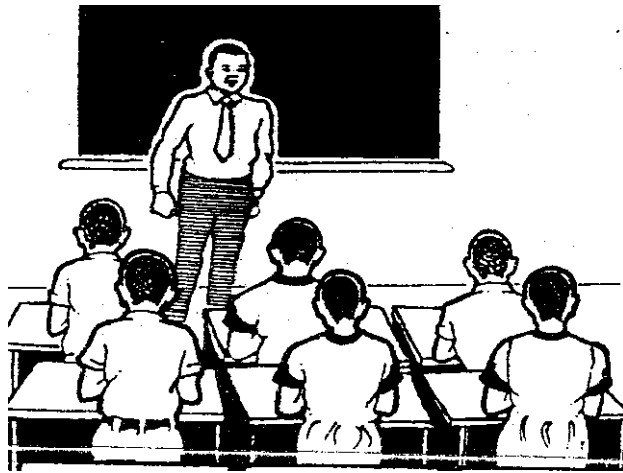


A Complete Version of Junior Secondary

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE NOTES



Simple! Readable! Straight to the point!

BY

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*A COMPLETE VERSION OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE NOTES FOR JUNIOR SECONDARY
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DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

Definition of the Bible and its Divisions

The word Bible comes from either Greek word *ta biblia* the book or the Latin word *Biblia*. The Bible can be defined as the holy book of the Christian Religion consisting of the Old and New Testaments. It is believed to have been written under God's guidance according to 2 Timothy 3:16

Divisions of the Bible

The Bible is divided into two main parts and each part is called testament. The word testament means covenant or agreement. The two divisions of the Bible are as follows

1. The Old Testament with 39 books
2. The New Testament with 27 books

Divisions of the books in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is further divided into four divisions. Each division has several books

1. The Pentateuch or Torah

This consists of the first five books of the Bible. The word Penta means five while the word Torah means 'the law'. These books are as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy. These books are also called books of Moses because they are believed to have been written by Moses

2. The Historical books

These books discuss about history of the people of Israel and they include: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Esther and Nehemiah

3. The Wisdom Books

These books deal with prayers and moral teachings and they include: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Songs of Songs and Ecclesiastes

4. The Prophetic Books

This is the last section of the Old Testament. These books are grouped into two namely: major and minor prophets

Examples of major prophetic books are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Examples of minor prophetic books are Amos, Hosea, Micah,

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Habakkuk, Jonah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Haggai, Obadiah, Joel, Zephaniah and Malachi

However there are other major prophets like Elijah and Elisha who never wrote any book and are reported in the book of Kings



Study Questions

1. Define the term 'bible'
2. State the divisions of the books in the Old Testament
3. What is the difference between major and minor prophet
4. Give four examples of each of the following
 - a. Major prophetic books
 - b. Minor prophetic books
5. What is the Torah?

Division of the Books in the New Testament

The New Testament has 27 books. The books are divided into four groups namely: the Gospels, the Letters, History and the Apocalyptic

1. The Gospels

These books report about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and they include the following: Mark, Luke, Matthew and John. Mark was the first book to be written about 65 to 70 AD. Luke was the second book to be written about 75 to 85 AD. Matthew was written almost the same time as Luke. John was written between 95 and 100 AD

2. The Letters

These were the first books to be written in the New Testament. These letters were written by Paul and they include: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Philippians, Philemon, Ephesians and Hebrews. In total they are about 13

3. Historical Books

There is only one book called *the Acts of Apostles*. This book was written by Luke. It explains what happened after the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the birth of the Early Church

4. Apocalypse

Apocalyptic books or passages are written in symbolic language or figures. They were written to hide their message of hope to those who

were being persecuted under ruthless rulers. A good example of this book is the Book of Revelation

How the Bible is used

The Bible can be used in many ways

1. During worship when they want to follow the preacher
2. When preaching to interpret the word of God to people
3. When taking oaths in courts or office like parliament to show commitment to the task
4. When healing the sick or as a source of healing
5. During meditations or prayers to strengthen one's faith
6. For teaching as a resource book or text book
7. For counseling when there are conflicts among Christians

Literary Forms of the Bible

The 66 books in the Bible are presented in different styles and types of writing

Types of Literary Forms of the Bible

1. Narratives

Narratives are accounts of what happened in the past about a nation or a person. There are many examples of narratives in the Bible, for example in 1 Kings 6:1-38 is a narrative of how Solomon built the Temple, Genesis 12:25 has a story of Abraham as a narrative

2. Poetry

Poetry is a collection of poems. It prompts the listener or reader's imaginations or emotions. In so doing, the message is spread like bush fire. In the Bible poetic books are for examples, Psalms, Songs of Songs and Lamentations.

3. Songs

A song is a short piece of music with words that you sing. People sing songs everyday when praying to God. The songs are used to convey messages to the Almighty God

4. Oracles

Oracles are prophecies made by prophets on behalf of God. They are normally warnings issued to people on what would happen in the future because of disobeying God. They are used to predict the future. Oracles

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in the Bible begin with “The Lord says...” or end with “... I the LORD has spoken”. Very good examples of oracles are on Isaiah 1:18, 6:8, 40:1

5. Parables

A parable is an imaginary story with some teachings about the kingdom of God. The lesson of a parable is found at the end. Many preachers nowadays use parables for a number of reasons like to make the audience remember the message for a long time.

Literary Form	Example	Use/Importance
Narrative	Psalms Lamentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They pass on history from one generation to another
Poetry	The song of the Vineyard (Isaiah 5:1-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praising God Entertaining people during ceremonies Conveying messages to the authorities
Oracles	The works of Isaiah and Ezekiel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God uses them to address His people
Parables	The parable of the sower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracts the attention of the listener Listeners remember the message for a long time



