's wonderful work. After these events, they all lived happily, thankful to God, awaiting salvation and the return of Israel from exile.

Views

- It has been the point of view of some, that the actions of Raphael the angel are symbolic of the work of Christ who has been an intermediary between people and God, and also

because Christ put a limitation to the devil who kills our souls. God has also enlightened us, just as Raphael the angel has done to Tobit the father. This part of the book which was in the apostolic era, was very similar to the works of our Lord Jesus Christ, Glory be to Him, and one of the corners of basic ministry, due to the strength of the symbolism of Tobias and the angel to the work of Christ for salvation.

- The book of Tobit demonstrates that God has witnesses in all places and eras, no matter the surrounding conditions or the prevalent evil, just as the presence of God's witnesses were mentioned during the period of captivity, such as Daniel and the three Youths, likewise, the presence of Tobias, Sarah and others during the captivity of the North [kingdom].
- The book of Tobit also reveals how to overcome Satan's tricks, by long standing patience and the purity of prayers of a person who has faith in their God. God's righteous angels are the "...ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14), they are the children of God who are diligent in their prayers, their petitions, and lead pure lives, God would hence send His angels to help us in all the work that we put our hand to, just as He did with Tobias.

The Lesson

- A long time ago there was a small family made up of a father, a mother, and a good son called To-bias. The father's name was Tobit and the mother's name was Anna. Tobit the father loved God very much, he used to offer many services to God's people and did good things that were pleasing to God.
- One day, Tobit was returning back home as usual, he was tired so he sat down to rest, [he fell asleep] and was blinded by bird droppings which fell into his eyes. Since Tobit was a faithful man whose heart was full of God's love, he was not saddened by this event, he was certain that good things would follow after this trial ends.[This is not accurate, in fact the blindness caused by this inju-ry strained his marriage, Tobit grieved and ultimately, he prayed for death (Tobit 3:1-6)]

- Time passed, Tobit aged, and his son Tobias grew up. One day, Tobit asked his son to find some-one to go with him on a journey to a man called Gabael who owed Tobit a large sum of money [the book does not recall that it was 'a large' sum]. Tobit gave Tobias a deed (handwritten receipt) of the amount of money that Gabael owed, so that Gabael would see the receipt and agree to give Tobias the money. Tobias went to find someone who would go with him on the journey.
- Tobias found a beautiful young man, whose face was comforting, his name was Azarias. [the de-scription of the appearance of Azarias/Raphael the angel was not mentioned in the Book (see Tobit 5:4-16)] Tobias asked Azarias if he know the town of Rages, where Gabael comes from, as Tobit had mentioned. Azarias told him that he knows the town well, and he would be able to accompany him on the journey. Tobias thanked God because he felt that it was He who sent this man to ac-company him [this addition does not exist in the Book/Bible]. Tobias took Azarias home to meet his father Tobit. Upon speaking with Azarias, Tobit was satisfied that Azarias is a faithful man, and he felt that Tobias would be safe in his company, he prayed for Tobias before he departed with Azarias [and Tobias's dog].
- As they went on their journey, they reached the river Tigris in the evening and decided to stop to rest, all was calm and suddenly at an unexpected moment, a fish leapt up to devour Tobias. Tobias screamed, the angel quickly grabbed the fish and threw it to the ground [the angel did not grab the fish]. [As Tobias went to wash in the river, a fish leapt out of the river and tried to devour him. Tobi-as screamed, the angel instructed him to grab hold of the fish and throw it to the ground, he also instructed Tobias to open the fish, remove its heart, liver and gall, and keep those safe for later, To-bias obeyed the instructions.
- Tobias and Azarias continued on their journey to the town of Rages where Gabael lived. They reached a nearby town and decided to stopover for the night, Azarias told Tobias that they should stay over at the house of a man called Raguel who is one of Tobit's relatives, Azarias also told To-bias to marry Raguel's daughter. They entered the town and met Raguel, when he found out that Tobias is one of his family relatives, he was over-joyed, they talked a lot, but before they ate, Tobi-as asked Raguel if he could marry his daughter Sara. God blessed Tobias's marriage and looked after him. Azarias took the receipt and went to get the money from Gabael. After this, Tobias, Sara and Azaria returned home to their father Tobit. As they got closer to their home, Tobias's mother saw them from a distance, she told Tobit, who ran to them. Tobias took the gall of the fish and rubbed it on his father's eyes, he regained his sight again, was very joyful at his son's return, and

thanked Azarias a lot. Azarias told them all to thank God first who gives us everything. He told them that whilst Tobit was praying, I Raphael, one of the angels who stands before the glory of the Holy One, lifted your prayers up to Him. God sent me to heal you and Sara, and accompany Tobias in his journey to marriage.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What happened to Tobit the father when he got back from work?
- Who will go with Tobias in his journey?
- What are the names of Tobias's wife and her father?
- Who went to retrieve the money, and who went with him?
- What would you enjoy most in a journey with the angels?



Exercise...

- God's angels help us in our lives, when we face difficulties
- For the children to ask for help and intercession of an angel before setting out on a task such as studying.
- For the children to ask for the intercession of an angel before they leave home every day.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

Lord Jesus Christ

Who sends His angels to help us along the path we walk in our daily lives

Surround us with Your angels, so that they may protect us from the warfare of the devil

We are certain that You look after us God, because You love us

Thank You Lord Jesus for everything in our lives, because all the things You do Lord are a result of Your love for us

We also love You Lord Jesus, keep us close to You Lord by the intercession of our Mother St Mary, the seven Archangels, and the Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the hosts of angels.

Amen.



The third week of the month of Baba
(October)

The Tower of Babel

Bible reference: Genesis 11:1-9

Lesson purpose: To learn to be humble and not demand too much (or think we are better than others) so that at the Holy Spirit inside us would guide us and lead us to spiritual growth.

Bible verse: *"Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- The sons of Noah multiplied for many generations. They built many cities and formed many nations. All the people everywhere had only one language and they could all understand each other. Some of these people migrated from the east. They came to a plain in the land of Shinar which seemed a good place to settle. So they went to work firing bricks. When they had enough, they said, "Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:4)
- But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower. And when He saw how high it was, He said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." He did just that and immediately they stopped building the tower, and the city was named Babel. The Lord then scattered the groups and nations all over the earth. They all had separate languages so that they could not understand each other anymore.
- One of the main characteristics that all the saints have in common is "humility". The Holy Spirit can only work and become effective in a person's life when he is humble. No one can become a saint without the guidance, help and declaration of the Holy Spirit. This is the reason our Lord Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight." (Luke 10:21). St. Mary's song when she met Elizabeth was "He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly." (Luke 1:51-52)
- In Pentecost, the Holy Spirit granted the Disciples "who continued with one accord in prayer and supplication (Acts 1:14) the ability to speak several languages so that they can communicate with other people and "spread" the word of God to all nations. So, what had happened to the modest Disciples in the Pentecost was the reverse to what had happened to the proud people at Babel when they were confused by the Lord so that they may not understand one another's speech.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) Let us be humble and not demand fancy things like the people who wanted to build a "high tower". Let us not ask for fancy clothes or cars or toys. Lord, help us to be satisfied with the bare necessity.
- 2) When we get higher marks than our friends or we win a game, we must give glory to God who helped us. Reject the idea that we are better than other people.
- 3) Big achievement can happen every time we behave in a humble way.



