

Part III - The Service of the Sacrifice

The Prayer for Peace

- The Priest ascends to the *darga*, which symbolizes Christ's entering into the mansion of Zion to observe the Passover
- The prayer for peace and the kiss of peace are conducted in accordance with the command of the Lord (Matthew 5:23 ; 6:12) that before offering sacrifice one should be reconciled with God and with one's brethren

The Prayer of Benediction

- Prayer for the faithful who stand with their heads bowed throughout the prayer
- Bowing is the external sign of adoration and perfect dedication

The Prayer of Dedication

- The community is dedicated completely before the mercy of the Lord
- It is with the strong belief that we can be saved only through divine mercy

The Celebration of the 'Susopo'

- The raising up in celebration of the *Susopo* => opening up of heaven
- The fluttering and raising up and down of the *Susopo* => we are lifted up to the heavenly Jerusalem and the heavenly angels descend towards us
- *Susopo* is compared to the ladder Jacob saw in Bethel => Angels descend to earth and ascend to heaven through this ladder
- *Susopo* is compared to the rock from which water flowed to Israelites => the living water, divine grace flowed out from Christ, the spiritual rock to the Church in abundance
- *Susopo* is considered as the rock that used to cover the entrance of the tomb of the Lord => fluttering signifies the earth-quake and the removal realizes the resurrection

The Apostolic Blessing

- Based on the salutation of St. Paul to the Corinthians (II Cor. 13:14)
- This blessing in the name of the Trinity signifies that the offering of the sacrifice is centered on the Trinity

The Praise of Angels

- The Priest requests the attention of the faithful to heaven through special invitation

- Heaven is symbolically opened, the heavenly angels and earthly human beings praise God in unison singing: 'Holy, Holy, Holy'
- This hymn is made combining the vision of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:3), the vision of John (Revelation 4:8) and the singing of Hosanna at the time of the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:9 ; Luke 19:38 ; Psalm 118:26)
- 'Holy' is said thrice, but Lord God is said once => one God is celebrated as three
- Priests fluttering of hands => indicates the fluttering of the wings of the angels in heaven during praising God

The words of Institution

- Jesus, at the last supper in the mansion of Zion, took bread and wine and having blessed, changed them into his body and blood and gave them to his disciples
 - Took bread => Jesus taking flesh from the virgin
 - Give thanks => asking permission from the Father
 - Blessed and sanctified => Jesus sacrificed his body for the earthly beings
 - Broke => signifies the passion and death on the cross
 - Gave to the disciples => Entrusted the faithful
- The bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus, firstly for the remission of sins and secondly for eternal life.

The Memorial Observance

- Through the invitation, 'Do this in memory of me', the Priest makes clear that the Holy Qurbano is the memorial of all the saving events of Jesus.
- The spoon is taken from the left and having touched the edge of the chalice, paten, tablet and his own fore-head, the Priest, through rising up, moves it towards the right side
 - Touching the chalice and paten => the death of Jesus is remembered
 - Touching the tablet => burial of Jesus is reminded
 - Touching the fore-head => His resurrection is signified
 - Raising the golden spoon from the left to the right side and lowering it swiftly depicts the second coming of Jesus
 - The cushion on which the Spoon is placed => signifies the throne and keeping both on the right indicates the sitting of Jesus at the right side of the Father at the last judgement

The Prayer of Inviting the Holy Spirit

- All sacraments are perfected with the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- The Priest fluttering his hands just as a dove => signifies the majestic descent of the Holy Spirit up on the Holy Mysteries

- 'Answer me O! Lord,' => The prayer of Elijah on Mount Carmel
- The bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Jesus through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit on the offerings of the sacrifice indicates that God is pleased with the sacrifice and he has accepted it (Acts 2:1 ; Deuteronomy 7:1 ; I Kings 18:38)

The Prayers of Intercession

- They are called *Tubden* in Syriac
- These prayers entreat that the Holy Spirit should work not only in the offerings but also in the needs of the faithful.
- There are altogether 18 prayers
 - Six prayers the Servers recites publicly
 - Six prayers each the Priest says publicly and silently
 - The first half of the prayers is for the living and the second half is for the dead.
- The personal petition of each one could be offered before God during this time

The Blessing in the Name of Jesus Christ

- After a greeting of peace, the Priest blesses the people in the name of Jesus Christ, the Majestic God and our Saviour.