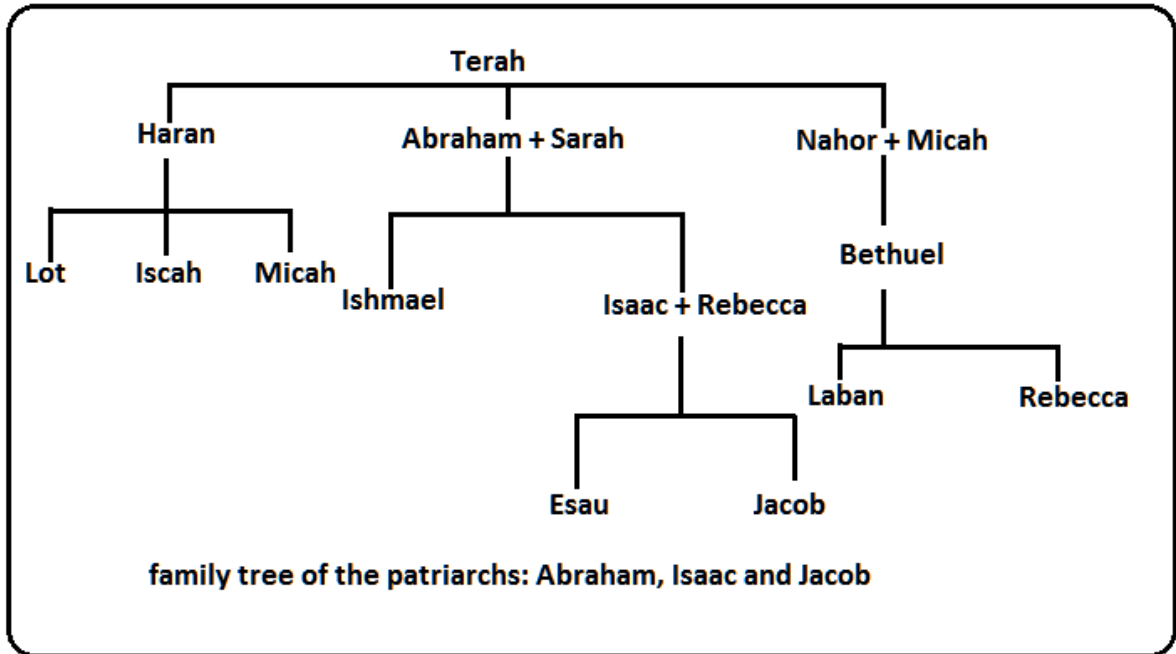
Study Questions

1. Define the term ‘Bible’
2. What biblical names is given to the following
 - a. The first five books of the old testament
 - b. The first four books of the New Testament?
 - c. The last book in the Bible
3. Which division of the Bible is also called ‘the Torah’?
4. How are Christians today using wisdom books in the Old Testament?
5. Explain the importance of using the parable when preaching to the youth today

THE PATRIARCHS

Abraham as the Patriarch

The word Patriarch means a male head of the family or community that people have a lot of respect for. The opposite of a patriarch is matriarch who is the female head of the family or community. There are many patriarchs in the Bible as summarized by the family tree below



GOD CALLS ABRAM: GENESIS 12:1-9

Abram's Historical Background

Abram's father was Terah. Terah had three sons namely: Abram, Nahor and Haran. Haran was Lot's father. Sarai was Abram's wife. Terah and his children together with Sarai and Lot were living in the city of Ur. Terah moved from Ur to Haran where they settled. It was at Haran where God called Abram to go to Canaan. God revealed Himself to Abram and from that time Abram started worshipping God. Abram's father Terah was an idol worshipper as many people were that time

God's call to Abram (Genesis 12:1-9)

The Lord said to Abram, *"Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a land that am going to show you. I will give you many*

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descendants and they will become a great nation. I will bless you and make your name famous, so that you will be a blessing...” Genesis 12”1-3

Outline what God said to Abram at Haran

- God asked Abram to leave Haran and his relatives to go to the land that God will show him
- God promised Abram many descendants who will become a great nation
- God promised to bless Abram and to bless all nations through him
- God promised to make Abram’s name famous

How did Abram respond to God’s call?

- At the age of 75 years Abram moved from Haran to Canaan
- As Abram was moving from Haran to Canaan, he took Sarai and Lot, his nephew, and all the slaves he had together with all his wealth

Hagar and Ishmael: Genesis 16:1-16

Historical Background

Sarai Abram’s wife was barren and could not give children. This forced Sarai to ask Abram to have sexual intercourse with her Egyptian slave, named Hagar, with an intention that Sarai and Abram could have a son through Hagar

The Angel of God met Hagar: Genesis 16:7-16

- The angel met Hagar at a spring in the desert on the road to Shur
- The angel recognized Hagar as a slave of Sarai
- The angel asked Hagar where she was coming from and where she was going
- Hagar revealed to the angel that she was running away from Sara’s house

The Covenant

A covenant is a legally binding agreement based on faith between two parties. In a covenant all parties have a duty to perform. If one party fails to perform its duty the other party is also legally accepted not to fulfill its duty. In some cases covenant does have a sign

Circumcision as a Sign to the covenant

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- God asked Abraham and his descendants to circumcise every baby boy when he is eight days old
- Circumcision would show that there was a covenant between God and Abraham and his descendants

God Asked Abraham to change his Wife's Name

- God said Sarai should be Sarah, because she would be a mother of nations
- A son was promised to Sarah through an angel and his name would be Isaac
- Upon hearing this, Sarah laughed because she could not believe that a man of 100 years (Abraham) could impregnate a woman of ninety (Sarah)
- God assured Abraham that it would be possible and his son would be named Isaac. Isaac means laughter
- God emphasize that He would fulfill his covenant through Isaac and not Ishmael

Abraham's Reaction to the Covenant

The same day Abraham circumcised his son Ishmael and all his male slaves. Abraham was also circumcised, by then he was 99 years and Ishmael was 13



Study Questions

1. Define the term 'Patriarch'
2. Where was Abram when God called him?
3. Narrate how God called Abraham
4. How did Abram respond to God's call
5. Explain what the angel said to Hagar when she was running away from Sarai
6. At one point God asked Abram and Sarai to change their names:
 - a. What are the new names of Abram and Sarai?
 - b. Give the meaning of each name
7. Explain how Abraham responded to the covenant between him and God?

ISAAC THE SECOND PATRIARCH

The Birth of Isaac Genesis 21:1-8

Isaac was Abraham's son with Sarah. He was born when his parents were old to give birth to children; for example, Abraham was 100 years old. The name Isaac means laughter. Isaac is our second patriarch after the death of his father Abraham. He was circumcised by Abraham when he was 8 days old

Hagar and Ishmael are sent away Genesis 21:9-21

Hagar and Ishmael run out of water in the desert. They were very thirsty and Ishmael was about to die

Sacrifice

Sacrifice in Old Testament was understood as killing an animal and burn it as an offering to God. An altar was used to make a sacrifice. However, people today practice offering sacrifice in a different way. They no longer kill animals and burn them

God command Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice Genesis 22:1-19

God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God. Abraham responded positively by taking Isaac to the land of Moriah to offer him as a sacrifice to God. God said to Abraham, *"Take your only son Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice"*. Next day Abraham took wood and a knife together with Isaac and two servants and went to the land of Moriah. It took Abraham 3 days to reach the land of Moriah. When Abraham was about reach the land of Moriah he said the following words to his two servants: *"Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there and worship, and then will come back to you"*. Abraham carried live coals for starting fire. He asked Isaac to carry wood. On the way Isaac realized that an animal for sacrifice was missing, therefore he asked his father; *"Father, I see that you have the coals and the wood, but where is the lamb for the sacrifice?"* In his answering, Abraham said: *God himself will provide one*". When they reached the place where God told Abraham to offer Isaac, Abraham built an altar and arranged wood on it. Abraham tied up Isaac and placed Isaac on top of the wood, on the altar. Then he picked up a knife to kill him but God

intervened and offered him a ram. During the time of Abraham human sacrifice was common. But with this experience God forbid it, as He offered a ram as the item for sacrifice