The fourth week of the month of Baba
(November)

Let Us Trust God – I

Elisha's Servant Learned to Trust God

Bible reference: 2 Kings 6:8-23

Lesson purpose: This is the first lesson in a two-lesson series on our need to fully trust God. In this lesson we learn that the Lord can open our eyes to realize that we have a lot of heavenly power to support us more than all the powers against us.

Bible verse: *"Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) In what situations, are we more likely to lose trust in God?

2) Does God have limits or is He unlimited?

- Tell in a story-like method about the fear that Elisha's servant had. He lacked the feeling of trusting God.
- Elisha the prophet helped the king of Israel. He was called the man of God. God tells Elisha something and Elisha tells it to the king of Israel. The king of Syria was surprised about the strength of Israel but one of his servants said to him, "Elisha the prophet, who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom" (2 Kings 6:12). Therefore the king of Syria wanted to capture Elisha and he "sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city" (2 Kings 6:14). When Elisha's servant saw this army he was very afraid and said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" (2 Kings 6:15)
- **Elisha asked the Lord to open his servant's eyes that he may see.**
 - This means sometimes we cannot understand the word of God by ourselves. But God can open our eyes (meaning our minds to understand and believe the word of God).
 - We have to pray to God to give us good eyes to be able to see that God is with us.
- When Elisha's servant saw the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, he trusted that "those who are with us are more than those who are against us." All his fears then disappeared.
- The people who wanted to capture Elisha, the prophet, were blinded and captured by Elisha who led them to Samaria. Then Elisha prayed to the Lord to open their eyes and He did. They found themselves in Samaria. When the king of Israel wanted to kill them, Elisha said "no". Instead they were given food and water and allowed to go back to their master.

This shows us that Elisha did not want to take the opportunity to kill the enemies. He only trusted God and wanted to prove to the Syrians that they cannot take him captive because he was the man of God.

- All the saints of the church trusted God and knew that “those who are with us are more than those who are against us.” Hence, they stood in front of kings and judges and did not fear anything.
- Another example for the opening of the eyes of the people to understand and trust God: the two disciples of Emmaus who did not understand what happened to the Lord Jesus after He was crucified. The Lord Jesus opened their eyes and they knew that the person who was speaking to them was the Lord Himself. Please read this example in Luke 24:13-31.
- If we do not understand anything in the Bible, what do we do? Pray to God to enlighten us. If we still do not understand, then we should ask Abouna or our parents or our Sunday School teacher to give explanation to us.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) We must trust that God loves us and He is also the Almighty. This means He can do everything for our benefit.
- 2) Let us not fear anything: tests, competition, darkness ... etc. We should develop a firm belief that those who are with us (i.e. God who sends His angels to serve us) are more than those who are against us (i.e. the devil).



The fifth week of the month of Baba
(November)

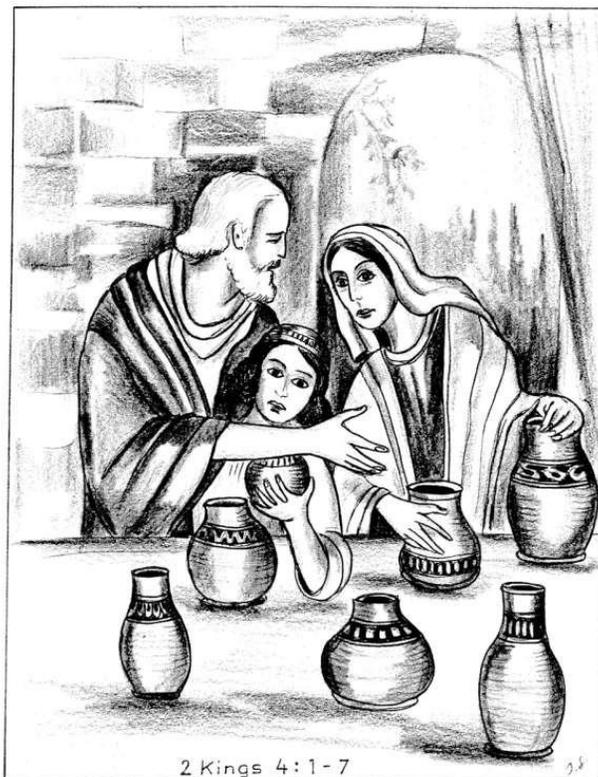
Let Us Trust God – II

God Helps a Poor Woman Through Elisha

Bible reference: 2 Kings 4:1-7

Lesson purpose: This is the second lesson in a series of lessons on our need to fully trust our God. He helps us through His believers, so we must listen to God's people.

Bible verse: *"Commit your way to the Lord" (Psalm 37:5)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) Whenever we are faced with a challenging problem, who should we commit our problems to?

2) Are we limited or unlimited?

3) Is God Limited or Unlimited?

- A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets went to Elisha because she had a problem. She knew that Elisha is a man of God. God accepts the prayers of His true believers. This means that the mother trusted Elisha and, more importantly, she trusted God because He is truly the one who can solve all problems.
- The mother cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves." (2 Kings 4:1)
- The mother asked the boys to bring empty containers. She trusted and obeyed what Elisha asked her to do. She asked them to collect as many containers as they can. They did.
- God helped the mother and the boys as follows:
From a very small amount of oil that she had, she was able to fill all containers, until all the containers were completely filled. She asked then the boys to bring more containers. When they said that they did not have any more, the oil stopped.
- What did she do with the oil? She sold it and paid the loan. She took the rest of the money to spend on her other needs.
- Discuss the memory verse:
- Commit our way to the Lord means let Him handle all our life. If we have a test at school, we must not fear. If we have someone sick in the family, we must not get sad and lose

hope. All what we have to do is to pray and do our best, and then we leave the rest to God.
Always leave

Application



Exercise...

