

# St. George: Sunday school



---

---

## Lesson 1

Read the lesson...Hymns and Prayers

## Lesson 2

Yahweh the True God

- Abraham-Father of the Faithful
  - God's land-He started in Haran, crossed river Euphrates, and then to Canaan.
  - Test of faith-was ready to sacrifice his son; was the seed of all nations
- Moses-chosen to save Egypt
  - There were plagues; Israelites were liberated; people started to head toward Canaan. Parted the Red Sea, and traveled 40 years through desert.
    - Manna and Quails; water from rock
  - Moses was dying-never forget true God; climbed Mt. Nebo (Pisgah peak)—saw the Promised Land, and died; Joshua became leader.
    - Under Joshua, crossed river Jordan; mount ebal—commandments were written
- After Joshua-judges appointed to lead Israelites
  - Including Deborah, a prophetess, there were 15 in total
- When they were in Palestine, they forgot true God and worshipped Baal; lose values...led to rule of kings
  - Reign of the kings (BC 1050-586)
    - Saul was first king-anointed by Samuel
    - David was after...expanded empire, wanted to build temple (Jerusalem)
      - Immorally married Bathsheba...Uriah's wife; prophet Nathan made him realize sins...Psalm 51 (repentance)
    - Solomon was successor—later lost trust in God; many wives and gods.
      - Divided into Israel
        - North Israel- 10 tribes under Jeroboam –capital was Samaria
        - South- Judah-ruled by Rehoboam (Solomon's son)—capital was Jerusalem.
  - King's of Israel

- 19 total...most were idol worshippers (ex. King ahab)
- Fall of N. Israel-Samaria...
  - South (Judah) prospered for 150 years more...20 kings
    - During reign of zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar attacked and took Jews as slaves to Babylon—temple destroyed

### Lesson 3

Yahweh-continuation; period of exile (BC 586-516)

- Most prisoners engaged in farming and business
- Unhappiness and despair; prophet Ezekiel was a comforter and encouragement; under shade of trees, pray
- Rule of Nebuchadnezzar- golden period; his successors were weak though
  - So Persian King cyrus invaded Babylon and defeated them
  - Rise of Persian empire-allowed jews to go back to Palestine and rebuild the temple of Jerusalem
  - Prophet haggai revived them of disparity due to all they lost; renovated temple and held Passover; under Nehemiah, rebuild walls of Jerusalem; and started observing Sabbath again
- Reign of the Greeks – BC 333
  - Emperor Alexander the great; spread of language and culture; was kind to jews
  - After he died it was split in 2:
    - Palestine by Ptolemy
      - Translate old testament into greek
    - Syria under selukas nicator
  - BC 168—antiochus IV invaded temple, installed greek god in it; persecuted jews; the family that protested was MATHIAS!—macabees
- Macabees – BC 167-63
  - Preferred martyrdom under Antiochus IV persecution—judah maccabi
    - He defeated Greeks, reconsecrated temple and worshipped; his sons ruled after him...
      - Judah Maccabi > Brother Jonathon, Simon > 3<sup>rd</sup> son John Hirkanus > Son Aristobulus > brother Alexander janius
- Roman reign –BC 63
  - Hirkanus was namesake ruler; governor of Judea; assassinated by jews
  - With the help of roman government, herod son of antipather became ruler; tried to please the Jews; built the temple of Jerusalem and wailing wall
  - Known as herod the great; jesus was born
  - Jew were ridiculed, forgot the true god, and disobeyed laws; chosen people lived as exiles; they repented and started to worship Yahweh again

### Lesson 4

Yahweh...cont'd

- After death of Herod, Palestine divided into 3 and ruled by sons
- Herod antipas ruler of galilee married Herodia; beheaded john the Baptist; referred to as FOX

- Pilate sent Jesus to Herod for trial; Herod was exiled later, his grandson Agrippa ruled and persecuted Christians to please the Jews; his son was also kind to Jews
- Jesus was born during reign of Emperor Augustus; later on Nero, etc. were rulers; they persecuted Christians brutally; Rome was burned down
- Pontius Pilate was 5<sup>th</sup> governor of Judea; asked for crucifixion of Christ; Jews shouted if you let Jesus go, you are no friend of Caesar...they didn't believe him as son of God
- Roman soldiers looted temple; Jews live with hope that it will be renovated and Jerusalem will once again be their land.
  - Yahweh the True God- Continuation
  - Palestine was divided into 3 and ruled by Herod's sons
    - Judea: Archelaus
    - Territory of Iturea and Tracoenitis: Philip
    - Galilee: Herod Antipas
  - Herod Antipas was exiled in AD 39
  - Agrippa- grandson of Herod the Great came to rule
  - Agrippa persecuted Christians to please Jews
  - executed James and imprisoned Peter
  - Jesus born during reign of Emperor Augustus Octavius
  - Jesus crucified during the reign of Tiberius
  - first Jewish revolt during Nero's reign
  - in Judea governor was the ruler and commander in chief of army
  - only governor could instate death penalty
  - Jewish opposition to the Roman rule was the basic reason for Jewish revolt

## Lesson 5

### Land of Palestine

- Known as land of Canaan, Holy Land, and Israel—Romans gave the name of Palestine
- Divided into coastal plains, middle mountainous land, valley of Jordan, and mountainous land beyond Jordan
  - Coastal plains
    - Ancient traders of Phoenicia; Jesus heals daughter of lady; Palestinians originally came from island of Crete; 50 miles wide; olive and oak trees; rose of Sharon; place where prophet Elijah challenged the prophets with fire from heaven
  - Middle mountainous land
    - Galilee, Samaria, and Judea; river Jordan; Lebanon is famous for cedar wood
    - When Solomon built temple, King Hiram sent cedar wood from Lebanon; abundance of grapes, olives, figs
  - Mount Hermon
    - Hermon dew that falls on Mt. Zion; suitable for agriculture; town of Caesarea Philippi
  - Galilee
    - Full of mountains; river Kishon flows northwestern into Mediterranean sea; lake Galilee; Mount Carmel on W. side; Mt. Gilboa on S. side; Jesus spent youth in Nazareth of Galilee
  - Sea of Galilee
    - Backwater lake. River Jordan falls into it from north and it flows South; strong winds; fishing is main; towns of Capernaum, Korasin, Tiberias; most fertile lands of Palestine
  - Land of Samaria

