

## **THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

The word Genesis comes from the Greek translation and it means Origin, Source, Creation whereas in the Hebrew translation means the beginning.

### **Meaning of the Creation stories to the readers**

- The stories show that God is the sole creator of every thing e.g man, fish, animals, etc.
- They show that God is the initiator of marriage thus God saw that it was not good for man to stay alone.
- They show that God is all-knowing (Omniscient) i.e He saw that it was not good for man to stay alone.
- They show that God is every where i.e on earth and heaven (Omnipresent)
- They show that God is the source of life for man, animals, fish and all other creatures.
- They show that God has no origin i.e He was there before creation.
- They also indicate that God is in Trinity by the use of “US” i.e had the father, son and the Holy Spirit.
- They show that God was a worker i.e he worked for six days before he rested and even practically formed mankind.
- There is also a call to respect leisure time i.e to observe the Sabbath day.
- They show that man was given the power to control the rest of the creations i.e both domestic and wild animals even the birds.
- They indicate that God is a spirit i.e He was moving over the waters and the earth.
- God is seen as a designer e.g He made man from soil and woman from a man's rib.
- God is seen as being very perfect i.e He was ever pleased with whatever he had created.
- God is seen as a source of blessings i.e He blessed man to go and produce and subdue the earth.
- Man is seen as the summit of creation in Genesis 1 i.e man was created last.
- Man is to depend on God alone since he is the creator.

*QN. What does the author of Genesis 1 and 2 intend his readers to grasp?*

### **Lessons / relevancies of the creation stories to Christians**

- ✓ They should be faithful to God alone because he is the sole creator of every thing.
- ✓ They should depend on God alone because he is all powerful and a provider.
- ✓ They should be holy because they were created in the image of God.
- ✓ They should keep the Sabbath day holy since God himself observed it.
- ✓ They should have monogamous type of marriage because it was the original plan of God.
- ✓ They should always thank God for he loved mankind.
- ✓ They should work as a normal activity because even God worked for six days.
- ✓ They should always ask God for whatever they want since he is the provider of every thing.

- ✓ They should value and respect the gift of life because it is God given.
- ✓ They should treat both male and female as equal before God.
- ✓ They should produce children and subdue the world.
- ✓ They should always work for God's blessings since he is the source of all blessings.

### **The creation of Human beings / mankind Genesis 1:27 and 2**

*Qn1. Comment on the creation of man as recorded in Genesis 1 and 2.*

*2. Examine the characteristics of man according to Genesis.*

- Genesis 1 shows that man was created at the end of God's creation.
- Genesis 1 shows that God created human beings, both male and female.
- Genesis 1 shows that God created mankind in his own image and likeness.
- Genesis 1 shows that man was created and given freedom to choose what he wanted.
- Male and female were created, blessed and were to have many children.
- Genesis 1 shows that man was given responsibility to control the rest of the creation.
- Genesis 2 shows that man was to worship and fellowship with God alone.
- Chapter 2 shows that man is composed of materials derived from the ground i.e man was made from soil.
- Chapter 2 shows that both man and woman were naked but not ashamed.
- Man was provided with all kinds of grains and fruits to eat.
- Chapter 2 shows that man was created first and then woman.
- Chapter 1 shows that man was created and was to live forever.

### **The meaning of God's creation of man from soil.**

- ❖ It means that man is mortal i.e he is to go back to soil (die).
- ❖ It means that man is weak like clay and therefore must rely on his porter or creator.
- ❖ It means that man is to depend on God alone for everything. It shows that God is all powerful as he made man from soil.
- ❖ It shows that God is a worker as he used his hands to create man.
- ❖ Means that man is liable to sin since he is weak like clay.
- ❖ Means that God is a designer in the way he created man from soil.
- ❖ Means that man is supposed to pray to God for guidance.
- ❖ Means that man is supposed to follow all God's commandments or else can be punished.
- ❖ Since man is clay, he is supposed to live a simple life or else can be destroyed.
- ❖ Means that God is the source of life and man is meant to respect him.
- ❖ Shows that God is the creator of mankind and can determine his destiny.

*Qn. Analyze the meaning of God's creation of man from earthly materials.*

## **Meaning/ importance of God' s creation of man in his own image and likeness. Genesis 1:27**

- Meant that man was made different from other creatures.
- Meant that it' s only man of all creatures who resembles God.
- Shows that man has to fellowship with God.
- Shows that of all creatures, only man has a close relationship with God.
- Shows that of all creatures, it' s only man who can worship God in a special way.
- Shows that man has to co-create with God.
- Shows that man is the master of all creation (masterdom)
- Shows that man has got some qualities of God though not in totality.
- Shows that of all creatures, man is different in reasoning, belief and character.
- Shows that man has got the ability to know what is right and wrong.
- Shows that man and woman are equal before God since they both reflect God' s character.
- Shows that man is supposed to be holy since his creator is holy.
- Shows that man is supposed to love God and his fellow man.
- Shows that man is supposed to depend on God, his creator.
- Shows that it' s only man' s duties or activities that can be referred to as work.
- Shows that man was given the gift of pro-creation (produce children).
- Shows that God initiated marriage.

## **How man has failed to live up to God' s image and likeness today.**

- ✓ By worshipping God alongside other gods and idols.
- ✓ Man commits murder, steals, e.t.c
- ✓ Mankind is corrupt and practices injustice in courts of law.
- ✓ There is a lot of hypocrisy (pretence) among people.
- ✓ Churches are being used as places for making money by pastors.
- ✓ Today, religion is being used by some people to get wealth by commercializing blessings.
- ✓ Today, some pastors are using demonic powers to perform miracles.
- ✓ Among the youths, there is a lot of immorality eg fornication, nude dancing, homosexuality, etc
- ✓ Today, very many people have abandoned the Sabbath day.
- ✓ There is a lot of indescnt dressing among women.
- ✓ Today, there is a lot of human sacrifice, kidnap, etc
- ✓ There is a lot of beautifying among women i.e they bleach themselves.

## **How man has lived up to God' s image and likeness today.**

- Some people are keen at fellowshiping with God by constantly praying.
- Some Christians are servants of others.
- Some people have provided clothing, food, blankets to those affected with disasters.
- Some people keep the Sabbath holy through worshipping God.
- Some people have maintained God' s original plan of marriage which is monogamous.
- There is observance and following of the commandments.

- Some people respond to God' s call positively and act as pastors, nuns, etc
- The faithful ones have tried to call people back to God.
- Some people respect religious festivals like Easter day.
- Some people are not ashamed of their faith by being road side preachers.
- In some cases there is respect of human rights.
- God is praised in various ways eg through praying, singing, dancing, shouting, etc
- Non organizations have gone ahead to set up institutions that help those in need eg schools, hospitals, etc
- Some people contribute in building the churches.

### **Meaning of the creation of woman from the man' s rib**

- ❖ Means that marriage is a divine institution planned by God himself.
- ❖ Shows that marriage is supposed to be monogamous.
- ❖ Shows that man and woman are to stay together as compliments in marriage.
- ❖ Shows that man and woman are to stay together in harmony.
- ❖ Shows that both man and woman are equal before God.
- ❖ Shows that woman was created as a companion and helper of man.
- ❖ Shows that man and woman are to love one another since both are equal.
- ❖ God' s plan was that marriage remains permanent.
- ❖ Shows that man participated in the creation as shown in the way God brought Eve to Adam for naming.
- ❖ Shows that woman is a source of happiness to man.
- ❖ Shows that man and woman are to stay together and carry out pro-creation.

### **Problems resulting from the rib story.**

- Some women are oppressed by men.
- Women are considered as subordinates (inferior) to men.
- In some societies, women are considered as property of men.
- Inheritance of property is normally given to boys incase of death of parents.
- In some homes, women are beaten, battered by men.
- There are some quarrels in homes between men and women.
- In some churches, leadership is reserved for men.
- In some societies or offices, women are not given respect.
- In some societies, women are not supposed to dress like men.
- In some societies, education is meant for boys and not girls.
- Even in forces, posts like being a commander is given to men.

### **Comparison between the creation stories in Genesis 1 and 2**

#### **Similarities**

- Both chapters show that God is the creator of all things eg animals, plants, mountains, etc
- They both show that man was created out of God' s initiative ie there was no force behind mans creation.
- Both show that man is a central creature of all God' s creation.
- Both show that mankind was created in form of male and female.

- In both, there is a necessity of marriage thus man and woman were created to stay together.
- In both, God is seen as a source of life of every thing eg animals, birds, etc.
- In both, man was given the power to control the other creatures.
- In both, God existed before creation.
- In both chapters, God is seen as having no origin.
- In both, there was total order during creation ie every thing was created at peace.
- In both, God is shown as a planner eg he created every thing in proper order.
- In both chapters, God is seen as loving, caring, etc
- In both stories, God is seen as being perfect eg God was ever pleased with whatever he created.
- In both stories, every thing was created for man to use eg birds, animals, etc
- In both, marriage was initiated by God himself and that's why he created man and woman.
- In both stories, animals and vegetations are recorded for having been created.
- In both chapters, God took the initiative of creation thus it was out of his own will to create every thing.

#### **Differences.**

- ✓ In Genesis 1, God created the world in a sequence of days while in Genesis2, he created the universe at once.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, man and woman were created on the same day while in Genesis 2, it was man first and then woman later.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, man was created with life while in Genesis 2, man was lifeless until God breathed life into him.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, God showed happiness with his creation while in Genesis 2, he was reserved.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, the naming of the creatures was done by God while in Genesis 2, man is the one who named the creatures.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, God used command (let there be..) in his creation while in Genesis 2, he used his own hands to create.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, man was created in the image of God while in Genesis 2, man was made from soil.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, man was given freedom to eat whatever he wanted while in Genesis 2, he was restricted on what to eat.
- ✓ Genesis 1 shows that marriage was for production of children while in Genesis 2, it was for companionship.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, there was a gift of immortality while in Genesis 2, it was conditional.
- ✓ The language used in Genesis 1 is highly poetic while in Genesis 2 it is symbolic.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, God seems to have been far away from the creatures while in Genesis 2, God was closer to the creation.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, man was put on earth while in Genesis 2, he was placed in the garden of Eden.
- ✓ Genesis 1 is brief about the creation of woman while Genesis 2 is detailed.
- ✓ In Genesis 1, God is in Trinity (“ and now we will make” ) while Genesis 2, God was alone (“ I will make” ).

- ✓ In Genesis 1, man was created last while in Genesis 2, man was created first.

### **Reasons for the difference between Genesis 1 and 2**

- The two stories could have been written by different people.
- The two stories could have been written in two different periods of time.
- The aim of writing the two creation stories could also have been different.
- The places where the two creation stories were written from were different.
- The circumstances that surrounded the writers could also have been different.
- Chapter 1 was aimed at instilling faith among the readers while chapter 2 was to develop people's attitude towards work.
- The first story was written from a priestly source and the second from the Yahwehist view.
- Genesis 1 was written before exile (pre-exile) and Genesis 2 was written after exile (post-exile)

### **The fall of man/ man's disobedience / man's sin / rebellion of man. Genesis 3**

The following are the ways in which man and woman disobeyed God.

- Man and woman disobeyed God's command and ate the forbidden fruit.
- Man and woman had become greedy for they took more than what God had given them.
- Man was trying to equate himself to God ie the snake had told them that God refused them from eating the fruit because they would be wise like him.
- The woman accepted to be tempted by a mere creature (the snake) which was bad before God.
- Man and woman were unrepentant eg after sin, they began blaming each other.
- Man and woman showed signs of pride thus they wanted to know what was good and bad.
- Man and woman had failed to master creation thus they allowed the snake to control them.
- The woman was punished because she led her husband into sin thus she took the fruit to Adam to eat.
- Man and woman had wanted to act independent of God thus they didn't want God to control them.
- Man and woman had lost faith in God as their provider and this was disobedience.
- Man and woman had misused the God given wisdom thus they thought that God had not given them enough wisdom.
- Man and woman had failed to consult God before eating the fruit and this was a rebellion.
- Man and woman had lacked trust and confidence in their creator, that's why they went ahead and ate the fruit.
- They had failed to live to God's expectations by not following his instructions.
- They had gone beyond their limits by eating the forbidden fruit.
- They had decided to choose evil and left out what was good which was disobedience.
- They had tried to usurp (grab) the power that belonged to God alone and this was a rebellion.

- Eating the forbidden fruit showed that man can easily be swayed by Satan.
- Eating the fruit showed that man and woman lacked appreciation of what God had given them in the garden.

### **Role of the snake in the fall of man.**

- Lured woman into sin.
- Told Eve that God was just jealousy.
- Took God as a liar.
- Told woman that they won't die as God had told them.
- Told them that they would be wise.

- Qn* 1. Discuss the meaning of man eating the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3.  
 2. Account for God's disappointment upon man in Genesis 3.  
 3. Discuss the view that the fall of man in Genesis 3 goes beyond eating the forbidden fruit.

### **God's punishment / Judgment to the three parties involved in sin**

#### **A. Snake.**

- The snake was punished to eat dust as long as it lived.
- The snake was meant to crawl on its belly.
- There developed hatred between the snake and the woman.
- The offspring's of the woman and those of the snake were to be enemies.
- The woman's offspring's would crush the snake's head and the snake would bite the woman's offspring's.

#### **B. Woman.**

- The woman was punished to have increased trouble during pregnancy.
- The woman was to feel pain in giving birth.
- The woman was to have desire for her husband and to be subject to him.
- The woman and the snake were to be enemies.

#### **C. Man.**

- The man was punished as the ground was put under a curse.
- The man was to work hard and sweat to make the soil / land produce enough food for him.
- Man was to die. He was to go back to soil from which he was made.
- Man was chased from the Garden of Eden.
- Man lost the original dignity and integrity i.e. he became shameful.
- Man was to suffer all his life.
- Man's relationship with his God was destroyed.

### **Consequences / effects / impact of man's sin/ rebellion.**

- ❖ Woman experienced trouble during pregnancy and pain during child birth.
- ❖ To earn a living, man works day and night.
- ❖ In every home, death is common and some people complain of its frequency.
- ❖ Man struggles with thorns and weeds as he cultivates.

- ❖ Snakes are enemies with man and some people today die of snake bites.
- ❖ Man is never satisfied and therefore goes in for thievery.
- ❖ Man experiences all sorts of suffering thus, he is always unhappy.
- ❖ Man tries to reconcile with God through prayers.
- ❖ Man experiences problems of drought, heavy storms, famine, earthquakes, and landslides.
- ❖ In some areas, land is unproductive which makes man struggle for life.
- ❖ Women are subject to men and some men take them as their property.

### **Meaning of God's clothing of man after sin.**

- It showed that God is a forgiving father.
- It showed that God had mercy upon mankind.
- It showed that God loved sinners and thus he could not abandon them.
- It showed that God had sympathy upon mankind.
- It meant that there was going to be a continuous relationship between God and mankind.
- It meant that God's plan to save mankind had started.
- As a creator, God wanted to bring mankind closer to him.
- It showed that God wanted man to regain his lost glory and dignity.
- It showed that God is the provider and protector of mankind.
- It showed that God was trying to reconcile with mankind.
- It showed that man was made in God's image and therefore God was trying to save him from shame.
- It meant that man's wisdom is far different from that of God thus man cannot understand the works of God fully.

### **Lessons / relevance of God's action of clothing man after sin.**

- ✓ Christians should try to forgive one another as God did.
- ✓ They should always pray to God since he is the provider of everything.
- ✓ They should always help those in trouble like God helped mankind.
- ✓ They should depend on God alone when they face problems.
- ✓ They should be merciful to other people.
- ✓ They should always say the truth unlike Adam and Eve who lied to God.
- ✓ They should always follow God's instructions unlike Adam and Eve.
- ✓ They should be satisfied with whatever God gives them.
- ✓ They should repent off their sins instead of blaming one another.
- ✓ In case of trouble, they should seek God's protection,
- ✓ They should always thank God because he is the provider of everything.
- ✓ They should try to live acceptable moral lives.
- ✓ They should remain faithful to God alone.

### **Nature of sin in Genesis 3.**

- Sin is disobedience to God.
- Sin comes in a very attractive and enticing way.
- Sin brings shame to mankind and man becomes guilty.
- After sin, mankind realizes that he or she has committed a crime.

- Sin brings about lack of confidence of man towards God.
- Sin makes man to be afraid and hides from the creator.
- Sin brings anger to the offended ie God got annoyed of man.
- Sin makes man helpless ie after sin, man failed to defend himself before God.
- Sin makes man fail to accept his mistakes and blames circumstances.
- Sin destroys marriage thus after sin Eve became subordinate to man.
- Sin brings about all types of suffering eg death, being chased from the garden, etc
- Sin brings denial of God' s love, trust, etc towards fellow man.

### **Genesis 1, 2 and 3 and the:**

#### **a. Nature of man.**

- Man was made in the image and likeness of God.
- Man was made from soil.
- Man is a co-creator with God.
- Man is the master of creation.
- Man is not perfect and therefore needs God' s control.
- Man has a duty to work hard since his creator was a worker.
- Man is supposed to depend on God alone.
- Man is the summit of creation ie man is above all creatures.
- Man and woman are equal before God and therefore they are companions.
- Man does not accept his mistakes.
- Man is never satisfied with whatever he is given.

#### **b. Nature of God.**

- God is a perfect worker ie he was ever pleased with whatever he had created.
- God is in trinity by the word we.
- God is all-knowing (omniscience).
- He is a mighty God ie he merely used words to create everything.
- God is above all things on earth.
- God is everywhere (omnipresent).
- God has no origin thus he existed before creation.
- God is a provider eg he provided the Garden of Eden to Adam.
- God is the source of life for every living thing.
- God is the initiator of marriage.
- God is the source of blessings to mankind.
- God is loving eg he provided clothing for mankind.
- God hates sin and therefore he is annoyed by sinners.
- God is forgiving eg he forgave Adam and Eve after sinning.

#### **c. Nature of marriage.**

- ❖ Marriage is meant to be monogamous ie a woman was created for man.
- ❖ Marriage is meant for pro-creation ie production of children.
- ❖ Marriage makes man happy ie Adam was happy on seeing Eve.
- ❖ Marriage is meant to be permanent thus no divorce.
- ❖ Marriage is meant for companionship ie a woman to help the man.

- ❖ Marriage was initiated by God himself ie it was God' s plan to create Eve for Adam.
- ❖ Marriage is meant to be a source of harmonious relationship between partners.
- ❖ Marriage is a blessing from God ie God blessed them.
- ❖ In marriage, there is meant to be equality between man and woman.
- ❖ Marriage is destroyed by sin ie a man became superior over the woman.
- ❖ Sex is a gift from God in marriage.

### **Marriage in the New Testament.**

- In marriage, man and woman become one.
- Nobody should separate what God has joined therefore its permanent.
- A man who divorces and marries another wife is guilty of adultery.
- A woman who divorces her husband and marries another is also guilty of adultery.
- Wives must be submissive to their husbands.
- Wives must not use out word aids to make themselves beautiful.
- Husbands should love their wives.
- Husbands should handle their wives with care because they are a weaker sex.
- Husbands should treat their wives with respect.
- There should be harmony in marriage.
- There should be equality in marriage.
- Because of immorality, every man should have his own wife and every woman should have her own husband.
- According to Paul, marriage is not a sin.
- According to Paul, celibacy is a gift from God.
- A man should be faithful to his duties as a man and likewise the woman.
- A woman is not free as long as her husband still lives.
- A wife is not the master of her own body and so is the man.
- Sex in marriage is meant to be continuous unless the two first agree in times of prayer.
- Marriage between a believer and a non believer is allowed.
- In heaven, there will be no marriage and all people will be angels.

### **Lessons / relevance of the fall of man to Christians.**

- ❖ Christians should follow the rules given to them unlike Adam and Eve.
- ❖ They should be careful while taking advise given to them by others unlike Adam and Eve.
- ❖ They should be patient in whatever they do other than hurrying into things.
- ❖ They should always say the truth unlike Adam and Eve who blamed the circumstances.
- ❖ They should humble themselves before the Lord since pride annoys him.
- ❖ They should control creation as commanded by God unlike man who allowed the snake to control him.
- ❖ They should have total trust and confidence in God' s providence unlike Adam and Eve.

- ❖ They should have faith in God and in his words unlike Adam and Eve.
- ❖ They should depend on God for everything instead of blaming each other.
- ❖ They seek for God' s opinion first before doing anything unlike Adam and Eve.
- ❖ They should give respect to their creator unlike Adam and Eve.
- ❖ They should always ask for forgiveness or repent off their sins.
- ❖ They should be satisfied with whatever God gives them unlike Adam and Eve.

### **The call of Abraham (Genesis 12).**

#### **Reasons / factors for his call**

- Abraham was called by God to re-establish the relationship which had been broken by the fall of man.
- God wanted to use Abraham to be the source of blessings to all nations.
- God wanted to raise a person who will be used to save the whole world ie a person who will be exemplary to the whole human race.
- God called Abraham so that through him, mankind could enter into a covenant with God.
- He was called so as to restore joy, happiness, peace and freedom that had been lost by the fall of man.
- He was called by God to show that his call does not depend on one' s history or back ground.
- God called him because he wanted to start a nation of believers guided by himself.
- God wanted to establish an earthly kingdom of people who would live and act according to his will.
- God called Abraham because he wanted to show the importance of faith and obedience to mankind.
- God called Abraham because he wanted to prepare special people who would receive the messiah. This resulted into the foundation of the Israelites.
- God wanted to use Abraham for reconciliation between mankind and himself.
- God called Abraham because he wanted him to abandon polytheism and adopt monotheism.
- God called Abraham because he wanted to test his faith by telling him to leave all his relatives, property and go to the un known land.
- God called Abraham because he wanted to show that he loved mankind including sinners.
- God called Abraham because he wanted to give him the land of Canaan.
- God called Abraham because he had a plan of giving him a son, Isaac.
- God wanted to reveal his character to mankind ie kind, loving, forgiving, etc

*Qn. 1 Discuss the view that the fall of man in Genesis 3 led to the call of Abraham.*

*2 Discuss the factors that led to call of Abraham.*

#### **The religion that Abraham and his Descendants practiced (Patriarchal).**

- It was a religion of blessings. Abraham and his descendants got blessings.
- They worshipped one God. This was after God' s revelation.

- They didn't know the name of God (Yahweh) but was later revealed to Moses.
- It was a religion of direct communication with their God.
- Their religion was characterized by laws that governed them.
- They called their God different names ie El-shaddai (God of the mountain), Elohim (God almighty), El-Elyon (God most high), El-Olam (God everlasting), El-Roi (God the over seer), etc.
- They understood their God as a God of the people and not a God of particular places.
- It was a religion of great hope in their God.
- It involved fasting, purification and repentance.
- It was characterized by Covenant making.
- It involved observance of important religious events eg the Passover.
- It was a religion of obedience ie it was a requirement to descendants of Abraham.
- They offered sacrifices to God in their response to him.
- They also built alters from where they sacrificed to God.
- Through God's revelations, they received God as being the God of their ancestors eg God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- It was a religion of believing in the power of God (Theocratic community).
- Their religion involved circumcision eg Abraham and his descendants went through the ritual of circumcision.
- Their God was a God of promises and a guiding God.
- They honoured, trusted and obeyed their God.
- They took God as watching whatever they were doing.
- There was adoration of the Almighty.
- There were vows made during the covenant making.
- It involved God's appearance (theophany).
- It involved curses or punishments.
- There was prayer and worship by patriarchs.
- It was a religion that involved priesthood.
- It involved change of names.
- It was a religion of miracles.