Significance of the Sacrifice of Isaac

- Abraham's obedience makes him a friend of God
- God's purpose was to strengthen and deepen Abraham's faith
- Abraham's confidence and trust in God
- God's attitude to human sacrifice; He forbids it
- Many Christians relate this incident with the way in which God did not spare his own son, Jesus Christ

A Bride for Isaac (Genesis 24:1-9)

Abraham was now settled in Canaan and by this time his wife Sarah was dead and she was buried in the Machpelah cave, which he bought from Ephron. Abraham like any other parent he was concerned with his son marrying. Abraham wanted his son to get married to a wife from his home village. He did not want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman. He therefore sent his trusted servant to go to Haran and look Isaac's wife among his relatives

When a servant arrived at a well in Haran he prayed for a sign of the right candidate and God answered. Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel (Abraham's relative) was chosen. Rebecca did not only care the strangers but also she took care of the animals. Abraham had asked that the bride of his son must agree to come back to Canaan and Rebecca agreed. She came and joined her husband at Hebron (vs. 57-67). Isaac and Rebecca were childless for twenty years. When Isaac prayed to God they had twins sons (25:19-26)



Study Questions

1. *How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?*
2. *Name the place where God asked Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice*
3. *What relationship was there between Rebecca and Laban?*
4. *Who was Bethuel to Rebecca?*

5. *Bethuel's family was very democratic. Explain how the family showed democracy when Abraham's servant wanted to take her to Canaan*

JACOB AS THE THIRD PATRIARCH

The Birth of Esau and Jacob

Esau and Jacob were twins of Isaac and Rebecca. Esau was older than Jacob. Esau loved outdoor life, as a hunter. He was impatient, but generous. He was loved by his father. While Jacob was quiet, but crafty and forward-looking. He was loved by his mother

Esau sells his Rights as the first born son to Jacob (Genesis 25:27-34)

One day Jacob was home preparing for his bean soup, when Esau came in. he was so hungry that he asked for the bean soup. Jacob accepted to give him on a condition that he surrenders his birthrights. Esau agreed without caring and vowed that Jacob be the elder son. The rights of the firstborn child entitled him to take care as the head of the family when the father dies

Jacob is blessed (Genesis 27:1-29)

In Hebrew society a blessing or death bed words were respected and valued. They were considered to be effective or to have the intended effect on the life of a person. So when Rebecca heard that Isaac was planning to bless Esau as the first born, through deceit she made Isaac bless Jacob instead. It is possible that Esau lost his parents favor because he married Hittite women who were cruel to his parents (Genesis 27:46)

Jacob was then sent away to Haran. He was asked to go and marry from his Uncle's home. While on the way, at Bethel (house of God), he had a dream. God appeared to him and renewed the promise he made to Abraham and Isaac of land, blessing to the nation and protection. Jacob pledged to offer a tenth to God after he successfully returns to his home land

The dream of Jacob

- He saw a stairway joining heaven and earth

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- Angles were going up and down on the stairway
- God was standing beside Jacob

God's message to Jacob

- God is the LORD of Abraham and Isaac
- God would give the land of Canaan to Jacob and his descendants
- God would give Jacob many descendants
- All nations would be blessed through Jacob and his descendants
- God would be with Jacob and protect him wherever he would go
- God promised to bring back Jacob to the land of Canaan

Jacob's Reaction to God's message

- Jacob realized that God was present at that holy place
- Jacob thought that the holy place was the house of God
- The place could be the gate that opens into heaven
- He took the stone he used as a pillow and set up as a memorial
- He named the place Bethel; the name was changed from Luz to Bethel
- Bethel means house of God

The children of Jacob (Genesis 29:31-35)

Jacob married the two daughters of Laban namely: Leah and Rachel. Rachel was younger to Leah. Beside that Rachel was the beloved wife of Jacob. Laban gave his slave woman named Zilpah to Leah and Bilhah to Rachel as their maid. Leah gave birth to the following sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah. Rachel was barren and she could not give children. As a result, she gave her slave maid, Bilhah to Jacob so that she could have children through her and it happened like that. When Leah saw what had happened, she gave her slave Zilpah as a wife to Jacob so that Leah could have more children through Zilpah. Possibly Jacob had many daughters, but the Hebrew culture compared daughters to being childless. The only daughter of Jacob being mentioned is Dinah, with Leah (34:1)

The Twelve sons of Jacob and a Daughter

Order of Birth	Name of a child	Sex	Mother of the child	Place of birth
1	Reuben	M	Leah	Haran
2	Simeon	M	Leah	Haran
3	Levi	M	Leah	Haran
4	Judah	M	Leah	Haran
5	Dan	M	Bilhah	Haran
6	Naphtali	M	Bilhah	Haran
7	Gad	M	Zilpah	Haran
8	Asher	M	Zilpah	Haran
9	Issachar	M	Leah	Haran
10	Zebulun	M	Leah	Haran
11	Dinah	F	Leah	Haran
12	Joseph	M	Rachel	Haran
13	Benjamin	M	Rachel	Canaan

Jacob worked for his Uncle for 6 years in order to gain wealth. Later his cousins started to envy him that he had to run away again (31:1-4). On his way to Canaan he had to pass through a territory of his brother Esau. He was looking for reconciliation with his brother. While waiting meet his brother, Jacob met an Angel at River Jabbok. After wrestling with the angel, he believed that he had wrestled with God. His name was changed to 'Israel' meaning he struggles with God (32:22-32)



Study Questions

1. How long did Jacob work to marry Rachel?
2. List all children who were born to Jacob through the following mothers
 - a. Leah
 - b. Rachel
 - c. Bilhah
 - d. Zilpah
3. Who was the last born son to Jacob?
4. Name the only daughter of Jacob. What was her mother's name?
5. The last born child of Jacob
 - a. Name the child
 - b. Who was the mother of this child

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- c. *Where was he born*
- d. *Suggest a reason why he was loved by Jacob*

Joseph as the Next Patriarch

Joseph and his brothers Genesis 37:1-36

Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons, because he had been born to him when he was old. To show his love, Joseph made a beautiful robe for Joseph. His brothers hated Joseph because he was the only son who was loved by their father. Joseph was as a young man used to bring bad reports to his father about what his brothers were doing. This was the other reason why his brothers hated him

Joseph's two Dreams

The first Dream Genesis 37:5-8

He dreamt that he was in the field with his brothers tying up sheaves of wheat. The sheaf of Joseph got up and stood up straight, his brothers' sheaves formed a circle round his and bowed to Joseph's sheaf

The second Dream

Joseph saw the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing down to him

Both these dreams implied that he was going to become a leader at some point. But he was second youngest son of Jacob, therefore not possible for him to head the household of Jacob

Joseph is Sold and Taken to Egypt Genesis 37:12-36

One day Joseph's brothers went to Shechem to take care of their father's flock. From Shechem they proceeded to Dothan. Jacob sent Joseph to Shechem to check his brothers. Joseph did not find his brothers at Shechem and he proceeded to Dothan where he found them. His brothers decided to get rid of him but Reuben tried to save him by having thrown into a dry well, but when they saw the Ishmaelite traders they sold him. Now that Joseph was sold his brothers had to lie their father that Joseph is dead. So they took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood so that it would appear that Joseph was killed by wild animal. They reported the news to their father. The Midianites/Ishmaelite sold Joseph in Egypt to Portiphar. Portiphar was a