- Between galilee and Judea; no rain; wheat, maize, grapes.
- Cities of shechem and samaria are important
  - Shechem is where Abraham first settled and Jacob; Moses carried bones of Joseph and buried in shechem
  - Samaria was most beautiful capital city of Israel
  - Bethel means house of God; samaria was conquered by Emperor Asshur in 8<sup>th</sup> century BC
    - Mixed blood of Israel and people of Asshur—Samaritans; no contact with Jews, but Jesus was friendly with them; Jesus asks for water from Samaritan lady in Sychar of Samaria
- Land of Judea
  - Hills; west is plateau; east is Dead Sea; valleys are fertile; Jerusalem, the capital, built on the highest hill. Mt Zion and Moriah are also high altitude
  - Moriah—Abraham to offer his son; King Solomon built temple here; where Jesus was crucified and ascended; Mt Calvary on north side of Jerusalem
  - Mt Olives on east side; ascension; Gethsemane is on W. slope of mountain; Bethlehem (Ephrath)—David's town; fields where shepherds lie
  - Bethany and Bethpage—house of figs and shore respectively; house of Lazarus was in Bethany
  - Jericho—story of good Samaritan; this is where tax collector Zacchaeus was from and blind Bartimaeus
- Beersheba
  - South most side of Judea; now a mosque here

**Palestine:** The land of Canaan

- a. Has many names such as Land of Canaan & Holy Land of Israel.
- b. Located on the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea and 120 miles in length.
- c. Geographically the land is divided in 4 parts:
  - i. **Costal Plains**
    1. Also called the plateaus of Phoenicia and Sharon
    2. Sidon and Tyre were the important cities and Jesus healed the daughter of a lady Canaanite from this region.
    3. Israelites and Palestinians were enemies
    4. Acron, Gath, Gaza, Ashdod and Ashkelon are the 5 Palestinian Cities.
    5. The Plateau of Sharon extends from Joppa to Carmel. Length of this land is 50 miles. The land is beautiful with olive and oak trees and other flourishing plants. The rose of Sharon is famous. This is the place where Prophet Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal.
  - ii. **Middle mountainous land**
    1. Cities of Galilee, Samaria and Judea constitute the middle mountainous land.
    2. Mountains of Lebanon and Hermon lie towards the north of Galilee river.
    3. The River Jordan originates from the western slope of Mount Hermon.
    4. Lebanon is famous for its cedar wood.
    5. In the Valley of this mountain, grapes, olives and figs grow abundantly.
    6. The name Lebanon comes from the whiteness of snow.
  - iii. **Mount Hermon**
    1. It lies parallel to Lebanon on the east.
    2. Hermon valley is suitable for agriculture.
    3. The rivers Abana and Pharpar which flow eastwards from this mountain make Syria fertile.
  - iv. **Galilee**
    1. Through the southern side of the Esdralon Plain., river Kishon flows north westerly and falls into the Mediterranean Sea. Lake Galilee is on the eastern side.
    2. Jesus spent his youth in Nazareth of Galilee.
  - v. **Sea of Galilee**
    1. It is also known as Sea of Kinnereth, Lake Gannasaret, and Sea of Tiberias.

2. River Jordan Falls into it from northern side and then flows towards south.
3. For people living in the coastal region fishing is the means of livelihood.
4. The coastal regions are one of the most fertile regions of Palestine and so it is densely populated
5. It is also a health resort.

**vi. Land of Samaria**

1. It lies between Galilee and Judea.
2. In the valleys wheat, maize, grapes, and olives grow in abundance.
3. Shechem and Samaria are important towns
  - a. **Shechem:**
    - i. Western side of Samaria
    - ii. Is the place where Abraham settled first in Canaan.
    - iii. Jacob also lived in Shechem
    - iv. Moses carried the bones of Joseph with him when he left Egypt and Joshua buried them in Shechem.
  - b. **Samaria**
    - i. Was the most beautiful capital of city of Israel.
4. Shiloh, Shechem, and Bethel were places of worship. Bethel means house of God. Jacob had his heavenly vision here.
5. Samaria was conquered by many foreigners. In 8th century BC Emperor of Asshur attacked Samaria and took the people as prisoners. They brought the people of Asshur to live there. Descendants of the mixed blood of Israelites and people of Asshur what later to be known as Samaritans.
6. Jesus was friendly with the Samaritans. The incident where Jesus Christ asks water from the Samaritan lady takes place at the city of Sychar in Samaria.

**vii. Land of Judea**

1. It is a plateau famous for its hills and valleys. On the western side lies the plateau of Palestine and the Dead Sea on the eastern side.
2. Lemon, grapes, wheat, maize, and corn are cultivated here.
3. Many of the cities are built on hills. Jerusalem the capital is built on the highest hill. Mount Zion and Mount Moriah are also situated at a higher altitude.
  - a. Moriah is where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son, later king Solomon built the temple there.
4. Jerusalem is the holy city where our Lord was crucified, resurrected, and ascended into heaven. Mount Calvary where Jesus Christ was crucified is on the north western side of Jerusalem.
5. Mount Olives and stream of Kidron are on the eastern side of this town. Our lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven from Mount of Olives.
6. House of Lazarus who was raised from death by Jesus was in Bethany.
7. Jericho is one of the most important towns of Judea. The incidents described in the parable of the Good Samaritan takes place on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jericho is the first fort and town which Israelites captured at Canaan. Tax collector Zachaeus and blind man Bartimaeus were from this place.