### **Abraham as a man of faith and trust in God.**

- Abraham always had trust and obedience to God.
- Abraham accepted God's call even when he was not aware of him before.
- Abraham accepted to leave his people, homeland, culture, and country to go to the unknown land.
- He accepted to change his name from Abram to Abraham and that of his wife from Sarai to Sarah.
- He accepted all the promises that God had made to him eg having many descendants.
- He built alters to worship God at Bethel and Shechem.
- Abraham always praised and worshipped God to show that he had faith in God.
- Abraham accepted to make a covenant with God, a God he had not known before.
- He accepted circumcision at an old age and that of his male households.

- He offered sacrifices to God eg a cow, lamb, goat and birds to show his commitment.
- Abraham was always faithful to God all through his life.
- Abraham always prayed to God in both good and bad times eg he pleaded for Sodom and Gomorrah.
- He accepted to abandon polytheism and adopted the worship of one God (monotheism).
- Abraham was promised a son yet he and his wife were too old, but he believed.
- Abraham accepted to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God.
- He accepted to send away a slave woman Hager and his son, Ishmael on God' s demand.
- He made sure that his son Isaac marries from a right family.
- He believed in everything that God had told him.

- Qn. 1 In what ways is Abraham a model to those who seek to know God.*  
*2 In what ways did Abraham make his relationship with God strong?*  
*3 In what ways did Abraham show his commitment to God?*  
*4 In what ways did Abraham demonstrate his trust and obedience to God?*

#### **How Christians demonstrate their faith and trust in God today.**

- Some Christians constantly pray to their God.
- There is observance of the Sabbath as the law commands.
- They accept and respond positively to God' s call in order to do his work.
- They repent off their sins and ask for forgiveness.
- They put themselves in the hands of God despite the difficulties they face.
- Some live exemplary lives by showing good morals and conduct.
- There is spread of the gospel to non believers.
- Some Christians sacrifice for the sake of others.
- Some are merciful to those in problems eg the needy, orphans and widows.
- Some are faithful and show this by fasting and having retreats.
- Some go for pilgrimages to holy places like Namugongo.
- Some Christians give in tithe every month.

#### **God' s promises to Abraham.**

- ❖ God promised Abraham to have many descendants like stars in the sky.
- ❖ Abraham was promised to be the father of a great nation to which himself will be the head.
- ❖ He was promised blessings thus he was promised to be the source of all blessings.
- ❖ He was promised that his name would be made famous.
- ❖ He was promised a son despite his old age.
- ❖ He was promised to live up to his old age, die in peace and be buried in honor.
- ❖ He was promised the land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey ie from east to south.
- ❖ He was promised that his descendants would be taken as slaves in a foreign nation for 400 years.

- ❖ He was promised that God would punish the nation that would enslave his descendants.
- ❖ He was promised protection from all dangers and told him never to be afraid.
- ❖ He was promised a son who would be the one to inherit his property.
- ❖ He was promised that God would be his God and of his ancestors.
- ❖ He was told that his descendants were to leave the foreign land with great wealth.

#### **How the promises were fulfilled in the history of the people.**

- Abraham was promised blessings and thus the Israelites were blessed by God.
- Abraham was promised many descendants and thus the Israelites became many.
- Abraham's descendants were promised exile and thus were enslaved in Egypt.
- God promised to rescue or liberate Abraham's descendants and the Israelites were rescued from slavery in Egypt.
- God punished Egypt for having enslaved Abraham's descendants.
- Abraham died peacefully and was buried honorably as promised by God.
- The Israelites were given the land of Canaan as promised by God.
- Abraham was promised a heir and this was fulfilled in the person Isaac.
- God blessed those people who blessed Abraham and punished those who condemned the Israelites.
- God also protected the Israelites from all sorts of danger as promised to Abraham.

#### **The universal nature of Abraham's promises.**

- Those with faith are to be made great people like Abraham.
- The believers in the God of Abraham are assured of protection from all dangers.
- Believers with good morals expect to receive God's words like Abraham.
- The great nation promised to Abraham is the many believers in the all world.
- To God, those who are sinners are to be cursed as promised to Abraham.
- Many blessings were promised to Abraham and therefore those with faith are assured of blessings from God.
- Abraham was promised many descendants and therefore those who believe in the God of Abraham are said to be his spiritual descendants.
- Abraham was promised the land of Canaan and therefore those who believe in God are assured of heaven.

#### **God's covenant with Abraham.**

- Abraham's covenant with God was characterized by a dialogue between him and his God.
- There was a sacrifice of a ram, goat, cow, each three years old and then a dove and a pigeon.
- The covenant involved promises eg protection from danger, have many descendants, etc.
- The covenant reflected obedience, trust and confidence in God by Abraham.
- During the covenant making, Abraham fell asleep as fear and terror came over him.
- God's theophany (God's appearance) was witnessed in form of a smoking fire pot and flaming torch.

- There was change of names during the covenant making eg from Abram to Abraham and from Sarai to Sarah.
- Circumcision was part of the covenant making where by Abraham and all his male households were circumcised.
- The covenant was bi-lateral thus it was a covenant between God and Abraham.
- In this covenant, there was shading of blood from the cut pieces of the sacrifices.
- In this covenant, God communicated directly to Abraham thus there was no mediator.
- Abraham responded with blind faith in the making of this covenant.
- Vultures tried to snatch the sacrifices but Abraham was able to chase them away.
- During the covenant making, there was emphasis on worshipping one God.
- The covenant was initiated by God himself thus there was no force behind God to make this covenant.
- The covenant was between a superior God and an inferior Abraham (un equal parties).
- The covenant was meant to be binding and everlasting.
- It was a free will since both God and Abraham were committed to carry out its terms.

*Qns. 1 Examine the major elements of the Abrahamic covenant.*

*2 Analyze the major features of the covenant God made with Abraham.*

*3 Discuss the covenant of dialogue between God and Abraham.*

### **Abraham in the New Testament.**

- ❖ Abraham is listed in the list of Jesus' ancestors (Mathew 1:1-7).
- ❖ John the Baptist referred to Abraham in the way that challenged the Jews about the descendants of Abraham (Luke 3:3).
- ❖ Abraham is referred to as one of the Patriarchs of Israel from whom all believers came.
- ❖ St. James uses Abraham as an example of faith and actions that makes one acceptable before Christ.
- ❖ Paul' s letter to the Galatians gives an example of Abraham who won God' s blessings because of his faith.
- ❖ Jesus called sinners like Pharisee' s to come to him and repent and respond the way Abraham did (Hebrews 11:11).
- ❖ Paul' s letter to the Hebrews also praises the faith of Abraham.
- ❖ Jesus teaches that all those that have faith are the real descendants of Abraham (Romans 4).
- ❖ Abraham is considered as a faithful man and great believer.
- ❖ Peter appeals to wives to be submissive just as Sarah obeyed and respected Abraham and always referred to him as master.
- ❖ In John' s gospel, Jesus was with Abraham.
- ❖ Zechariah confirmed that Abraham made a covenant with God.
- ❖ In Hebrews 7:1-7, paid a tenth of his collection from the battle to Melchizeda.

*Qn. Discuss the importance of Abraham in the New Testament.*

**Importance / significance of Abraham to the Jews / Israelites.**

- To the Jews, the salvation history for man began with the call of Abraham.
- The Israelites were blessed by God because of Abraham's unquestionable obedience to God.
- Abraham is regarded as the father of the Israelites i.e. their great grand father.
- The liberation of the Israelites from slavery is seen as a fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham.
- Moses, the important figure in the Jewish liberation history is a descendant of Abraham.
- The nation of Israel is created because of God's relationship with Abraham.
- The Israelites' claim of God's protection is in accordance with God's promises to Abraham.
- God's covenant with Abraham formed the basis of all other covenants that God made with the children of Israel.
- Abraham's call was the basis of all future dealings between God and any leader of Israel.
- The Israelites became God's chosen nation as a result of God's promises to Abraham.
- The true faith God demanded from the Israelites was based on what Abraham had shown.
- Abraham is the founder of the monotheistic religious worship.
- Abraham became the yardstick of faithfulness and righteousness to God in Israel.
- Abraham became a theological being that the future Prophets used to teach the Israelites.
- God's love for Israel reflected through Abraham was a divine choice of grace and not by merit.
- Prophetic, an important Jewish institution stretched back to Abraham.
- Trust in God expected from the Jews was first established by Abraham.
- The Jewish settlement in Canaan is as a result of God's promises to Abraham.
- The Jewish religious rituals of giving sacrifices started with Abraham.
- The religious tradition of circumcision, a mark for all Jews started with Abraham.
- It was through Abraham's act of constructing alters that the Israelites started to construct worshiping places.
- Through the promises God made to Abraham, the Israelites came to understand God's love and protection.
- Through Abraham, the Israelites became more united due to their common descent.
- Through Abraham, Jesus Christ was received by the Jews.

**Lessons / relevance / teachings of Abraham to Christians today.**

- Christians should be obedient and faithful so that God can accept them in heaven thus Abraham was obedient.
- They should show their faith and actions like Abraham did.
- They should respond positively to God's call like Abraham had done.
- They should be patient in their lives until God answers their prayers like Abraham.
- They should accept circumcision of their hearts thus accept baptism.
- They should leave everything and serve their God.
- They should maintain the worship of one God (monotheism).
- They should be confident as they wait for God to fulfill his promises,
- They should always pray to God whenever they face problems.
- They should build worshiping places for God just as Abraham built alters for God.
- They should have trust in God since he calls whoever he wants regardless of background.
- They should depend on God alone.
- They should thank God since they are people of a new covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus.
- They should always give offertories to God.

## **THE BOOK OF EXODUS**

### **The call of Moses (Exodus 3)**

- Moses received his call while looking after his father in law's flock (Jethro).
- At that time, Moses saw the bush burning but the grass was not being burnt up.
- Moses tried to go closer and find out what was happening but a voice ordered him not to go any further.
- Moses was told to remove his sandals because he was standing on a holy ground.
- God identified himself as a God of the Israelites' ancestors ie God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- During the call, Moses covered his face because he feared to look at God.
- Then God informed Moses of how his people, the Israelites were being treated cruelly in Egypt and that he heard their cries.
- Therefore God told Moses to go and rescue the Israelites from Egypt.
- Moses did not accept the task given to him because he had murdered some one in Egypt.
- In spite of Moses refusing the task, God promised to be with him and even give him strength.
- During the call, Moses wished to know the God who was calling him.
- Then God identified himself as I AM who I AM meaning that he does not change.
- Moses showed doubts and asked God what he would do if the people refused to believe.
- Moses was given the power to perform miracles as a proof eg the stick turning into a snake.
- In the call, Moses still belittled himself and said that he was a poor speaker.

- This angered God and therefore gave him Aaron to be his spokesman.
- Eventually, Moses accepted and went to Egypt to rescue the Israelites.

*Qn. 1 Comment on the message contained in Exodus 3-4.*

*2 Comment on the call of Moses to be a messenger of God.*

*3 Comment on the main features / elements of the burning bush incident.*

### **The meaning of the name IAM who IAM.**

- It meant that God does not change i.e. he is a God of history.
- It meant that God is all powerful (omnipotent) and gives protection.
- It meant that God is dependable during times of crisis.
- It showed that God is alpha and omega.
- It meant that God is holy and hates sin or injustice.
- It meant that God is the creator of everything.
- It showed that God calls any one he wishes.
- It meant that God is universal and master of everything.
- It meant that God can cause any thing to happen either in the past, present and in future.
- It meant that God is all-knowing.
- It showed that God answers people' s prayers.

### **Response of Moses to God' s call.**

Moses had both negative and positive response to God' s call.

#### **Negative response.**

- Moses wanted to know what he would tell the Israelites and that' s why he was asking God.
- It was because Moses had never had of God' s voice before.
- It was because Moses was fearful and therefore had excuses.
- It was because God' s appearance in the burning bush was mysterious.
- The knowledge about God' s name was not clear to Moses.
- It was very difficult for Moses to take instructions from a God he had not known before.
- It was because the Israelites wouldn' t trust his words if he was not to tell them God' s name.
- Moses wanted to know if God would protect him in this mission.
- Unlike the other gods, the Lord God who was calling Moses was invisible.
- God' s visions and revelations had become rare since the time of Abraham.
- Moses never wanted to leave his family in Median.
- Moses knew that the Egyptians were too strong for him and that' s why he hesitated.
- It was because Moses had killed some one and therefore a wanted man in Egypt.
- Moses might have feared to go alone to Egypt and so he wanted a helper.
- Moses saw himself as a no body to take up such a big task.
- Moses might have wanted to evade or refuse God' s task.

*Qn 1 Account for Moses' objection to God' s call.*

*2 Account for Moses' negative response to God' s call.*

*3 Justify Moses' wish to know the name of God in Exodus 3-4.*

*4 Examine the factors that led Moses to hesitate taking up that task that God had given him in Exodus 3-4.*

**Positive response.**

- God had told Moses his name ie Iam who Iam.
- Moses had been given a helper in the name of Aaron.
- God had given him powers to perform miracles as a proof.
- God had promised to be with him and even protect him.
- God had promised to give him what to say and how to say it.
- It was because God had identified himself with the Israelites' ancestors.
- Moses had been told that he was the one who had been chosen to rescue the Israelites.
- He had also seen the suffering of his fellow Israelites in Egypt.
- God had got annoyed with him and therefore Moses didn' t want to annoy God any more.
- It was God' s plan to make him accept and become his messenger.

*Qn. 1 Account for Moses' positive response to God' s call.*

*2 Account for Moses' response response to God' s call. (Negative and positive).*

**Why God called Moses / reasons for liberation.**

- God called Moses to use him as an instrument of his liberation act of his people.
- God called him as a way of identifying himself with one of Abraham' s descendants.
- He wanted to prove to Moses and the Israelites that he was a God of history ie a God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- He wanted to show the love he had for the suffering Israelites.
- He wanted to show that he hadn' t forgotten the promises he made to Abraham.
- He wanted to prove that he had heard the cries of his people, the Israelites and he had come to rescue them.
- He wanted to prove that he can call any one regardless of his or her past history.
- He wanted to show that he was an active God not only in the past but also in the present and the future.
- God called him because he had seen elements of nationalism in Moses.
- He wanted to prove that he was a God of justice who could not let his people suffer in oppression.
- God wanted to show his nature as caring, concerned and a universal God who even controlled the Egyptians.
- God wanted to show his close intimate relationship with the Israelites as he referred to them as " my people"

*Qn. 1 Account for the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt.*

*2 Account for God' s call of Moses.*

### **The call of Moses and the nature of God.**

- ❖ It showed to the people of Israel that God is holy as he told him to remove his sandals.
- ❖ It showed that God is a God of history ie he was a God of Israel' s ancestors.
- ❖ It showed that God can not be explained by man ie it is shown by his name, Iam who Iam.
- ❖ It showed that the liberation of the Israelites was a work of God and not themselves.
- ❖ It showed that God is all powerful as he appeared in the burning bush.
- ❖ It showed that God is loving as he came down to liberate the Israelites from slavery.
- ❖ It showed that God is omnipresent thus God is every where even in the bush.
- ❖ It showed that God is the only one to worship thus calls for monotheism.
- ❖ It showed that God chooses whoever he wants regardless of past history eg Moses was a murderer.
- ❖ It showed that God is the master of creation ie Moses saw the bush burning but the grass was not being burnt.
- ❖ It showed that God' s call can not be resisted ie Moses had tried to resist God' s call but later accepted.
- ❖ It showed that God is a God of mercy, he punished the Egyptians but did not destroy all of them.
- ❖ It showed that God fulfills his promises ie he fulfilled the promises he had made to Abraham.

### **The importance / significance of Moses' call (Burning bush incident).**

- Out of Moses' call, the Israelites realized the holiness of God eg he told Moses to remove his sandals because he was standing on a holy ground.
- It changed the life of Moses from a murderer to a Prophet / leader.
- It made the Israelites realize the power of God ie the way he destroyed the Egyptians.
- It showed that God can appear to mankind in any form ie he appeared to Moses in form of a burning bush.
- The call of Moses led to the liberation of Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- It showed that God was faithful to his promises thus God was able to fulfill the promises he had made to Abraham.
- It showed that God was merciful to the Israelites thus God was able to come down and rescue them.
- It showed the love of God towards the Israelites as he always referred to them as " my people"
- It showed that God is not happy when his people are suffering thus he got concerned when the people were suffering in Egypt.
- It resulted into monotheism and all the Israelites were to maintain it.
- It made the Israelites realize that their liberation from Egypt was the work of God and not their own effort.

- The Israelites realized that God can call any one regardless of their past history.
- Through this event, the Israelites became more united as one people.
- Through this event, the Israelites got the land of Canaan as promised to Abraham.
- Through this event, the Israelites were able to enter into a covenant with God.
- The Israelites got God's protection thus God was seen as a God who fights for his people.
- Out of the call, the Passover came to be instituted as an important festival.

*Qn. Comment on the significance of the burning bush incident / call of Moses.*

### **The Passover event / festival (The last plague).**

The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in Egypt that the day was to be in the first month of the year for them of the Jewish calendar. They gave the Israelites the following instructions on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month that each man was to choose a male lamb or goat for his family. If the family was too small for the whole animal, they would invite the next door neighbors' to share the animal.

- ✓ They were to choose either a sheep or a goat, one year old male without any defect.
- ✓ On the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month, the whole community of Israel was to kill the animals.
- ✓ The Israelites were to take some of the blood and smear on their door posts and the beam in which the animal was to be eaten.
- ✓ The meat was only to be eaten roasted.
- ✓ The meat was to be eaten with bitter herbs to signify the bitter experience they went through and unleavened bread which meant the limited time they had.
- ✓ The Israelites were to eat the whole animal roasted including the head, legs and the internal organs.
- ✓ They were instructed not to leave any meat until morning.
- ✓ They were told that if any meat remained, it was to be burnt to ash.
- ✓ They were to eat the meat very quickly, for they were to be dressed ready for travel with sandals on their feet and walking sticks in their hands for protection.
- ✓ On that night, no body was to leave the house until morning and if any one did, he could be struck to death.
- ✓ That night, the Lord's angel of death passed over the Israelites houses and killed the first born males of the Egyptians.
- ✓ They were then instructed to celebrate this day as a religious festival to remind them of what God had done for them.

*Qn 1. Examine the instructions concerning the last plague in Egypt (Exodus 12-14).*

*2. Analyze the preparations that were undertaken by the Israelites before the Exodus event.*

*3. Examine the rules for the future remembrance of the Exodus by the Israelites.*

*4. Comment on what happened on the night of the Passover.*

### **The Passover and the New Testament.**

- The New Testament understanding of the Passover is that it was transformed into the Lord' s Supper.
- Jesus in the New Testament celebrated the Lord' s Supper with his disciples qualifying him as the new Passover lamb.
- Jesus is seen as the new sacrificial lamb who had taken over the place of the old Passover lambs.
- His death brings universal salvation to all sinners thus Jesus died so that man' s sin could be forgiven.
- Jesus commanded his disciples to continue commemorating the Lord' s Supper.
- When Christians partake of the holy Eucharist, they eat the bread symbolizing Jesus' body.
- Participating and commemorating the Lord' s Supper prepares Jesus' followers for a journey to heaven.
- The death of Jesus as a new Passover lamb acts as a sign to remove the sins of all his followers.
- When he gave his disciples wine, he symbolically meant that his followers were participating in the drinking of blood that brings salvation.
- Jesus died innocently for the sins of all people thus Jesus is the lamb without defects.
- Therefore Jesus invites all people to the table as a new Passover lamb.
- Those who accept Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God will be passed over on the Day of Judgment.
- Through Jesus' death, the new covenant was established and sealed by his blood.

- Qn. 1. In what ways does Jesus act as a new Passover lamb in the New Testament?*  
*2. Examine the New Testament understanding of the Passover.*

### **Lessons from the Passover to modern Christians.**

- Christians should repent off their sins so as to participate in the Holy Communion.
- They should love one another because God loves them.
- They should examine themselves before going for the Holy Communion.
- They should participate in the Holy Communion as they prepare to go to heaven.
- They should stand firm even when they are under persecution.
- They should thank God for sacrificing his son to come and die for their sins.
- They should always praise God because he showed them his grace.
- They should always pray to their loving God.
- They should always be faithful to God before Christ comes back.
- They should always believe in Jesus since he is the only acceptable sacrifice.

### **Why God liberated the Israelites from Egypt.**

- God wanted to fulfill his promises that he had made to Abraham that he would rescue his descendants.
- He wanted to demonstrate his power among the Jews and the Egyptians.

- He wanted to answer the cries of the Israelites ie he heard their cries and he had to come and rescue them.
- God wanted to demonstrate his love for the suffering Israelites.
- He wanted to continue with his salvation plan that he had started on right from the fall of man.
- He wanted to show his intimate relationship with the Israelites as he called them “ my people”
- He wanted to start a special nation under his leadership. (Start theocracy).
- He wanted to show his nature as being concerned, caring and universal. ie God who even controlled the Egyptians.
- He wanted to show that he was not happy with the Egyptians.
- He wanted to prove to the Jews that he was the same God by the use of “ Iam who Iam”
- He wanted to give them the Decalogue (Ten Commandments).
- He wanted to give the Israelites the land of Canaan as he had promised.

#### **How the Passover separated the Jews from the Egyptians.**

- ❖ The judgment / punishment fell upon the Egyptians while the Jews were instead celebrating.
- ❖ The Egyptians first born’ s were killed while the Israelites were saved.
- ❖ The Egyptians were not told of the time for the Passover to take place while the Israelites were given instructions.
- ❖ While the Israelites were protected by God, the Egyptians were not protected by their gods.
- ❖ The Egyptians were forced to let the Israelites go to the land of Canaan.
- ❖ No Egyptians participated in the Passover festival while all the Israelites participated in its celebration.
- ❖ The king of Egypt accepted defeat while Moses triumphantly (victoriously) led the Israelites to safety.
- ❖ The Israelites smeared the houses with blood while the Egyptians were not told to do so and thus were killed.
- ❖ The Egyptians ate leavened bread while the Israelites ate un leavened bread.
- ❖ The Israelites were told to stay indoors while the Egyptians were un aware.
- ❖ The Israelites became a special group of people while the Egyptians were a cursed group of people.

#### **Importance / significance / meaning of the Passover event to the Jews.**

- It showed that God was powerful as proved by the way the Egyptians were defeated.
- Through this event, the Israelites were rescued from slavery.
- Through this event, God is seen as all knowing eg he was able to see the doors of the Israelites and Passover them.
- The event showed the Israelites that God protects his people eg they were able to defeat their enemies with the help of God.
- The event united the Israelites as one people of God.
- The event broke Pharaoh’ s arrogance and eventually let the Jews leave Egypt.