- 1) We must trust that God can do everything and that He, at the same time, loves us. So we must ask Him for all our needs.
- 2) Help from God can come to us through His believers. We must trust and obey God's people. When Abouna tells us to do something we must obey him because we trust Abouna.
- 3) As long as we pray, God is going to act and do everything to our best. God has His ways, which are beyond our understanding.



Introduction to the Book of Exodus

Moses Talks to God

Bible reference: The Book of Exodus

Lesson content: To have a general overview of the book of Exodus

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** General overview of the book of Exodus and the character of Moses the Prophet
- **Feel:** The secret behind the power of Moses in his life (talking with God)
- **Practice:** Prayer as a conversation with God

Bible verse: *The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold[a] your peace.” (Exodus 14:14)*

The Lesson

We know from the book of Exodus that long ago the people of Israel, who were the children of Jacob and his descendants, were living happily in Egypt. However, when their population increased and became a great people, the Egyptians feared them and in turn they started to make them work very strenuously, which made the Israelites call upon God to save them from the hands of the Egyptians. God arranged to free His people from this bitter slavery and prepared a leader to free them from the hands of the Egyptians. Do you know who he is?

- When Moses was born, his mother hid him, in fear that he would be killed by the Egyptians because of Pharaoh's command to kill all the baby boys. But Moses' became more and more afraid for her son, so she hid him in a basket and placed the basket it on the River Nile, where it was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter while bathing in the river. So, she took the baby boy from the basket and adopted him, and Moses' sister, Miriam came and told the Pharaoh's daughter about a woman (who was Moses' mother) that could nurse the baby, but without letting her know that she was his actual mother.
- Moses grew and fled Pharaoh's palace because he killed an Egyptian which annoyed his fellow Israelites.
- God appeared in a burning bush and said: "I shall be with you" (Ex 12:3). (It may be helpful to show the children a picture of the burning bush.)
- God told Moses that he is responsible for the Israelites and sent him to speak to Pharaoh to release His people.
- Moses initially refused God's calling, but later he returned and accepted God's invitation after God told Moses to take his brother Aaron to go and see Pharaoh.

Moses went to Pharaoh and told him that God wanted him to let His people to go out of Egypt, but Pharaoh didn't approve and so God struck Egypt with heavy plagues.

The ten plagues are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Changing the water to blood | 6. Boils |
| 2. Frogs | 7. Hail |
| 3. Lice | 8. Locusts |
| 4. Flies | 9. Darkness |
| 5. Livestock diseased | 10. Killing of the firstborn |

- The last plague was the hardest one of them all, when Pharaoh's heart was hardened and didn't want to let the people go. In spite of all of these plagues, it was before the death of the firstborn that God told every family of his people to sacrifice a 1-year old lamb without blemish and sprinkle its blood on the doorposts and lintel of their houses, and were to eat of it grilled with unleavened bread with bitter herbs, in order for their firstborn to be saved from death. So, the angel of death killed the firstborn of the Egyptians only, i.e. the houses that do not have the blood of the lamb sprinkled on it.
- After the death of the firstborn of the Egyptians, Pharaoh expelled Moses and the Israelites from the land of Egypt, but later, he went out to follow them and kill them. It was a very difficult situation for the Israelites; the sea was in front of them and the enemy was behind them. So, Moses prayed to God who ordered him to stretch out his rod, and strike the water of the Red Sea, so it divided into two, and they all crossed over. And when they reached the over side, Moses struck the sea again with his rod and the waters of the sea returned back and drowned Pharaoh and his chariots.
- The journey through Sinai started after crossing the Red Sea, the journey to the Promised Land which God promised his people to dwell in.
- During the journey, there was a pillar of cloud by day shadowing them, and a pillar of fire by night to light their way. And He fed them manna and quail (explain what is manna and quail).
- When the Israelites were thirsty, God told Moses to hit the rock to release water, and so the Israelites drank, and that place was called in a place called Horeb. God stood by the people in every battle, and they defeated the Amalekites; He fought for them and they needed only to be still (Exodus 14:14), just as He stood by them in Egypt.
- Afterwards, God told Moses to ascend upon Mount Horeb to give him the Ten Commandments, so Moses went up the mountain and fasted forty days and God gave him the Ten Commandments written on two tablets of stone. God also ordered him to make a tent called the "tent of meeting", because this is the place that God chose to dwell with His people, just like as He does in the church today.
- After forty years in the wilderness, the Israelites reached the Promised Land, but under the leadership of Joshua the son of Nun; Moses died and God chose Joshua (Moses' disciple) to lead His people instead. This is a brief overview of the book of Exodus, which is the second book of the Holy Bible and the Old Testament.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What's the order of the book of Exodus in the Holy Bible?
- How many chapters does it contain?
- What are the most important parts of the book, and what were the main events of each part?
- Who is the main character in the book?



Exercise...

- Pray and ask for God's help during distress and have faith in His promise that he will never leave us.

I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave, thou hast kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. (Ps 30:1-4)



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

My Lord Jesus, thank you for your many blessings, because you shield me and save me from evil. Please protect your people everywhere, and keep us firm in You, for You are blessed forever. Amen.



The second week of the month of Hatour
(November)

Moses Leads His People out of Egypt by the Power of God – I

Bible reference: Exodus Chapter 2 to Chapter 12

Lesson purpose: To learn that with a strong hand the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt. The Lord supports us in all our difficulties. No matter how strong the devil is, God is much stronger and he will make us victorious over the devil.

Bible verse: *"And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed." (Exodus 3:2)*



Background information to servant

(A) MOSES' FLIGHT TO MIDIAN

- The story finally reached Pharaoh about Moses' killing an Egyptian and Pharaoh decided to punish him by death. By this time, Moses had fled out of the country. He went to Midian. One day he was sitting all alone by a well when he saw seven girls, the daughters of a Midianite priest, who came to draw water. They were just watering their flocks when along came some rude shepherds who pushed them out of the way. Moses took the side of the girls and helped them water their flocks. When the girls arrived home, their father asked, "Why are you home so early today?"
- The girls answered that an Egyptian had defended them from some shepherds and had also helped them draw water for themselves and for their sheep.
- "Where is this Egyptian?" asked their father. "And why didn't you invite him to come and eat with us?"
- So Moses was welcomed into the priest's household. He eventually married one of the girls whose name was Zipporah. When she had a son, Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a strange land."
- In the meantime, the Pharaoh whom Moses feared died and another took his place. But still the oppression of the Hebrews continued as before, and they cried out to the Lord for help. God heard their moaning and saw their condition of slavery. Then He remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- He recalled to mind the promises that He had made - that these people would be His people and that someday they would be as numerous as the sand of the sea.
- Therefore, He resolved to free them from the yoke of slavery under which they were suffering in the land of Egypt. And He resolved that He would send His angel to call His servant Moses and appoint him to be the Saviour of His people.