## Lesson 6

### Land of Palestine cont'd

- Valley of Jordan- river Jordan; lake galilee and dead sea; very fertile land
- Dead sea- salt level is high; known as east sea bc located on east of Judea; Jordan river flows into it; in dead sea cave where dead sea scrolls were found
- Damascus- capital of Syria; silk is famous; place of comfort, rest for merchants
  - People of Damascus and Israelites were enemies; attacked Lot, north of Damascus; naaman the leper was from here; **the supreme head of univ. Syrian orthodox church is here**
- Mountainous land beyond Jordan- east of Jordan valley; mount nebo on NE side of dead sea; where Pisgah peak is located.
- Town of Bethesda-jesus feeds 5000 people with 5 loaves of bread
- Climate and vegetation- rain and winter...wind causes damage
  - Its common that people prayer for good weather; rich in grass for cattle, etc; farming and cattle are main occupations
- Land of Palestine (Continuation)
  - Valley of Jordan
    - River of Jordan, Sea of Galilee, and Dead Sea
    - Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee are known as "Thickets"
  - Dead Sea

- also known as Salt Sea and Sea of Arabah and Eastern Sea
- due to high content of salt it is known as the Dead Sea and Sea Salt
- it is named East Sea because it is found on the east side of Judea
- 1312 meters below sea level, 47 miles long, 9 miles wide
- Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea
- East side is where John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded
- Sodom and Gomorrah were situated on the southern side of Dead Sea
- West side, David hid himself from Saul
- in the cave Qumran is where our late Yeshu Mar Athenaius Metropolitan found the Dead Sea scrolls in 1947

#### Damascus

- 120 miles NE of Jerusalem
- Abraham attacked kings who attacked Lot, David captured this city, the leper was from Damascus, Paul the Apostle was converted in Damascus
- mountainous land beyond Jordan
  - Moab, Gilead, and Bashan
- Moses saw the Promise Land at the peak of Mt. Nebo
- Peter declared Jesus the Son of God in Gilead
- Near to this is town of Bethesda where five thousand people were fed with five loaves of bread

## Lesson 7

### The Jewish Family

- Culture
  - Nomads...Abraham—wore tents; raised cattle, clothes of fur
  - Milk, fruits, vegetables, meat; Jews in Egypt had brick houses; cultivate agriculture
  - Jews freed from Egypt—went to Canaan; stone houses; joint family system-father and children together
  - Early on father was priest as well; chiefs of clans were elders; clans made up tribes
  - Polygamy was not a sin; at first only one wife, but soon caused problems; birth of boy was =)
  - Eldest son got 2/3 \$\$\$--right of firstborn; circumcision on 8<sup>th</sup> day; girls were house management
- Education
  - Parents taught; then rabbis; synagogues; importance to religion; age of 6 was school; obey laws-13; marriage-18
  - Boy studied mother tongue of syriac and biblical language of Hebrew; greek was popular
- Occupation
  - Jesus was carpenter...fishing was main in coastal area
- Marriage and customs
  - 18 for man; 12 for girls; sacred and forbidden to marry into other caste
  - Engagement was important was = to marriage; dowry system. Man used to give dowry to girls...marriage is one year after engagement
  - White dress is worn
- Dress of the jews
  - Leather dress; later made of sheep fur; in cold-woolen dresses; whole body
  - Sash over long dress; gold and purple for priests; sandals popular; veils for women
- Food of the jews
  - Wheat and maize; bread with soup, wine, etc; main were lunch and supper

- Fish and meat-only birds and fish were clean
- Sit on floor; praise beforehand

## Lesson 8

Jewish family cont'd

- Religious customs and rituals
  - Education from the beginning; circumcision-day 8; 40<sup>th</sup> day-offered at the temple; relationship between god, religion and society are made strong; pray 3x a day kneeling down and face down; prayer after washing hands to signify removal of sins
  - Offered sacrifices; after they prayed and read verses; psalms were sung; fasting was ideal and used to show grief
    - Used to avert god's anger and cleanse oneself
  - On the day of atonement, all Israelites must fast—prayer.
    - 4<sup>th</sup> month of fasting was remembrance of Babylonian army invasion
    - 5<sup>th</sup> month-destruction of city
    - Etc...all were for days of grief!
    - MONDAY-day moses went to get laws from mt Sinai-10 commandments
    - THURSDAY-day he returned; later they were mere acts of show
  - Death and Life after death
    - Long life was a fortune; elders were respected; Pharisees believed that soul is eternal and resurrection after death; evil souls go to hell
    - Others didn't believe in life after death; others believed souls of departed can help the living ones
  - Rituals after death
    - Death is sleep, journey, and rest to be with the fathers
    - Eyelids were closed and kissed upon; body washed and laid; covered in cloth and anointed with perfume
    - Buried within 24 hours; either in ground or caves; sometimes family tombs out of rock; practice of fasting for the souls of dead
    - When moses and aaron died, 30 days of grief...etc
  - Law enforcement
    - Very strict; public prosecution in front of elders; guilty were punished; eye for eye...Tooth for tooth!
    - Varied in severity...no trial at night and that more than one witness needed; not all were followed in condemning Jesus
  - Cities of refuge
    - If anyone murders unintentionally flee here! Joshua designed this escape
      - Kedesh in galilee, shechem, hebron in Judah, Jericho, ramoth in gilead, Golan in bashan
  - Days and time
    - Evening to evening; calculated by hours; darkness btwn 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> hour when Jesus was crucified

## Lesson 9

Temple of God

- Rescued from slavery in Egypt, crossed red sea toward promised land; cloud above them to protect from heat; pillar of fire at night for heat
  - Sometime here was 10 commandments

- God's wish was to live amongst Israelites; sanctuary was built...tent was called the tabernacle
  - Purpose of worship; at canaan, it was kept at Shiloh; later on, the ark was kept in the temple which Solomon built
- Moses had instructions on building the temple; all materials needed to be given free willed by people and people had to build it
- People worked together and things were brought in abundance
  - Gold, silver, jewels, wood, and fine cloth
  - Woven carpets and curtains by women
  - Built with wooden planks, cloth, and leather-easy transport
- Men from levi tribe chosen as priests
- Tabernacle
  - Most holy place
  - Holy place
  - Courtyard
- Door was on east side
- Colors
  - Blue-divinity of Christ
  - Purple-human nature
  - Scarlet-royalty and redemption
  - White-purity
- Bronze altar
  - Burnt offering-entrance of courtyard; square box of acacia wood; covered with bronze-fireproof; horns at end to tie animals
- Bronze Basin
  - Water was kept to wash hands prior to entering tabernacle
  - Between tabernacle and altar; cleanliness before approaching God
- Holy Place
  - Curtain separated holy of holies and holy place
    - Objects here
      - Altar of incense-table covered w/gold. Incense burnt here
      - Golden lamp stand-single lamp and 3 on right and left side; placed on S. side of altar of incense; kept burning all day
      - Table to keep showbread- N. side of altar of incense
      - Holy of holies- holiest place; once a year priest came to offer sacrifice for himself and people
        - Ark of covenant-covered w/pure gold; two slabs where 10 commandments were written; golden plate where manna was kept, and budded rod of aaron
        - Mercy seat on top of ark-shows god's presence; covered with clouds
        - Cherubim on mercy seat- two cherubims w/spread wings facing each other; in the midst of them, God spoke to moses

#### Temple of God

- God wanted to live among the people so He ordered Moses to make a tent that could be carried from place to place, a tabernacle.