- The event showed that the Israelites were a special group before God.
- Though this event, the Israelites became a divinely elected people before God ie God chose them as his people to act as priests.
- It confirmed Moses as a leader of the Israelites, marking the beginning of the institution of leadership among the Israelites.
- It showed that God chooses whoever he wants and thus, his choice does not depend on ones background.
- It showed that God hates injustice and therefore fights for the helpless people.
- It showed that God is loving and merciful as he listens to the peoples cries.
- It was an assurance to the Israelites that God would continues fighting for them.
- The event marked the end of their suffering in Egypt.
- It became one of the memorable event and marked the beginning of a religious year for them.
- As a result of the Passover, the Israelites abandoned the worship of other gods and turned to monotheism.

### **The exodus event.**

The exodus means the mass movement of the children of Israel from the Egyptian bondage to the promised land of Canaan. During this movement, Moses acted as their leader and he tried to solve some of their problems.

### **Importance / significance / meaning of the Exodus event to the Israelites.**

- ✓ The Israelites were made a theocratic nation ie a nation whose king was God.
- ✓ It laid the background of the Israelites future history. They understood the rule of Yahweh.
- ✓ The Israelites were proved as a divinely chosen race.
- ✓ The event was a source of unity for the future of the Israelites who were to live as one family.
- ✓ Through this event, Israel was reorganized as the first born of God.
- ✓ The event led to the fulfillment of God' s promises to Abraham
- ✓ The Israelites understood God' s salvation plan for mankind thus God made them a nation of special people.
- ✓ Through this event, the Israelites came to understand and adopt monotheism.
- ✓ The Israelites came to own or posses the land of Canaan as promised to Abraham.
- ✓ It led to the establishment of certain Jewish culture that had been abandoned eg the Sabbath.
- ✓ Through this event, the Israelites proved God' s love for them.
- ✓ Through this event, the Israelites were freed from slavery and were made to observe morality.
- ✓ The event showed the need for justice among the Israelites basing on what had happened to them.
- ✓ The event made the Israelites a nation of priests thus to tell other nations about God.
- ✓ The Israelites received God' s blessings thus they were given a lot of wealth as they left Egypt.

- ✓ Through this event, the Israelites came to understand that Moses was a distinguished leader of Israel.
- ✓ Through this event, God showed to be more powerful than the Egyptian gods (through crossing the red sea)
- ✓ The Israelites came to know the dangers of rebellion as shown in the event.
- ✓ They were given obligations and responsibilities to perform.
- ✓ Through this event, God was shown as the master of nature (Red sea).
- ✓ The Israelites came to know the character of God i.e. being caring, loving, kind, etc
- ✓ The event promoted the idea of fellowship amongst the Israelites.
- ✓ The Israelites entered a covenant with God at Mt. Sinai and were given laws to follow.

*Qn 1. Comment on the view that without the Exodus event, Israel as a nation would not have existed.*

*2. Discuss the significance / importance of the exodus event to the Jews.*

*3. Discuss the importance of the movement from Egypt to the Promised Land to the Israelites.*

### **Relevance of the Exodus event to Christians.**

- Christians should promote unity among themselves.
- They should depend on God for everything.
- They should thank God for electing them as special people.
- They should prepare themselves for the new Canaan or heaven.
- They should show their love to God and fellow man.
- They should maintain the worship of one God.
- They should always remain a theocratic nation.
- They should be able to enter a covenant with God.
- They should act as priests by preaching the gospel.
- They should ensure that justice prevails in society.
- They should be obedient and expect blessings from God.
- They should respect their leaders.
- They should respect all the laws of God.
- They should fellowship with God and one another.
- They should maintain holiness in their lives.
- They should depend on God's protection.
- They should place all their worries / burdens to God for he has the provisions.
- They should take God as being faithful to his promises.

### **How God revealed his power during the Exodus event.**

- Through God's power, the Israelites were able to cross the red sea.
- Faithful to his promises, God led the Israelites he had rescued to the land of Canaan.
- Through God's power, Moses used a piece of wood and purified the bitter water.
- When the Israelites complained for food, God sent them manna and quails.
- Moses struck the rock and the Israelites were able to get water to drink.

- The Israelites were able to defeat the Amalekites on their way to Canaan (Exodus 17:8).
- God entered a covenant with the Israelites and were given laws to follow.
- Through God's power, the Israelites left Egypt with a lot of wealth.
- God also made the Israelites to leave Egypt under the pillar of fire.
- The pillar of the cloud gave the Israelites light and darkness to the Egyptians.
- The Egyptian army, Chariots and drivers were drown in the sea.
- God appeared to them in form of thunder, lightening at Mtn. Sinai.
- A boundary was made between the mountain and the Israelites.
- Through God's power, Moses did not reach Canaan.
- God also appeared to them in form of dazzling light on the mountain that covered the whole area.

### **How God reveals himself today.**

- Through the healing miracles.
- Through the Holy Spirit.
- Through earth quakes, floods, storms, etc.
- Through prayers.
- Through un expected happenings.
- Through recovery from sickness.
- Through passing exams.
- Through survival of some people in accidents.
- Through speaking in tongues.
- Through predictions.
- Through vacations eg becoming a Nun, Reverends, etc.
- Through severe droughts.

### **Exodus in the New Testament.**

- ❖ Jesus came to deliver people from sin just as the Israelites were liberated from slavery.
- ❖ Jesus calls upon the people to go through him if they are to be saved from sins.
- ❖ Jesus intercedes for people before God ie Jesus pleads for sinful mankind.
- ❖ Jesus says that he did not come for the righteous people but those who were suffering or in need.
- ❖ Jesus performed many miracles to deliver people from their suffering eg the blind.
- ❖ People are called upon to repent if they are to enter into Canaan or heaven.
- ❖ As Israelites went through the red sea, believers in the New Testament are to go through the blood of Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Jesus is coming back to take those who believe in the kingdom of God, heaven.
- ❖ Jesus summarized the Mosaic laws into the love of God and fellow man.
- ❖ The Lord's Supper brings a new covenant based on salvation and therefore Christians are called upon to share in the lord's supper.
- ❖ Jesus becomes a new Moses who brings spiritual liberation to mankind.
- ❖ The death of Jesus Christ and his resurrection bring a new exodus to eternal life.

### **The Sinai / Mosaic covenant.**

### **Characteristics.**

- The covenant was initiated by God himself thus it was made according to his will
- In this covenant, God reminded the Israelites what the Lord had done for them in the past (Egypt).
- The covenant was made between unequal parties thus God being superior while the Israelites being inferior.
- God said to the Israelites that if they obeyed his commands, then they would be his own people.
- Purification was required before making a covenant with God ie they were to wash their clothes and not to have sexual intercourse.
- Moses was given the Decalogue which he brought to the Israelites and they accepted to follow them.
- Moses made an altar made of 12 stones thus each stone represented a tribe in Israel.
- In this covenant, Israel was elected by God in his service as a nation of priests.
- God's presence was made known on the third day in a very violent way (theophany) ie God appeared in form of thick cloud, thunder, smoke, etc.
- To seal the covenant, a ceremony was performed thus cattle was sacrificed, blood was collected in bowls, some blood was poured on the altar and the remaining was sprinkled on the people.
- In the covenant, promises were made eg God promised the Israelites to be their God so long as they obeyed his commands.
- The covenant was mediated by Moses between God and the Israelites.
- A boundary was set up between the holy mountain and the Israelites.
- The covenant was conditional with the "if".
- The Israelites were given responsibilities and obligations to follow.

### **Reasons for making the Sinai covenant.**

- ✓ God wanted all the promises he had made with Abraham to be fulfilled.
- ✓ God wanted the Israelites to realize that they were special people of God.
- ✓ He wanted to prove to the Israelites that Moses was their leader and indeed a Prophet.
- ✓ To show that God is holy and therefore he wants holy people.
- ✓ God wanted the Israelites to obey him and therefore worship him alone (monotheism).
- ✓ He wanted to show that he can appear to mankind in many forms ie he appeared to them in form of smoke, thunder, lightning, etc.
- ✓ He wanted to reveal to them that he was a powerful God eg how he defeated Pharaoh and his soldiers.
- ✓ He wanted to make Israel a theocratic nation ie a nation whose kingship is God.
- ✓ He wanted to give the Israelites a constitution to guide them ie he wanted to give them the Ten Commandments.
- ✓ God wanted to make Israel a kingdom of priests.

### **Significance of the Sinai covenant to the Jews.**

- Through this covenant, the Israelites were charged with a responsibility of serving God as priests.
- This covenant promoted unity among the Israelites thus they had to love one another.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites realized that God's choice for them was out of his grace but not that they were so superior.
- The covenant made the Israelites realize the importance of faith and obedience to God.
- It showed that God is the ruler of the whole earth and heaven and therefore the Israelites had to observe monotheism.
- It prepared the Israelites for the new covenant to be sealed by the blood of Jesus.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites realized that God was all powerful in the way he appeared to them.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites received the Decalogue through Moses, their leader.
- Through this covenant, Israel became a theocratic nation, a nation ruled by God himself.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites were promised and given protection as long as they obeyed God.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites saw God's love for them.
- Through this covenant, the Israelites were given obligations and responsibilities.

#### **Relevance of the Sinai covenant to Christians.**

- Christians should act as priests or disciples of Jesus by telling others the love of God.
- They should promote harmony among themselves.
- They should thank God for being special people before the Lord.
- They should maintain their faith in God alone.
- They should be obedient and follow God's laws and commands.
- They should maintain the worship of one God (monotheism).
- They should be prepared for the new covenant made by Jesus Christ.
- They should respect all religious leaders.
- They should expect God's protection as long as they remain obedient to him.
- They should offer to God whatever they have in their lives.
- They should always purify themselves before meeting their God.
- They should always follow all the laws of God.
- They should promote harmony in their societies.
- They should live holy lives since God is holy.

#### **Comparison between the Sinai covenant and that of Abraham.**

##### **Similarities.**

- Both covenants were initiated by God himself ie it was out of God's plan to make these two covenants.
- Both involved sacrifices eg Abraham sacrificed a cow, goat, sheep, pigeon and cattle which were also sacrificed during the Sinai covenant.

- In both, fear and terror were experienced ie in both, people trembled when God appeared.
- In both, there was acceptance of God' s commands by the people.
- Both had promises which were made ie Abraham was promised a son and the Israelites were promised the land of Canaan.
- In both, the two parties involved were un equal thus God being superior and the people being inferior.
- Both reflected steps taken by God to save mankind.
- In both, God' s appearance was experienced ie God was seen in form of fire.
- In both, there was a demand of faith from the people by God.
- In both, God' s love for the people was revealed.

### **Differences.**

- ❖ The two covenants were different in that Abraham was alone in the course of the covenant making while there were many Israelites in the Sinai covenant.
- ❖ In the Abrahamic covenant, Abraham talked to God directly while in the Sinai, Moses acted as a mediator between God and the Israelites.
- ❖ In the Abrahamic covenant, words were verbal while in the Sinai, words were written down eg the Ten Commandments.
- ❖ Abraham' s sacrifices involved a cow, goat, sheep and a pair of birds while in the Sinai, only cattle was sacrificed.
- ❖ Abraham cut the animals into halves and were placed opposite to each other while in the Sinai, cattle was sacrificed and blood was put in the bowels.
- ❖ The Abrahamic covenant took only one day while the Sinai took several days at the mountain.
- ❖ In the Abrahamic covenant, there was change of names while in the Sinai, there was change of hearts.
- ❖ The Abrahamic covenant was absolute (compulsory) while the Sinai was conditional.
- ❖ The Abrahamic covenant required circumcision while the Sinai required faith and obedience.
- ❖ In the Sinai covenant, there was purification as a requirement while Abraham was already clean.
- ❖ The two covenants were made at different times and in different geographical places.
- ❖ In the Sinai covenant, people kept awake in the course of the covenant while Abraham fell asleep.

### **Obligations and responsibilities of the Sinai covenant.**

- The people of Israel were to observe monotheism, worship one God.
- They were to remember and celebrate the Passover festival every year.
- The Israelites were to be holy and condemn whatever was evil and un clean.
- They were to act as God' s messenger to other people thus act as priests.
- They were to observe all the commandments of God eg regarding treatment of slaves.
- The Israelites were to take care of the poor, orphans and the widows.

- They were to observe the laws regarding ownership of property.
- The Israelites were not to make any political alliance with any pagan nation.
- As a result, God was going to fulfill the promises he had made to them.
- God was going to take of them until they reach their promised land.
- God was going to bless them with good health, property, harvests, etc.
- God was going to defend them from enemies.

### **The importance or role of Moses in the history of Israel.**

- ✓ Moses was a liberator thus he saved the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- ✓ Moses was a political leader. This was when the Israelites consulted him for water and food and as a leader he found a solution.
- ✓ Moses was a writer. He is believed to have been the author of the Pentateuch (books of law).
- ✓ He was a military leader or commander. On their way to Canaan, he was able to command the Israelites to defeat their enemies.
- ✓ He was a law giver ie when the Israelites reached the Mtn. Sinai, Moses went up the mountain and received the Ten Commandments fro God and gave them to the Israelites.
- ✓ He was an intercessor. The Israelites could not have reached the Promised Land if he had not pleaded for them before God.
- ✓ He was a miracle performer. Using God' s power, he was able to perform many miracles eg crossing the red sea.
- ✓ He was a religious leader. He offered sacrifices on behalf of the Israelites and went to give religious laws.
- ✓ He was the founder of Judaism, a religion that believes in the worship of ancestors.
- ✓ Moses was a judge. On leaving Egypt, he used God' s laws to settle cases and promoting harmony.
- ✓ Moses was a mediator. He mediated between God and the Israelites during the covenant marking.
- ✓ He was a prophet. He used to deliver God' s message to the people of Israel.

*Qn 1. Justify the view that without Moses, Israel could not have existed.*

*2. Discuss the importance of Moses in the formation of Israel as a nation.*

*3. Examine the role of Moses in the history of Israel.*

## **Comparison between Moses and Jesus.**

### **Similarities:**

- Both Jesus and Moses began their ministries at a mature age.
- Both left the comfort of their parents and accepted to suffer.
- Jesus like Moses had insights that God had called him for a special purpose.
- The 40 years of Israel's wilderness and the 40 days of Moses' stay on the mountain is a reflection of Jesus' 40 days in the desert being tempted by the devil.
- Jesus led the people from the bondage of sin to the life of freedom with God just as Moses liberated the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- Jesus interceded on behalf of sinners just like Moses interceded on behalf of the Israelites before God.
- Jesus often sat down and taught the people many things and this was true of Moses who taught the Israelites of obedience to the law during the exodus.
- Jesus identified himself with the people he had come to serve just as Moses had identified with the suffering Israelites.
- Jesus performed many miracles just as Moses performed miracles while still in Egypt.
- Both survived death during their infancy thus they had the same surroundings during infancy.
- Both were born when their nations were under foreign rule or dominance.
- Jesus like Moses began some important religious festivals ie Moses began the Passover while Jesus began the Lord's Supper.
- Both Jesus and Moses were faced with oppositions in their ministries.
- Both Jesus and Moses got the power to perform miracles from God.
- Both Jesus and Moses were judges thus they settled conflicts among their people.
- Both of them were law givers thus Moses gave out the Ten Commandments and Jesus gave out the two important laws.
- Both of them were Prophets or God's messengers.

## **Differences:**

- Jesus was a son of God while Moses was a son of Levite parents.
- Jesus' liberation was spiritual while that of Moses physical.
- Jesus' mission was to prophesy and save mankind while that of Moses began with his call.
- Moses was a political leader while Jesus was a spiritual leader.
- Jesus rose from the dead while Moses died, was buried and awaits resurrection.
- The death of Moses was out of his disobedience while Jesus died innocently to save mankind.
- Moses was a married man while Jesus lived a celibate life.
- Moses lived up to 120 years while Jesus lived up to 33 years.
- Moses died a normal death while Jesus died after being tortured, beaten and then crucified.
- Moses came to save the Jews while Jesus came as a universal savior.
- Moses was purely human while Jesus was both human and divine.
- Jesus was sinless while Moses was a criminal.
- Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit while Moses was conceived through sexual intercourse.

*Qn. To what extent was Jesus a new Moses.*

## **The Decalogue / Torah / Mosaic laws.**

The Israelites were given absolute laws as they were entering the Promised Land and these were called the Ten Commandments. They had the following major elements.

- In the first commandment, God called upon the Israelites to worship only him.
- In verse 3, God forbade Israel from making images of anything showing that he is a jealousy God.
- In the 3<sup>rd</sup> command, God forbade Israel from using his name for evil purposes or else they were to be punished.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> command required the Israelites were to observe the Sabbath and keep it holy ie they were to do their work in six days and dedicate the seventh to Him.

- In the 5<sup>th</sup> command, the Israelites were supposed to give respect to their parents if they were to live longer.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> commandment forbade the Israelites from murdering thus they were supposed to respect human life.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> commandment forbade the Israelites from committing adultery thus the Israelites were to remain faithful in their marriage.
- The people of Israel were forbidden from stealing in the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment. This meant that they had to respect other peoples' property.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> commandment required the Israelites to desist from accusing any one falsely thus they were to observe harmony in society.
- The Decalogue was against having desires for another man's house or any of his possession thus they were to be satisfied with what they have.

*Qn. Examine the major elements of the Decalogue.*

**Role / importance / significance of the Decalogue to the Jews.**

- ❖ The Decalogue acted as their constitution in their day today life.
- ❖ They were a source of blessings and curses to the Israelites.
- ❖ They were an element of the covenant that God made with them at one time in history.
- ❖ They were a constant reminder to the Israelites.
- ❖ They indicated how the Israelites had to live faithfully with their God and each other.
- ❖ They were important in the sense that they helped the Israelites to live in harmony.
- ❖ They helped the Israelites to understand what they were meant to do in order to please God.
- ❖ They were important in that the Jews were able to respect and value the gift of life by not committing murder.
- ❖ They made the Israelites a special group of people before God.
- ❖ They made the Israelites to respect God's activity or work by observing the Sabbath.

- ❖ The laws made the Israelites to understand the character of God ie God is loving, caring, merciful, etc.
- ❖ It showed God' s presence / revelation to his people thus the laws meant God' s existence.
- ❖ It reflected the theocratic nature of Israel thus the Israelites were under God' s kingship.
- ❖ It showed the Israelites that God was active in their day today life for he continued guiding them.
- ❖ It reminded the Israelites to worship one God.

*Qn. Examine the role of the Decalogue in the history of Israel.*

### **Jesus' teaching about the Decalogue.**

- Jesus summarized the Decalogue into two as he explained the basic requirement of human relationship and while relating with God.
- Jesus emphasized that the greatest commandment is the love of God with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> most important is to love one' s neighbor as much as one loves himself.
- Jesus declared that looking at a woman with a desire to possess her makes a person guilty of adultery.
- Jesus said that having an evil thought against some one is the same as committing murder.
- Jesus advised every believer not to swear in whatever the circumstances one may be in.
- Jesus declared that the Sabbath was made for man but not men for the Sabbath.
- Jesus revealed himself as the Lord of the Sabbath thus he knew the importance of the Sabbath for human beings.
- Jesus said that he had come to perfect the Law of Moses ie the laws were imperfect.
- To Jesus, disobeying the least important of the commandment meant disobeying all the others.
- Jesus said that having faith is more important than the laws in doing what God requires ie it is by one' s faith that one joins God' s kingdom.

### **Challenges / problems / difficulties that the Jews met in trying to follow the Decalogue.**

- ✓ For some time in Israel, there was no physical king and therefore every one behaved the way he wished.
- ✓ People in Israel were praying to God but God' s response was not always immediate.
- ✓ The influence of other pagan cultures in Israel made them to follow other gods.
- ✓ Some Israelites took God' s laws to be so hard to follow.
- ✓ The Israelites were always being attacked by their enemies and God would not help them.
- ✓ The prosperity of neighboring nations inspired them to worship other gods.
- ✓ At that time, the Israelites suffered from famine and drought and their God could not help them.
- ✓ At that time, there were false prophets who confused the Israelites.
- ✓ There was a practice of magic and divination which attracted them and abandoned God.
- ✓ At that time, the so called judges were too corrupt and immoral thus the leaders were not exemplary.

### **Relevance / lessons of the Decalogue to the modern Christians.**

- Modern Christians should worship only one God (monotheism).
- They should respect the Sabbath day.
- They should be holy in the service of God.
- They should respect and preserve human life.
- They should give respect to their parents.
- They should be faithful in their marriages.
- They should rest from their work ie observe leisure time.
- They should respect each others property.
- They should follow the laws governing their societies.

- They should live in harmony with each other.
- They should speak the truth.
- They should maintain justice.
- They should be satisfied with what God gives them.

## THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

The book of Leviticus is concerned with God's holiness and also answers questions as to how sinful man may approach a holy God. Therefore the book of Leviticus gives guidance or instructions of how to maintain man's relationship with God.

### Types of offerings / sacrifices.

1. **Burnt offering:** Here the whole animal was completely burnt on the alter as an act of devotion either by individual, community or nation.

It meant allegiance of the people to Yahweh since it was seen to be an act of human possession.

The fatty part of the animal was also burnt to ensure that God tastes on the sacrifices.

2. **Grain offering:** This was purely agricultural products usually cereals.

A handful of the flour was presented by the priest on behalf of the people.

The grains were burnt along with incense and the aroma was to please God.

The purpose of this offering was to thank God for the good harvest rendered to his people.

3. **Fellowship offering:** This is where a bull or cow was sacrificed. The Lord was given all the fatty parts and the internal organs.

Also cakes or bread without yeast was made, mixed with oil and then were offered to God.

It also involved shading of blood and the priest sprinkled on the alter.

It was done to thank God and come in union with one another.

During fellowship offering, worshippers saw each other as guests of the Lord.

The priest also had his share of the sacrifice since he was considered to be holy.

- 4. Sin offering:** These were offered to remove the sins of the people. They could be offered by an individual, community or nation.

The animal was to be killed by the priest who was holy and it was killed on the alter.

It was intended to ask for forgiveness by the offerer.

- 5. Peace offering:** Here animals were offered and it was believed that God consumed them.

Its purpose was to ask God to give peace to the people.

*Qn. Examine / comment on the various types of offerings and sacrifices in the book of Leviticus.*

**The importance / meaning / role / purpose / significance of sacrifices in Israel.**

- Sacrifices were emphasized in the religion of the Israelites because it was a way in which they thanked God.
- They were used during celebrations of the covenant relationship thus they were used to show their allegiance to God eg burnt offering.
- They were offered to mark anniversaries or historical events like the Passover.
- They were given in recognition of God as a source of life ie blood was sprinkled on the alter.
- They were given to God to ask for forgiveness eg sin offering which aimed at removing the peoples' sins.
- They were intended to create a good relationship between God and the people of Israel.
- They were given as a way pleasing God eg incense offering at the alter.
- They could be offered when asking God for victory before going for a war.
- They could be offered to ask God to bless their families.
- They could be offered to cleanse the priest and the place of worship eg animals without defect were sacrificed.
- They were used as a way of acknowledgement of God as the creator of everything.