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soldier who was working in a king's palace. He was a captain of the palace guard. Joseph proved to be trustworthy and hardworking that he was put in charge of the household of Portiphar. But this position made him face the seduction of Portiphar's wife. When he refused to give him he was falsely accused and put in prison

Joseph in Prison Genesis 40:1-23

While in jail he continued being trustworthy and hardworking, such that he was made responsible over other prisoners. Among his fellow prisoners were two palace officials: **the wine steward and chief baker**. These two officials one day had dreams which disturbed them. When Joseph heard their dreams he interpreted them and were fulfilled

Joseph interprets the King's Dreams Genesis 41:1-36

The king of Egypt had two dreams and he did not know their meanings

The first dream

In the first dream, the king was standing by river Nile

- He saw seven cows, fat and sleek, came up out of the river and began to feed on the grass
- The seven other cows, thin and bony, came up and stood by the other cows on the river bank
- Later, the thin cows ate up the fat cows

The second dream

After the first dream the king fell asleep and had this dream:

- Seven ears of corn, full and ripe, were growing on one stalk
- The seven other ears of corn sprouted, thin and scorched by the desert wind
- Finally, the thin ears of corn swallowed the full ones

Then Joseph appeared before the king to interpret the dreams and this is how he interpreted:

- Seven fat cows and seven full ears of corn are seven years of good harvest
- Seven thin cows and seven thin ears of corn are seven years of famine

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Joseph suggested that a man of wisdom and insight be responsible for organizing the storage of the crop during the time of plenty

Joseph is made Governor of Egypt Genesis 41:37-57

Pharaoh was impressed by Joseph. He put him in charge of the harvesting and storage of grain. Joseph was 30 years old when he became Governor. He married an Egyptian wife, Asenath, who bore him two sons Manasseh and Ephraim

How the king crowned Joseph as Governor

- The king removed from his finger the ring engraved with the royal seal and gave it to Joseph
- He gave Joseph a fine linen robe
- He placed a gold chain round Joseph's neck
- He gave Joseph the second royal chariot to ride in
- He gave him the Egyptian name Zaphenath Paneah
- Asenath was given to Joseph as a wife
- Asenath was the daughter of Potiphera. Potiphera was a priest in the city of Heliopolis

Joseph as Governor of Egypt

- During the seven years of plenty food, Joseph collected food from all angles and kept it in all cities
- During the seven years of plenty food Joseph was blessed with two children. The first born was Manasseh and the second was Ephraim.
- When the seven years of famine came, the Egyptians did not suffer because of the food which was kept by Joseph
- People went to Egypt to buy corn from all over the world

Joseph's brothers moved from Canaan to Egypt to buy corn: Genesis 42:1-24

The famine affected places even beyond Egypt, such that even Canaan was not spared. Jacob heard of corn in Egypt. He sent his ten sons to go and fetch it

When Joseph saw them he recognized them immediately. He tested them to find out if they had changed. Meanwhile he treated them very well, until he

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revealed himself to them. He sent for their father to come and live in Egypt. He settled them in Goshen near the city of Rameses (46:47). Jacob died an old man. When he died he was buried in Canaan at the Machpelah Cave. After the death and burial of their father the brothers were afraid, but Joseph assured them. He said that they were just fulfilling the plan of God: *“don’t be afraid; I can’t put myself in the place of God. You plotted evil against me, but God turned it into good, in order to preserve the lives of many people who are alive today because of what happened”* (Genesis 50:19-20)



Study Questions

1. *Explain Joseph’s first dream*
2. *Why was Joseph hated by his brothers?*
3. *How would you describe the character of Joseph?*
4. *What happened to Joseph in Egypt?*
5. *Who suggested that Joseph should be sold?*
6. *Explain how the king of Egypt crowned Joseph as a Governor of Egypt*
7. *How did Joseph reveal himself to his brothers?*
8. *Describe the two dreams of Pharaoh*

THE WORK OF MOSES

After revealing himself to his brothers, Joseph invited his parents and all relatives to Egypt. They were given the land of Goshen to stay where there was enough grass for their animals. They stayed in Egypt for about 400 years. When the king of Egypt who knew Joseph died, the Egyptian started ill-treating the Israelites. The Israelites were living like slaves with hard labour. They were crying to God every day and God heard their cry. The term ‘exodus’ means ‘departure’

Hebrew Slavery in Egypt: Exodus 1:8-22

A new king who did not know Joseph came into power; the new king was not happy with the Israelites because they were so numerous and strong. The king feared that in case of war, the Israelites could join the enemy forces and defeat the Egyptians. The king suggested that the Israelites should be given hard labour so that they should be tired and have no time to produce children. They were forced to build two cities namely Pithom and Rameses. The king also asked *Shiphrah* and *Puah*, the midwives, to kill the

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sons born to the Israelites or to have them thrown in the river (Exodus 1:15-22)

The birth of Moses and Upbringing Exodus 2:1-10

When Moses was born, her mother hid him for three months in fear for his life. After that time the baby was hidden in the tall grass at the edge of Nile River. Through God's intervention, Moses was saved and adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh. He was named Moses. Moses' parents both came from the family of Levi (Exodus 2:1-10). Moses enjoyed the education and upbringing suitable to his new status as a Prince. Whatever happened Moses never forgot his Hebrew origin. His sympathy for his own people led him to be in trouble. He fled to Median, where he took refuge with Jethro, the Median Priest.

The Call of Moses/The Burning Bush Exodus 3:1-22

Moses married Zipporah the daughter of Jethro. Jethro was a priest of Median. Moses was taking care of the sheep and goats of his father inlaw, Jethro. One day Moses took the animals to Sinai, near the holy mountain of God

The Miracle at Mount Sinai

- The Angel of God appeared to Moses. The Angel was in form of flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush
- Moses saw that the bush was on fire but that it was not burning up
- Moses wondered because the bush was on fire but it was not burning up. This was strange to Moses and he wanted to go closer to the burning bush and see what was happening
- As Moses was going closer to the burning bush, God told him not to go closer

What God said to Moses

- God asked Moses to take off his sandals (shoes) because he was standing on the holy place
- God introduced himself as God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- In response, Moses was afraid to see God so he covered his face

God gives Moses a mission

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- God asked Moses to go to the king of Egypt (Pharaoh) and tell him to release the Israelites and Moses should lead the people to the promised land
- In Egypt by then the Israelites were treated harshly because Joseph was dead and the king who knew Joseph was also dead. The Israelites stayed in Egypt for 400 years
- God heard the prayers of the Israelites and sent Moses to take them to the Promised Land which was spacious and fertile
- God said by then the Promised Land was occupied by the following people: Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites

Moses' Conversation with God

- Moses asked God to tell his name, in case the Israelites would ask him
- God said his name is: "Iam who Iam" in short the name is "I AM"
- "Iam who Iam" is God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- God asked Moses to go to the leaders of Israelites and tell them that God wanted to bring them out of Egypt because they were treated cruelly and they will be given a rich and fertile land
- God advised Moses to go to the King of Egypt together with the leaders of Egypt and tell him to allow the Israelites to go away. God made it clear that the king will not be willing to release the Israelites unless he would be forced to do so. God assured Moses that he would use his power to punish Egypt and finally the king allow them to go

Moses' reaction to his mission

Moses said that the people would not take him seriously as he was nobody, "I am a poor speaker, slow and hesitant". However God gave him the following signs

- The walking stick turning into a snake (4:3)
- Placing his hands in his robe, it became diseased (4:6)
- The water turning into blood when poured on the ground (4:9)

Moses returns to Egypt (Exodus 4:18-11;10)

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Moses and Aaron returned to Egypt. They were received by his people and the contest with Pharaoh begun. Pharaoh's reply to the request of letting the Israelites leave, was to increase their burdens (Genesis 5:22-23). When Moses started to be discouraged God encouraged him. He gave him powers to perform miracles in order to convince the king. The God caused problems for the Egyptians, by inflicting them with plagues. The following were the miracles which Moses performed:

1. Blood: turning water
2. Frogs: presence of frogs everywhere in Egypt
3. Gnats: all the dust in Egypt was turned into gnats
4. Flies: the houses of the Egyptians were full of flies
5. Death of animals: all the animals of the Egyptians died but the animals of the Israelites did not die
6. Boils: open sores on the people and the animals
7. Hail: a heavy hailstorm
8. Locusts: ate everything and filled the King's palaces and houses
9. Darkness: there was total darkness throughout the Egypt for three days
10. The Death of the firstborn: Moses ordered the Israelites to kill a lamb or young goat and put the blood into the doorposts. The angel of God would pass all houses with blood on the doorposts but enter and kill all firstborns in the houses without blood on the doorposts. In the morning, there were funerals of firstborn in all the land of Egypt. This forced the king to permit the Israelites to go to the Promised Land

Crossing the Red Sea: Exodus 14:1-31

After the Passover, the great journey through the wilderness now began. The party which started out consisted of 600,000 people. The Lord was always with them in *pillar of cloud* during the day and *a pillar of fire* during the night, to guide them (Ex 13:17-22)

When the King of Egypt learnt that the Israelites had escaped, him and his officials changed their mind and wanted them to come back and work as slaves in Egypt. The king asked his soldiers to run after the Israelites and tell them to return to Egypt. At the Red Sea Pharaoh found them with his army. God worked out a miracle by dividing the waters of the Red Sea for Israelites to pass on dry land. The Egyptian army perished in the sea as the water consumed them (Ex. 14:1-31)

Manna and Quails (Exodus 16:1-36)

In the desert the Israelites had no food and they complained to Moses. As usual, Moses asked for a help from God. In his answering, God gave them manna and Quails and they ate for 40 years, up to the time they entered the Promised Land

Water from the Rock Exodus 17:1-7

From the desert of sin, the Israelites camped at Rephidim which is in the southern part of the Sinai peninsula. At this place, there was no water to drink. As usual, the Israelites turn on Moses and blamed him for their plight. “Give us water to drink” Exodus 17:2; others said “why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us with thirst?” 17:3. In his response, Moses advised the people to trust God by not putting God to the test. Moses prayed to God for water and God answered his prayer. God told Moses to take some leaders of Israelites and go ahead of the people to Mount Sinai. God asked Moses to strike the rock with the same stick which he used to struck the Red Sea. When Moses struck the rock, water came out of it for the people to drink. People were happy using the water which Moses brought to them from the rock. Moses named the place Massah which means “testing” and Meribah which means “quarrelling”



Study Questions

1. *Define the term ‘exodus’*
2. *Discuss the Hebrews’ slavery in Egypt*
3. *Narrate the call of Moses*
4. *Describe how Moses fought the release of the Israelites from Egypt*
5. *Suggest reasons why the king of Egypt was so stubborn to listen to Moses?*
6. *Discuss the calamities that fell upon Egyptians*

THE COVENANT

The word covenant means “an agreement”. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, he brought them to Mount Sinai. While there, Moses went up the mountain and received the message from God. The message was that God had chosen these people to be His own. He called them to join in a covenant, i.e to

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make an agreement with Him. They must promise to obey Him and he would promise to look after them and defend them

The covenant at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:1-20:17)

From Rephidim, the Israelites camped at the foot of Mount Sinai and Moses was invited by God. So he went up the mountain to meet Him. God revealed His plan of establishing a covenant with his people, whom he identified as the descendants of Jacob

The Israelites at Mount Sinai

- God presented the terms of the covenant to Moses so that he should present to the people
- Israelites were asked to obey God and keep his covenant. Only then would they be God's people, the chosen people
- The Israelites will serve God as priests: a priest has access to God and acts as an intermediary between the people and God. In this way the Israelites they will know the will of God
- Moses explained what God said to the leaders of the people, who then explained it to the people. The Israelites unanimously accepted God's terms which demanded obedience and total consecration. "We will do everything that the Lord has said".
- God wanted the Israelites to trust Moses as God's instrument. So God planned to appear to Moses before them all. So he laid requirements for ritual purification. People were advised to purify themselves by washing their clothes and refraining from sexual intercourse as they were preparing to meet God. These actions (washing their clothes and refraining from sexual intercourse) symbolize the attitude of their heart and their total consecration to God

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

God gave Ten Commandments to Moses for the Israelites and all human kind who believe in God to follow

a. Relationship between a person and God; the first four commandments

1. Worship no god but only the true God
2. Do not make images of everything in heaven or earth or in water and worship them

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3. Do not misuse God's name
4. Observe the Sabbath

b. Relationship between a person and her or his immediate family

5. Respect your father and your mother

c. Relationship between a person and the society

6. Do not commit murder
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not accuse anyone falsely
10. Do not covet

The Death of Moses and Leadership Transition Deut 34:1-12

Moses was shown the Promised Land and then died. Joshua took the leadership and led the Israelites into the Promised Land. Moses was 120 years when he died. God buried him in a valley in Moab but no one up to now knows where he was buried. The Israelites mourned for Moses for 30 days in the plains of Moab

Transition Power from Moses to Joshua

The Israelites travelled from Egypt to Canaan for a period of 40 years. As they were approaching Canaan, Moses died. Before his death, Moses appointed Joshua, son of Nun to be his successor. After his death, there was smooth transition of power from Moses to Joshua. The Israelites obeyed Joshua and kept all commandments which God gave them through Moses. The names Joshua or Jesus in Hebrew means *Saviour* or *God saves*