#### • Tabernacle

- materials needed for the tabernacle were to be brought at free will by the people

- materials brought: gold, silver, jewels, wood, fine woven cloth
- women wove carpets, curtains, upholstery for the tabernacle
- tabernacle was built with wooden planks, cloth, leather
- placed in the middle of settlement
- 3 places: most holy place, holy place, courtyard (all around the tabernacle)
- door on the east
- curtains: covered all four sides, blue (divinity of Jesus Christ), purple (Jesus' human nature), scarlet (His royalty and redemption) and white (His purity) threads with artistic work on it
- in Israel the tabernacle was kept in Shiloh
- after the Ark of Covenant was confiscated till the reign of Solomon the tabernacle was kept at Gibeon
- Ark was later kept in the temple which Solomon built
- Bezalel and Oholiab were chosen to train the others to build the Ark artistically and beautifully

• Bronze Altar

- Square box made of acacia wood, five cubits long, five cubits wide, three cubits high, covered in bronze
- Meant for burnt offerings
- Horns at each corner- symbolized human nature, slavery, royalty, divine natures of Jesus

• Bronze Basin- showed importance of cleanliness and purity

- Water kept so priests could wash hands and feet before entering tabernacle
- Between tabernacle and altar

• Holy Place

- Objects at the holy place
  1. The Alter of Incense
    - covered with gold
    - incense burnt every morning and evening
  2. The Golden Lamp Stand
    - made of pure gold
    - single lamp and 3 lamps on both right and left side
    - south side of altar of incense
  3. Table to keep show bread
    - northern side of altar of incense
    - 12 loaves of unleavened bread in two rows
    - new ones were kept and old ones were eaten on Sabbath
  4. Holy of Holies
    - holiest place
    - priest entered once in a year to repent and offer sacrifice

• Things Kept at the Holy of Holies

- The Ark of Covenant
  - 2 ½ cubits long, 1 ½ cubits wide, and 1 ½ cubits high
  - kept inside: 10 commandments, golden place for manna, budded rod of Aaron
- The mercy seat on top of the ark
  - showed God's presence
  - covered with clouds- symbolized the clouds that God used to talk through to Moses
- Cherubim on the mercy seat

- two cherubims facing each other
- wings spread upward, faced mercy seat

## Lesson 10

### The tabernacle

- a. The Temple of Jerusalem is on Mount Moriah on the Eastern side of Jerusalem. David planned to build the temple there because that is where God revealed himself to David. Solomon built the first temple.
- b. They had two masses that were the same. They would open the temple, sacrifice an animal, the head priest will walk down to the altar with the censor and bless the people, then the sacrifice is burnt and personal sacrifices are received.
- c. Parts of the church:
  - i. Most Holy Place i.e. Madbaha ==> Alter
  - ii. Holy Place ==> Sanctuary
  - iii. Courtyard ==> Hall
  - iv. Table ==> thronos

## Lesson 11

### Worship in the temple

- Offering was the most important; tribal heads offered the sacrifices
- Important offerings
  - Whole burnt offering-sheep,goat,calf; without any blemish; offerer washes hands and kills animal; priest sprinkles blood on table and animal is burnt
    - if dove or pigeon, priest will kill it himself
  - sin offerings-unintentional sins; for a priest—a calf; a lord—a goat, church—a calf, normal person—a lamb; very poor person—pigeon; place hands on animal, pray, kill it; priest will take blood and sprinkle it in front of curtain 7x, smear blood on the horns...priest prays, sins are forgiven
  - peace offerings- 3 kinds
    - thanksgiving
    - vows
    - offerings of self will
  - trespass offering- unknowing mistakes; doing things forbidden; ram is offering
  - meal offerings-cakes and batter; no yeast or honey; one portion was burnt, rest given to priest
  - drink offerings-oil and wine

### Worship in the Temple

#### Climate and Vegetation

- Winter had plenty of rain and summer was dry

#### Important offerings

- whole burnt offerings
  - animals were used for whole burned offerings
  - offerings were in the morning and evening
  - symbolizes complete submission and cleansing of impurities
- sin offerings
  - for unintentional sins
  - sinner seeks deliverance from God
- peace offering

- 3 kinds: thanksgiving, vows, and offerings
- trespass offering
  - one ram is offered
  - this is a penalty sin
- meal offerings
  - diluted and unleavened food
- drink offerings
  - all blessing were incomplete until Jesus sacrificed himself
- there is no offering for deliberately committed sins

## Lesson 12

Feast of the Jews-Big feasts

- Passover feast- surrender firstborns; Lord passed to smite Egyptians—firstborns died
  - Sheep blood on doors for protection
  - Festival was 7 days; leavened bread removed for 7 days; eat meat of lamb, unleavened bread, thank the Lord
    - We now celebrate this as Eucharist; Jesus is slaughtered lamb
- Pentecost
  - 50 days after Passover; happiness and praise; leavened bread with flour
  - Holy spirit came to disciples on Pentecost
- Feast of tabernacle
  - Feast of vegetables and fruits; after collecting wine, etc.
  - Remember God for 40 years travel; songs; drink everlasting water (If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink)