- They were offered and given to priests as upkeep thus some offerings were given to priests.
- They sacrificed as a way of showing that all wealth comes from God.
- They sacrificed as a way of remembering God's love for them since the time of the exodus.
- They were used by the Israelites to show their commitment to God.
- They were used to praise God and even show that God was holy.

*Qn. Examine the significance of sacrifices and offerings in the history of the Israelites.*

**Misuse of sacrifices (Why Canonical prophets were against the forms of sacrifice).**

- Canonical prophets like Amos condemned the empty worship of Israel.
- They said that God was not interested in their extravagant sacrifices.
- The worshippers were boasting of their extravagant sacrifices.
- Their sacrifices were for formality ie their hearts were far away from God.
- They were even offering sacrifices to idols.
- They were offering inferior animals ie animals with defects.
- Sacrifices were offered by wrong people ie people who were not Levite priests.
- Sacrifices were being offered in wrong places eg under trees.
- The Israelites composed empty songs, had feasts and played good music.
- At that time, the worshippers had become syncretic thus they had mixed the worship of God and other gods.
- People sacrificed with hope of impressing God and yet they continued sinning thus there was pride during sacrifice.
- They used sacrifices for showing off.
- At that time, the worshippers were guilty of hypocrisy.
- The very people who went to sacrifice were the very people involved in idol worship.
- It was because people even sacrificed to pagan gods and this annoyed God.

- The priests at that time were growing rich from the sins of the people.
- At that time, the peoples' religious observance was not genuine or sincere.
- During worship, there was cult prostitution at the altar.
- The rich people were sleeping on clothes taken from the poor as security during worship.
- During worship, Sabbath had become a burden to the worshippers especially the business class.

**Amos' prophesy / message on the forms of worship / sacrifice.**

- Amos condemned the empty worship in Israel and promised that the worshipping places were going to be destroyed.
- He said that God was not interested in their extravagant sacrifices.
- To Amos, God hated their noisy songs because they were meaningless.
- Amos called for justice to flow like a river that does not dry up.
- He said that the coming judgment upon them will be like fire that can not be put off.
- He said that even the bravest soldier would not stand their ground.
- He said that the day of the Lord would be full of mourning, terror, darkness and disaster.
- Amos declared that even the fastest runner would not escape judgment.
- Amos said that the enemy would come and destroy the summer and winter houses of the rich.
- He said that the rich women of Samaria could be dragged into exile like fish on hooks.
- He said that God would send a foreign army to oppress the Israelites from the north to south.
- God promised to destroy the alters of Bethel.

**The first sacrifice offered by Aaron after ordination.**

- ❖ The sacrifice was given on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after the ceremony of ordination to priesthood.

- ❖ The sacrifice was presided over by Moses who instructed him to offer both sin and burnt offering.
- ❖ Present at the ceremony were Aaron's sons and the people of Israel.
- ❖ Then the people of Israel brought a he-goat, ram and a bull for offering.
- ❖ All these animals were without any defect.
- ❖ Aaron was to offer these sacrifices on the altar to remove his sins and those of the people.
- ❖ At the altar, he killed the bull and his sons brought him blood which he sprinkled on the corners of the altar.
- ❖ In these offerings, the fatty parts like the liver and the kidney were burnt completely as a gift to God.
- ❖ The priests were given the breasts and the right hand legs.
- ❖ Also grain offering was carried out mixed with oil.
- ❖ As soon as Aaron had finished giving all his sacrifices, he raised his hands over the people and blessed them.
- ❖ Together with Moses, Aaron entered the Lord's tent and on coming out he blessed the people again.
- ❖ Immediately, God's presence was realized in form of dazzling light.
- ❖ Suddenly, the flame of fire from the Lord consumed all the fatty parts on the altar.
- ❖ When the people saw this, they all shouted and bow down their faces on the ground.

*Qn. Comment on the very first sacrifice that Aaron offered after ordination.*

**The motives of Aaron's first sacrifice.**

- It was intended to enter him in the family of priests.
- It was intended to ask God to always intervene in their day today activities.
- It was intended to share God's blessings with other people.
- It was intended to have fellowship with the whole community of Israel and God.
- It was intended to show that God is holy and required the best (animals without defect).
- As a priest, he had to offer these sacrifices so as to be with God.
- It was given as a sign of appreciation or thanking God.
- It was intended to promote peace among the Israelites.

- It was to remove the sins of himself and that of the whole community.

### **Food prohibitions / regulations (Leviticus 11).**

- ✓ The Lord gave Aaron and Moses the following regulations for the people of Israel.
- ✓ Animals that had divided hoofs and also chewed the cud were to be eaten because they were clean eg goats, cows, etc.
- ✓ Animals like pigs were not to be eaten because they don' t chew the cud although they have divided hoofs.
- ✓ Any fish with fins and scales were to be eaten because it is clean.
- ✓ However, any fish with only fins or scales was said to be un clean.
- ✓ All winged insects were considered un clean except those that hop.
- ✓ Animals that move on paws were considered un clean and therefore not to be eaten.
- ✓ Animals like moles, rat and lizards were considered to be un clean and therefore not to be eaten.
- ✓ Animals that move on many legs were seen and considered as un clean.
- ✓ Animals that moved on the ground or crawled were considered to be un clean.
- ✓ Touching even their dead bodies would make one un clean.

### **Meaning / significance of food regulations.**

- The food regulations were given as a form of purity code to govern the life of the Israelites so that they could be able to worship him.
- It was intended to make them remain holy so as to approach God.
- Eating the forbidden foods or animals would cause un holiness such that a person could not approach God in worship.
- Even touching the forbidden foods would cause un holiness and so separate a person from God.
- Any Israelites who touched the forbidden food was cut off from the community because he was un clean
- The Israelites were to eat animals that chewed the cud and had divided hoofs and thus become clean to approach the holy God.

- Animals that only chewed the cud or had divided hoofs would cause unholiness and so a person would not approach a holy God.
- Among the animals in water, Israelites had to eat those that had fins and scales because they were clean and would keep a person's holiness before God.
- Among the birds, the Israelites were not to eat birds of prey because they were considered unclean.
- Among insects, those that were considered clean and could cause holiness were those that hop like grasshoppers.
- The Israelites were not to eat crawling animals because they were considered unclean and could cause unholiness.
- The Israelites were not to eat animals with many legs because they could cause unholiness.
- Whoever ate or touched the forbidden animals became unclean and had to be purified before approaching a holy God.
- Some times the food regulations were put in place for hygienic purposes because some animals were seen as dirty.
- The idea was to separate the Jews from pagan Gentiles who were using them for food.

#### **Food regulations / Ritual uncleanliness / defilement in the New Testament (Acts 10).**

- The Pharisees challenged Jesus that his disciples were eating without following the ritual of cleaning hands.
- To the Pharisees, such action of not washing hands defiles a person so they informed Jesus.
- In answer, Jesus said that their type of reasoning was full of hypocrisy.
- To Jesus, human traditions or rules can not have the same authority with the love of God.
- Jesus said that the Pharisees had ignored the law of God by following man made laws.
- Jesus sighted the example of one's duty to help one's parent which the Pharisees contradicted.
- Jesus said that all foods are clean to be eaten.

- Therefore Jesus said that what one eats does not defile a person because it goes to the stomach and then comes out of the body.
- To Jesus, what defiles a person is what comes from his or her heart.
- From the heart, there come evil thoughts leading to jealousy, pride, insults, anger, etc.
- To Jesus, God does not judge a person basing on what he or she eats or drinks.
- To Jesus, what matters alot is the spiritual purity.
- Timothy states that everything that God created is good, nothing is to be rejected.
- Timothy also said that all foods should be received with a word of prayer which makes it acceptable before God.
- In a vision, Peter was given all kinds of animals and birds to be eaten.
- No body should give rules of what to eat and not to eat.

*Qn. 1. What was Jesus' view / teaching about food regulations.*

*2. What was the New Testament teaching about food regulations?*

### **Leprosy /A dreaded skin disease (Leviticus 13-14).**

At that time, a person suffering from any skin disease like a sore, ring worm or an inflammation was seen as a leper, the Jews thought that such suffering was attributed to sin and that person was serving a punishment from God.

### **Treatment of lepers.**

- The Jews often isolated such people for seven days because the person could contaminate the members of the society.
- They were stopped from visiting their relatives or even take part in public worship.
- Such people were not to shave, take a bath or wash their clothes.
- Such people were to put on torn clothes because they were seen as out casts.
- Such people were to tie bells on their legs and shout un clean, un clean.
- Those that touched the leper were to take a religious ritual of cleansing.
- Such people were to be examined by a priest.

- Such people were to stay in isolated places or areas.
- Such people were to live outside the camp.
- They were to undergo the ceremony of purification before joining the camp again.

**Regulations regarding a dreaded skin disease / purification ceremony (Leviticus 14).**

- ❖ Any Israelite who had leprosy was supposed to be taken to the priest for examination.
- ❖ If the disease was healed, the man was restored to the community after being cleansed.
- ❖ The priest was to take him outside the camp of the Israelites for examination.
- ❖ If he was cured, such a person was to bring two ritually clean birds, a piece of wood, a red cord and a hyssop.
- ❖ One of the birds was to be killed over a clay bowl containing fresh spring water.
- ❖ The 2<sup>nd</sup> bird, cedar wood, red cord and the hyssop would then be deepened in blood of the first bird.
- ❖ The priest would sprinkle the blood seven times on the person who was to be purified.
- ❖ The priest would then leave the live bird to fly away over the open fields.
- ❖ Then the person would then wash his clothes, shave off all his hair and have a bath.
- ❖ Then he would enter the camp but he was to live outside the tent for seven days.
- ❖ On the 7<sup>th</sup> day, he was to shave again, wash his clothes and have a bath and then he would be ritually clean.
- ❖ The person was to take sacrifice to God on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.
- ❖ The sacrifice was to include two male lambs and one female lamb, one year old without any defect and grain offering.

*Qn 1. Examine regulations regarding a dreaded skin disease in Leviticus 14.*

**Jesus' attitude towards the Lepers / outcasts in society.**

Jesus had a positive attitude ie:

- Jesus felt pity for the people who were considered to be outcasts.
- Jesus had sympathy for such people who were considered as outcasts.
- Jesus even touched some of the lepers.
- Jesus told lepers to go straight to priests for examination.
- He had love for those considered as lepers or outcasts.
- Jesus forgave the sins of those who were suffering.
- He even sat and ate with the so-called outcasts eg Levi.
- He associated with the tax collectors who were seen as outcasts.
- Jesus said that he had come for the sick and not those who were normal.
- Jesus said that physical illness did not mean that one had sinned.
- Jesus had mercy for those who were seen as outcasts.
- He also welcomed such people to himself and called them to God's kingdom.

#### **Significance / meaning of the purification ritual of lepers.**

- ✓ The 2<sup>nd</sup> bird that was released into the fields symbolized the departure of the evil spirit from the man.
- ✓ The ritual also symbolized that a person had repented his sins.
- ✓ The blood from the 1<sup>st</sup> bird mixed with water was believed to scare the evil spirits away from the man.
- ✓ The blood of the 1<sup>st</sup> bird showed that a person had been presented to God for cleansing.
- ✓ The washing of clothes and taking a bath symbolized purity.
- ✓ The shaving of hair meant being sorry for the sins.
- ✓ It was a presentation of one's readiness to join God's society again.
- ✓ It showed that the person had regained his former state of purity.
- ✓ The leper had to present himself to the priest signifying that he was the one to declare him clean.

- ✓ This ritual involved sacrifice which was meant to restore the leper back to God.
- ✓ It showed the holiness of the priests in Israel.

### **The role of priests in Israel.**

Priests in Israel played both positive and negative roles.

#### **Positive contributions.**

- They were the ones who carried the Ark of the Covenant during the exodus period.
- At that time, the priests also led the people of God to war (they were commanders).
- Priests in Israel taught the laws of God to the people.
- They examined those who were sick and prepared them for cleansing.
- They interceded for the Israelites before God ie they pleaded to God on behalf of the Israelites.
- They at times conducted prayers for the people of God eg Samuel.
- They even served as judges by settling disputes.
- They were guardians / custodians of the Lord' s sanctuary eg priest Eli.
- They anointed kings in Israel eg Samuel anointed King Saul and King David.
- They acted as mediators between God and the people of Israel eg Samuel.
- Priests also emphasized God' s holiness to the people.

#### **Negative contributions.**

- Priests used to tell the people false message and leading them into sin.
- Some of them ignored God' s divine laws.
- Some of them worshipped idols and Baal.
- They misled the people and broke the covenant or bond.
- Some of them were growing rich from the sins of the people.
- Some of them enjoyed empty sacrifices and offerings.

- Some of them never condemned evils like theft, murder, etc.
- Some of them only talked what was pleasing to the kings.
- Some of them could get drunk at religious festivals.
- There was religious prostitution during these festivals.
- Some of them failed to condemn the insincere repentance of the people.
- Some of them did not acknowledge God and challenged his teachings.
- Some priests were like a Ganga of robbers.
- Some of them did not attack the political leaders openly for they feared to face challenges.

*Qn. Assess the contributions of priests in the history of Israel.*

## **THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.**

### **Religious syncretism.**

Syncretism means the worship of other gods along side Yahweh.

### **Development / causes of syncretism among the Israelites.**

- The Israelites were over whelmed by the Canaanite influence thus some Canaanites were so friendly to the Israelites and this attracted the Israelites to the foreigners.
- The rate at which Yahweh used to respond to their demands and requests was not so immediate as they wished therefore they thought that God had abandoned them.
- Due to change of occupation from pastoralism to crop farming forced them to worship gods of rain, fertility. Etc.
- Visions from God would take long to appear and so they misunderstood that as God' s neglect.
- Some times human weakness could account for syncretism thus human beings are easily swayed.
- Some of their leaders committed mistakes which forced them to adopt syncretism eg Samuel appointed his sons to become priests yet they were too bad.

- The Israelites failed to carry out the act of herem which meant total destruction. However, those who were spared eventually had an influence to the Israelites to worship others gods.
- The nature of their God was quite puzzling thus Yahweh was invisible compared to the visible Canaanite gods.
- The Israelites expected to find a land flowing with milk and honey. When they didn' t find this, they thought that God had deceived them.
- The Israelites had started loosing battles and this made them to despair thinking that their God had been conquered.
- At that time, the Israelites had no common place of worship to unite them and this could have led them into syncretism.
- General temptation or attractiveness of the Canaanite religion led them to adopt syncretism.
- The young generation who had not experienced the exodus event could have influenced others into syncretism.
- The Israelites also admired the prosperity or progress of the Canaanite' s and thus adopted syncretism.
- The Israelites had forgotten the covenant demands and this might have caused the practice of syncretism.
- The similarity of God' s name might have influenced them to adopt syncretism.

*Qns 1. Account for the development of religious syncretism in Israel.*

*2. Account for Israel' s betrayal of God after the conquest of Canaan.*

*3. Examine the causes of syncretism in Israel.*

*4. Account for Israel' s disappointment of Yahweh after reaching Canaan.*

### **The nature of religious syncretism in Israel (How they practiced it).**

- ❖ The Israelites sacrificed to pegan gods along side Yahweh when they reached Canaan.
- ❖ The Israelites practiced idolatry eg they built and worshipped idols along side Yahweh.
- ❖ The Israelites practiced sexual rituals involving temple prostitution along side the Jewish ritual.

- ❖ They also built alters for the worship of Yahweh and at the same time for the worship of Baal.
- ❖ They practiced the festivals of the Canaanites along side theirs eg the Passover.
- ❖ They involved in human sacrifices, a practice of the Canaanite and continued to offer sacrifices to God.
- ❖ The Israelites followed the Canaanite calendar and that of the Jews.
- ❖ They made covenants with God and at the same time with pagan nations.
- ❖ They practiced divination and magic ie they consulted mediums and fortune tellers and also consulted God through his prophets.
- ❖ Along side Yahweh, the Israelites worshipped other gods like El-Shadai, Asharah, etc.
- ❖ Parents started naming their children Baal names eg Gideon was named Jerus Baal and by doing so they were practicing syncretism.
- ❖ They continuously consulted false prophets and true prophets eg King Ahab.
- ❖ They also built temples for Yahweh and also for foreign gods.

*Qns 1. Examine the nature of religious syncretism that the Israelites practiced in Canaan.*

*2. Analyze the ways in which the Israelites practiced syncretism after reaching Canaan.*

### **How the Jews disappointed / betrayed God after reaching Canaan (Evils).**

- They accepted the Canaanite culture and religion contrally to the covenant faith.
- They started the practice of idolatry eg they built idols and worshipped them.
- They practiced sexual rituals like temple prostitution.
- They sacrificed to the idols that they built.
- They practiced polytheism thus they worshipped many gods.
- They started imitating other people' s ways of life in form of political, cultural and religious.
- They built temples for foreign gods on the holy land of God eg the alters built at bethel and dan.

- They practiced syncretism of the highest order thus they worshipped other gods along side Yahweh.
- People totally lost faith, confidence and trust in Yahweh thus they started worshipping the Canaanite' s gods.
- They started making un necessary foreign political alliances instead of trusting God.
- Leaders of Israel sold the holy land of Israel eg King Solomon sold 20 towns of in Galilee to king Hiram of Tyre.
- They ignored the covenant requirement yet they had promised to remain faithful to God.
- They also failed to listen to their God.
- They started fighting themselves instead of living as brothers and sisters.
- They also demanded for an earthly king which was a sign of abandoning Yahweh as their leader.
- At that time, the leaders of Israel had become too immoral and irreligious thus they practiced sexual immorality.

*Qn. Analyze the ways in which the Jews betrayed Yahweh after reaching Canaan.*

**How Christian have disappointed God today.**

- ✓ Some Christians are hypocrites.
- ✓ Some are involved in human sacrifices.
- ✓ Others practice idolatry.
- ✓ There is love for material things other than God.
- ✓ There is a lot of pretense among Christians.
- ✓ Some Christians go underground to get powers.
- ✓ Some Christians are segregative and try to judge others.
- ✓ Some Christians give their children pagan names eg Kiwanuka, Lubaale, Nawudo, etc.
- ✓ Some Christians are too immoral.
- ✓ Some religious leaders are too arrogant.

- ✓ Some religious leaders give false messages to the Christians.
- ✓ God is remembered in the last minutes of trouble.
- ✓ Churches are used by some people as hiding places for evil doers.

### **How Christians practice syncretism.**

- Modern Christians worship the one true God along side other gods.
- They show loyalty to God along side visiting shrines.
- They worship idols at the same time worship God.
- They consult both spiritual specialists and the church leaders.
- They practice witch crafts and then pretend to be devoted Christians.
- They build churches and also shrines.
- They practice polygamous marriage, a practice that was common in the African Traditional Society.
- Other go bathing in the water they believe to be holy and again use it in the church.
- They pray to the spirits to get children and at the same time pray to God for children.
- Some have named their children after their deities and at the same time name them after saints.

*Qn. Analyze the ways in which Christians are involved in syncretism.*

### **Why prophets condemned syncretism in Israel (Why it was bad).**

- Syncretism violated the Sinai covenant requirement and yet their fore fathers had pledged to follow the covenant.
- It was a sign of disobedience to Yahweh and therefore the prophets had to condemn it.
- It reflected lack of commitment to their God as they shifted loyalty to other gods.
- It showed lack of faith in their God.
- The Israelites had forgotten the promises they had made to God thus to keep their allegiance to their God.
- God had done a lot for them in their history therefore by taking syncretism showed lack of appreciation.

- It was seen as a betrayal of Yahweh whom they were meant to love and worship.
- Syncretism was condemned because it was a sign of lack of confidence and trust in their God.
- The practice was condemned because it was diverting Israel into acts of paganism which was totally opposed to Israel's worship.
- The God of Israel was for a long time a jealousy God and did not like being worshipped along side other gods.
- It was condemned because it was connected to immorality such as sacred prostitution ie the worshippers were involved in sexual immorality.
- It was condemned because Israel had been warned against syncretism and apostasy.
- It diluted the theocratic status of Israel as a divinely elected nation of God.

### **Consequences of Israel's betrayal of God / Effects of Baalism / Syncretism.**

- God withdrew his favors from them and they suffered.
- The Israelites were hit with disaster eg famine, diseases and drought.
- Visions from God became rare because of total moral decay of the Israelites.
- People became like sheep without a shepherd thus God withdrew his protection from them.
- The Israelites were taken into exile in different nations.
- God sent prophets to warn them before punishments.
- Enmity among the Israelites became the order of the day thus there was no unity among the Israelites.
- At that time, foreigners captured them and they were taken as slaves.
- They lost life and property because of syncretism.
- The earthly kings became oppressors and dictators.
- Power struggles started among themselves which resulted into assassinations.

### **Lessons that Christians learn from the condemnation of syncretism.**

- ❖ Christians should stick to the promises they made with God.
- ❖ They should keep their loyalty to God, their creator.
- ❖ They should be faithful to God and maintain the vows they made to him.
- ❖ They should be holy in an attempt to relate with God.
- ❖ They should protect their faith against competitions from other religious beliefs.
- ❖ They should pay allegiance to God their creator if they are to survive judgment.
- ❖ They should follow the laws of their God to avoid judgment.
- ❖ They should take God's warnings seriously and obey his commands.
- ❖ They should always be grateful to God when he does things for them and reward him with love.
- ❖ Christians should appreciate the works of God to avoid judgment.

### **Comparison between the Canaanite religion and the Israelite religion.**

#### **Similarities.**

- Both religions involved sacrifices thus the Canaanite used to sacrifice to their gods and the Israelites sacrificed to God.

- In both religions, obedience would bring blessings and disobedience would cause curses.
- Both religions had prophets thus these prophets used to talk or warn people on behalf of their God.
- Both religions had religious festivals thus they could gather at different places and sing praises to their gods and God.
- The Canaanite religion was polytheistic and even some Israelites adopted syncretism after reaching Canaan.
- In both, there was a belief about deliverance, protection to the people.
- Both religions had laws and regulations which governed their lives.

### **Differences.**

- The Canaanites gods were believed to have conflict with each other while among the Israelites, there was harmony.
- In the Canaanite religion, kings were above the laws and they were at times worshipped as gods while in Israel, kings were under Yahweh's laws and were merely his representatives.
- The Canaanite religion concentrated the pagan worship at Ugarit while the Israelites worship concentrated in cities like Shiloh and later Jerusalem.
- The laws in the Canaanite religion were verbal while the Israelites faith was based on the covenant laws that were written down.
- Whereas the Israelites religion demanded holiness and purity, the Canaanites religion tolerated acts of impurity.
- Whereas only animals and crop offerings were tolerated among the Israelites, the Canaanites tolerated the pagan sacrifices eg sacrifice of human beings.
- The Canaanites gods were visible while the Israelites God was invisible.
- The Israelites religion was monotheistic while that of the Canaanites was polytheistic.
- The Canaanite's gods were dictatorial while the Israelites God was loving, merciful and forgiving.
- The Canaanites religion encouraged the worship of idols while the Israelites religion discouraged the belief and worship of idols.
- In the Canaanites religion, immoral practices were tolerated eg culti prostitution while such practices were completely condemned among the Israelites religion.
- The main aim of the Canaanites worshippers was to control forces in which they live where God was the controller.
- The main god of the Canaanites was Baal who was seen as a source of everything while the Israelites' God was Yahweh who was seen as the source and controller of the fertility.
- In the Canaanite religion, sacrifices could be made from any place whereas the Israelites' religion demands, sacrifices could be made in the central place chosen by God himself.
- The Canaanite religion involved the worshipping of the moon, sun and stars while the Israelites were to worship only one God.