(B) THE CALL OF MOSES

- One day Moses was pasturing the flocks of his father-in-law when he came to Mount Horeb. There he suddenly saw a bush which seemed to be on fire. Yet it was not consumed. He was just going to investigate when he heard a voice coming out from the midst of the bush calling him by name. When he answered, the voice said, "Come no nearer. Take off your sandals for you are standing on holy ground." The voice then

continued, I am the God of your father and of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. I have heard the cry of My people in Egypt, and I have seen their great affliction. Therefore, I plan to free them from their slavery and bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey, the land of Canaan. I hereby send you to Pharaoh, to bring My people out of Egypt."

- Moses said, "But I am unable to do this". The Lord answered, "I shall be with you and you will bring the people to this very mountain to worship God."
- Moses again protested that he was not eloquent, and did not believe he could persuade Pharaoh.
- Then the Lord grew angry with Moses and said, "What about your brother Aaron? He can speak well. I will tell you what to say and you will tell him."
- Then Moses saw his brother Aaron coming towards him, and he explained to him all that the Lord had said. Together they went down to Egypt to free the people. When they first told Pharaoh that the Hebrews were complaining because they did not have enough work to do, he therefore made their work harder.
- Moses and Aaron went back to Pharaoh. To prove that their mission was from God and to be respected, Aaron threw down his staff and it immediately turned into a snake. Pharaoh summoned his court magicians who did the same thing; all of their staffs became snakes when they threw them down, but Aaron's staff ate up all of their staffs.

(C) THE TEN PLAGUES

- The Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart has hardened, he refuses to let the people go. So tomorrow, when he goes to the river, you and Aaron are to stand on the bank and warn him that I the Lord gave you power to **change the water to blood** if he continues to be so stubborn."
- You shall say to him, "The Lord God of the Hebrews has sent me to tell you that you must let the people go into the wilderness to worship." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to stretch out your rod over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, rivers and ponds and all their pools of water, so that all may become blood."

- Moses and Aaron did what the Lord commanded. In front of Pharaoh they changed the waters of the river to blood by smiting it with the rod. And all the fish that was in the river died, and the water began to smell so bad that the Egyptians could not drink it. But the Egyptian magicians could do the same thing, so Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron just as the Lord had predicted. So Moses and Aaron threatened to bring about another disaster. Should Pharaoh refuse to let the people go out and worship, **a plague of frogs** would overrun the country. And the frogs did come in swarms, into the bedrooms and into the beds, into the ovens and kneading bowls and over all the people.
- Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and promised to let the people go if they would only get rid of the frogs. They did so, but Pharaoh changed his mind.
- Then God told Moses to have Aaron strike the dust with his rod, so that it would turn into **mosquitoes**. He did so and the mosquitoes attacked men and animals throughout Egypt. Pharaoh's magicians told him that this was God's doing but as usual, he refused to listen.
- The next plague was **gadflies**. They swarmed over all the Egyptians, but there were no flies in Goshen where the Hebrews lived. This was to prove that God distinguished between His people and the Egyptians. Pharaoh relented only insofar as letting the Hebrews worship within Egypt. But Moses said they must go for three days' journey into the wilderness. Pharaoh yielded, but as soon as the flies were gone, he refused again.
- Next, God **killed all the livestock** of the Egyptians, all the cattle and horses, the asses and camels, the oxen and sheep; but not one animal of the Hebrews was stricken. Pharaoh refused again.
- God then told Moses to take ashes from the kiln, throw them up in the air, for when they would come down on the Egyptians, all the people would break out with **terrible boils and sores on their skin**. Still Pharaoh said "no",
- Then Moses promised a **hail storm** such as had never been seen in Egypt before. All the crops would be ruined. And so it happened. Thunder and lightning and hail went on striking down every plant and shattering every tree. Only in the land of Goshen was there no hail. Pharaoh promised Moses to let the people go, if he would only pray that God make the hail storm cease. But when there was no more hail, Pharaoh forgot his promise.

- The Lord then sent a plague of **locusts** to eat every green leaf and plant that remained after the hail. By this time, the whole country of Egypt was nearly mined. Pharaoh's servants urged him to let the Hebrews go. But still he refused.
- Then God sent **thick darkness**, so dark that the people could not see each other, nor could they even get up for three days. Pharaoh allowed the people to go, but insisted that they leave their herds behind. Moses, however, said that they must have animals to sacrifice, Then Pharaoh ordered Moses to go out of his presence and told him never to look upon his face again.
- Then the Lord came around midnight and went into the midst of Egypt and all the **firstborn in the land of Egypt died except for the children of Israel**. There was a great cry throughout Egypt. Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and asked them to take the children of Israel and depart from Egypt. So, the Hebrews led by Moses left Egypt. God kept His promise to Moses and delivered His people out of Egypt with a very strong hand.

The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Did you ever face a situation where you felt unable to handle it by yourself?
- 2) What should we do then in order for us to be victorious over this difficult problem?

Here is a story to illustrate how asking for God's help always leads to victory.

- Joseph brought his father Jacob and the Hebrews to Egypt. Joseph was lord of all Egypt. After Jacob died and as the years passed, the Hebrews multiplied greatly and grew strong. A new Pharaoh came who did not know anything about Joseph. He feared the large number of the Hebrews, so he made them slaves, "So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor" (Exodus 1:13).
- Use the above introduction to proceed with the birth of Moses, his preference not to stay in Pharaoh's house and his departure to Midian. (Exodus 2:1-15)

- He looked upon the burning bush, yet unconsumed. It was a symbol of St. Mary who was pregnant with the Lord Jesus, the Son of God (the fire of the Divine) and was not burnt.
- Moses was afraid at the beginning, but the Lord showed him that He would support him with miracles and he would assign his brother Aaron to help him. 'And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt ... So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, ... Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh,.." So God said, "I will certainly be with you ..." (Exodus 3:7-11).
- To prove that their mission was from God, He supported them with miracles. Aaron threw down his staff and it immediately turned into a snake. Pharaoh summoned his court magicians who did the same thing, all of their staffs became snakes when they threw them down. But Aaron's staff ate up all of their staffs. "And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and did not heed them, as the Lord had said," (Exodus 7:13)
- Describe briefly the ten plagues as per the attached material.
- Pharaoh's heart was hard. He did not want the Lord's people to go. The Lord wanted to prove to His people that He will get them out of Egypt by a strong hand so that their faith would grow in spite of the hardening heart of Pharaoh.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) God is more powerful than all our enemies. If God is with us, we will be victorious.
- 2) If we need something, we must mention it in our prayers, and then leave it in God's hands. We have to be patient. The Lord will answer our prayers and give us all our needs and more at the right time and in the most suitable way. We can see this very clearly in the way through which God delivered His people out of Egypt.