## Lesson 13

Feasts of Jews-contd

- The small feasts
  - Days of repentance-day of fasting; sept 30<sup>th</sup>; after prayer in altar, it's purification of the people—confess sins with lamb; pray with hand on lamb and set it loose to jungle
  - Purim-haman wanted to destroy jewish tribe, mordecai and esther saved them
  - Feast of dedication-once temple was made clean again and worship restarted, this is dedication for that; celebrated as Christmas
  - Feast of wood offering
  - Feast if trumpets-remember 10 commandments
  - Harvest festival-time of barley harvest; offer some, and then eat of the barley
  - Sabbath- 7<sup>th</sup> day; take rest and praise god
  - Related to Sabbath

## Lesson 14

The sermon on the mount

- After Moses received the Ten Commandments Jesus uttered words of wisdom which is called the Sermon on the Mount

- Summary of all the teachings of Jesus, moral and ethical responsibilities
- Sermon
  - Who are blessed
    - Those who are poor in spirit, mourn, meek, have hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, those persecuted because of righteousness
  - Roles of disciples
    - Spread the light of Jesus
  - New laws that are the fulfillment of the old ones
    - Jesus came to the world to show the real messages of the Old Testament and reveal that it is being fulfilled through Him
    - Morality of Christians should be above others
    - Jesus advises not to take revenge, revenge is equal to murder
    - Never lead others to sin
  - New dimensions to old rituals
    - Giving alms, praying and fasting increases faith
    - Please God through religious practices, not to impress others
    - Refrain from boasting about charity
    - Individual and group prayer is equally important
    - Lent, fasting= self control and repentance
  - Things to be taken care of in the path towards purity
    - Act properly, have a correct outlook and vision
    - Don't live for money, have worries or be anxious for deep prayer removes that
  - Laws and Prophecies in Sermon on the Mount
    1. Two Ways
      - one to destruction the other to eternal life
    2. Two kinds of Prophets
      - true prophet or false prophet
    3. Words and Actions
      - carry out the work of God alone with praise
    4. The foolish man and wise man
      - foolish: doesn't listen or obey the words of Jesus
      - wise: obeys and listens

## Lesson 15

### Christ

- God the father decided to save humans—sent his son; day of Pentecost-holy spirit and tongues...
- Jesus means-one who will save his people from their sins
  - Immanuel
  - Saviour
  - Lamb
  - Son of David
  - Redeemer

## Lesson 16

### Prophecies about Jesus Christ

Prophets prophesized about events centuries ago

1. Jesus Christ being born (place and to whom)
2. Wise men
3. Killing of 2 year old boys
4. Life of Joseph and Mary
5. Public ministry of Jesus
6. Miracles of Jesus
7. Sufferings of Jesus
8. Crucifixion
9. Resurrection

## Lesson 17

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus

- Not even the son of God knows when this is; only the Father knows; there will be signs...
  - Signs
    - Sun will grow dark, moon fades, stars fall from heaven; son of man appears in sky; people will weep and great trumpet will sound—angels to 4 corners of earth
    - Bloodshed, fire, smoke, sun dark, moon will be red as blood; all who ask of Lord will be saved
    - Earthquakes; will come like a thief; heavens disappear and celestial bodies
    - View great white throne and who sits on it; books were opened-book of the living; judgment day; those not in it were thrown in lake of fire
    - Spread the word of salvation

## Lesson 18

### Plan for redemption

- Incarnation of Christ to save mankind-1<sup>st</sup> coming
- With 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, all living and resurrected will be judged and assigned locations-heaven or hell
- Jesus will appear in sky with a trumpet sounding; right before a sign of the cross will appear
- Good people will be transfigured and transformed; this will all happen within seconds.
- Jesus will live with us on the new heaven and earth; old things are gone

## Lesson 19

### The salvation theory

The Salvation Theory

1. Holy Baptism
  - With this we are granted the right to be God's children
2. Through Strong Faith

- Believe that Jesus is the Son of God, shed His blood on the cross to save us from Satan and grant us the right to salvation, died and resurrected, and is sitting on the right hand of the Father and will come again to redeem and save us
- 3. By living a life pleasing to God, obeying his laws
- 4. Through the holy sacrament of Qurbana we live in Christ and Christ lives in us
  - participating alone makes us eligible for salvatopm
- 5. True remorse
  - remorse: sorrow about evilness and to live away from sin and desire for withdrawal from sin after confession
  - no one is truly righteous so repentance is needed
- Heavenly Experience
  - -Father, Son, Holy Spirit, angels, and the faithful

## Lesson 20

### The kingdom of God

- a. The kingdom of god has no geographical limits and cannot be seen by the naked eye.
- b. The Holy Trinity is in Heaven
- c. To enter the Kingdom of God as Humans on earth we must repent, do good deeds, and try to live a Christian life.

## Lesson 21

### The Holy Spirit

- in Godliness, the 3 personalities or entities are called Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Holy Spirit is Father and Son
- “He” as in the gospel of St. John

#### Description of Holy Spirit

- eternal, everywhere, knows everything, powerful, glorious, creator, Lord of being born again, controller of prophetic messages, appoints gospel workers, decides where the gospel should be preached, helps, gives life to everything, speaks through prophets, lives with only righteous people, lives in church and holey people, gives priests to forgive sins

#### Holy Spirit is compared to:

- fire which purifies and shines, powerful wind, oil which is soothing, dove which is gentle and innocent, inner voice which speaks to know the way

#### Sins against the Holy Spirit

- to test, to say evil things, to lie, protest, to ignore gifts, to make it sad

## Lesson 22

### History: Early Christian Church

- AD 30-70—apostolic period; Luke writes the history in the Acts of the Apostles; even after Ascension, believers still went to temples; after martyrdom of stephen, Christians were unique
- The resurrection is the driving force; Sadducees were thus hated; Saul of Tarsus converted to Paul
- AD 70—Romans destroyed temple of Jerusalem
- AD 70-110—apostolic disciples period; New testament books
- Romans worshipped idols; Christians refused atheism; prayer in secret at night
- AD 55-313—rule of Nero...christians were persecuted

- Christian church was prohibited—thus no freedom; only faithful were members
- Constantine—war leader; put cross on all weapons; removed restrictions on Christians—all Sundays were now public holidays
  - Conducted first synod in Nicea; resurrection was accepted
- Under Queen Helene (mother of Constantine), people to Jerusalem to find crucifixion cross—sept. 14<sup>th</sup> (sleeba perunnal)
  - Constantine captured Byzantium—now Constantinople—christian area
- Heresy started by Patriarch of Constantinople (Nestorius)
  - Jesus had man and God in him—suffering was of man; Mary was mother only in sense of nature and personality
  - MAR KOORIOSE—declared Jesus had both human and divine natures; we have right to call Mary the mother of God