- The Canaanite religion had different gods for different aspects eg the god of fertility, death while the Israelite religion believed that God was the controller of everything.
- To have success in all the areas of life, the Canaanites had to remind Baal through sexual practices while among the Israelites, it was through prayer and obedience.

### **The Act of Herem (total destruction).**

- God through Moses instructed the Israelites to have no mercy at all with their enemies as they entered the Promised Land.
- They were to defeat and must put them all to death ie Canaanites, Perizzites, etc.
- They were to destroy and smash their sacred stones.
- The Israelites were to break down their altars.
- They were to cut down the symbols of their goddess Asherah.
- They were to burn their idols in fire.
- They were instructed not to make any foreign alliance with them.
- They were not to intermarry with them.
- They were not to let their children associate with any of them.

*Qn. In what ways were the Israelites to carry out the act of Herem.*

### **Why the act of Herem was carried out.**

- ❖ The act was to make them survive the harmful habits of the Canaanites, Perizzites, Jebusites
- ❖ It was a way of cleansing the land of the Canaanites by destroying everything.
- ❖ It was an act of purification of the land before settling in it.
- ❖ It was to show that the Israelites belonged to the Lord their God.
- ❖ It was to show that they were different from other people i.e that they were a holy nation of God and divinely elected.
- ❖ The act of Herem was to reveal the love that God had for Israel.
- ❖ Carrying out the act was a show of obedience to his command and faithfulness to the covenant he made with them.
- ❖ It was a covenant of love that God chose them and were to keep his commands.
- ❖ It was a way of asking for God's blessings i.e to have many children, livestock, food, health.
- ❖ It was to show that since God delivered their fore fathers from Egyptian slavery, they were instructed to take this command seriously.

*Qn 1. Account for the act of Herem among the Israelites.*

*2. Comment on the act of Herem in Deuteronomy 7(Give how and why)*

### **The Christian view about the act of herem**

To a small extent, Christians may carry out the act of Herem.

- It can be carried out in case of destroying property but not human life.
- Christians can destroy idols of non believers if they wish to convert them to Christianity.

- Christians can also destroy the shrines where non believers worship from.
- Christians can cleanse the society of any other pagan influence or practice.
- Christians can also participate in any armed struggle incase one has been killing God' s people.

**However**, to a large extent, Christians may not carry out the act of herem because of the following:

- God tells his people to love their enemies but not to destroy them.
- God encourages Christians to forgive their enemies instead of destroying them.
- Christians are supposed to promote unity and not revenge.
- Christians are meant to use peaceful means but not the use of violence.
- Jesus calls upon people to always have reconciliation but not revenge.
- Jesus teaches that he came for the whole world so as to save mankind ie Jesus calls for equality.
- Jesus calls for his people to always pray for their enemies.
- Jesus encourages Christians to treat fairly those who wrong them because he forgave those who killed him.
- Jesus calls for judgment to be made by God alone.

*Qn. How should Christians treat their enemies?*

#### **Lessons for Christians from the act of herem.**

- ✓ Christians should be obedient to the laws of God or follow God' s commands.
- ✓ They should be faithful to God and follow his words.
- ✓ They should love one another instead of revenge.
- ✓ They should be loyal to their God by following his words.
- ✓ They should have mercy over other people.
- ✓ They should love their enemies as Jesus commands.
- ✓ They should show sympathy to other people.
- ✓ They should pray for their enemies as Jesus commands.
- ✓ They should take time to respond or say anything to their enemies.
- ✓ They should reconcile with their enemies.
- ✓ They should treat their friends fairly by promoting justice.
- ✓ They should try to bless their enemies.

#### **Blessings and curses in the book of Deuteronomy.**

##### **Blessings:**

- The blessings which were promised to God' s people were a direct reward of the covenant.
- Among the blessings, Israelites were to receive God' s protection if they obeyed his laws.
- The Israelites would multiply and have well established families in case they obeyed God' s commands.
- The Israelites were to succeed and have safety if they obeyed God' s commands.
- They were to prosper and be wealthy so long as they obeyed God' s commands.

- The Israelites would be respected by their neighbors if they obeyed God's commands.
- Power and fame would be theirs if they obeyed the laws of God.
- They were promised to be blessed with many children, animals and high yields if they obeyed God's commands.
- They would be victorious against their enemies if they obeyed God's commands.
- They would be made leaders among other nations and not followers if they obeyed God's laws.
- The Lord would make them his own people if they obeyed his commands.
- The Lord would bless their towns and cities if they obeyed his commands.
- They were promised good health and better life if they obeyed the commands of God.

#### **Curses:**

- The Israelites would experience food shortage and suffer from famine if they disobeyed God's commands.
- They would face natural catastrophe such as drought, floods, if they disobeyed God.
- They were to be affected with infectious diseases if they chose to be disobedient.
- They would lose all their property through earthquakes and their lives if they disobeyed the commands of God.
- They would have few children i.e. their wives would suffer from barrenness.
- They would suffer from poverty and their lives would be miserable in case of disobedience.
- They were to lose all their cattle, sheep in case they disobeyed God.
- They were to be attacked and overrun by their enemies in case of disobedience.
- Their children would be defiled and become prostitutes in case of disobedience.
- They were to be cursed with worms in case they disobeyed God's commands.
- They would experience hard life which would be hopeless in case of disobedience.

Qn. Justify the view that the Israelites were given a choice between God and Baal.

#### **Lessons that Christians learn from blessings and curses.**

- Christians should worship only one God for rewards to come to them.
- They should obey God for everything good comes from God.
- They should be appreciative for whatever God gives them.
- They should try to relate with God in good terms.
- They should pray to God at all times to be blessed.
- They should love God and fellow man if they are to be blessed.
- They should be faithful to their God if they are to be blessed.
- They should respect other peoples' rights if they are blessed.
- They should obey all God's commands if they are to be blessed.
- They should love their enemies so as to promote unity among themselves.
- They should always seek for reconciliation in case of conflicts.
- They should forgive those who try to wrong them so as to be blessed.

- They should always tell the truth so as to be blessed.
- They should repent off their sins so as to be blessed by God.

### **The theme of love / religion of the heart (Deuteronomy 11).**

- Moses instructed the Israelites to love God with all their hearts, soul and with all their strength.
- According to Moses, the commandment of love was the greatest.
- Moses instructed them to have love for one another because all of them belong to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- Moses said that God loved the Israelites so much that he rescued them from slavery in Egypt.
- To Moses, God demanded sincere love from the Israelites by remaining faithful to him.
- The Sinai covenant which was made between him and the Israelites showed God's love for them.
- They were to extend the love of God to others like orphans, widows and foreigners, for this, God would bless them.
- The Israelites were reminded that they were God's divinely elected nation because of God's love and therefore disobedience would dilute this love.
- The Israelites were meant to trust and obey God as they entered the Promised Land ie maintaining monotheism.
- The Israelites were meant to teach this love to their children so that they would live longer.
- The Israelites were to fear the Lord by avoiding foreign alliances as this would show their love for God.

### **New Testament / Jesus' teaching about love.**

- Jesus showed God's love by accepting to come and die for the sinners thus he gave up his life willingly for the sake of mankind.
- The Lord so loved the world that he sent his only son to come and give mankind abundant life.
- Jesus said that the most important commandment is the love of God with one's whole heart, soul and mind.
- According to Jesus, the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment is the love of neighbors as one loves himself.
- Jesus hated the love based on hypocrisy and that is why he always conflicted with the Pharisee's who were showing sugar coated love.
- Jesus advised people to try and love their enemies and avoid revenge.
- By healing the sick, blind, Jesus showed love and sympathy to those in need.
- His death on the cross was a manifestation of God's love thus his death was universal.
- Because of his love, Jesus forgave and prayed for those who crucified and killed him.
- The act of feeding people showed the need to love those in need.
- Jesus looked at the people in the world like sheep without a shepherd and this was a sign of love.

### **The theme of Divine election (Israel as a special people of God).**

- The Israelites were supposed to love and obey God as his people i.e. they were to remain faithful and do everything he commanded.
- The Israelites were to be committed to the Sinai covenant i.e. they were to follow the content of the covenant.
- The Israelites were to maintain monotheism as they entered the promised land of Canaan.
- The Israelites were supposed to stick to God alone since their God is supreme.
- The Israelites were to maintain theocracy showing that they were God's chosen people.
- The Israelites were to obey all the laws that were given to them thus God does not accept bribes.
- The Israelites were supposed to live as a model nation by showing their faith and love to God.
- The Israelites were supposed to act as priests i.e. tell other nations about the love of God.
- The Israelites were to carry out the act of herem as they entered the promised land of Canaan.
- The Israelites were not supposed to intermarry as they entered the promised land of Canaan.
- The Israelites were to celebrate the Passover festivals.

### **Ways in which Christians can be seen or act as elect people.**

- ❖ Christians are supposed to go in for baptism so as to share God's love.
- ❖ They are supposed to worship only one God.
- ❖ They are meant to love one another.
- ❖ They are supposed to remain faithful to God.
- ❖ They are supposed to call God Father whenever they pray.
- ❖ They are supposed to thank God for having sent his son to come and die for our sins.
- ❖ They are supposed to trust in their God.
- ❖ They are supposed to participate in church activities.
- ❖ They are supposed to do away with the idol worship.
- ❖ They are supposed to be prayerful at all times.
- ❖ They are supposed to help orphans, widows and the foreigners.

### **The first harvest festival / offering (Deuteronomy 26).**

#### **Significance:**

- It was an acknowledgement that God alone was the provider of their needs in the desert.
- It was a statement of faith of the chosen people of God.
- It was to reaffirm their election and delivery from Egypt under the guidance of God to the Promised Land.
- It was an appreciation of Yahweh's blessings that had come upon them.
- This festival was to show that God is the Lord of triumph.

- It signified that the Israelites originated from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- It was a way of dedicating Israel as a nation of God thus to show that they were a theocratic nation.
- It was part of worship indicating Yahweh' s love for them.
- It a way of showing that God was the owner of the land.
- It was a divine command of sharing amongst the people and God.
- The festival was an act of prayer among the Israelites.
- It was a way of remembering the Passover.

### **Lessons for Christians from the above command.**

- ✓ Christians should pay tithes of what they have to God.
- ✓ They should demonstrate the worship of God through giving what they have.
- ✓ They should give offertories in church as a way of sharing with God.
- ✓ They should give thanks to God in what ever they do.
- ✓ They should pray for new things they get in life.
- ✓ They should share whatever they have with other Christians especially the poor.
- ✓ They should be kind to other people.
- ✓ They should have genuine faith in their God.
- ✓ They should dedicate their lives to God.
- ✓ They should always follow God' s commands.
- ✓ They should show that they are special people of God.

## **THE BOOK OF FIRST SAMUEL.**

### **Hannah' s life and petition.**

- In Ephraim (Israel) there was a man named Elkanah who had two wives ie Hannah and Peninah.
- Hannah' s life at that time was full of misery because God had kept her away from having children.
- Peninah even tormented and humiliated her for not having children.
- During yearly sacrifices, there was an unfair distribution of shares thus Hannah used to be given a small share because she had no children.
- Peninah could upset Hannah to the extent that she could cry and refuse to eat anything.
- At Shiloh, Hannah prayed to God as she cried bitterly.
- Hannah presented her troubles to the Lord and asked not to be forgotten ie that the Lord remembers her.
- Hannah said that if given a child, the child was to be dedicated to the Lord.
- Hannah used to pray so hard that priest Eli thought that she was drunk.
- She was so miserable that people thought that she was worthless.
- Later, priest Eli blessed her and asked God to answer her prayers.
- The Lord answered her prayers and she bore a son who she named Samuel.
- After she had weaned him, she took him to Shiloh as promised.
- After this, Hannah worshipped God and even gave a prayer of dedication.

*Qns 1. Comment on Hannah' s life and petition in 1 Samuel 1 and 2.*

*2. Examine the circumstances that led to Hannah' s prayer in 1 Samuel 1 and 2.*

### **Reasons for the birth of Samuel.**

- Hannah prayed to God with total madness as if she was mad and was blessed by priest Eli. Therefore such blessing from a religious man might have led to the birth of Samuel.
- All the time, Hannah kept praying to God and promised never to abandon her faith. Therefore Samuel might have been born to answer her prayers.
- At that time, the judges and priests had become disgraceful to Yahweh. Therefore Samuel might have been born to be used as a messenger of God.
- Samuel might have been born to bring harmony in the family of Elkanah because she had been looked at as being cursed.
- Samuel might have been born to stop Hannah's mistreatment by Peninah.
- Eli had become too old that he had made his sons, Hophni and Phinehas as priests yet they were too immoral, corrupt and arrogant. Therefore Samuel might have been born to cleanse the worship at Shiloh.
- At that, people of God had abandoned the covenant laws and therefore Samuel might have been born to restore theocracy.
- Samuel might have been born to assist the Israelites to get rid of the foreign threats.
- At that time, the Israelites leaders had misled the people by carrying out injustice, worship of other gods. Therefore Samuel might have been born to organize the people of God.
- Samuel might have been born to act as a prophet of God because at that time there were many false prophets.

*Qn 1. Account for the birth of Samuel.*

*2. Examine the factors that led to the birth of Samuel.*

*3. Justify the view that the birth of Samuel was inevitable.*

### **Content of Hannah's prayer.**

- In the prayer, Hannah exalted God with devotion.
- Hannah indicated that by getting Samuel, her enemies had been put to their knees.
- In her prayer, Hannah rejoiced of her victory in view of her past humiliations.
- In her prayer, Hannah recognized the presence of God ie that God is holy.
- She boasted on God's greatness and referred to God as a rock on which she based her faith.
- Hannah acknowledged God as all knowing ie that God knew her problems.
- She maintained that it is God who blesses the barren with many children and makes the proud mothers with many children to suffer.
- In her prayers, the Lord rises the needy from dust and elevated the poor but humbles the rich.
- In her prayer, Hannah said that God gives life to the lifeless and death to those who are proud.
- Hannah appreciated Samuel as a gift and blessing from God.
- To Hannah, God is all powerful and controls all human destinies.

- To Hannah, God judges all those who are faithful and makes the wicked perish in darkness.

*Qn. Examine the content of Hannah' s prayer.*

*Discuss the main issues raised in Hannah' s prayer.*

### **Lessons to Christians from Hannah' s prayer (How to react when in problems).**

- ❖ Christians should be thankful to God as Hannah did in her prayers.
- ❖ They should recognize the majesty of God like Hannah did.
- ❖ They should always pray to God when they face problems like Hannah did.
- ❖ They should be grateful when God gives them something like Hannah did.
- ❖ They should dedicate what is precious to them to God like Hannah did.
- ❖ They should demonstrate self surrender before God like Hannah did.
- ❖ They should boast in what God gives them just as Hannah did in her prayers.
- ❖ They should have humility as they deal with others.
- ❖ They should always fulfill their promises as Hannah did.
- ❖ They should appreciate the blessings from God as Hannah did.

### **PRIEST ELI AND HIS FAMILY.**

Eli was a priest at Shiloh and later the whole family was rejected / punished / condemned because of the following evils / misdeeds.

- The sons of Eli did not follow their father' s example by serving God faithfully. Therefore they were un faithful to God.
- The sons of Eli were scoundrels. They violated the laws concerning sacrifices.
- The sons of Eli tampered with the sacrifices that the Israelites brought to God.
- The sons of Eli were blasphemous thus they spoke evil things about God.
- The sons of Eli indulged in immorality in the sanctuary at Shiloh as the slept with women.
- They were punished because they were greedy ie they ate the fatty parts of the sacrifices which were meant for God.
- The sons of Eli were corrupt thus they accepted bribes in judging cases.
- The sons of Eli always insulted the people who brought sacrifices and offerings to God.
- The sons of Eli did not respect their father which was against the Ten Commandments.
- The sons of Eli even did not have respect for God and therefore causing their rejection.
- Eli knew all the things that his sons were doing but did little to correct them prompting the rejection.
- Eli himself had grown too old to manage the affairs of administering his sons.
- The sons of Eli were not satisfied with the privileges of the priestly office.
- The sons of Eli even misused the sacrifices of the people by eating the fatty parts that belonged to God.
- The sons of Eli were arrogant to the worshippers thus prompting their rejection.
- Eli seemed to be honoring his sons more than God thus prompting the rejection.
- Eli also had rebuked his sons mildly and prompted the rejection.

- The sons of Eli were beyond God's defense and thus prompting the rejection.

- Qn 1. Justify the view that the rejection of Eli and his family was inevitable.*  
 2. *Justify the view that the call of Samuel was due to public outcry.*  
 3. *In what ways were the sons of Eli a disgrace to God?*  
 4. *Discuss the misdeeds of Eli and his sons.*

#### **Evils of the present religious leaders.**

- ✓ Some are corrupt.
- ✓ Some misinterpret the scriptures.
- ✓ Some support immorality.
- ✓ Some engage in human sacrifice.
- ✓ Some have commercialized the house of God.
- ✓ Some are not exemplary.
- ✓ Some are arrogant and greedy.
- ✓ Some take priesthood as a mere occupation.
- ✓ Some fail to stick to the vows they make.
- ✓ Some are drunkards.
- ✓ Some make ungodly miracles.
- ✓ Some are too demanding to the worshippers.

#### **Lessons /relevance that political leaders learn from the rejection of priest Eli.**

- Political leaders learn to respect God unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should entrust offices to competent people unlike Eli who gave them to his sons.
- They should be contented with the privileges of their offices unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should follow all the laws of God unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should show good examples to their subjects unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should seek advice when need arises unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should try to discipline their children when they go astray unlike Eli.
- They should respect the places of worship unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should accept God's punishment when they go wrong just like Eli did.
- They should be honest to their work unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should try to remain faithful to God alone unlike the sons of Eli.
- They should respect the gift of sex unlike the sons of Eli who were immoral.
- They should try to follow the Ten Commandments unlike the sons of Eli.

#### **The message / prophesy / consequences of Eli's rejection (1 Samuel 2:27-36).**

- Eli's sons were killed on the same day. This was due to their sins that annoyed God.
- Eli got shocked and died instantly when he was told of the death of his sons and the capture of the covenant box.
- The Philistines attacked the Israelites and captured the covenant box.
- God promised to pick one of Eli's descendants to serve him as a priest.
- God also said that none of Eli's descendant would live up to an old age.

- God said that Eli and his family were to be reduced to extreme poverty and become baggers (look for some thing to eat).
- Phinehas' wife who was pregnant got shocked, went into labor and gave birth to a son whom she named Ichabod meaning that God' s glory had left Israel.
- Eli' s family was removed from serving God as priests.
- God promised to honor those who honored him and treat with contempt those who despise him.
- Samuel was called by God and took over Eli' s duties as a priest, judge.
- God' s messages and visions which had been rare for a long time began to appear.

### **The call of Samuel.**

- ✓ In those days when Samuel was serving the Lord under the direction of priest Eli, there were very few messages from God and visions from him were quite rare.
- ✓ It was during that time that Samuel received a call from God.
- ✓ When the lamp was still burning, the Lord appeared to the boy, Samuel.
- ✓ At first Samuel thought it was Eli calling him because he had never received a call from God.
- ✓ The lord called him three times but later Eli realized it was the Lord calling him.
- ✓ So, Eli advised Samuel to say “ Speak Lord, your servant is listening” if the Lord continued calling him.
- ✓ Samuel went back to bed to sleep and then the Lord continued to call him then Samuel responded as he had been advised.
- ✓ The Lord told Samuel of his plans of punishing Eli' s family from beginning up to the end.
- ✓ Samuel went back to bed but had a difficult task of telling Eli of the impending punishment or consequence of his sins.
- ✓ In the morning, Eli asked Samuel what the Lord had told him and advised him not to hide any thing otherwise God would punish him.
- ✓ After Samuel revealing everything to him, he confessed to the Lord, let him do whatever seems best.
- ✓ Samuel continued to serve the Lord and whenever he spoke, the whole Israel listened.

- Qns1. Examine the message that is contained in 1Samuel 3:1-22.*
2. *Comment on the call of Samuel to be a prophet of God.*
  3. *Analyze the conversation between God and Samuel at night.*
  4. *Discuss the main features of the call of Samuel.*

### **Relevance of the call of Samuel to Christians today.**

- Christians should carry out God' s plans because they can not be resisted.
- They should accept God' s instructions in their lives like Samuel,
- They should always be ready for God' s call positively like Samuel did.

- They should have courage to deliver God's message to whoever they are supposed to pass it to.
- They should try to be holy or do good in order to receive God's visions.
- They should respect God's messengers however young they may be.
- They should have confidence in the one true God while doing their work.
- They should be courageous while delivering God's messages.
- They should be able to challenge or condemn any evil just as Samuel did.
- They should change from their unfaithfulness ways of living to up right ones.
- They should always try to please God in whatever they do unlike Eli's sons.
- They should always consult elders in the church before doing anything.

### **The prophesy / message that God gave to Samuel at night.**

- God promised that he was going to do something in Israel which will make every one stunned.
- God said that he was going to carry out all his threats against Eli's family from the beginning to the end.
- God informed him that Eli's sons had spoken evil things about him.
- God told Samuel that Eli knew about what his sons were doing but did not stop them.
- God said that not even sacrifice or offering would be able to remove the consequence of the terrible sins.
- He told Samuel that all the descendants of Eli would die a violent death.
- God told Samuel that all the remaining descendants were to become beggars.
- That his glory would leave Israel because of the sins of Eli.
- He said that non from Eli's family will serve him as a priest again.
- He said that he was going to honor those that honored him and treat with contempt those who despise him.

### **Comparison between the call of Samuel and that of Moses.**

#### **Similarities.**

- Both Samuel and Moses were called by God by their names.
- Both were called to serve God by his power ie they were given tasks and duties to perform under God's guidance.
- Both of them had never seen or heard the voice of the Lord before.
- Both were given tasks of prophetic missions ie both were called to act as God's prophets.
- Both revealed that nothing could be done without God's providence.
- Both accepted God's tasks though they at first hesitated.
- Both of them assumed the role of priests by leading the people into worship and sacrifices.
- Both of them were called to serve as judges by settling disputes among people.
- Both of them were called to serve as national leaders.
- Both of them received their calls in dramatic ways ie Moses in the burning bush incident and Samuel in a vision.

#### **Differences.**

- Samuel was called when still young while Moses was mature.
- God appeared to Moses in a burning bush while he appeared to Samuel in a vision.
- Samuel was called when he was sleeping at the sanctuary at Shiloh while Moses was called when he was looking after his father in laws' flock at the mountain.
- Moses was sent to go and rescue the Israelites in Egypt while Samuel was sent to go and warn Eli.
- Samuel took time to understand the voice of God not until he was told by Eli while Moses understood the message very first though he had some questions.
- Moses was a covenant maker at Sinai while Samuel was to uphold the covenant.
- Moses was the founder of the nation of Israel while Samuel was the liberator of the nation of Israel from sin.
- Moses had problems with Pharaoh before the Passover while Samuel passed the message to Eli peacefully.