Joshua sends spies into Jericho Joshua 2:1-24

The Israelites camped at Acaia and from there Joshua sent two spies to go and explore the land of Canaan especially the city of Jericho. A prostitute named Rahab accommodated the two spies in Canaan, however, that did not go well with the king of Jericho. He sent a word to Rahab asking her to bring the men who came to his house before the king because they were spies. "The men in your house have come to spy out the whole country! Bring them out!" Rahab lied to the king that the spies visited he house but left before sunset. This was just a lie because Rahab had taken the two spies up on the roof of her house and hidden them under some stalks of flax

Agreement between Rahab and the two spies from Joshua

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Rahab knew that the Lord had given Canaan into the hands of the Israelites, so she asked the spies to do her a favor of not killing her together with her family when they would be destroying Canaan. The two spies promised to spare Rahab and her family on understanding that Rahab will not tell anybody about them. Rahab was living in a house built into the city wall, so she let them down from the window by a rope and asked them to go

The crossing of Jordan

In Joshua chapter 1-2 Joshua was commissioned by God to take Moses' place. He assumed command and begun by sending spies or scouts forward to go and spy on the land of Canaan. They received help from a prostitute Rahab (2:1-24). The Lord promised to bless Joshua as he had done to Moses. When the priests with the covenant box stood in the river, the water stopped flowing. The Israelites crossed on dry land. This made the people respect Joshua just as they had with Moses (4:4)

Memorial Stones are set up Joshua 4: 1-24

God asked Joshua to ask 12 people from each tribe to collect a stone from the river Jordan to where they would camp that night and pile them up as a memorial pillar. That pillar would remind the future generation that the covenant Box and the Israelites crossed the River Jordan on dry ground because of God. Then the Israelites camped at Gilgal, where they put the twelve stones as a memorial pillar. The stones are still there today

The Fall of Jericho

Jericho was among the first cities to be conquered by Joshua. The people of Jericho knew that enemies (Israelites) wanted to attack them so they were keeping the gates to the city closed. God told Joshua that the Israelites will defeat the people of Jericho. God gave these instructions:

- The Israelites should march round the wall of the city of Jericho once a day for six days. Seven priests each carrying a trumpet, should go in front of the Covenant Box
- On 7th day they should march seven times while the priests would be blowing the trumpets. After the trumpets people should shout at once and the city walls will fall down. Then the army should go in and attack

The Israelites followed what God commanded and on the seventh day the walls of Jericho fell. Joshua told the people that the Lord had given them the city of Jericho. Thereafter, he gave them the following orders to the people:

- The city and everything in it must be totally destroyed as an offering to God
- Only Rahab and her family should be spared because she hid Joshua's spies
- Nobody should take anything from the city because that could bring trouble and destruction to all Israelites
- The only thing to be taken out from Jericho city could be anything that was made of silver, gold, bronze and iron that should be given to the Lord

Destruction of Jericho city

The walls fell; Joshua and his people attacked the people and killed them. Only Rahab and her family were spared. The city was set on fire after taking all things which were made of silver, gold, bronze and iron for the Lord

Conquest of the city of Ai (7:1-8:29)

Unfortunately at the conquest of Jericho one instruction was not observed, not to get some wealth from the fallen city. The army which had been so victorious at Jericho was shamefully routed at Ai. After the culprit, Achan, was found and punished their second assault was successful and Ai destroyed. After the victory Joshua built an altar and called the people to a solemn remembrance of all the laws of Moses, at Mount Ebal (8:30-35)



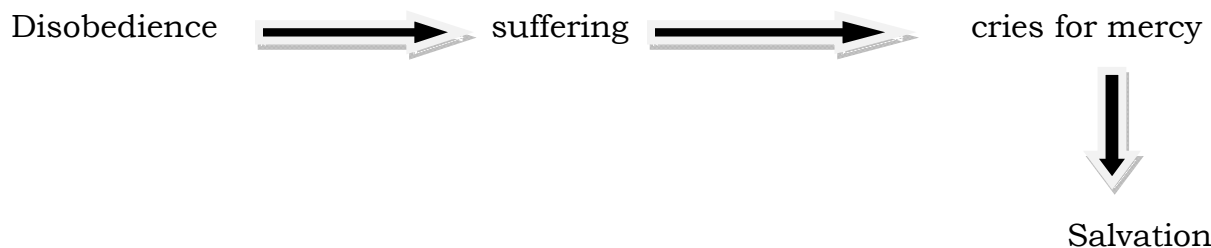
Study Questions

1. *Who succeeded Moses as the leader of the Israelites?*
2. *Explain how Israelites prepared to enter into Canaan*
3. *Explain the role of Rahab in the entry into the promised Land*
4. *Relate how the Israelites conquered the city of Jericho*
5. *Why did Israel lose in the first battle of Ai?*

THE JUDGES

Reasons for the rise of Judges

After the death of Joshua, Israel lacked a national leader who could unite the whole people, and guide them to their common history and religious covenant. Besides that each tribe became occupied with its tribal concerns. Therefore, the people's disobedience to the covenant characterized by intermarriages and adoption of Canaanite religions broke down the national unity. Relationship with God and each other suffered, even God neglected them. Therefore, when they sinned, God neglected them and let them be oppressed by their neighbours. When they cried out to God he raised a leader to save them. Yet each time a strong leader died a repeat of events occurred. The illustration below describes this circle of the people disobeying God, who lets them to suffer from the oppression of their neighbours. Yet each time they cried out to Him, He would raise a leader to lead them out of this oppression



Israeli had many Judges but we are only going to focus on the four judges namely: Deborah, Gideon, Samson, and Samuel

DEBORAH THE FIRST WOMAN JUDGE OF ISRAEL

After the death of Judge Ehud, the Israelites sinned again before God; as a punishment God let them to be conquered by king Jabin of Canaan who ruled his country from the city of Hazor. Sisera was the commander of King Jabin's army. Jabin ruled Israel with cruelty and violence for twenty years. Then the Israelites cried to God for help

That time Deborah the wife of Lappidoth was a prophet and she was also serving as as a judge. Deborah was judging cases between Ramah and Bethuel in Ephraim. One day Deborah called her army commander, Barak, son of Abinoah. She told him the following: "The Lord, the God of Israel, has given you this command: 'Take ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and

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Zebulun and lead them to Mount Tabor. I will bring Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, to fight against you at the River Kishon... but I will give you victory over him."