## Lesson 23

The roman catholic church

- Catholic church—very close to ours
- Ignatius Zakka Iwas and Pope John Paul proclaimed through a joint declaration that there is a unity in fundamental issues
  - Ecumenical relationship
- Acceptance of intermarriages; work as a group
- St Peter and Paul found church of Rome
- Missionary activities of catholic church
  - Much initiative to spread the word; Europe was a big land mass to conquer
- Growth of theology
  - Church in W. Europe known as Catholic Church
  - Not many theologians at first
    - St Augustine
    - THOMAS AQUINAS—considered to be greatest theologian of church; study of theology led to universities
- Growth of papacy
  - Accept bishop of Rome
  - Also great monastic movement
    - Benedict order—greatly inspired W spirituality
    - Augustinian movement
    - Cistercian movement—strict about relations; no lengthy prayers; St Bernard
    - Dominican order
    - Franciscan order
- Reformation in the catholic church
  - Martin Luther, John Calvin, Zwingli—to check this, they launched counter reformation

## Lesson 24

Modern Age: 17<sup>th</sup> Century

- Modern Age: 17<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Much of Europe was Catholic
  - In 1829, Catholic church was given permission to worship in England
  - Pope Pius IX proclaimed that Virgin Mary is considered to be free of inherited sin
  - Infallibility of the Pope theory: shepherd and teacher of all the Christians and according to his apostolic powers when he proclaims any declarations regarding faith

- Pope Leo XIII found over 290 dioceses all over the world

## Lesson 25

Catholic Church-20<sup>th</sup> century

- Pope pious X-reformed liturgy of church

## Lesson 26

Protestant Churches

- Christian churches in Europe were under control of Roman Pope; he had temporal powers other than confined to religion too!
- Papal supremacy tried to be modified---main person for reformation was Thomas Aquinas
- Martin Luther wrote of his arguments with the system of the church and posted his theses on the church at wittenberg!—start of reformation.
  - Meeting—discussed not to hinder liturgy worship, or traditions of Catholic church—from this...protestants came to be
  - Idea behind reformation beliefs:
    - All believers of church have priesthood
    - Justification is through faith and not rituals
    - Bible is basis; Holy communion and Baptism are most important

Protestant Churches

- Pope ruled over Christian churches during Middle Ages in Europe
- many gave up to the Pope
- bad things came from this, reformation ignored

Reformers

- Thomas Aquinas, Thomas E. Kempis, Catherine Nun of Siena, Savanorola, John Wickliffe

Martin against indulgence

- wrote many articles to churches
- questioned many things
- wrote in German after being threatened with death penalty

Protestants

- led by Martin Luther
- strictly against Catholic traditions

Zwiryli- Switzerland reformation; John Calvin- French reformation; John Knox-Scotland reformation

## Lesson 27

Anglican Church

- Known as church of England—leader was Canterbury Archbishop; reformation (Martin luther)
- Henry VIII-divorce of Catherine of Aragon; pope denied...he then declared church of England as the head of church; supremacy act—those who didn't join church were persecuted
- 2 bodies for church
  - Convocation with Diocesan Bishops and Priests
  - National assembly of priests and laymen
- Church missionary society; gospel spreading society; oxford mission, etc.

- Follows the protestant faith, but still many traditions of Roman Catholic church
  - 2 sections of Anglican church:
    - High church-importance to rituals
    - Low church-importance to preaching of God
- Anglican Church in India
  - Bishop middleton-calcutta
  - 13 dioceses—madras, Bombay, Colombo.....
  - From 1930, known as the church of india, Burma, and Ceylon
- IN 1947, CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA was formed; THEN CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA...after this, Anglican dioceses left church of England

## Lesson 28

### Other protestant churches

- Presbyterian church-same as church of England –john knox
  - Not Episcopal; led by an elder
- Methodist church-largest protestant church in the world—john Wesley
- Congregational church- gathering of parishners; all members are of equal status
- Baptist church-concept of adult baptism- mainly focus on sermons
- Society of friends or quakers-
- Salvation army-no baptism, holy communion, or priesthood—william booth
- Marthoma church- strong relationship w/ protestant churches
  - Presbyterian Church
    - Scotland church holds the same status of Anglican Church in England
    - John Knox initiated the reformation in Scotland
    - After Knox’s period Scotland came under the rule of England and the church tried to force them under the Anglican church, but the people resisted
    - 1661: Presbyterian Church was declared the Established church of Scotland
    - Not an Episcopal church, but led by an elder
    - Church later spread to England, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Hungary, U.S, India, China, and Africa
  - Methodist Church (Wesleyan Church)
    - Largest protestant church in the world
    - John Wesley established this church
    - Named after the way everything is systematically run
    - Different branches: Methodist England, Methodist Episcopal church of USA, Primitive Methodist, United Methodist, Methodist New Connection
    - Similarities in faith, different in set up
- Congregational Church
  - Means gathering of those in the parish
  - Independence from all formal functioning of the church
  - All members have the same status and freedom in the church
  - Church is a gathering of faithful people for service and togetherness
  - Priests- ministers, have no special blessings or rights above anyone else
  - When Queen Elizabeth said that all members must use the Anglican prayer book this church was established as protest

- 1689 officially accepted in England
- Baptist Church
  - Basic belief is concept of Adult Baptism
  - Baptism is a symbol of spiritual rebirth and is done to witness Jesus in the world
  - Pastors and deacons but no prayer book
  - Based on sermons, bible study and singing
  - Many subgroups
  - All members are of priestly class
- Society of Friends
  - Believed that every faithful person must live according to His spiritual light
  - Prayed with wavering voices and shivering bodies
  - Observed silence in most of the time of prayer
  - No creed, church, priests or sacraments
  - Oppose participation in any war
- Salvation Army
  - William Booth: founder
  - Do not have baptism, holy communion, priesthood
  - Different positions are titled general, major, captain, corporal
- Marthoma Church
  - Formed in 1888
  - Inter-communion with CSI and CNI churches
  - Have traditions of the oriental churches, robes of priesthood, celibacy for bishops, dress code of the clergy, hierarchy in church
  - Described as lesser eastern churches