### **The role / significance / importance of Samuel in Israel' s history.**

Samuel was a priest.

- He sacrificed on behalf of the people.
- He took care of the holy land of God.
- He led the people in prayer and repentance.

Samuel was a prophet.

- Whatever he said came true.
- He delivered God' s message to the people.

Samuel was a seer.

- He fore told the death of Saul.
- He told Saul' s servant about what had happened to the lost donkey they were looking for.
- He was able to pick out David from 8 boys to replace Saul as king.

Samuel was a judge,

- He settled cases or disputes among the people.
- He brought about justice in courts of law.

Samuel was a religious leader.

- He purified the worship at Shiloh.
- Syncretism was abolished in Israel.
- People could now talk to God without hindrances.
- He encouraged monotheism.
- Israelites could now be satisfied with their sacrifices.

Samuel was a mediator.

- He would link the Israelites to Yahweh.
- Israel got proper guidance based on the covenant.

Samuel was a king maker.

- He anointed Saul as first king of Israel.
- When Saul was rejected by God, he anointed David to replace him.

Samuel was a military leader.

- He was able to defeat all the enemies of Israel.

Samuel was a counselor.

- He always reminded the kings about the effects of disobedience.
- He was able to promote unity among the 12 tribes of Israel.

Samuel was a law maker.

- He gave out laws and regulations concerning kingship.

Samuel was a political leader.

- He maintained peace and harmony in Israel.

### **Israel' s demand for a king (1 Samuel 8).**

- ❖ The Israelites asked for a king because Samuel was getting too old and the leaders in Israel sought of asking for a successor to Samuel.
- ❖ The sons of Samuel ( Joel and Abijah) had become corrupt by asking for bribes and never followed their father' s example.
- ❖ Samuel' s sons had become immoral and a disgrace to God that' s why the Israelites demanded for a king.
- ❖ It was because they wanted a visible God whom they could talk to face to face.
- ❖ The Israelites were fulfilling God' s promise ie God said that after settling in Canaan, they will need a king. (Deut.17:14).
- ❖ The Israelites wanted a king who would organize them in battles or wars against their enemies.
- ❖ The Israelites thought that they would be more united under an earthly king.
- ❖ They argued that the king had a mediator' s role to other nations and wondered how they could do it without a king.
- ❖ To them, kingship was a symbol of royal Messiahship revealed to them by their God.
- ❖ The Israelites were wondering of the future of their nation under evil leaders.
- ❖ They wanted a leader who would be recognized by other nations.
- ❖ They argued that human kingship was not intended to destroy Yahweh' s kingship but an earthly king would act as God' s representative on earth.
- ❖ They thought that God had abandoned them after experiencing defeats in war.
- ❖ The Israelites were behaving the way they wished because they had no king.
- ❖ It was because of external or Philistines threat eg
  - The Philistine kings were worshipped.
  - They constantly attacked the Israelites.
  - There were oppressions of the Israelites by the Philistines.
  - They had captured the covenant box.
  - They could even use hit and run method.
  - They had friends in Israel.
- ❖ The Israelites wanted to be like other nations because:
  - In other nations, kings had overall authority.
  - In other nations, there was a lot of economic developments.
  - In other nations, kings led them into the wars.
  - In other nations, kings were respected and worshipped.
  - In other nations, kings were visible.
  - Kings were to provide security and protection to their subjects.

- Qns*
1. Account for the demand of an earthly king in Israel.
  2. To what extent did the Philistines' threat cause the demand for a king in Israel?
  3. To what extent was the demand for a king influenced by other nations.(to be like other nations).
  4. Account for the origin and concept of kingship in Israel.

**Samuel gets displeased / disappointed / un happy / annoyed with the demand for a king.**

- The Israelites were not appreciative of what God had done for them in Egypt thus their demand for a king was therefore an insult to God.
- Their demand for king showed that Samuels' sons also being rejected as leaders of Israel.
- To Samuel, the time for the demand for a king was pre-mature because God knew when to give them a king.
- To Samuel, the Israelites had been succeeding in everything even without an earthly king therefore the demand for a king was useless.
- To Samuel, leaders in Israel were chosen by God himself and not by any other person.
- He got annoyed with this act because they had not consulted him whether this was appropriate.
- It was because the Israelites were forgetting that to be God' s people meant accepting him as their king.
- To Samuel, the Israelites were copying pagan cultures of having human kings.
- It was because at that time, God had not instructed him to appoint them a king.
- To Samuel, the Israelites were trying to break the covenant they had made with God.
- It was because this act was one way of undermining the power and authority of God to have victory which annoyed him.
- He was disappointed because this was one way of rejecting him as their leader.
- He got disappointed because they were not appreciating what Samuel had done for them.
- He got annoyed because they were changing from theocracy to charismatic leadership.

- Qn*
1. Justify the view that the demand for an earthly king displeased Samuel.
  2. Examine the view that the demand for a king demonstrated lack of appreciation by the Israelites.
  3. Account for Samuel' s un willingness to grant the Israelites a king.
  4. Account for Samuel' s negative attitude towards granting the Israelites a king.

**Samuels' fear s / warning / consequences / effects of having an earthly king (1 Sam 8-10).**

- ✓ Samuel warned that the kings would make soldiers of their sons.
- ✓ He said that the sons of Israel would have to plough the king' s fields, harvest his crops and make his weapons.

- ✓ He warned them that their daughters would make him perfumes and others become cooks.
- ✓ He warned them that the kings would take away their vineyards and their fields.
- ✓ He warned them that the kings would take tithe of their crops and harvests.
- ✓ He warned them that the kings would take their servants and their best animals like donkeys, cattle, and sheep.
- ✓ He warned them that the kings would be above the laws and make them slaves.
- ✓ Under the earthly kings, the Israelites were to suffer from exploitation and injustice.
- ✓ He said that the Israelites would complain bitterly but the Lord would not listen to their complaints.

*Qn1. Examine Samuel' s warnings concerning kingship in Israel.*

2. *Analyze the fears of Samuel when the Israelites asked for the king.*
3. *Discuss the consequences of having an earthly king in Israel according to Samuel.*
4. *Comment on the justification of Samuel' s fears or warnings in Israel. (give the evils and the king who did them).*

#### **Lessons / relevance from the demand for a king to Christians.**

- ❖ Christians should always consult God before doing any thing.
- ❖ They should be faithful to God unlike the Israelites.
- ❖ They should follow God' s plans so as to succeed in life.
- ❖ They should always pray to God when in difficulty unlike the Israelites.
- ❖ They should always be examporary in whatever they do unlike the Israelites.
- ❖ They should seek guidance from God before doing any thing.
- ❖ They should always respect God' s messengers unlike the Israelites.
- ❖ They should allow God' s interventions in their plans.
- ❖ They should relay on God alone for everything.
- ❖ They should believe in God' s promises because he fulfills them.
- ❖ They should only copy good things from neighbors.
- ❖ They should be appreciative for whatever God does for them in life.
- ❖ They should take God as the king of all kings.
- ❖ They should follow the covenant laws.
- ❖ They should allow God to choose for them a king.

#### **Qualities / features / characteristics of a good king in Israel.**

- A king was supposed to be chosen by God himself to rule Israel.
- He was not supposed to be a foreigner thus he was to be an Israelite chosen from them.
- He was not supposed to have many wives because they would lead him into worshipping other gods.
- He was not to have a large number of horses because this could make him believe that he is stronger than more people.
- He was to have a copy of God' s laws and teachings made from the original copy.
- He was not supposed to make himself rich with silver and gold.
- He was not supposed to make alliances with the pagan nations.

- A king was not supposed to serve others with injustices.

## **KING SAUL**

### **The choice and anointing of Saul as first king of Israel.**

- ✓ The people of Israel demanded a king because they wanted to be like other nation.
- ✓ Even when Samuel explained the effects of kingship, they insisted on having a king.
- ✓ At that time, there was a wealthy and influential man named Kish who had a son called Saul.
- ✓ Some donkeys that belonged to Kish had got lost and he had told his son to look for them with a servant.
- ✓ Saul and one servant set off to go and look for the lost donkey.
- ✓ They went through Ephraim, Salish, but they did not see them.
- ✓ Saul then suggested that they go back because his father may stop worrying about the donkey and start worrying about them.
- ✓ The servant said that they go and see the holy man who might tell them about the donkey.
- ✓ Saul wondered what they would give the holy man because there was no food left in their packs.
- ✓ The servant said that he had a small silver coin which they would give the seer.
- ✓ The two set off to go to the town and as they went, they met some young woman coming from the well.
- ✓ Saul and the servant asked about the seer and the girl said that he was in the town.
- ✓ The girl said that the seer had just come in the town to bless the sacrifices that the people were going to offer.
- ✓ Saul and the servant went to the town and as they were going, they saw Samuel coming their way.
- ✓ The Lord had on the previous day told Samuel that he would send him the person who was to be elected as king of Israel.
- ✓ Samuel told Saul to go with him to the place of worship and eat with him.
- ✓ Samuel told Saul that the donkey they were looking for had already been found and told him that the Lord had chosen him as ruler of his people.
- ✓ Saul wondered how he could be chosen yet he came from the smallest tribe in Israel and a family of least importance.
- ✓ Samuel led Saul into a large room and gave him a place at the head of the table where 30 guests were seated.
- ✓ Saul was given a special piece of meat which had been specially kept for him.
- ✓ They left the place of worship and Samuel got a place for him to sleep.
- ✓ The following morning, Samuel woke him up and they went to the street together.
- ✓ As soon as they reached the edge of the town, Samuel told the servant to move ahead of them.
- ✓ Samuel told Saul to stay there for a minute and he would tell him what the Lord had said.
- ✓ Samuel took a jar of olive oil and poured it on his head.
- ✓ Samuel kissed Saul and told him that the Lord had anointed him ruler of Israel.
- ✓ Saul was to rule the people and protect them from their enemies.

- ✓ Eventually, Samuel gave Saul signs to confirm that he had been picked as king of Israel.

*Qn. Comment on the circumstances that led to the choice and anointing of Saul as king of Israel.*

**The achievements of King Saul (Assets / positive role).**

- Saul was the first king of Israel and therefore inaugurated the establishment of Israel as a kingdom or a nation.
- Saul reduced on the enemies of the Israelites thus bringing some relative peace in Israel.
- Saul defeated the Philistines who had been the greatest enemy of Israel.
- Saul brought together the 12 tribes of Israel so that they could fight a common enemy ie he brought unity in Israel.
- Saul reduced rivalry among the 12 tribes of Israel thus he promoted harmony among the people of Israel.
- Saul was a religious man who got involved in fighting battles to show a good example to others in fact he died at the battle front.
- Saul knew how to deal with his people which simplified internal co-ordination and thus formed a strong military force.
- Saul cleared the hill country around Bethel which the enemies were using to attack Israel.
- Saul laid a good foundation in the political development of Israel as the first king.
- Saul built an altar for God in Israel which was used for offering sacrifices.
- Saul had love for his people thus he used to visit them.
- Saul broke the iron monopoly of the Philistines there by paving way for the development of Israel thus Israel started making their own weapons.

*Qn. In what ways was Saul an asset to the people of Israel.*

**The failures / weaknesses of King Saul (liability / negative role / betrayal of Israel.**

- In the war against the Philistines, Saul sacrificed yet he was not a priest which annoyed God.
- Saul showed that he lacked faith in Samuel and in God thinking that he would be defeated without sacrificing.
- Saul disobeyed God' s commands that he had been given through Samuel and this annoyed God.
- Saul was impatient thus he hurriedly went to sacrifice before the war and this annoyed God.
- Saul destroyed only what was worthless and useless among the Amalekites possessions ie cattle, sheep, goats, etc.
- Saul did not kill the best sheep and cattle and instead destroyed the worthless ones only.
- What was annoying was that he even kept the Amalekites king, Agag alive.
- Saul was not repentant. He justified his actions by saying that he wanted to sacrifice to God what he had spared.

- Saul seemed to have feared his men more than God by saying that they were deserting him.
- Saul consulted mediums and spirits (fortune tellers) instead of God which was a foolish thing to do.
- Saul killed 85 priests and inhabitants of the town of Moab which annoyed God.
- Saul unsuccessfully tried to kill David because he was envious of him which annoyed God.
- Saul ran mad because the spirits of God left him which led to his rejection.
- Saul was unprincipled in that he had promised to give Miriam to David to be his wife and later changed his mind and gave her to Michal.
- Saul failed to win the confidence of Samuel, God's spokesman and this contributed to his rejection.
- Saul feared the uncircumcised Philistine soldier, Goliath which annoyed God.
- Saul was inhuman eg he had kept the soldiers hungry the whole day and made some to sin by making them to eat meat with blood.
- Saul was a liar eg he informed Samuel that he had obeyed God and all his commands.
- Saul failed to control his soldiers thus they deserted him in the war which made him to sacrifice.
- King Saul later committed a terrible sin before God by committing suicide.
- Saul later practiced syncretism ie he named his son Ishbaal, a name associated with Baal.

*Qn 1. Assess Saul as king of Israel.*

*2. To what extent was Saul a liability to the people of Israel.*

*3. Examine the ways in which Saul acted foolishly towards the covenant laws.*

*4. Examine the ways in which Saul disobeyed God.*

*5. To what extent was the rejection of king Saul of Israel inevitable?*

To a large extent, it was inevitable because of the following (negative role). However, to a small extent, it was not inevitable or justified because:

- Samuel had delayed to come for the sacrifice.
- The soldiers were deserting him.
- Being the first king, he had no point of reference.
- Due to human nature, Saul needed a chance to save the situation.
- The enemy was approaching and the people of Israel were trembling with fear.

6. "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel away from you..." 1 Sam 15:28.

Analyze the factors that led to the above statement. (Failures of Saul).

### **Lessons that political leaders learn from Saul's rejection.**

- ✓ Political leaders should perform duties which are theirs unlike King Saul who offered a sacrifice.
- ✓ They should be ready to be corrected for their mistakes unlike Saul.

- ✓ They should accept the wrongs that they do and ask for forgiveness unlike King Saul.
- ✓ They should always listen to God's spokesmen like prophets unlike King Saul.
- ✓ They should always be ready to give up power in case they are voted out of office unlike Saul.
- ✓ They should have fear for God in everything they do unlike Saul.
- ✓ They should be satisfied with whatever they have unlike Saul who was materialistic.
- ✓ They should try to follow the constitution that governs their countries.
- ✓ They should be patient with God at all times unlike King Saul.
- ✓ They should always tell the truth at all times unlike King Saul who was a liar.
- ✓ They should respect the lives of other people unlike King Saul who killed the prophets of Moab.
- ✓ They should be principled in their decision making unlike King Saul who changed his mind.
- ✓ They should put their faith and trust in God alone unlike King Saul.
- ✓ They should consult God before doing anything unlike King Saul.
- ✓ They should try to give honor to God alone unlike King Saul.

#### **David is anointed as king of Israel.**

- ❖ Through Samuel, the Lord anointed David after the rejection of Saul who had sinned against God.
- ❖ The Lord said to Samuel, for how long he would go on grieving over Saul because he had rejected him as king of Israel.
- ❖ The Lord then told Samuel to get olive oil and go to Bethlehem to a man called Jesse because one of his sons had been chosen as king of Israel.
- ❖ Samuel was scared because Saul would kill him if he heard about it.
- ❖ The Lord answered, take with him a calf and claim that he was to offer a sacrifice to the Lord.
- ❖ The Lord then told Samuel to invite Jesse to the sacrifice and he would anoint one of his sons to become king of Israel.
- ❖ Samuel then did as God had told him and went to Bethlehem where the city leaders were trembling and asked him "Is this a peaceful visit, seer?"
- ❖ Samuel told them that it was peaceful and ordered them to purify themselves and he invited them to the sacrifice.
- ❖ When they arrived, Samuel saw Jesse's son Eliab but the Lord had not chosen him.
- ❖ Then Jesse called his son Abinadab but the Lord had not chosen him either.
- ❖ In that way, Jesse brought seven of his sons but none of them had been chosen.
- ❖ Then Samuel ordered Jesse to call the youngest son to the sacrifice.
- ❖ So Jesse sent for him. He was a handsome healthy young man and his eyes sparkled.
- ❖ Then the Lord said to Samuel "this is the one, anoint him as king of Israel.
- ❖ Samuel got the olive oil and anointed David in front of his brothers.
- ❖ Immediately, the spirit of the Lord took control of David and was with him from that day onwards.

- ❖ Eventually, Samuel turned back to Ramah.

*Qn. Comment on the circumstances that led to the anointing of David as king of Israel.*

### **Factors for David' s rise to power.**

- David was anointed king of Israel because of Saul' s failures ie he had disobeyed Yahweh.
- At that time, there was insecurity in Israel and therefore there was need for a leader to fight the Philistines.
- David was a good warrior thus he had special ability and military skills to take up any challenge in life.
- David defeated Goliath and this earned him fame and praise especially from women.
- David' s skills of befriending people eg he was a friend of Jonathan, Saul' s son who made him learn about Saul' s ways of leadership.
- It was because of God' s plans thus God ordered Samuel to anoint him as king of Israel.
- David was a musician and this facilitated his coming into the king' s palace thus he learnt how a modern kingdom could be managed.
- David was a shepherd and this helped him to know how to survive the harsh conditions.
- At that time there was religious decay in Israel and there was need for a leader to revive the covenant faith.
- David was a patient person eg he did not rush to capture power after killing Goliath.
- He was a forgiving person eg he forgave Saul very many times even when he had chance to kill him.
- David had faith in God that' s why he killed Goliath in the name of God.
- David was courageous, humble, hard working and charismatic man that is why he was able to win people to his side.
- David' s marrying from the first family (Michal) helped him to rise to power.

*Qn. Examine the factors that facilitated David to rise to power.*

### **Achievements of David as king of Israel.**

- David brought security in Israel when he defeated the Philistines. The Philistines had made the Israelites demand for a king.
- David defeated all other enemies of Israel eg Israel had been under the pressure from her neighbors.
- David established Jerusalem as the most powerful state of the time.
- David captured Jerusalem and established it as a capital city of Judah.
- David united the Israelites (12 tribes) into one people even after division.
- David constructed Jerusalem making it a modern city with good infrastructures.
- David glorified God and kept loyalty to him thus that was expected of kings in Israel.

- David established a friendly relationship with other states like Tyre to ensure peace for Israel.
- David reduced internal resistance within the kingdom of Israel.
- David was highly religious that he even proposed for the building of the first temple in Israel.
- David expanded the boundaries of Israel ie it became the largest state of the time.
- David brought the Ark of the Covenant in a secure place in Jerusalem showing his faith.
- David respected God so much that he composed so many songs of praise and Psalms.
- David founded a powerful and everlasting dynasty in Israel.
- David was a repentant king eg he repented after committing sin with Bathsheba.
- David established a strong army that he used to defeat the enemies of Israel.
- David killed Goliath that had mistreated Israel for so long.
- David was a great promoter of the worship of Yahweh in Israel thus he promoted monotheism in Israel.
- David respected God' s prophets eg he respected Prophet Nathan.
- All future kings were judged with reference to him which showed that he lived to the expectations of kingship in Israel.
- Before his death, he advised his son, Solomon to trust and obey God.

#### **Failures of King David.**

- David became a dictator towards the end of his reign and this was bad before the Lord.
- David even failed to control his officers and gave them excessive powers to do what they wanted.
- David carried out a census thereby annoying God and causing death of many Israelites.
- David admired Uriah' s wife, Bathsheba and he broke the Ten Commandments.
- He even went ahead and committed adultery by having sex with Uriah' s wife.
- David then committed murder of Uriah because he wanted to cover up the pregnancy.
- David went on and possessed Bathsheba as his wife even when he had so many wives.
- David broke the law concerning holy wars when he had sex with Bathsheba yet Israel was at war.
- David remained home when his soldiers were at the war front which annoyed God.
- David killed the surviving members of Saul' s family in an act of revenge yet he had Saul' s daughter.
- David failed to control his family thus there was incest ie Amnon and Tamar.
- David' s polygamous tendencies brought Israel' s administration into problems thus he was forced to turn away from God.
- David practiced tribalism and favoritism thus he favored the southerners more than the others.
- David had lustful desires and this was bad as far as kingship was concerned.

- David was not exemplary ie he allowed himself to be above the law by breaking the law of impurity.

*Qn 1. Assess David as an ideal / model king of Israel.*

*2. Analyze David' s attitude towards the covenant and the law.*

*3. In what ways did David commit double murder?*

*4. To what extent did David live up to the expectations of kingship in Israel?*

### **Reasons / factors for David' s successes.**

- David was a hardworking man before and after becoming a king. This helped him to succeed in his administration.
- David also had the support of Yahweh. David usually depended on Yahweh who gave him strength.
- David was a faithful man who trusted God and he was committed to the covenant. This helped him to succeed.
- When he brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, he mobilized support for himself thus everybody loved him.
- David respected and honored Yahweh and that' s why God promised an everlasting dynasty.
- David was a soldier and using his military skills, he succeeded in most of the battles he engaged in.
- David was a courageous man and this helped him to succeed.
- David was a talented musician eg he composed many songs and hymns which made him get favors.
- David was a tolerant king eg he could kill Saul even when he had chance to do so.
- David was a humble man and had respect for God' s prophets eg he respected Prophet Nathan.
- David was a repentant man eg he asked for forgiveness when he sinned with Bathsheba.
- David was a shepherd and this helped him to get used to hard life and challenges.
- David stayed in Saul' s palace and this helped him to get leadership skills.
- David was diplomatic in his foreign relations eg he allied with king Hiram of Tyre.

### **Reasons / factors for David' s failures.**

- ✓ David failed because he had human weaknesses thus in life, nobody is perfect.
- ✓ David lacked self control thus he went in for other people' s wives which contributed to his failure.
- ✓ David misused his powers thus he was corrupted by power ie David thought that by being a king, he would do anything.
- ✓ David didn' t control his royal officers (soldiers) eg the army commander Joab was given excessive powers.
- ✓ David was greedy, un satisfied eg he had many wives but again went for Uriah' s wife, Bathsheba.
- ✓ David was segregative thus he practiced discrimination between the southerners and the northerners hence leading to his failure.

- ✓ David had lustful desires that led him into adultery with Bathsheba.
- ✓ With time, David started neglecting his duties eg he was at home while the soldiers were at a holy war.
- ✓ At the end of his reign, David became a dictator, creating many enemies for himself.
- ✓ David failed to, live up to the covenant law and faith.