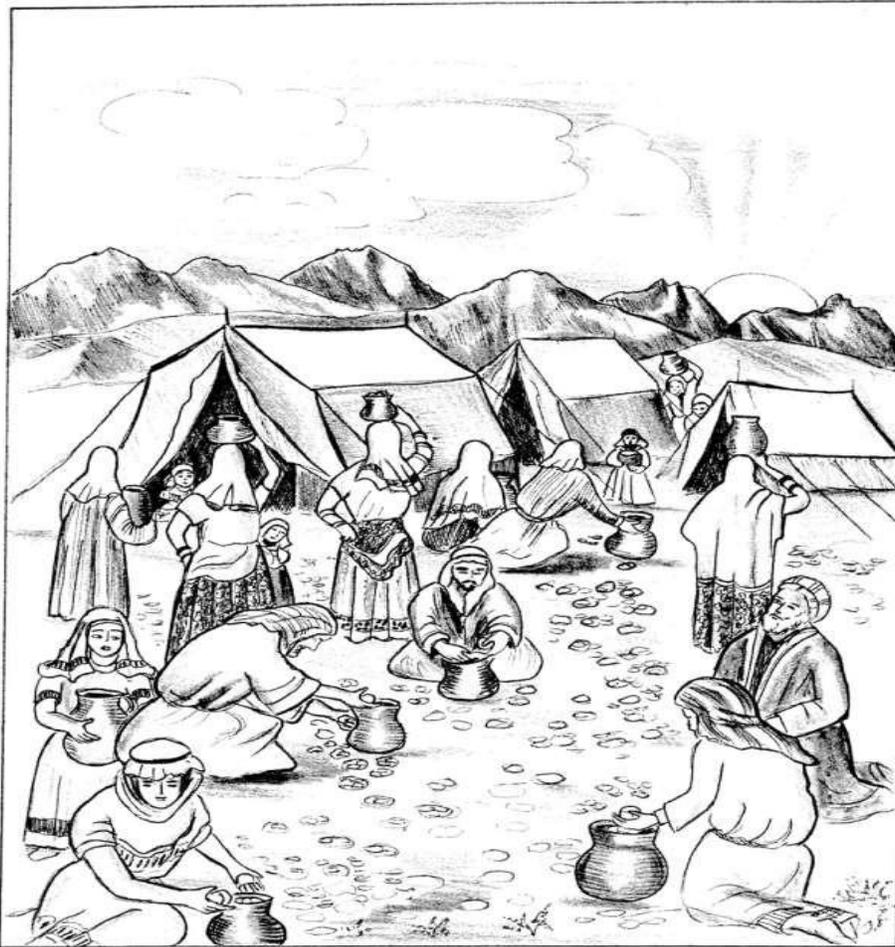
The third week of the month of Hatour
(December)

Moses Leads His People out of Egypt by the Power of God – II and the Quail and the Manna

Book reference: Exodus Chapter 16

Lesson purpose: To learn that the Lord gives us all our needs.

Bible verse: *"I will sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously" (Exodus 15:1)*



Background information to servant

(A) THE TENTH PLAGUE: THE DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN

- Then God told Moses that He would kill every first-born in Egypt that night at midnight.
- Moses summoned the elders of Israel and told them to have all the Hebrew families kill a lamb, and then sprinkle its blood over the lintel and the doorposts of their doors. So when the Angel passed through that night to let the destroyer smite the Egyptians, He would see the blood on the doors of the Hebrews and "pass over" them. Moses told them also that when they eventually came to the land that the Lord would give them, they were to keep this ritual.
- That night at midnight, the Lord struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first born of the prisoner in the dungeon. He even struck the first-born of the cattle. Pharaoh got up that night, along with all his household and all the Egyptians, and a loud wail rose up throughout the country, for there was not a single house without its dead So Moses was welcomed into the priest's household. He eventually married one of the girls whose name was Zipporah. When she had a son, Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a strange land."

(B) THE DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT AND THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA

- When Pharaoh heard that the Hebrews had departed and had taken their flocks and herds with them, along with jewels of gold and silver that they had borrowed from the Egyptians, he had a change of heart and wished he had not given them permission to go. Accordingly, he decided to pursue them and bring them back, so he made ready his chariot and six hundred other chariots, all with their captains, and he overtook them as they were encamping by the sea.
- When the Hebrews looked up and saw all the chariots and horsemen of Egypt bearing down on them, they were terrified. And they were angry with Moses.

- "Is it because there were not enough graves in Egypt that you have brought us out to die in the wilderness?" They asked scornfully. "It would be better to live as slaves in Egypt than die out here."
- But Moses said, "Fear not. Just behold the salvation that the Lord will work for you today. These Egyptians you will never see again. For the Lord will fight for you."
- Then the Lord told Moses to stretch his staff out over the sea. He did so and the waters of the sea were divided in two; the children of Israel went through the midst of the sea. The waters were like a wall to them on the right hand and on the left.
- When they were all safely crossing, Moses saw the chariots of the Egyptians also crossing right behind them. So he raised his staff again, and the waters rolled down on top of the Egyptians and covered their chariots and their horsemen until there was not one left.
- That was the way the Lord saved Israel that day from the hands of the Egyptians. The people saw it and revered the Lord, and believed in Him and in His servant Moses. And they made up a song of thanksgiving to God.

(C) THE QUAIL AND THE MANNA

- About six weeks after leaving Egypt, the sons of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai. By that time their supplies had nearly run out, and they grumbled to their leaders about their condition.
- "We wish we had died by the hand of the Lord back in Egypt, where at least we had pots of flesh enough to eat. You brought us out here so that we can all die of hunger", they said.

- Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring food to these people, flesh in the evening and bread in the morning, so that they will know that the Lord brought them out of the land of Egypt."
- On that very evening, quail flew in and covered the camp, so that there was plenty of quail for everyone. And in the morning, when the dew was melted, there lay on the ground something like hoar frost. The people did not know what it was.
- "This is the bread which the Lord has given you", said Moses. "Gather as much as you want". It was white as coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. The Hebrews called it manna; they lived on it for forty years.