## Lesson 29

### Ecumenical movement

- Ecumenical Movement
  - Ecumenical: whole, inhabited world
  - As time passed different regions accepted different rituals and ways of administration
  - Even if beliefs are different the hope was that churches could work together in other aspects other than faith and liturgy
  - Not known when or who started it
  - Translation of Bible helped this movement
  - Bible Society est. 1084 by Anglican church started Y.M.C.A and Y.W.C.A.
  - 1937: 122 protestant churches took part in the meeting in Edinburgh to discuss unification in faith and rituals
  - 1948: first world council of churches meeting was held in Amsterdam
    - 147 churches took part
      - All major churches except the Roman Catholic Church

## Lesson 30

### The true faith (orthodoxy)

- Sum of ones beliefs and rituals and life
  - Inner spirituality in old testament church

- Experience god and total metamorphosis of man
- Glory of god—experiences of god and powerful transformation it brings to humanity
- In new testament church
  - Experience god and participate in the mystery of the incarnation of god
  - Know the human experience at the time of incarnation

## Lesson 31

History of inner Christian spirituality

History of Christian Inner Spirituality

- Be ready for second coming at all times
- breaking bread, sharing messages, prayer symbolize Jesus Christ born and died and rose again
- based on martyrdom dues to sacrifice

## Lesson 32

Eastern Spirituality

### I. **Eastern Spirituality**

- a. Spirituality that exists in eastern churches and countries
- b. Based on Holy Bible
- c. Eastern churches give importance to spirituality which each believer feels through the holy sacraments and which he experiences in his worldly life
- d. Working of the Holy spirit is given great importance
- e. **Merge divinity into worldliness**
- f. Importance give to the divine intervention that is beyond human intelligence—this is why easterners feel the divine presence of God through the holy sacraments
- g. Consider spirituality in its social outlook to the general people...

#### Important Facts

1. Centered on the TRINITY
  - a. Father, Son, Holy Spirit
  - b. We see God’s love in the creation of earth and man
  - c. Total submission in the front of this love, and to sing and praise him—this is the real spirituality! Individual prayers are great...but our belief is that God knows what goes on in our lives...He will take care of that, so offer praise to Him.
  - d. Baptized believers receive Holy Spirit
2. Giving importance to the working of the Holy Spirit
  - a. Very important in the lives of people...
  - b. Holy Spirit works with believers and fulfills holy sacraments—mediums of salvation.
  - c. Apostle Paul defined the Christian life as the life in the Holy Spirit
3. Eastern Spirituality is based on sacraments
  - a. These are mediums toward salvation
  - b. By partaking in this, each person becomes a part of the spirituality of Christ
  - c. Transformed into an inseparable part of salvation
  - d. Grows in spirit and into the completeness of Christ
  - e. First one is holy Baptism—being born again

- i. Removed from clan of Adam, deep in sins, and joins tribe of Jesus—the second Adam...the new generation of humans
    - ii. Holy Mooron—rids one of his old sinful self, joins the church, and becomes God’s son or daughter
    - iii. Very important...absorb the meaning of baptism
      - 1. John the Baptist—predecessor to Christ, public ministry, crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension to heaven, second coming
  - f. HOLY QURBANA is above the limitations of place and time...with this...you basically accept these thoughts:
    - i. John the Baptist—predecessor to Christ, public ministry, crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension to heaven, second coming
    - ii. The church—body of Christ—and spiritual body—flesh and blood—become one identity...
4. Eastern Spirituality is based on worship
    - a. Brings man closer to God
    - b. Without a strong relationship with God, spirituality is incomplete
  5. Eastern Spirituality stresses the importance of learning theology
    - a. Not confined to rituals and traditions alone
    - b. Equal importance to learning theology
  6. Conclusion
    - a. Visualizing God is important
    - b. Participation in the incarnation of God is necessary
    - c. Based on theology...and the essence of the sacramental spirituality...
    - d. EQUAL IMPORTANCE to worship and human service
- II. Western Spirituality**
- a. Consider spirituality and understanding God as two different topics—knowing God based on spirituality is the eastern way of thinking
  - b. Separate divine things and worldly things**
  - c. Importance given to intellectual thinking and written codes of practice
  - d. Consider spirituality as something special to the individual...everyone has their own prayers..etc...
- Important Facts
1. Centered primarily around Jesus Christ and not the Trinity
  2. Base your argument on what counters Eastern Spirituality...

## Lesson 33

### The divided churches

- o Rome was famous and important from the beginning
  - o Rome and Constantinople: centers of power and administration
  - o Antioch and Alexandria: centers of learning and knowledge
  - o Constantinople brought the golden period and ended persecution of Christians
  - o Rome tried to establish supremacy over the other churches
- Aims of Council
    1. To defeat Dioscorus
    2. To accept the Tome of Leo
    3. Establish the supremacy of Rome in the field of Theology
    - o Leon’s tome: human and divine natures of Jesus are separate and all of His activities can be divided into human and divine

- Nestorius argued that Jesus had two personalities and two kinds of nature
- Decision at the council of Ephesus in AD 431 was that the personality of Jesus can't be separated as human and god and his nature into human and divine
- Evuthicos taught that human nature and divine nature merges and become one
- The teaching of our church: divine nature in completeness and human nature in completeness except for sin are inseparable in one essence
- After incarnation Jesus was complete man and complete God
- Oriental orthodox churches: did not accept the double personality theory
  - Syrian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Abyssinian Orthodox

