



St. Thomas Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church Los Angeles

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Vicar's Desk



By Rev. Fr. Yohannan Panicker

What is Holy Qurbana?

Holy Qurbana is worship and a sacrament.

The Holy Qurbana is a systematic form of public worship, most beautiful and exhilarating. It is also an important sacrament. Above all, it is the most perfect of all sacraments. It was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ himself. He specially entrusted it to his disciples. It is food and salvation for our souls. We are connected to Him by the body and blood of Christ through this sacrament. Therefore, it is magnificent, truly attractive and it excels above everything. Melchizedek, the chief priest of God, (who lived at the time of Abraham) made an offering through bread and wine as a foreshadowing of this. This is described in Genesis 14:18 - "Then Melchizedek King of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was a priest of God Most High." During the Old Testament days, it was celebrated through the sacrifice of innocent lambs. In the fullness of time, this sacrifice was fulfilled with the Holy body of the lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Today, the church commemorates this offering through this sacrament. It will continue until the end of the world ("Until I am coming back"). This sacred sacrament is full of several great and deep mysteries.

----To be continued ----

Special Topic

Diptychs (Thubden) - The Great Intercessions

The Diptychs are part of the Holy Qurbana. These are the prayers of Great Intercession.

Diptychs were hinged two-leaved tablets of wood or metal containing on one leaf, the names of those among the living, and on the other those among the dead, for whom prayers are said. The early Christians carried these Diptychs with them wherever they traveled, so that they could say the intercessory prayers. In the 5th Thubden, we say the intercessory prayers for the departed spiritual fathers and doctors of the church. They were the great souls of the Orthodox Christian Church. This column attempts to give details about the early spiritual fathers of the church.

Saint James of Jerusalem (Mar Yacoub)

Holy Apostle James, the Brother of God (Adelphotheos) was the son of St. Joseph the Betrothed of St. Mary, the Mother of God (Theotokos) and was about 11 years old when our Lord Jesus Christ was born. St. Joseph had four sons with his first wife. The other three sons were: Josse, Jude and Simon (St. James' brothers). He accompanied St. Joseph and St. Mary to Bethlehem for Christ's birth and then to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath. From his early years, James was a Nazarene, a man especially dedicated to God. The Nazarenes vowed to preserve their virginity, to abstain from wine, to refrain from eating meat, and not to cut their hair. The vow of the Nazarenes symbolized a life of holiness and purity, commanded by Jehovah, the Lord for all Israel. When the Savior began to teach the nation about the Kingdom of God, St. James believed in Christ and became His apostle. The Lord Himself chose St. James as the first Bishop of Jerusalem. He worked many miracles such as healing the sick. He was a scholar and a very prayerful and pious ascetic.

St. James presided over the Council (Synod) of Jerusalem (50 A.D) and his word was decisive (Acts 15). In his 30 years as bishop, St. James converted many of the Jews to Christianity. Annoyed by this, the Pharisees and the Scribes plotted together to kill St. James. They led the saint up on the pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem and asked what he thought

of Jesus. The holy Apostle began to bear witness that Christ is the Messiah, which was not the response the Pharisees were expecting. Greatly angered, the Jewish teachers threw him off the roof. The saint did not die immediately, but gathering his final strength, he prayed to the Lord for his enemies while they were stoning him. St. James' martyrdom occurred in 63 A.D.

The holy Apostle James composed a Divine Liturgy (Holy Qurbana), which formed the basis of the Liturgies of St. Basil (Mar Baselious) the Great and St. John Chrysostom (Mar Ivanios) used today throughout the Orthodox Church. He first celebrated the Holy Qurbana at the Sehion mansion. The Church has preserved an Epistle of St. James, one of the books of the New Testament. He wrote this Epistle addressed to the Jews that were scattered outside (Diaspora) Palestine.

By Thomas Joseph

Children's Corner

Social Injustice

Have you ever felt that someone did not treat you as fairly as they treated others? Well, this is known as personal injustice. Have you ever experienced a time when your group and another group of people did not treat each other fairly? Well, this is known as social injustice.

In the law, it is already explained that everyone must treat each other equally. We are all created the same, so there is no reason to treat other people with disrespect. It would be injustice if we did so. Of course when it comes to priests, we should treat them with high respect.