Barak responded that he would go to war against Jabin's army if Deborah went with him. Barak's response showed that he was either afraid of Sisera or he doubted whether Deborah's message was true. Because of Barak's doubt, Deborah said that she would go to the war with Barak. However, she made it clear that God will defeat the Canaanites and their commander, Sisera, would be killed by a woman

The war between the Israelites and the Canaanites

Deborah as a judge waged a war against the Canaanites with their king, Jabin. When camps fought, all soldiers of Jabin were killed except for Sisera who ran away to the tent of Jael (a woman) the wife of Heber. Jael welcomed Sisera in her tent. Sisera asked Jael to give him water. Jael gave him some milk and then she slept. As he was sleeping, Jael took a hammer and a tent peg and killed Sisera by driving a tent peg in his head. When Barak came to look for Sisera, Jael showed a dead body of Sisera. At this point, Barak was convinced that God fought for them



Study Questions

1. *Name two offices of Deborah*
2. *Who was Lappidoth?*
3. *Why did Barak want to go to war with Deborah and not alone?*
4. *Explain the warm welcome which Jael rendered Sisera*
5. *How did Jael serve God*
6. *What tribes did Deborah and Barak come from?*
7. *How was Sisera killed?*
8. *Are women respected in your community?*

GIDEON AS A JUDGE OF ISRAEL 6:1-40

Once again the Israelites sinned against God. As usual, God let the people of Midian rule them. The Midianites were stronger than the Israelites and they ruled Israel for 7 years

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The Midianites could come and destroy the crops and animals like sheep, cattle and donkeys for the Israelites. The Israelites cried to God for help. In response, God sent them a prophet who reminded the Israelites that God loves them so much but they always sinned against God. Then God sent his angel who went to the village of Orphah and found Gideon, the son of Joash from the clan of Abiezer. At this time Gideon was threshing wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites

The Angel's Message to Gideon

- He said that God was with Gideon
- Gideon was a brave and mighty man

Gideon's response

- Gideon wondered why the Midianites were troubling them if God was with him.

Then God ordered him to go and rescue Israelites from the hands of Midianites. Gideon complained that he was coming from the weakest tribe of Manasseh and he was the least important member of the family

God assured Gideon that he will be helped by God to destroy the Midianites. However, Gideon was not sure if he was talking to God and he asked for a proof or a sign that it was God who was speaking to him. In addition to that, he asked if it was possible for him to make a sacrifice for God

Gideon's sacrifice

He brought meat and bread before the angel. He was advised to put them on the rock. The angel touched the meat and bread with his stick and fire came and burned the meat and the bread and the angel disappeared. Gideon then knew that it was indeed God who was talking to him. Gideon built an altar there and called it "The Lord is peace". This altar is still there up to now

That night God asked Gideon to destroy his father's altar of Baal and destroy the symbol for goodness Asherah. In response, Gideon with ten servants did what God told him to do. However, he did it during the night because he feared his father and all people who worshipped Baal and Asherah. After that, Gideon built an altar for God and made a sacrifice. Next day people wondered what destroyed the altar of Baal and the symbol of Asherah. After investigations,

they learnt that it was Gideon so they asked Joash to bring his son, Gideon to be killed.

Gideon gathered soldiers in readiness to fight against the Midianites. Gideon asked God once again if they would win the battle. He therefore asked for a sign; he asked God to rain dew on the wool and not on the ground and that happened. He asked God the next night to reverse this by raining dew on the ground and not on the wool and it happened that way. Gideon was then assured that he would defeat the Midianites.

Gideon defeats the Midianites Judges 7:1-25

Gideon took 32,000 soldiers with him and camped at the spring of Herod. The Midianites camped by Moreh Hill

God told Gideon that his soldiers were too many and the number must be reduced. Gideon selected soldiers from those who lapped up water with their tongues like dogs and from others who scooped up water in their hands and lapped up

God assured Gideon of victory so Gideon with his servant Purah went to the camp of their enemies and found them sharing a dream: 'I dreamt that a loaf of barley bread rolled into our camp and hit a tent. The tent collapsed and lay flat on the ground.' (Judges 7:13). Another soldier interpreted it in this way: 'it is the sword of the Israelites, Gideon son of Joash! It can't mean anything else! God has given him victory over Midian and our whole army!'



Study Questions

1. How long did the Midianites rule Israel?
2. Describe how the Midianites ill-treated the Israelites
3. How did God intervene?
4. Gideon and Purah, found the Midianites sharing a deram
 - a. Explain the dream which Gideon heard from Midianites
 - b. How was the dream interpreted by the soldiers?
 - c. Explain the importance of the dream to Gideon
5. What reasons did Gideon give trying to refuse his mission?
6. How did God win the war with small army?
7. Why did God use a small army?

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SAMSON AS A JUDGE OF ISRAEL

The Israelites sinned again and God invited Philistines to rule them. The Philistines ruled Israel for 40 years. The Israelites cried out to God for help when they were tired of oppression from the Philistines. God heard their prayer and appointed Samson to be a judge and lead them to fight against the Philistines

The Birth of Samson Judges 13:1-25

An angel of God visited the wife of Manoah in Zorah, telling her that though she was barren when would be pregnant and give birth to a son. The woman was advised not to drink any wine, beer or forbidden food because the baby to be born would be dedicated to God as a Nazarine

When Manoah got the news from his wife, he prayed to God and asked the angel to come again and tell them what they should do with the boy. The angel came, advised the wife of Manoah to follow all what he said. When Samson was born, he was dedicated to God as a Nazarine just as the angel had commanded

Samson at Gaza Judges 16:4-31

Gaza was the city for the Philistines. One day Samson went there to chat with a prostitute and the Philistines wanted to kill him but him run away.

Samson and Delilah

Samson fell in love with Delilah, one of the Philistines. The five kings of the Philistines took it to be an advantage; they went to Delilah and asked her to trick Samson to reveal the secret of his strengths so that the Philistines should overpower him. She was promised eleven hundred pieces of silver from each of the five kings. For three times, Samson lied to her but later got tired with her and revealed everything about his strengths. “My hair has never been cut; I have been dedicated to God as Nazarite. If my hair is cut, I would lose my strengths and be as weak as anybody else. “Delilah with assistance from the Philistines shaved Samson and he lost his power. The Philistines captured him, removed his eyes and took him to Gaza. As a prisoner Samson was grinding at the mill in the prison. But his hair started growing again

Death of Samson

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The five kings of Philistines and 3000 Philistines met together to celebrate and offer sacrifice to their god Dagon, whom they believed gave them victory over Samson. Samson was brought in to entertain them in that building

Then Samson with help from the boy who was leading him by hand touched the two pillars that held up the building. He prayed to God for his strength and God gave him. He pushed the two pillars and shouted: 'Let me die with the Philistines!' The building fell down and killed everyone who was in that building including Samson. Samson killed more people at his death than he had killed during his life. His family came and took his body and buried it in the tomb of his father, Manoah, between Zorah and Eshtaoh. Samson ruled for 20 years



Study Questions

1. *For how long did the Philistine rule Israel?*
2. *Explain the dangers of intermarriages with heathen people*
3. *Narrate how Delilah betrayed Samson*
4. *Explain the death of Samson*
5. *What lessons can we learn today from the death of Samson?*

THE STORY OF RUTH

The story of Ruth took place during the time of Judges. Ruth, a Moabite by nationality married to an Israelite. When the husband of Ruth died, Ruth left her country and went with her mother in law to Israel despite letting her to stay with her people. Ruth showed loyalty to her and a deep devotion to the God. Ruth married to Boaz, one of her husband's relatives as it was the custom of that time and the two became the grandparents of king David