The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- Review the previous lesson and continue to describe the tenth plague in detail. The Hebrews put the blood over the lintel and the posts of their doors. So when the Angel passed through that night to let the destroyer smite the Egyptians, He saw the blood on the doors of the Hebrews and passed-over. Since that time the Hebrews' most important feast is the "Passover" as they remember how the Lord got them out of Egypt.
- For us as Christians our Passover Lamb is our Lord Jesus Christ because through His Blood on the Cross we gained salvation and were transferred from death to life. This new life was granted to us by the Risen Lord on Easter which has become our new Pass-over.
- Please describe the Red Sea crossing as per the attached material. "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea ... Then the Lord said to Moses, 'stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians' ... And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; ... the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it."

- Please let the children read the rest of the song of Moses and his people (Exodus 15:1-21). "I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously!... The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him ..." Our Lord is capable, our Lord loves us and when we are with Him we are very happy.
- At the sea of Marah, the water was bitter, they could not drink it and Moses cried to the Lord. Moses threw a tree in the water according to God's command and the water became sweet.
- After they had exhausted their food supplies in the wilderness, the Lord gave them flesh (quail) in the evening and bread (manna) in the morning.
- The Hebrews lived on God's food for forty years in the desert. As the Lord took care of the Hebrews at that time, He takes care of us now.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) When we take communion, the Lord Jesus gives us His Body to eat and His Blood to drink. This is the heavenly food that is given to us now in order to gain eternal life. When the Hebrews were in the desert God gave them regular food to eat, i.e., the quail and manna.
- 2) We have to be very careful of the temptation of the devil who wants us to fall in sin. But we must not be afraid of the devil because God is much stronger and he is with us.



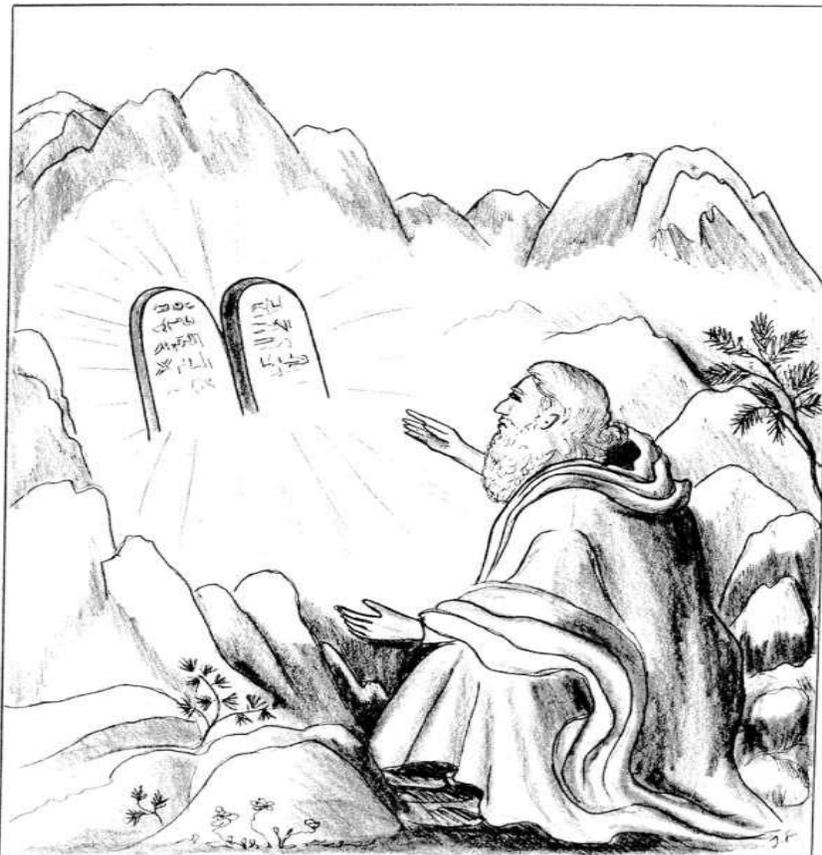
The fourth week of the month of Hatour
(December)

The Ten Commandments

Bible reference: Exodus 20:1-17, Exodus 31:12-18

Lesson purpose: This lesson is a continuation of the series of lessons about Moses and his people as discussed in the previous two lessons. In this lesson we will learn about the Ten Commandments.

Bible verse: *"And He gave Moses two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." (Exodus 31:18)*



Background information to servant

- In the third month of the journey, the Hebrews camped in the desert, near Mt. Sinai. And the Lord called Moses and told him to sanctify the people and have them wash their clothes, for in three days He would appear before them on the mountain.
- On the third day in the morning, there was thunder and lightning and a thick cloud covering the mountain. Then came great clouds of smoke for the Lord descended upon the mountain in the form of fire. When Moses spoke, God answered him with a voice.
- Then God called Moses to come up to the top of the mountain, and **He gave him these commandments:**
 1. You shall have no gods except Me.
 2. You shall not make any carved idols.
 3. You shall not use the name of God profanely.
 4. Remember to keep the Sabbath day Holy.
 5. Honor your father and mother.
 6. You shall not kill.
 7. You shall not commit adultery.
 8. You shall not steal.
 9. You shall not give false evidence.
 10. You shall not covet anything of your neighbor's.
- Moses was on the mountain so long that the people became impatient. They went to Aaron and asked him to make them gods to go before them. So Aaron had them contribute their golden jewelry, which he melted down and formed into a golden calf.
- When Moses came down the mountain, he heard the people singing. Then he saw them dancing naked in front of the golden calf and worshiping it. Moses was in a fury. He broke the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments on them. Then he took the golden calf and burned it and ground it to powder.

- Later, Moses returned to the mountain and received the stone tablets engraved with the commandments a second time.

The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Why is Moses considered to be a very important character in the Old Testament?
 - 2) After spending forty years in the desert, what did Moses receive from God?
 - 3) Why are the Ten Commandments important for us as Christians?
- Discuss the Ten Commandments. We, as Christians, are supposed to follow these commandments and even more. We should love not only our neighbors but also our enemies. "You shall have no other gods before Me., You shall not make any carved idols... You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain., Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... Honor your father and your mother... You shall not murder... You shall not commit adultery... You shall not steal... You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor... You shall not covet your neighbor's house, You shall not covet your neighbor's wife nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." (Exodus 20:3-17)
 - Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled Moses' Laws. He said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17)
 - The commandments were given to Moses for the people of Israel to follow in their life. The people at that time did not have the grace of the Holy Spirit as we now have Him when we are baptized. So, the 10 commandments were the minimum requirements and we as Christians are required to do a lot more. For this reason the Lord Jesus said, "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)
 - The Sabbath (Saturday) is the Lord's Day of rest. God commanded His people to keep that day holy so that they can continue to remember His mighty works in creation. Adam's

disobedience took away God's rest. "And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart," (Genesis 6:6)

When did rest return to God? On His Resurrection when He gave life back to man.