Our responsibility as a Christian is to bear the injustice (if it is personal). If it is done to the poor, needy, or the weak, we have to stand in the name of Christ. We have to fight against unjust authority and declare what is right. We are all here for a reason, and each and every one of us is made equally. We will each accomplish something different, but we should not hate on each other or become jealous. We

should treat each other with the same amount of respect and God will bless us for that.

By Stephanie Mathew

Marvahtho (Fan)



A Fan shaped silver object mounted on a long pole. In the center of the fans, the seraphic face and wings are represented. The fans symbolize the presence of angels around the altar. The sounds represent the seraphim's and the flutter of their wings around the mysteries. It is carried in processions and shaken at the most solemn parts of the Qurbana.

Bible Trivia

1. Who named each living creature?
2. Name the rivers in Eden Garden?
3. Which are the main two trees in Eden Garden?
4. Name the man who died first?
5. Name the two people who walk with God?

Answers in next edition

Answers From Last Month Trivia:

1. From the Greek word *Biblyon* [The Book]
2. 14 rivers and 19 Mountains.
3. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.
Mathew 22:37-39
4. Love one another as I have loved you. *John: 15:12*
5. Jesus feed 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish.

By Lalu Kurian

Daily Bible Reading:

25 th April	Hebrews 7:1-6; Mark 13: 1-13
26 th April	Hebrews 7:7-20; Mark 13: 14-23
27 th April	Hebrews 7:21-28; Mark 13: 24-37
28 th April	Hebrews 8:1-13; Mark 14:
29 th April	Hebrews 9:1-10; John 6:1-14
30 th April	Hebrews 9:11-23; John 6: 15-21
1st May	Fourth Sunday after New Sunday Hebrews 11: 32-40, Luke 9: 51 - 62
2 nd May	Hebrews 9:24-28
3 rd May	Hebrews 10:1-10
4 th May	Hebrews 10:11-18;
5 th May	Ascension of our Lord. Ephesians 4: 1-16, Luke 24 : 36 - 53
6 th May	Hebrews 10:19-25;
7 th May	Hebrews 10:26-31
8th May	Sunday before Pentecost (Sunday of the Monks) 1 Corinthians 9: 1-14; John 17: 13 -26
9 th May	Hebrews 10:32-39; John 6: 22-29
10 th May	1 Cor. 9:15-23; John 6: 30-40
11 th May	Proverbs 1; John 6: 41-50
12 th May	Proverbs 2; John 6: 51-59
13 th May	Proverbs 3; John 6: 60-71
14 th May	Proverbs 4; John 7: 1-8
15th May	Pentecost (50th day after Easter) Sunday School day Galatians 5 : 16 – 26, John 15: 1 - 14
16 th May	Proverbs 5; John 7: 9-19
17 th May	Proverbs 6; John 7: 20-27
18 th May	Proverbs 7; John 7: 28-32
19 th May	Proverbs 8; John 7: 33-36
20 th May	1 Cor. 12: 28-13: 10, Matthew 19: 23 - 30
21 st May	Proverbs 9; John 6: 1-25
22nd May	Sunday Pentecost I 2 Corinthians 5: 14 - 6:10, John 6: 26-35



Schedules

Sunday Service:

Namaskaram	: 9.00 am – 9.45 am
Holy Qurbana	: 9.45 am onwards
English	: 1 st & 2 nd Sunday
Malayalam	: 3 rd , 4 th & 5 th Sunday



Prayer Corner

Prayer Group Meeting:

Corona prayer meeting will be held at the residence of Mr. Soomodh Abraham on Saturday May 28th 2005 at 5.00 PM.

Sunday School:

Every Sunday After the Church:

04/30/05 - OVBS Conference / Workshop (Western Region)

05/22/05 - Sunday school Final Exam – Summer Begins

Church Events:

May 5th : Ascension of our Lord
Holy Qurbana at 6.30 PM

Have any Questions?

OR

**Your Comments may be directed
Editorial Board**

Rev. Fr. Yohannan Panicker
Mr. Gigi Kurian, Mr. Mathew Varughese
And Mr. John P. Varughese