Naomi returns to Bethlehem with Ruth

Elimelech, a Jew and his wife Naomi left Bethlehem in Judah to live in the land of Moab because of a famine. While there Elimelech died before his two sons Mahlon and Chilion who took Moabite wives, Orpah and Ruth respectively

After sometime the two sons died as well. Naomi was left alone with her daughters-in-law. Later she decided to return to her home when she heard that her land was blessed with a good harvest. When she tried to discourage her

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daughters-in-law from going with her Orpah readily returned to her people while Ruth refused to abandon Naomi, saying, *“Don’t ask me to leave you! Let me go with you. Wherever you go, I will go, wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God. Wherever you will die, I will be buried...”* (Ruth 1:16-17)

Upon reaching Bethlehem, people were excited to see Naomi. In response, Naomi said her name would be Marah because God had made life bitter. Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem when barley harvest was just beginning. This barley is not tobacco but food crop like maize

Ruth works in the field of Boaz (Ruth 2:1-23)

Boaz was a rich man and a relative of Elimelech. One day with permission from Naomi, Ruth went to the fields to gather the corn that the harvest workers leave (*kukakhunkha/kuvutula*). Ruth coincidentally was picking up the corn which the harvest workers left in the field of Boaz, who was a relative to her late husband

Ruth meets Boaz

Boaz met Ruth in his field and he was kind to her. Boaz showed love to Ruth in the following ways:

- Boaz welcomed Ruth to work in his fields and not to anyone else
- Boaz ordered his workers not to molest Ruth
- He permitted Ruth to drink from the water jars that Boaz’s workers had filled
- He gave her some food (bread, sauce and roasted grain)
- Boaz instructed his men to pull out some corn from bundles and leave it for her to pick up

Ruth bowed down with her face touching the ground and wondered why Boaz was so kind to a foreigner. Boaz explained that he had full account of her story and admired her faith in the God of Israel. That day Ruth gathered 10 kilograms of corn and Naomi was so excited. When Naomi learnt that Ruth was working in Boaz’s field, she revealed to Ruth that Boaz was a close relative of theirs, one of those responsible for taking care of them. Ruth worked with Boaz workers until all the Barley and wheat had been harvested and she continued living with her mother-in-law.

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Ruth Finds a Husband (Ruth 3:1-18)

Naomi advised Ruth to go and sleep at Boaz's feet in the field. Ruth followed the advice and went to Boaz. Ruth told Boaz plainly that Boaz should marry her, "...so please marry me" (Ruth 3:9). Boaz promised to ask a certain man who was a closer relative to Ruth's late husband to marry Ruth. If that man would turn down the offer then Boaz would marry Ruth. Ruth explained everything to Naomi who asked her to be patient

Boaz marries Ruth (Ruth 4:1-22)

Boaz met Elimelech's nearest relative, the man whom Boaz had mentioned to marry Ruth. Boaz asked the ten leaders of Bethlehem town to be witnesses when he was asking the nearest relative of Elimelech to buy a field from Naomi and take Ruth as a wife. The man refused to take Ruth as a wife and gave Boaz permission to buy the field and marry Ruth in presence of the ten leaders of the town. Following that development, Boaz bought Naomi's field and married Ruth

Boaz and Ruth had a baby son and named him Obed. When Obed grew up, he became the father of Jesse who was the father of King David

Boaz + Ruth → Obed → Jesse → King David



Study Questions

1. *Mention family members of the family of Naomi*
2. *State the reason why Elimelech and his family moved to Moab*
3. *Explain the circumstances which forced Naomi to go back to Bethlehem*
4. *Explain the connection between Ruth and King David*

THE BRITH OF SAMUEL

Samuel is a judge. He is a special judge, as he lives at a point in history when the period of judges was being replaced with that of Kings. He ensured that Israel had a king, though his arguments were that the true king is God not man. Therefore, you will know and understand Samuel as a Priest, Judge and Prophet of Israel. He is probably the greatest spiritual leader of Israel after Moses

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Eli and Samuel (1 Samuel 1-3)

The Ark of the Covenant was at the sanctuary at Shiloh. Eli, the priest, was responsible for the sanctuary. The story begins with the introduction of Samuel from his birth.

The Birth of Samuel

Samuel's father was Elkanah from the tribe of Ephraim who lived in the town of Ramah. Elkanah was the son of Jeroham.

Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had children but Hannah was childless. Peninnah mocked Hannah because she had no children. Despite this Elkanah loved Hannah very much and tried to assure her of his care and love. Elkanah was a devout man who every time went to worship and sacrifice to the Lord in Shiloh.

Hannah prayed to God for a child in the house of the Lord at Shiloh and promised God that if he will give her a son, she will dedicate him to the Lord for the whole of his life and that he will never cut his hair (1 Samuel 1:11). As Hannah was praying, her lips moved but no words were heard. She was praying silently because she wanted God's attention, not human sympathy.

Interaction between Eli and Hannah in the Temple

- When Eli noted that Hannah's lips were moving but she made no sound, Eli thought that Hannah was drunk and reproached her for drunkenness.
- In response, Hannah answered politely that she was not drunk but she was desperate and she was praying to God.
- Eli pronounced a benediction on her, "Go in peace and May the God of Israel give you what you have asked him for." (1 Samuel 1:17)

From that time Hannah was very happy and ate assuming that God had listened to her prayers, and that all her problems of being barren and Peninnah's laughing at her were gone.

Samuel's birth and dedication 1 Samuel 1: 19-28

From Shilo, Elkanah and his two wives, Hannah and Peninnah went back to their home at Ramah. At Ramah, Hannah became pregnant and gave

birth to a son and he was named Samuel. Samuel means “I asked the Lord for him”. This means that Hannah asked for a child from God.

After nursing the child, Hannah took the child to Eli, the priest at Shiloh and told him that she had asked for a child and the Lord gave it to her and now was dedicating the child to the Lord to belong to him as long as he lives (1 Samuel 1:28)

Samuel was an attendant for Eli, the old priest. Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. They were wicked, but their father never reprimanded them. This made God decide to punish both Eli and his two sons. This was revealed through a dream by Samuel

The Call of Samuel

Samuel was serving the Lord at Shiloh under the direction of Eli. They were sleeping in the house of God. Samuel was sleeping in the sanctuary where the sacred covenant Box was. One day God called Samuel by name and Samuel did not realize that God was calling him, instead he reported he was reporting to Eli. On the third time, Eli advised Samuel to answer to the call in this way: “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.” When the Lord called Samuel for the fourth time, Samuel responded as Eli advised him

God’s message to Samuel

- God would punish Eli’s family because Eli’s sons had spoken evil things against God
- God said Eli was aware of what his sons were doing but he could not stop them



Study Questions

1. *Who were the parents of Samuel?*
2. *Explain the circumstances surrounding the birth of Samuel*
3. *Narrate the call of Samuel*
4. *Why was Eli not bothered with God’s message through Samuel?*
5. *What character does Eli display as a father? Is this good for the development of the child?*