### **David transfers the covenant ark / box to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6).**

- At that time, the covenant box had been captured from the Israelites by the Philistines and was taken to Balaah in Judah.
- After becoming king, David mobilized 30,000 of his best soldiers and led them to Balaah to bring God' s covenant box from the house of Abinadab.
- They took it from Abinadab' s home and placed it on a new cart.
- Uzziah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab were guarding the cart with Ahio walking in front.
- David and all the Israelites were playing lyres and drums while dancing and singing to honor the Lord.
- As they came to a threshing point of Nacon, the oxen stumbled and Uzziah reached out and took hold of the covenant box.
- God became angry with Uzziah and killed him instantly because of his irreverence.
- David was annoyed because God had killed Uzziah in anger.
- David decided to live the covenant box at Obed Edom' s home where it stayed for 3 months and God blessed Obed Edom and his entire family.
- David collected the covenant box on hearing that God had blessed the family of Obed Edom for keeping the covenant box.
- After a short distance, David sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf.
- On their way to Jerusalem, David danced with all their might to honor the Lord with shouts of joy.
- As the Ark of the Covenant came to Jerusalem, Michal who was David' s wife saw King David dancing before his subjects and she was disgusted of him.
- Then David and the Israelites brought the Ark of the Covenant and set it in its place inside the tent which David had set up for it.
- David then offered the burnt offering to the Lord.
- After sacrificing to the Lord, David blessed all the people in the name of the Lord and gave them food.
- Then David returned to bless his house holds but the wife rebuked him for having danced like a mad man in the eyes of his subjects.
- David had to answer her that he had to dance for the Lord who had chosen him to rule the Israelites and rejected her father.
- Michal never had children before she rebuked David.

*Qn1. Examine the circumstances that led King David to transfer the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.*

*2. Give an account of how David transferred the covenant box to Jerusalem.*

3. Discuss the events that led to the transfer of the covenant box to Jerusalem by King David.

**Significance / meaning of carrying the covenant box to Jerusalem by King David.**

- It showed that David gave God the first priority in his administration of Israel.
- It showed God's power and holiness and therefore to have a close dealing with him, one needs to be holy.
- It united the people of Israel the more eg they moved together rejoicing, dancing and had fellowship.
- The event was a religious renewal in that the people of Israel re-dedicated themselves to God.
- It showed that Yahweh was a God of blessings ie he blessed the family of Obed Edom for having kept the covenant ark.
- It showed the need to maintain the idea of monotheism among the Israelites.
- The event established Israel as a holy city and Centre of worship.
- It showed that God can be worshipped in various ways eg through singing, dancing, shouting, etc.
- It showed that the God of Israel was more important than the other gods.
- The Israelites were assured of God's protection because of the presence of the covenant box.
- It showed that the leaders of Israel are free to celebrate with their subjects.
- The event also demonstrated that David was a man of God.
- It showed the importance of sacrifices in the celebration of important days as a way of approaching God.
- It signified military confidence in Israel of having future victory in their wars.
- It showed that God can punish those who approach him in a way that is un holy.
- The ark signified God's invisible nature and presence among the Israelites.
- It showed how leaders in Israel could show exemplary acts to their subjects.
- The event showed that sacred duties should be done by people whom God chose or anointed.
- It showed that God can be worshipped regardless of ones status eg David was a king but danced almost naked.
- It showed the importance of community prayer.

**Lessons that Christians can learn from this act.**

- ❖ Christians should try to love and respect God as David did.
- ❖ They should respect their earthly leaders because all authority comes from God.
- ❖ They should be law abiding citizens like David.
- ❖ They should put God at the Centre of their work like David did.
- ❖ They should show good examples to their subjects like David did.
- ❖ They should approach God when they are in their holy state unlike Uzziah.
- ❖ They should worship God regardless of their status like David did.
- ❖ They should worship God in many ways eg singing, dancing, shouting, etc.
- ❖ They should construct and respect holy places like David did.
- ❖ They should worship God with commitment and devotion.
- ❖ They should leave sacred duties to people that has chosen.

- ❖ They should have unity amongst themselves like the Israelites were during this event.
- ❖ They should participate in community prayers like the Israelites did.
- ❖ They should seek for God' s blessings.
- ❖ They should maintain the worship of one God.
- ❖ They should do things that glorify God' s name.

#### **Reasons for David' s transfer of the ark to Jerusalem.**

- To uphold the idea of worship of one God in Israel.
- It was a way of respecting and honoring God.
- David wanted to put his administration in the hands of God.
- He wanted to make Jerusalem a holy city.
- David wanted to ensure that the Israelites were to have military victory in wars.
- David wanted to revive God' s presence in Israel.
- He wanted to promote peace and unity in Israel.
- He wanted to re-dedicate Israel and himself to God.
- He wanted to ask for God' s protection and security in Israel.
- He wanted to show the importance of sacrifices as a way of approaching God.
- David wanted to show the importance of community prayer.
- He wanted to show the Israelites that God could be worshipped in various ways eg by dancing, singing, shouting, etc.

#### **Lessons that modern Christians learn from David' s act.**

- They should try to love and respect God like David.
- They should respect their earthly leaders because all authority comes from God.
- They should be law abiding citizens like David.
- They should put God at the center of their work like David.
- They should show good examples to their subjects like David did.
- They should approach God when they in holy states unlike Uzziah.
- They should worship God regardless of one' s status like David di.
- They should worship God in many ways eg through dancing, singing, shouting, etc.
- They should construct and respect worshipping places of God like David did.
- They should follow the good examples of their leaders like the Israelites.
- They should worship God with commitment and devotion.
- They should leave all sacred duties to people that God has anointed or chosen.
- They should have unity among themselves.
- They should participate in community prayers.
- They should ask for God' s blessings.
- They should adopt monotheism.

#### **David' s plan / wish to build a temple for Yahweh (2 Sam 7), why God stopped him.**

- ✓ David had wished to build the temple for Yahweh and made his idea known to Nathan, the prophet.
- ✓ Nathan had given his approval but later God told him a different message.

- ✓ Nathan told David not to build the temple for God meaning that God can not be limited to one place.
- ✓ Nathan said that even in the past, God had never lived in the temple.
- ✓ Nathan reminded David of his former life as a shepherd and how he had been made a king.
- ✓ Nathan showed how the Israelites had settled in Canaan and were given protection.
- ✓ Nathan said that it would be David' s son to build a temple for God.
- ✓ Nathan said that David would be made the greatest and famous leader in the world.
- ✓ Through Nathan, God promised to keep David from his enemies.
- ✓ Nathan said that David was to die and be buried with his ancestors.
- ✓ Nathan said that God would not withdraw his support from David' s son.
- ✓ David was promised that his dynasty was to last forever.
- ✓ God promised to be with David' s son and that he would even punish him when he does wrong.
- ✓ Nathan told David that God had never asked the leaders of Israel to build for him a temple.
- ✓ Nathan told David that God had been with him and defeated his enemies.
- ✓ God also promised to defend the people of Israel.
- ✓ God promised David to give him many descendants.

#### **The message / prophecies that Nathan delivered to King David (2 Samuel 7:12).**

- Nathan said that David was not the one to build a house for God.
- That David was taken from shepherd hood to be a ruler of Israel.
- God promised to make David' s name famous and great.
- God declared that David was to live and die peacefully.
- God said that he was going to raise one of his sons who would be the heir to his throne.
- According to Nathan, David' s kingdom would be strong and great.
- God promised that David' s kingdom would be everlasting.
- He said that it was going to be David' s son to build a temple of God.
- He said that David' s son would be Yahweh' s son and at the same time be with his father.
- He said that when the son does wrong, God would punish him as a father does to his son.
- Nathan promised protection to David' s son and that his strength would rest on Yahweh' s power.
- He said that Yahweh' s love would never be taken away from David' s son.

#### **How Nathan' s promises / prophecies to David were fulfilled.**

- David was kept safe from his enemies as he was promised.
- Solomon, David' s son built a temple for God as it was promised.
- When David died at an old age, he was buried with his ancestors as it had been promised.

- God' s power continued in the history of Israel to guide and defend them as it was promised.
- David, through Christ Jesus established an everlasting dynasty.
- God punished Solomon as a father for going against the law.
- David has always been referred to as an ideal king of Israel.
- Despite the sinfulness of David, God never withdrew his love and support from him.
- Jesus, son of David constantly referred to God as father.
- Solomon was ever guided by God as a father does to his son.

### **David' s prayer of thanksgiving (2 Samuel 7:18).**

*Qn. Examine the main points that were raised in David' s prayer.*

- In the prayer, David showed that he was un worth of what God had done for him.
- David acknowledged that God' s promised to him and his family was worthy.
- David showed that it was the will of God to do to him what he had done.
- David praised God showing that there is no God like him (monotheism).
- David talked of how Israel was a nation of God.
- David talked of how God had driven out other nations as Israel advanced.
- David talked of how Israel had been rescued from Egypt.
- David called upon God to fulfill his promises; he would have his name great.
- David asked blessings on his family so that they continue enjoying God' s favor.
- David confessed that God was just teaching him.
- David said that God was incomparable.
- To David, God fights for his people.

### **Prophet Nathan and David' s sin (2 Samuel 11).**

*Qn1. Comment on the circumstances that led David to fall into sin according to 2 Samuel 11.*

*2. Examine the circumstances that led to the death of Uriah the Hittite.*

- ❖ David was at home idle when the soldiers had gone for a holy war.
- ❖ Late in the afternoon, David was walking on the roof top then he saw a woman bathing and she was beautiful.
- ❖ David admired this woman and sent a messenger to bring her to him.
- ❖ David made love with her and the woman eventually got pregnant.
- ❖ Then the woman sent a message to David to inform him of her pregnancy.
- ❖ This is when David sent for Uriah to try and cover up the act of adultery.
- ❖ When David told Uriah to go home, he refused and chose to sleep at the palace gate with the palace guards.
- ❖ When David learnt that Uriah did not go home, he invited him for supper.
- ❖ David made him drunk but he still didn' t go home and slept on his blanket in the palace guard' s room.
- ❖ When Uriah refused to sleep with Bathsheba, David got annoyed.

- ❖ Then David wrote a letter to Joab, the army commander to put Uriah where the war was heaviest.
- ❖ This was done and Uriah was killed in the battle.
- ❖ But the Lord was not pleased with what David had done.

*Qn. In what ways did Uriah show his faith from the story above?*

- He was at the war front fighting God' s holy war.
- When he was sent for by David, he freely accepted to come back.
- When he was told to go back, he instead went and slept at the palace gate.
- Uriah refused to sleep with his wife because he did not want to break the law of a holy soldier.
- Even when he was made drunk, he still slept at the palace gate.

*Qn. Account for the death of Uriah the Hittite.*

- David' s act of remaining at home.
- The beauty of Bathsheba.
- Bathsheba' s act of bathing outside.
- The presence of a holy war.
- Joab' s loyalty to King David.
- Uriah' s refusal to sleep with his wife.
- Adulterous nature of David.
- Lustful nature of King David.
- David' s fear of shame.
- David' s lack of faith.
- Uriah' s faithfulness to the covenant.

### **Prophet Nathan' s message /confrontation with King David after David' s sin (2 Sam 12). The parable.**

- ✓ When David sinned, Nathan delivered to him a message in form of a parable.
- ✓ Nathan told David a story of a rich man and a poor man who lived in the same town.
- ✓ Nathan told him that the rich man had a lot of cattle and sheep while the poor man had only one lamb.
- ✓ He said that the poor man loved his lamb so much like a daughter to him.
- ✓ He told him that the poor man would feed it on his food and let it drink from his cap.
- ✓ He said that when the rich man got a visitor, he took the only lamb of the poor man and slaughtered it to prepare a meal for his visitor.
- ✓ David got angry to the rich man and even promised punishment / pay 4 times.
- ✓ Nathan however revealed that David was the rich man for having taken Uriah' s only wife, Bathsheba.
- ✓ Nathan said that if David' s wives were not enough for him then the Lord would give him more.
- ✓ This came up as a result of David having been given a lot of wealth, property and even made king of Israel.

- ✓ Nathan then said that God would cause someone in his family to bring trouble to him.
- ✓ Nathan also told David that in every generation, one of his descendants would die a violent death.
- ✓ Nathan said that David would see when his wives are given to another man.
- ✓ Nathan said that this man would have sex intercourse with his wives in broad day light.
- ✓ Eventually, David repented his sins and God forgave him.
- ✓ Though David repented, Nathan told him that the child born of adultery would die.
- ✓ Then afterwards, Nathan went back home.

- Qn1. Discuss the confrontation between Nathan and David after David' s sin.*
2. *Examine the message that Nathan gave to David after David' s sin.*
  3. *Examine Nathan' s prophesy to David after David' s sin.*

### **The meaning of Prophet Nathan' s parable to King David.**

- The parable meant that prophet Nathan wanted to draw attention to what David had done.
- In the parable, the rich man meant David and the poor man was Uriah.
- The poor man, Uriah had only one wife while the rich man, David had many wives and property.
- The parable meant that Uriah loved his wife so much like the poor man loved his only lamb.
- The parable meant that David was not satisfied with his wives and property.
- It meant that David had sinned when he took the only wife of Uriah.
- It meant that God had given leadership of Israel as a kingdom to David.
- It meant that if David wanted more, God would have given him more wives.
- It showed that David had gone against the laws of Israel and therefore disobeyed God' s commands.
- It meant that David had broken the covenant that God had made with Israel.
- It meant that King David was guilty of adultery.
- It showed that David had committed murder by killing Uriah.
- It meant that David had admired someone' s wife and even took her as his wife.
- The visitor meant David' s sexual or lustful desires.
- When David condemned the evil doer, it meant that David knew the law but he was not just ready to follow the law.
- It showed that David was not clean or pure despite his achievements.
- It showed the need for repentance when one sins.
- It showed the need for justice in society.

### **Consequence / impacts / effects of David' s sin.**

- Bathsheba' s son born out of adultery with David died.
- There was incestuous adultery in David' s family eg Amnon raped his sister Tamar and broke her virginity.

- Absalom publically played sex with his father's wife thus disgracing his father David.
- Amnon was killed by his brother Absalom for raping his sister, Tamar.
- Absalom staged a rebellion that was aimed at overthrowing his father from power.
- David failed to control his family as a parent though he was able to govern Israel as a nation.
- Absalom died while still fighting to overthrow his father.
- There was struggle for power between David's sons on the issue of succession.
- Solomon killed Adonijah so that he may firmly control the Country as a king.
- Israel eventually broke up into two i.e. the Northern and the Southern kingdom.

### **Relevance of Nathan's message to modern political leaders.**

- ❖ Political leaders should be contented with what they have unlike David.
- ❖ They should respect other people's property unlike David.
- ❖ They should preserve other people's lives unlike David.
- ❖ They should be faithful to their partners unlike David.
- ❖ They should follow programs as they are laid down unlike David who stayed home when Israel was at a holy war.
- ❖ They should always accept their mistakes and ask for forgiveness.
- ❖ They should be active at all times because idleness leads to sin.
- ❖ They should accept punishments from God as David did.
- ❖ They should respect the gift of sex unlike David who was adulterous.
- ❖ They should lead the people in a proper way other than misleading them unlike David who wanted to confuse Uriah.
- ❖ They should learn to control their anger unlike David.
- ❖ They should control their lustful desires unlike David.
- ❖ They should follow the constitutions of their Country unlike David.
- ❖ They should have fear for the Lord unlike David.
- ❖ They should accept to be corrected when they go wrong just like David did.

### **Lessons / relevance of David's reign to political leaders today.**

- They should have faith in Jesus just as David had in Yahweh.
- They should accept advice from religious leaders like David did.
- They should contribute to the progress of their states.
- They should be God fearing like David was.
- They should support religious projects e.g. building schools, churches, hospitals etc.
- They should be patient in whatever they do like David.
- They should repent off their sins like David did.
- They develop infrastructures in their countries like David did.
- They should have faith in their marriages unlike David.
- They should try to unite the people.
- They should respect other people's lives unlike David.
- They should be contented with what they have.
- They should have good relationship with other neighboring states.

## **KING SOLOMON.**

Solomon was David' s son , born of Bathsheba. Though Solomon had been chosen by David as king, there was a rivalry for power by his brother Adonijah. However, when Solomon killed him, he finally settled as a king of Israel.

### **Achievements of King Solomon (How he lived up to the covenant laws).**

- ✓ Solomon asked for wisdom and the Lord was happy with him and as a result God gave him wealth and honor.
- ✓ His wisdom excelled so much that it was far greater than any of the wise men at that time.
- ✓ He was able to judge the case between the two prostitutes concerning the surviving son and the dead one.
- ✓ He built a great temple for the Lord and this created a strong religious impression among the people.
- ✓ He was a wise merchant who established and developed trade with other nations.
- ✓ He eliminated the enemies of Israel and therefore had no further opposition during his time.
- ✓ He developed a standing army far greater than that of his father which he used to ensure security in Israel.
- ✓ He promoted commerce by establishing merchant ships which helped him in the movement of goods and services.
- ✓ He made Israel to be recognized by many nations and therefore Jerusalem became the Middle East first center of fashion and culture.
- ✓ He sacrificed to God on many alters in the kingdom showing that he followed instructions of his father before he died.
- ✓ He married daughters of the neighboring nations in order to strengthen his politics.
- ✓ He was a great composer eg he composed 3000 proverbs and 1000 songs.
- ✓ He was able to exploit the copped deposits from the area of Edom which his father had conquered.
- ✓ He was paid taxes from the states that his father had conquered.
- ✓ As a result of his fame, the Queen of Sheba travelled to Jerusalem to test him about his wisdom and later gave him gifts.
- ✓ He organized internal administration in Israel which helped him to rule God' s people peacefully.
- ✓ Solomon was a wise man and had knowledge about botany and zoology.

### **Failures of King Solomon.**

- He married many wives which was against the covenant law.
- He practiced nepotism by favoring the southerners.
- He used forced labor while building the temple and other projects at the cost of the people' s liberty.
- He heavily taxed the Israelites to meet expenses of his building programs and upkeep of his wives.

- He was very extravagant especially in his daily provisions and yet all these came from exploitation of the people.
- He worshipped the gods of his wives in Jerusalem.
- He accumulated a lot of wealth in Israel against the laws governing kingship.
- He used pagan craft men thus all the designs and fashions in the temple were foreign.
- He allied with other neighbors against God's warnings.
- He ignored his father's warnings to follow God's teachings and instructions.
- He contributed to the division of the kingdom of Israel into two i.e. the north and south.
- He was a dictator and thus people suffered under his reign.
- He committed murder when he killed Joab and his step brother Adonijah.
- He was unrepentant even when the Lord appeared to him twice.
- He was polygamous by having 700 wives and 300 concubines.
- He sold 20 towns of Israel to King Hiram of Tyre which was against the covenant law.
- He created a big debt for Israel which was against the covenant law.

*Qn1. In what ways did Solomon become a disgrace to Yahweh during his reign?*

*2. Examine the ways in which Solomon used his wisdom during his reign. (Both positive and negative)*

*3. How far did Solomon live up to the covenant requirement?*

### **How polygamy / plural marriage affected the reign of Solomon.**

- Solomon married 700 wives and 300 concubines and contravened the code of kingship in Israel.
- Polygamy was a violation of the laws of God.
- It showed that Solomon undermined the Lord by marrying foreign women.
- Polygamy made him to ignore his father's warnings.
- He set a very bad example to the people of Israel.
- He was forced to over tax the Israelites in order to raise money that would sustain his wives.
- The many wives made Solomon to live an extravagant and luxurious life at the expense of the poor Israelites.
- In order to please his wives, he offered sacrifices to their gods instead of concentrating on the worship of one God.
- Solomon even built for them shrines in the holy places of God.
- The many wives made Solomon to ally with pagan nations which led to his downfall.
- The presence of his wives in Israel made the nation to be under the influence of pagan worship.

### **The building and dedication of the temple by Solomon.**

- Once Solomon had been confirmed king of Israel, he began building the temple.
- Preparations were made to build a great temple of God in Jerusalem and after completing the temple, Solomon called the leaders of Israel to come to God.

- The covenant box was lifted and placed in the most holy places by the priest as the law required.
- Then Solomon sacrificed 22,000 herds of cattle and 120,000 sheep for fellowship offering.
- Solomon addressed the congregation and pronounced blessings to the nation and the people.
- In the prayer, Solomon asked God to continue loving his people and also requested the Israelites to continue having faith in God.
- Solomon also appreciated God's work and recognized his holiness and supremacy.
- Solomon prayed that God should continue giving promises, guard and watch over the temple.
- He asked God to always forgive his people in case they sin.
- He also asked God to continue giving the victory in wars against their enemies.
- He asked God never to abandon his people but have mercy upon them.
- He said that even if God is made angry and sends them to exile, he should not let them perish in the foreign land.
- He asked God not to punish the Israelites by sending epidemics but should give them a chance to go and repent from the temple.

*Qn. Examine the dedication and Solomon's prayer.*

### **Impacts / effects / consequences of building the temple by King Solomon.**

#### **Positive effects.**

- ✓ The covenant box was now put in a more secure place in the temple.
- ✓ Israel became religiously organized since they could now celebrate their rituals in an organized place.
- ✓ The Israelites could now fellowship with God in a central place, something which had never happened before.
- ✓ The temple became a worshipping place for the Israelites thus people began moving to Jerusalem for worship.
- ✓ The temple was now a sign that Israel was at peace ie that all the enemies of Israel had been conquered.
- ✓ It promoted trade thus Israel had to exchange trade items in order to get construction materials from Tyre.
- ✓ It encouraged Israel's relationship with her neighbors who were encouraged to come and visit Israel eg the Queen of Sheba.
- ✓ It became a symbol of Israel's status thus it showed that Israel was now a theocratic nation.
- ✓ It was also a symbol of God's presence among the Israelites since the temple was seen as a house of the Lord.
- ✓ The temple at that time was seen as a place where the Lord would speak to his people.
- ✓ The temple was a place where sacrifices were offered to God.
- ✓ The temple was where the first born sons of the Israelites were dedicated to the Lord.

- ✓ The temple was an academic center for the Jews, the tribes met to work out laws and teachings of the Rabbi.
- ✓ The temple brought unity among the people of Israel.

### **Negative effects.**

- The Israelites were exploited during the construction and this led to division of Israel.
- It so happened that people started worshipping the temple instead of God.
- The Israelites suffered over taxation to finance the building project of Solomon.
- The temple was built by foreigners who introduced pagan plans of building and eventually people began worshipping other gods.
- Israel went into political alliance with nations during the construction and this promoted pagan worship.
- There was oppression during the construction i.e. the task masters were too harsh in the supervision of the work.
- Solomon spent extravagantly during the dedication of the temple which affected the treasury.
- The Israelites lost their freedom in the course of building the temple thus there was a lot of injustice during the construction.
- The temple promoted syncretism and apostasy.
- The temple was later equated to pagan sanctuaries and therefore it became a house of robbers.
- The Israelites were made to believe that God was confined in the temple and outside the temple, they sinned.

*Qn. Examine the impact of building the temple by King Solomon in the lives of the Israelites.*

### **Solomon reaped where his father had sown.**

To a large extent, Solomon's fame or greatness is attributed to his father, David in the following ways:

- On his death bed, David instructed his son to be firm, obey God's commands, be confident and fear the Lord.
- David was an efficient administrator as Solomon copied his father's administrative skills.
- Solomon got a lot of wealth from territories that his father had conquered.
- David brought a lot of peace and security in Israel which Solomon enjoyed in his reign.
- Jerusalem which Solomon made magnificent had been conquered by David.
- Solomon got timber and other building materials from Tyre where David had established that relationship with King Hiram.
- David had eliminated the remaining members of Saul who would be a threat to Solomon's reign.
- Solomon had minimal internal opposition after his father had created peace.
- David had united the 12 tribes of Israel and therefore Solomon had a strong tax base to meet his obligations.