Therefore, Sunday has become our day of rest ... our Sabbath.

- The people of Israel had to keep the Sabbath (remember that the word Sabbath means rest). But they kept it in a very rigid way. When our Beloved Jesus came and performed some of his miracles on the Sabbath, they were angry. For example, our Saviour healed the man at the pool of Bethesda on a Saturday, please see (John 5:1-17). The Jews were very angry. "For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him because He had done these things on the Sabbath." (John 5:16).

The Jews were wrong. They should have realized that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and He could do any merciful deeds at any time even on the Sabbath. God does merciful deeds at all times. We too can do merciful deeds on Sunday.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) I must know and follow God's commandments and all the teachings of the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments. I follow their commandments for my goodness sake.
- 2) Sunday, the day of the Lord's Resurrection, has become our day of rest ... our Sabbath. We can make Sunday as a very special day in which we remember the Lord's Resurrection and the new life that He gave us. On Sundays, we go to church, take communion, and family members get together dedicating time for prayers and hymns. Let us make Sunday an ideal day of our life in behaviour, prayers and happiness.



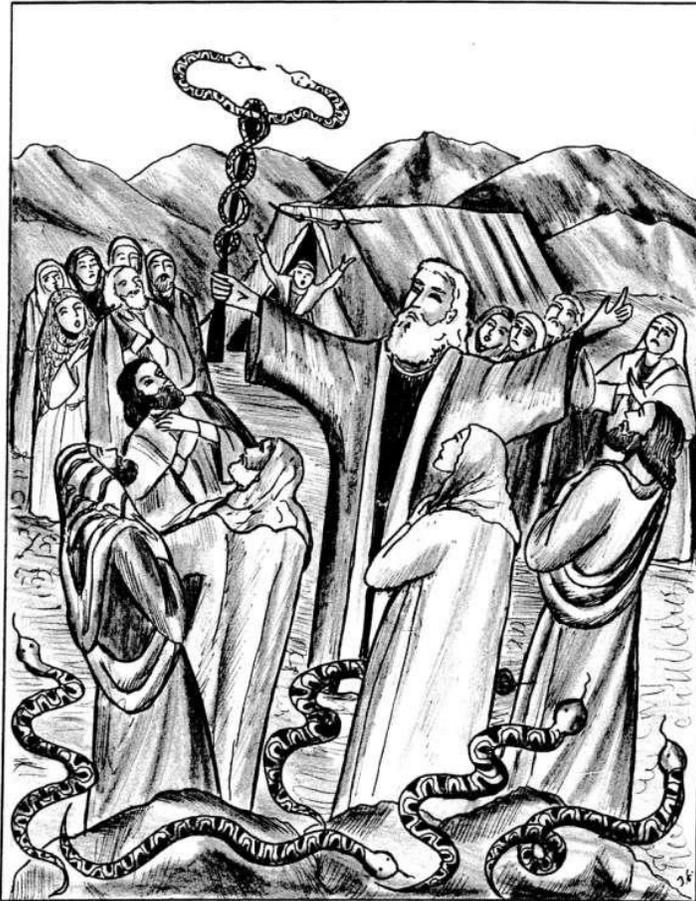
The first week of the month of Kiahk
(December)

The Bronze Serpent and Review of the Life of "St Mina"

Bible reference: Numbers 21:4-9

Lesson purpose: To complete the series about the Lord's care for Moses and his people. He also takes care of us. Let us all train ourselves not to be complainers.

Bible verse: *"If a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent he lived" (Numbers 21:9)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- The people were continually complaining against both God and Moses.
- "Why did you lead us out of Egypt in order to die in the wilderness?" was their constant cry. 'There is no bread, no water, and we are tired of manna.'
- Then the Lord sent stinging serpents among the people, which bit them. Many of them died from serpent bites.
- Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned in speaking against the Lord and against you. It is because of our sin that these serpents have been set upon us. Would you pray to the Lord for us, that He remove these serpents?"
So Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord told him to construct a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. If anyone should be bitten by a serpent, all he/she had to do was to look at the bronze serpent on the pole, and his/her life would be spared.
- The Jews were complainers in the days of Moses and also in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth in the flesh. "And the Lord said to what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: We played the flute for you, and you did not dance, we mourned to you, and you did not weep. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon,' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by all her children." (Luke 7:31-35) We should not be complainers at home or at school or at church or at any place we go to.
- The Bronze Serpent was a symbol of Jesus when He was crucified. As the Bible said, "As Moses raised the serpent in the wilderness, the Son of Man will be raised on the cross so that who believes in him will inherit eternal life." (John 3:14-15)
- Imagine a Hebrew child bitten by a stinging serpent and then he was healed when he looked upon the bronze serpent. Should he just go to his tent or go and play afterwards? No. He should go to other people and tell them about the glory of God and the miracle that

was performed on him. We should do the same. We must tell people about the Lord Jesus, who saved us with His Blood on the Cross.

- Review the life of St. Mina. Ask the children, what do they remember about St. Mina's life from the Sunday School lessons of previous years?
- The church is celebrating on November 25 (fifteenth of Hatour) the martyrdom of St. Mina.
- He was called the wonder worker for the large amounts of wonders performed through his prayers and intercessions.
- Pope Cyril the sixth (the late pope before Pope Shenouda) had a very large monastery built for St. Mina. Many Copts visit this monastery for the blessings of St. Mina.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) We must be thankful for all that we have from God. We must not complain as the Israelites did.
- 2) God is very merciful. When the Israelites repented and confessed their sins to Moses, God healed them through the bronze serpent (the symbol of the Cross). Similarly, God accepts us when we repent.



The second week of the month of Kiahk
(December)

The Birth of St John the Baptist and the Birth of Our Lord Jesus are Announced

Bible reference: Luke 1:5-38

Lesson purpose: To let the children rejoice with these two happy events and know them by heart. Emphasize the simplicity of the Virgin Mary.

Bible verse: *“Do not be afraid...” (Luke 1:13)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to be humble?
- 2) What does it mean to be obedient?
- 3) Who in the New Testament is known for her humility and obedience?