## Lesson 34

### Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch

- Most ancient
- Followers of Jesus were first called Christians in Antioch
- Third biggest town of roman empire
- Center of greek culture and learning
- Famous center of trade
- Reasons that church became weak
  - Persecution from the double personal group after Chalcedon council
  - Earthquake in the 6<sup>th</sup> century
  - Persian attack in 538
  - Arabs invaded and conquered Antioch in 638
- Dayara Movement
  - Many forefathers suffered to keep the faith pure
  - All these forefathers were for Dayara
  - Started in 3<sup>rd</sup> Century
- Dayara of Mar Mathai
  - Mosul, Iraw
  - 4<sup>th</sup> century
  - Abraham, Zaki and Daniel were other leaders in Dayara
- Dayara of Mar Barsouma
  - Called eternal rest
  - AD 457
  - Church acknowledges his purity and his name is included in 5<sup>th</sup> Thubden
- Dayara of Mar Haniya
  - From beginning to end, had 80 inmates
  - Had a library
  - Patriarchs used to live there
- Dayaras for nuns also
- Destuno Mar Semavoon Destoona: people who lived ascetic lives
  - Meditated from pillars
- Muslim rule before the crusade helped Christians
- The Syrian church made many contributions to science, medicine, astrology, history, and theology

## Lesson 35

### Coptic Church

- Patriarchal throne at Alexandria was est. at Council of Nicea
- Mostly Egyptians
- Language for liturgy- Coptic
- Misraim- present day Egypt
- Egypt: Abraham went and lived, Israelis grew in number, instruction of Angel, Joseph and Mary took Baby Jesus
- Apostle Mark est. the church in Egypt by Paul's instruction
- Mark: first patriarch

- School of Theology at Alexandria

- Est. by Mark, but no documented proof
- Pantenus: first important person in charge
- Became weak because the persecution of Arabs

- Persecution faced by Coptic Church

- Tortured by many
- Emperor Setpimius Severus was the first to persecute
  - Laws were passed prohibiting conversion to Christianity
  - School at Alexandria was sealed
- Emeror Deiys was next
  - Passed a law which everyone had to obtain a certificate from the regional magistrate that offerings were given to idols
- Emperor Diolcletian
  - All believers were expelled from the army, churches were demolished, books were destroyed, wealth of Christians were confiscated, government jobs were terminated, church meetings were prohibited
- Cyrus with military preparation tortured, jailed and killed many, and confiscated wealth
- When the Arabs invaded, Patriarch Alexandrios II was put in jail and the Coptic language was banned making Arabic the language
- Coptic church never truly regained the old glory

- Coptic-Catholic Church

- Many attempts to bring the Coptic Church under the Catholic Church
- All which failed

- Church Associations

- Majlis-Al-Mili established
  - Wanted authority to rule and to decide who should be ordained as priests

- Coptic Church Today

- Headquarters: Cairo, Egypt
- People from Egypt, Sudan, other African countries, and Middle Eastern countries belong to this church
- 39 dioceses, 12 monasteries, 6 convents
- Committee of church members, priests and metropolitans choose the Patriarch
- Synod has the main role in administrative matters
- Bishop- 50 years must be completed
- Priest- 25 years must be completed
- Christmas: January 6
- Easter: one week after the Passover of the Jews

## Lesson 36

### Armenian Orthodox Church

- first country which accepted Christianity as the official religion
- St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew- apostles who spread the gospel here
- no church documents for two and a half centuries
- Christianity spread fast during the time of King Tiridatus III and Gregor
- gentiles joined the church in large numbers, temples were converted
- by laws were written when Gregory was Catholicos
- church was divided into dioceses, headquarters were built, and bishops ordained
- Gregor Partov- greatest missionary/administrator the world had ever seen
- Armenian church known as Catholicos
- AD 387- AD 439 under St. Isahak's rule- golden period in the history of Armenian Church
- many things were changed
  - marriage between blood relatives banned
  - pagan customs and rituals forbidden
  - money only for hospitals, leprosy sanitariums, houses for blind, orphans, widows, rest houses for travelers, monasteries for Dayara people
- at first everything was in the greek or syriac language, later it changed to Armenian
- many attempts were made to bring the Armenian Church under Constantinople and to make them accept the dual nature theory, but the Armenian Church didn't give in
- 13<sup>th</sup> century- established relation with Catholic church
  - still didn't accept the dual nature theory
- now it is agreed upon the belief that the Holy Spirit comes from the father and is respected and praised alone with the father and son
- 15 churches are known as eastern orthodox
- 18<sup>th</sup> century- Catholics tried to bring the church under the control of Rome through negotiation but when that failed they tried to force them under roman rule and that also failed.
- 157 days- fasting
- christmas- jan. 6

## Lesson 37

### Ethiopian Orthodox Church

- One of the oldest; oriental orthodox; used to only worship one God
- Legend says through Queen Sheba and King Menelik, started to believe in one God
- Gospel reached in 1<sup>st</sup> century, gospel work in 4<sup>th</sup>; Coptic missionaries Frumentius and Eddesius put the foundation—God led them there
  - Started on journey to india; shipwrecked and landed in Ethiopia; king appointed Eddesius as his wine carrier and Frumentius as secretary; Esena, the king, and people were baptized in Christianity
  - Later they returned to own country; frumentius was member of Coptic church so Ethiopian church sided with them
- Connections of Ethiopia to Syrian church—AD 480, 9 fathers reached Ethiopia
  - Though muslims were strong in Ethiopia, no persecution faced as Coptic and Syrian churches once did
- Relationship w/ catholic church

- People from rome came to make connections; they agreed to join catholic church, but emperor disagreed and it didn't happen
- 1558-catholic bishop ovido decided to use force; soon the bishop died and nothing happened
- Pope ordained Alphonso Mendex as Patriarch, and sent him to Ethiopia; baptized Christians; 1936 italy conquered Ethiopia, bringing Catholicism...a small part today
- Coptic relationship w/ Ethiopia
  - Aboona-coptic person ordained by patriarch—was chosen to rule Ethiopian church
  - Emperor Johannes IV wanted to make Ethiopian church independent of Coptic; people objected
  - Aboona Mathews died, and new admin took over
    - Coptic was ordained as aboona (metropolitan of church)
      - 4 Ethiopian bishops under him; today Ethiopian church is independent
- Faith and sacraments
  - Own special features—likes jews, the Sabbath day is on Saturday
  - Circumcision, old testament laws, etc still exist
  - Very punctual about sacraments and fasting-250 days in a year consist of fasting—only vegetarian food at this time; no food until 3 pm on these days too
  - Primary education to church and liturgy, and songs; Christmas in Jan 7<sup>th</sup>.