- David had the plans of building the temple which Solomon accomplished.
- Solomon's brother Adonijah had almost taken over the throne if David had not come in.
- Even David identified most of the wrong elements for Solomon.
- David established a strong army which Solomon developed.
- Solomon married many wives just as his father David had done.
- David brought back the Ark of the Covenant which Solomon placed in the temple.

**However,** King Solomon became famous because of his unique contributions, thus:

- He developed a fleet of merchant ships which helped him to develop trade and commerce.
- When God asked him what he wanted, Solomon asked for wisdom which he used to succeed.
- By marrying many women from foreign nations, he promoted alliance with the neighbors.
- Solomon had a number of building projects which made him famous.
- Solomon using his wisdom, he solved a difficult case between the two prostitutes concerning the surviving child.
- Solomon also brought a new culture and modernity in Israel.
- Solomon made the kingdom of Israel more prosperous than it had been before.
- Using the wisdom given to him, he composed 3000 proverbs and 1000 songs which made him famous.
- He made himself fame by bringing many foreign leaders to Israel eg the Queen of Sheba.
- During Solomon's time, he made Jerusalem the Middle East center of fashion.
- Solomon decentralized his administration by introducing bottom up administration.

*Qn1. To what extent would Solomon's fame be attributed to his father, King David?*

*2. To what extent did Solomon reap where his father David had sown?*

*3. How far could Solomon's greatness be traced from King David's reign.*

### **The division of the kingdom of Israel after the death of Solomon.**

#### **Rehoboam's role.**

- Solomon's son and successor who was Rehoboam was extremely weak that the division of Israel could not be avoided as long as he was a king.
- When he was asked by the people of the northern kingdom to reduce on their burdens, he refused.
- He ignored the advice of the older men who had told him to reduce on the people's burden. He instead took the advice of the young men who had grown up with him.
- He promised to make the people's burdens heavier and this annoyed the people further.
- He had grown up in luxury and he didn't know about the people's sufferings.
- He spoke harshly to the people and so they broke away.
- He had promised to go on with his father's harsh policies.

- He acted cowardly by sending Adoniram, the forced labor task master during the reign of his father whom they stoned to death.

#### **Solomon' s role.**

- His oppressive policies had already annoyed the people and that' s why they came to Rehoboam pleading for a reduction on this burden.
- He had heavily taxed the people to meet his building programs.
- He had made treaties with other countries which resulted into selling 20 towns of Israel.
- He made the Israelites suffer the burden of forced labor.
- He also enslaved the Israelites which annoyed them.
- He annoyed God by marrying foreign women of Amon, Moab.
- He allowed his women to continue worshipping their idols in Israel.
- He built worshipping places for the gods of his wives and even worshipped them.
- He lived in luxury at the expense of the people.
- He had accumulated a lot of wealth against the law governing kingship in Israel.
- He showed a bad example to the people of Israel by not following the covenant.

#### **God' s role.**

- It was God' s plan that the kingdom of Israel had to be divided.
- It was also dramatized through Prophet Elijah when he tore his robe into 12 pieces and giving ten to Jeroboam.
- When God sent warnings to Solomon, he refused to change.

#### **David' s role.**

- It took David seven years before he could be accepted as king of Israel.
- David also killed Uriah and this caused discontent.
- David developed the south more than the north ie he practiced the nepotism.

#### **Jeroboam' s role.**

- His return and acceptance to leave Egypt in exile.
- He also accepted to lead the northerners as their king.

- Qn1. Examine the causes of the division of Israel into two after the death of Solomon.*
- 2. Justify the view that the division of Israel was inevitable after the death of Solomon.*
  - 3. To what extent was Rehoboam responsible for the division of the kingdom of Israel?*

#### **Consequences / effects / impact of the division of the kingdom of Israel on the people of Israel.**

- ❖ There developed enmity and conflict between the northern and the southern part of Israel.
- ❖ The spirit of brotherhood which was previous there was forgotten.
- ❖ On many occasions, the two nations, Judah and Israel could go to war and fight one another.
- ❖ Jeroboam 1, the king of the northern prevented people from going to Jerusalem temple to worship.

- ❖ There was the collapse of the covenant which previously used to bind the people together.
- ❖ There was complete decline of worship and religion in Israel.
- ❖ Jeroboam built two golden bull calves, one at Dan and another at Bethel.
- ❖ This led to the increase in idolatry especially in the north.
- ❖ Jeroboam appointed his own priests from ordinary people against the Levite laws.
- ❖ It made both Judah and Israel politically and militarily weak.
- ❖ It made both Judah and Israel vulnerable to external attacks.
- ❖ Some of the Israelite' s territories were taken away by their neighbors eg Edom.
- ❖ It marked the beginning of power struggles among the northern people which later led to assassinations.
- ❖ There developed syncretism and apostasy.
- ❖ The northern kingdom developed faster than the south because it controlled most of the trade routes.
- ❖ It led to the emergence of new capital cities ie Samaria as capital of Israel and Jerusalem as capital of Judah.
- ❖ New leaders emerged ie Jeroboam as king of the north while Rehoboam as king of the south.
- ❖ It led to the strengthening of the prophetic age in Israel because sent prophets to condemn them.

#### **Lessons for political leaders from the division of Israel.**

- Political leaders should make independent decisions unlike Rehoboam.
- They should work for unity of their countries.
- They should promote equal developments in their countries.
- They should follow the advice of the elders unlike Rehoboam.
- They should be humble in their behavior unlike Rehoboam.
- They should allow people to have their freedom unlike Solomon.
- They should seek guidance from God instead of mankind or earthly leaders.
- They should weigh advice given to them from those who have no prior knowledge.
- They should respect the constitution that govern their states unlike David, Solomon, etc.
- They should promote justice in their countries unlike Solomon.
- They should promote the rule of the law in their countries unlike Rehoboam.
- They should aim at peace in their countries unlike Rehoboam.
- They should solve people' s problems instead of frustrating them unlike Rehoboam.

#### **Lessons for Christians from the division of Israel.**

- ✓ Christians should encourage the spirit of love instead of division.
- ✓ They should promote unity in the nation and other communities.
- ✓ They should advise their leaders let them worship their God freely.
- ✓ They should protect their nations from being influenced by pagan nations.
- ✓ They should keep being holy instead of being involved in pagan practices.
- ✓ There is need to promote good relationship between the citizens and the leaders.

- ✓ They should try to encourage the leaders to be exemplary in their behavior.
- ✓ They should join hands with their leaders to develop their states.
- ✓ They should respect and honor their heritage eg the worship of one God.

### **KING AHAB AND PROPHET ELIJAH. (1 kings 16-22).**

- King Ahab married a Phoenician woman, Jezebel who was foreign and this was against the Deuteronomical concept of kingship in Israel.
- King Ahab had sinned against God more than his predecessors.
- Jezebel was a strong worshipper of Baal which she promoted in Israel.
- Through the influence of his wife, Ahab encouraged syncretism in Israel.
- Ahab allowed Jezebel to build temples of Baal in Samaria, a holy place of God.
- Ahab made unnecessary foreign alliances by marrying foreign women instead of allying with God.
- Ahab allowed Jezebel to persecute God' s prophets like Elijah.
- Ahab promoted polytheism by allowing many gods in Israel.
- Ahab showed excessive greed by admiring Naboth' s vineyard.
- Ahab also allowed Jezebel to manipulate Israel' s laws that led to the murder of Naboth.
- He also grabbed the land of Naboth after killing him.
- Ahab led the Israelites into pagan worship by promoting apostasy.
- Ahab did not follow the covenant faith that governed Israel.
- Ahab did not listen to the prophets of God like Elijah.
- Ahab was unrepentant, even after prophet Elijah telling him his mistakes.
- Ahab allowed Jezebel to bring into Israel 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophetesses of Asherah.

*Qn1. Account for Prophet Elijah' s continued disagreement with King Ahab.*

*2. In what ways was King Ahab a notorious king.*

*3. Account for the three year drought in Israel at the time of King Ahab.*

*4. Analyze King Ahab' s attitude towards the covenant law.*

*5. In what ways did King Ahab fail to live up to the covenant requirements?*

*6. To what extent did Jezebel contribute to the failure of King Ahab?*

**To a large extent**, she contributed to his failure as shown below,

- She brought Baal worship in Israel.
- She brought Baal prophets in Israel.
- She influenced the building of Baal temples in Israel.
- She promoted apostasy in Israel.
- She influenced the death of Naboth.
- She persecuted God' s prophets.
- She planned for the grabbing of Naboth' s vineyard.
- She made Ahab to enter foreign alliances.
- She hunted down Prophet Elijah.
- She promoted polytheism in Israel.

**However**, to a small extent, Ahab was responsible for his own failure as shown below,

- He married a foreign woman.
- He did not listen to God' s prophets.
- He allowed Jezebel to persecute Elijah.
- He was unrepentant.
- He promoted syncretism.
- He failed to implement the act of herem.
- He lacked faith in Yahweh.
- He entered into unnecessary alliances.

### **God' s power demonstrated through Prophet Elijah.**

- Prophet Elijah pronounced a three year drought as a punishment for Ahab' s disobedience and it so happened.
- In the desert, God fed Elijah with bread, meat by use of ravens.
- Elijah prayed to God and he restored the widow' s son to life.
- Elijah was able to get fire from God (God sent fire) to burn the sacrifice at mtn. Carmel.
- Through God' s power, the food seemed to be little for the widow became enough for some days.
- Through God' s power, all the Baal the Baal prophets were killed by Elijah.
- Elijah did not experience physical death but went to heaven as called by God. (2 Kings 2:1).
- After Obadiah' s refusal to go and inform Ahab that Elijah was around, Elijah went himself and met Ahab and such determination was as a result of God' s power.
- Out of God' s power, Elijah announced Prophet Elisha and King Jehu.
- Elijah got God' s revelation at the mountain (God appeared to him), a proof that he was using God' s power.
- Elijah openly confronted Ahab for the sins he had committed with Jezebel. This was through the courage got from God.
- Through God' s power, Elijah and Elisha were able to cross the river, Jordan.

*Qn. In what ways did God demonstrate his power through Prophet Elijah?*

### **The contest between King Ahab and Prophet Elijah at mountain Carmel (the triumph of Prophet Elijah over Baal prophets / end of the three year drought).**

- ❖ Jezebel, Ahab' s wife had brought her Baal gods in Israel and Ahab had started worshipping them.
- ❖ The worship of these gods was condemned by Elijah and Israel was punished by a three year drought.
- ❖ On mountain Carmel, Elijah told Ahab to bring the prophets of Baal, a total of 450 prophets and 400 prophetess of goddess Asherah.
- ❖ The aim of this contest was to prove who the true God was.
- ❖ The Israelites assembled at the mountain and so were the prophets of Baal.
- ❖ So Elijah suggested to bring 2 bulls, one for himself and another for the 450 prophets of Baal.

- ❖ Since the prophets of Baal were many, they were to kill the bull first but were not to light the fire.
- ❖ Then the people shouted to their god, Baal to send fire and burn up the sacrifice but there was no answer.
- ❖ Elijah mocked them to shout louder or perhaps their god had gone for a journey.
- ❖ Then Elijah built an alter with 12 stones, put firewood and even poured water on the firewood and sacrifice.
- ❖ Elijah however prayed to the Lord and fire was sent which burnt the sacrifice.
- ❖ After the sacrifice had been burnt, the people exclaimed “ the Lord is God, the Lord alone is God.
- ❖ Elijah then ordered and seized the 450 prophets of Baal and then led them down to the river Kishon and killed them.
- ❖ This marked the end of the three year drought and God sent rain.
- ❖ Eventually Ahab accepted and the people were brought back to God.

*Qn. Comment on the circumstances that led to the end of the three year drought in Israel during Ahab’ s reign.*

#### **Reasons for the contest between Prophet Elijah.**

- It was aimed at showing that Baal had no control over rain or drought.
- It was made to make the people decide who the true God was by sending fire.
- To show that Yahweh was the true God of Israel, the God of their ancestors.
- Elijah wanted the people to take on monotheism and stop their hypocrisy.
- Elijah wanted to cleanse Israel by killing the Baal prophets.
- To show that God answers the prayers of his spokes persons.
- It was aimed to prove that Elijah is a true prophet sent by God.
- It was aimed at reviving the covenant faith among the people of Israel.
- It was intended to end the reign of Baal influence in Israel.
- Elijah wanted to disprove the prophets of Baal that they are useless and empty.
- Elijah wanted to show to Ahab that he was innocent of the accusations.
- Elijah wanted to show that God was powerful by sending fire as the people exclaimed.
- Elijah wanted to humiliate King Ahab and Jezebel.
- He wanted to rededicate the people of Israel back to God.
- It was aimed at showing God’ s love for Israel.
- It was intended to end the three year drought that hit Israel.

#### **The meaning / significance of the mountain Carmel contest to the Jews.**

- ✓ The contest proved that God was greater than Baal.
- ✓ It showed the triumph of the Israelites religion over the Canaanite religion.
- ✓ Sit was a call to the people to choose for themselves to either follow Yahweh or Baal.
- ✓ It was also a call to the people to repent off their sins and turn to God.
- ✓ It proved that Elijah was a true prophet of God and that Baal prophets were liars.
- ✓ It showed the need for monotheism proved by their own words “ the Lord is God and the Lord alone is God.”

- ✓ It led to the humiliation of Jezebel, the promoter of Baalism.
- ✓ It was a call to King Ahab to turn to Yahweh and leave Baal.
- ✓ It showed that it was King Ahab's weakness that he caused the long drought that hit Israel.
- ✓ It signified that Elijah was innocent of the accusations made against him by King Ahab and Jezebel.
- ✓ It signified that the land of Israel was cleansed of Baal influence completely.
- ✓ It resulted into the killing of the 450 prophets of Baal by Elijah.
- ✓ It showed that the drought in Israel had provoked Jezebel's anger who vowed to kill Elijah and those who worshipped Yahweh.

### **Lessons / relevance of the contest to Christians or religious leaders.**

- Christians should have confidence in only God like Elijah.
- They have trust in only God like Elijah.
- They should follow all God's laws unlike Ahab and Jezebel.
- They should put themselves in the hands of God like Elijah.
- They should worship only one God.
- They should repent off their sins and ask for forgiveness unlike Ahab and Jezebel.
- They should have faith in God unlike Ahab and Jezebel.
- They should advise their political leaders whenever they go wrong.
- They should cleanse Christianity of any evil like Elijah did.
- They should confess of the Lord's greatness when wonderful things happen.
- They should ask for God's protection like Elijah did.
- They should trust in the power of prayer like Elijah did.
- They should ask for God's guidance in all aspects like Elijah.

### **Elijah hides in a cave after the contest (Elijah sought refuge in a cave) 1Kings 19:1**

- Elijah had defeated and killed the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophetesses of goddess Asherah.
- Elijah had humiliated Jezebel, the wife of Ahab.
- He was under the threat of being killed before the end of the following day.
- All the prophets of the Lord were being persecuted by Jezebel.
- Elijah was scared that he was the only prophet of God left as all the others had already been put to death.
- Ahab was now living under the influence of his wife Jezebel, who could no longer offer any protection to Elijah.
- Elijah was still being blamed for the consequences of the drought that had lasted for three years.
- Jezebel was killing whoever believed and was happy with Elijah's victory over the Baal prophets.
- The people of Israel had turned to the Lord and confessed in him as their only God during the contest.
- Elijah was disappointed that the people of Israel had violated the covenant they had made with God.
- By taking refuge, Elijah wanted God to intervene in his prophetic work.

- Elijah wanted the people of Israel to maintain their holiness so that they could remain God' s children.
- He wanted to appeal to the people of Israel to turn to monotheism and drop idol worship.
- Obadiah had told Elijah that he was a wanted man by Ahab and Jezebel.

### **Significance / meaning of Elijah hiding in a cave.**

- It showed Elijah as a human being with some weaknesses eg he could cry and even wanted to give up.
- It showed the need to depend on God in all times of difficulty.
- It showed that God always comes to his people in times of need.
- It showed that God' s nature is hard to understand ie God appeared in fire, wind and earth quake.
- Elijah was instructed to anoint other people to succeed him in his mission showing that God' s work was to continue.
- It was a call for faith that they had pledged to show to Yahweh at the mountain Sinai.
- It was to show how people of Israel had forgotten theocracy.
- It was a call to respect all the laws of God because the Israelites had failed to follow God' s laws.
- It was a reminder to the Israelites that they had violated the Sinai covenant.
- By being at the mountain, Elijah was reminding the Israelites of the events that took place on the mountain.

### **The death of Naboth (1 King 21).**

- ❖ Naboth had a vineyard near the King' s palace in Jezreal.
- ❖ King Ahab admired it and wished to have it.
- ❖ Ahab wanted to buy the vineyard for vegetable garden or give him a better one.
- ❖ Because Naboth refused to sell to him the vineyard, Ahab went back home depressed, refused to eat and slept on the bed facing the wall.
- ❖ When his wife Jezebel asked him what had happened, Ahab told her that Naboth had refused to sell to him the vineyard.
- ❖ Jezebel asked her husband whether he was the king of Israel and she wondered how a servant could refuse to honor the king' s request.
- ❖ She told the king to get up, cheer up and eat because she was going to get the vineyard for him.
- ❖ Jezebel wrote letters in the king' s name to the leaders of the city of Jezreal.
- ❖ She instructed them to organize a day of fasting and invite Naboth as one of the guests.
- ❖ Naboth was to be given a place of honor at the feast.
- ❖ Then Naboth was accused of cursing God and the king.
- ❖ This was done and the punishment for this was stoning to death.
- ❖ Therefore Naboth was led out side the city and was stoned to death.
- ❖ There after, King Ahab took over the vineyard.

*Qn. Comment on the circumstances that led to the death of Naboth.*

### **Why Naboth had refused to sell the vineyard to King Ahab.**

- It was because the land was family inheritance.
- Naboth knew that Ahab was being influenced by his wife, Jezebel.
- Naboth also had strong faith in God.
- Naboth was keeping the land for other people and God.
- Naboth knew that the covenant laws forbid the selling of any thing that belonged to God.
- Naboth knew that they were only allowed to use it but not to sell.
- Naboth was not materialistic.

### **God' s message to King Ahab after the death of Naboth (1 Kings 21:17).**

- Ahab was given a question “ after murdering him, are you going to take over his property as well.”
- The Lord was going to bring disaster to Ahab.
- Ahab' s family was to become like that of King Jeroboam.
- Prophet Elijah pronounced God' s judgment upon Ahab' s family.
- The dogs were to leek up the blood of Ahab after his death.
- Jezebel was to be killed and the dogs were to eat her body.
- All the relatives of Jezebel were to be eaten by vultures.
- The Lord informed Elijah of how Ahab disobeyed him by worshipping idols.
- God promised to bring disaster on Ahab' s family during his son' s life time.

### **Relevance / lessons from Naboth' s death for Christians.**

- Christians should be faithful to God like Naboth.
- They should value other people' s lives unlike Ahab and Jezebel.
- They should respect other people' s property.
- They should follow all the laws that govern their countries.
- They should control their feelings or emotions unlike Ahab.
- They should respect other people' s rights unlike King Ahab.
- They should always say the truth at all times like Naboth.
- They should be contented with what they have unlike Ahab.
- They should be servants of other people unlike King Ahab.
- They should consult God before doing any thing unlike King Ahab.
- They should make independent decisions unlike King Ahab.

### **The importance of Prophet Elijah in the history of Israel.**

- Elijah appeared in Israel to show that Yahweh was not happy of the sins that were being committed in Israel by Ahab and the Israelites.
- Elijah criticized Ahab for marrying Jezebel, a foreign woman who had promoted polytheism in Israel.
- Elijah pronounced a three year drought in Israel as a punishment for the sins of Ahab and the Israelites.
- God fed Elijah using ravens after he had pronounced drought for three years showing the idea of God' s providence.
- When Elijah went to a widow' s house, flour and a jar of oil never ran out.

- Elijah brought to life the widow's son who had died.
- Elijah prayed to God to send rain for Israel.
- Elijah confronted with the prophets of Baal and had victory over them.
- Elijah prayed and God sent fire which burnt up the fire wood, sacrifices and the stones.
- Elijah ordered to seize the prophets of Baal and killed them.
- Elijah condemned Ahab and said that he was the cause of the drought because of his sins.
- Elijah even revived the covenant religion in Israel.
- Elijah always challenged King Ahab and Ahaziah for their idol worship.
- Elijah challenged King Ahab and led him into repentance.
- Elijah also condemned Ahab for killing Naboth.
- Elijah rebuilt the alter of worship of God in Israel.
- Elijah foretold the death of King Ahab for killing Naboth and taking over his vineyard.
- Elijah appointed Elisha to succeed him as prophet of Israel.
- Elijah maintained the worship of one God in Israel.

*Qn. Discuss the significance of Elijah in the history of Israel.*

#### **The death of King Ahab (1 Kings 22 & 29).**

- ❖ The death of Ahab came about in a war that Judah and Israel waged against Syria.
- ❖ The two states had come into alliance to try and rescue Ramoth in Gilead.
- ❖ The king of Judah had accepted Ahab's request to fight Syria but on a condition that they first consult God.
- ❖ Ahab brought the 400 prophets of Baal who all prophesied victory.
- ❖ Jehosaphat, the king of Judah was not satisfied with the prophesy and therefore requested for another prophet.
- ❖ Ahab sent for Micaiah but grudgingly saying that Micaiah had never prophesied any thing good for him.
- ❖ When Micaiah appeared, he deliberately gave the king a false prophesy of victory.
- ❖ Micaiah knew that King Ahab always wanted God's news of victory.
- ❖ Ahab realized some falsehood in the prophesy and asked for the truth.
- ❖ Then Micaiah said, in the war, Israel could be defeated, people scattered all over the hills like sheep without a shepherd.
- ❖ Zedekiah, the leader of the false prophets went and slapped Micaiah for his words.
- ❖ Ahab ordered that Micaiah be arrested and put in jail until they return back from the war.
- ❖ Ahab however went to the war in disguise and during the war, Ahab was killed.

#### **Lessons that present political leaders learn from Ahab's reign.**

- Political leaders should follow the constitutions governing their countries.
- They should have faith in God alone.
- They should respect God's prophets unlike Ahab.
- They should glorify God in whatever thing they do unlike Ahab.

- They should repent off their sins unlike Ahab.
- They should marry from holy families unlike Ahab.
- They should maintain the worship of one God unlike Ahab.
- They should take advice from people with caution.
- They should build worshipping places for God unlike Ahab.
- They should be exemplary unlike Ahab.
- They should consult God before doing any thing.
- They should rely on God alone unlike Ahab.
- They should respect their subjects and their property unlike Ahab.

## **PROPHETS**