- As St. John the Baptist was designated, according to God's plan, to come before our Lord Jesus, St. Luke started by describing first the events of the birth of St. John the Baptist then the events of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Tell the two stories of the birth of St. John the Baptist and our Saviour the Lord Jesus in detail. The starting point of the angel with Zacharias was different from that of the Virgin Mary.
- The angel started with Zacharias saying, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John" (Luke 1:13). This reminds us that in spite of the fact that Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were too old to have a son, they did not lose hope, and God responded to their prayers in due time. When the angel came to the Virgin Mary, he said, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women." (Luke 1:28). St. Mary was "the highly favored one", "the Lord is with her" and that she is "blessed among women".
- The answer of Zacharias was quite different from that of the Virgin Mary. Zacharias did not believe the message. The Virgin Mary believed and obeyed.
- Ask the children to talk about the main characteristics of the Virgin Mary: Simplicity "let it be to me according to your word", humility and obedience "Behold the maidservant of the Lord." The Virgin Mary said that she was the "maidservant of the Lord" after the angel told her, "That Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). This means that she was going to be the Mother of God.

Even if we do not understand what the Bible is telling us, we have to be simple and straight in our thinking and take it as it is and believe it. God will explain things to us at the right time when we mature

- The Holy Spirit will be with the Virgin Mary so that she would give birth to a child and he would be called Holy. He is the Son of God.
- Why was John the Baptist needed to come before our Lord Jesus? He was needed to come before to prepare the minds and hearts of the people so that they may accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) Our Lord Jesus Christ was born, taking on a body from the Virgin Mary, for our salvation, and the remission of our sins. Hence, Christmas is the happiest occasion of our lives.
- 2) Let us learn from the Virgin Mary to be simple and obedient. When we read the Holy Bible at home or listen to it at church, we must listen, obey and apply what we read or hear in our daily life; even if we do not fully understand.



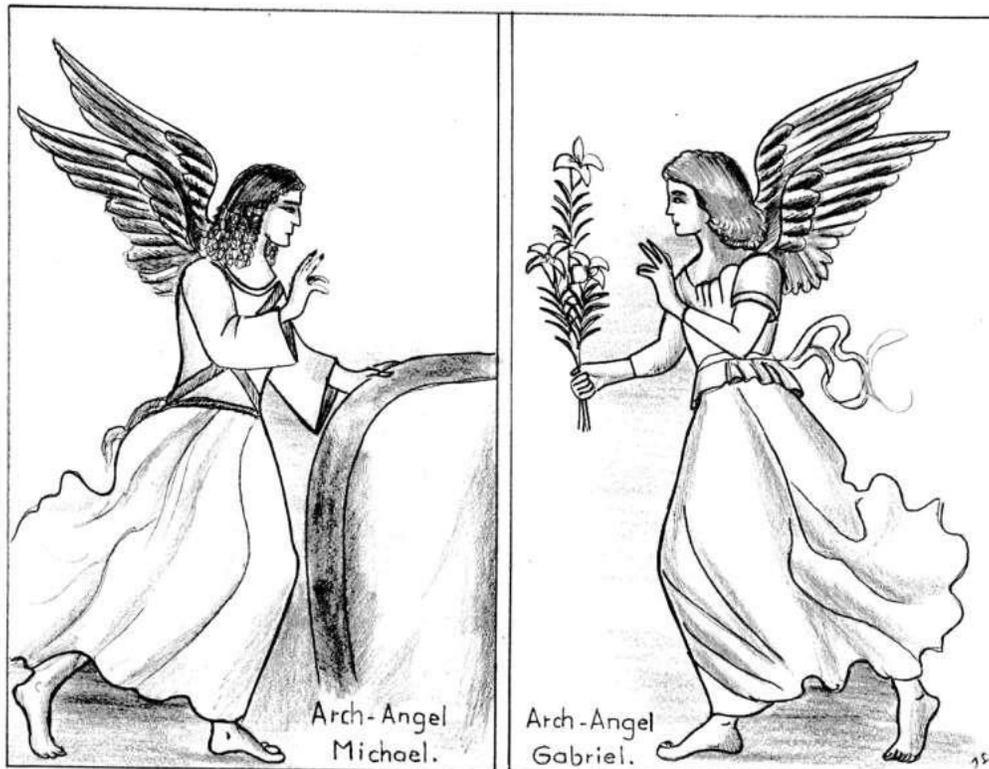
The third week of the month of Kiahk
(December)

The Archangel Michael and the Archangel Gabriel

Bible reference: Joshua 5:13-15, Luke 1:1 to the end, Matthew 28:1-10

Lesson purpose: To learn something about the angels and specifically about Archangel Michael and Archangel Gabriel. We must think about God, heaven and the Angels in our daily life.

Bible verse: "*Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*" (Hebrews 1:14)



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Are angels human like us or are they spirits?
- 2) Can we ask the angels for their intercession just like we do with the saints?
- 3) From the bible, what are some of the things that God asked the Angels to do?

- General outlook about the angels:
 - They are spirits - see the memory verse.
 - They are in heaven around God. When needed, God sends them to serve us.
 - God is the only One whose knowledge is unlimited. Even Angels' knowledge is limited. The angels are free to do what they like to do. The devil was an angel, but he decided not to obey God anymore and wanted to be more powerful than God. The devil said in his heart "I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of congregation the farthest sides of the north." (Isaiah 14:13). God rejected - him and he was thrown out to hell (Isaiah 14:12-15)
 - The angels of God are holy. "When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the Holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory." (Matthew 25:31)

- **Archangels:**

They are seven. Their names are Michael, Gabriel, Rafael, Sorial, Sedakael, Sarathael and Ananael. (Let the children memorize their names and give prizes.) Each one has his host of angels and they do services as God deems fit.

- The church is called "the house of God". She is also called "the house of the angels".

- The angels seek on our behalf (or intercede on our behalf) to God if we ask for their intercession. "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar, and he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the Saints ascended before God from the angel's hand." (Revelation 8:3-4)
- Angels bring pleasant news to good people but the reverse to bad. In other words, angels can be frightening to bad people. An example of this is the Archangel Michael when he brought the good news of the Lord Jesus' resurrection. "And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men, But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen," (Matthew 28:2-6)

- **Archangel Michael:**

- Archangel Michael, the head of the heavenly powers, is the first Archangel. He serves in front of the Lord. God sends us His mercies with the intercession of Michael because he is near to God entreating on our behalf.
- He was the angel to announce the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:1-4)
- He was the angel to help Joshua in his war (Joshua 5:3-15). Please tell the story in detail

- **Archangel Gabriel:**

- He was the angel who came to Zacharias to tell him about the birth of John the Baptist.
- He was the angel who came six months after the news to Zacharias and told St. Mary about the birth of the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

Application



Exercise...

- 1) Every one of us has his/her guardian angel who serve him/her. But we have to listen to God so that the guardian angel (who is a servant of God) does not get mad, but always protects us.
- 2) At the end of our prayers, let us remember to seek, on our behalf, the intercessions of the Virgin Mary and Archangels Michael and Gabriel; and the prayers of the Saints like St. Mark, St. George and St. Mina.