

# JUNIOR SCHOOL

8

CRE NOTES

# CREATION



## Origin of sin and its consequences

(Gen: 3-11)

### ***What is sin?***

Sin is the intentional, willful or knowledgeable violation of a norm.

It is a thought, word or action which is shameful or harmful to oneself, others or to God.

It destroys the relationship between human beings and even God.

### **Introduction**

Man and woman fell from the Garden of Eden. This experience is explained in Genesis chapter 3 verse 4; chapter 6 verse 9 and chapter 11. In these verses, the Bible is teaching about sin, which made Adam and Eve fall.

Sin is defined as iniquity, and guilt. It is to miss a mark, to transgress. Sin is a rebellion or an offence against God. Sin originated with the disobedience of Adam and Eve. They had been commanded not to eat of the fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil – the tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden. But Adam and Eve ate the fruit after being deceived by the serpent.

Man had the power to resist temptation but instead he yielded. Genesis Chapter 3 verse 6 states that man wanted to be wise and thought how wonderful it would be to become wise...” hence sin arises from the lack of knowledge of God, from the denial of trust of God.

## **The consequences of sin**

After sinning, we the human race and sinners:

- 1) Replaced friendship with God with fear of God.
  - 2) Lost innocence. What had been innocent and good became shameful. Adam and Eve became ashamed of their nakedness, something they had never felt before they sinned against God.
  - 3) Lost good relationship with God. The good relationship between God and man was betrayed. Human beings – were alienated from God. “The Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden...”
  - 4) Damaged the perfect relationship between man and woman. The Lord said to the woman “You will have desire for your husband, yet you will be subject to him”.
  - 5) Pain became part of human experience. “I will greatly multiply your pain in child bearing”.
  - 6) Man began toiling and struggling to meet his needs... “You will have to work hard and sweat to make the soil produce anything”
  - 7) The home of man, and the earth itself was placed under a curse. “Cursed is the ground because of you.”
- Enmity between man and wild animals emerged.
- 9) Man began to die. Death sentence is passed upon all men. “You will return to the ground... you are dust”
  - 10) Man began to hate. Man developed murderous feelings in his heart, for example Cain killed Abel, his younger brother.
  - 11) Man changed and became prone to sin.
  - 12) Life span of man was reduced (see Gen. 6:3) “I will not allow people to live forever, they will live no longer than 120 years”
  - 13) Man’s language was confused by God after the flood (read Gen.11: 7)
  - 14) Sin led to embarrassment, mistrust, suffering, pain, pride, arrogance and death.

## **Summary**

Disobedience of God by Adam and Eve brought serious sin consequences to human

### **Causes of sin (*Genesis 3-11*)**

1. Rebellion against God as human beings aspired to be like God.
2. Greed for power as human beings try to usurp the power which belongs to God alone.
3. Lack of knowledge of God.
4. Lack of trust in God's providence.
5. Failure to obey God by eating the forbidden fruit.
6. Lack of satisfaction.
7. Temptation by the devil.
8. Selfishness.
9. Wicked ambitions.
10. Human weakness.
11. Stubbornness.

### **Activity**

In groups of two or three, discuss the origin and consequences of sin.

## **CONCEPT OF EVIL**

### **Introduction**

In this lesson, we shall discuss the concept of evil as told by the traditional African religion and the biblical writings. We shall study similarities and differences of evil from the two religions.

### **What is evil?**

In the traditional African society, evil was an offence against God, spirits and ancestors. It was also viewed as an offence against another person or community. Evil was also a misfortune that can befall an individual or a community.

### **What are the causes of evil?**

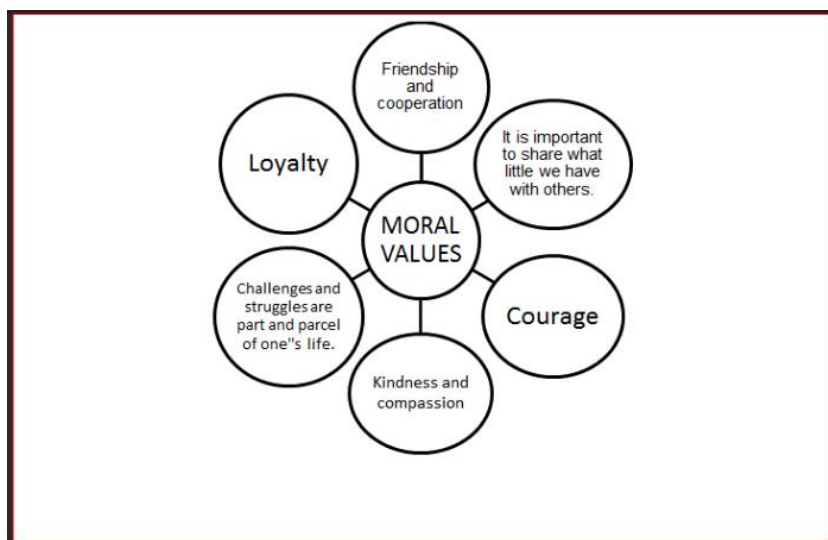
Many of the traditional African societies do not associate God with evil. God is not the creator of evil. Some communities believe that evil is an external power that exists on its own. Thus in the traditional African society, evil was understood or explained as something mysterious that was caused by several people and things. These were:

- a) Evil spirits
- b) Ancestral spirits – due to disobedience to them
- c) Some animals like the chameleon are sources of evil. The Akamba believed that chameleons brought evil. Other communities believed that if an owl cries near one's homestead, it is a sign of evil.
- d) People with mystical powers for example magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are evils
- e) If a member of a community breaks a taboo by disobedience, this action may bring evil spirits.
- f) The spirits of the dead; cause evil; if they are not remembered or respected. Evil spirits cause harm and violence.

### **Consequences of evil in traditional African society**

These were many and ranged from (a) Barrenness (b) Drought (c) Epidemics (d) Madness (e) Sickness (f) Death (g) Drowning (h) Burning in a house (i) War (j) Physically and mentally handicapped children (l) Rebellious children

## **Values needed to overcome temptations**



## **Skills needed to overcome temptations**

### **Recognize Your Tendency to Sin**

James 1:14 explains that we are tempted when we become enticed by our own natural desires. The first step toward overcoming temptation is to recognize the human tendency to be seduced by our own fleshly cravings.

The temptation to sin is a given, so don't be surprised by it. Expect to be tempted daily, and be prepared for it. The apostle Peter reminds us to stay on the lookout:

#### **Be alert and of sober mind.**

Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8, NIV)

### **Flee From Temptation**

But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.

When you come face to face with temptation, look for the way out—the way of escape—that God has promised. Then skedaddle. Flee. Run as fast as you can.

### **Resist Temptation with the Word of Truth**

Hebrews 4:12 says that God's Word is living, active, and powerful. Did you know you can carry a weapon that will make your thoughts obey Jesus Christ?

According to Ephesians 6:17, one of our weapons is the Word of God:

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4–5, NIV)

Jesus overcame the devil's temptations in the wilderness with the Word of God. If it worked for him, it will work for us. And because Jesus was fully human, he is able to identify with our struggles and give us the exact help we need for overcoming temptation.

While it can be helpful to read God's Word when you're being tempted, sometimes that's not practical. Even better is to practice reading the Bible daily so that eventually you have so much of it on the inside, you are ready whenever temptation strikes.

If you are reading the Bible regularly, you will have the full counsel of God at your disposal. You will start to have the mind of Christ. When temptation comes knocking on your door, all you'll have to do is draw your weapon, aim, and fire.

### **Refocus Your Mind and Heart with Praise**

How often have you been tempted to sin when your whole heart was fully concentrated on worshiping the Lord? I'm guessing your answer is never.

Praising God takes our focus off of self and puts it on God. You may not be strong enough to resist temptation on your own, but as you focus on God, he will inhabit your praises. He will give you the strength to resist and walk away from the temptation.

Psalm 147 might be a good place to start:

Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him! (Psalm 147:1, NIV)

### **Repent Quickly When You Fail**

In several places, the Bible tells us the best way to resist and overcome temptation is to flee from it (1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22). Even still, we fall from time to time. When we fail to flee temptation, eventually we will give in and fall.

Having a more realistic view—knowing that at times you will fail—should help you to repent quickly when you do. Failing is not the end of the world, but it is dangerous to persist in your sin.

Going back to the book of James, verse 1:15 explains that sin "when it is full-grown, gives birth to death." Continuing or persisting in sin leads to spiritual death, and often even physical death. That is why it's best to repent quickly when you know you've fallen into sin

Others include:

1. Keep yourself busy
2. Avoid comparison as it triggers temptations
3. Avoid watching negative films, movies etc.
4. Keep your mind focused and positive
5. Seek help where needed be

### **God's plan of salvation**

After the fall of man, God took steps to heal the damaged situation and relationship between Him and Adam and Eve.

#### **GOD:**

1. Provided clothing of skin to Adam and Eve.
2. Looked for Adam and Eve since they were hiding from His presence.
3. Provided Adam and Eve with the knowledge to find different foods.
4. Declared enmity between man and the snake.
5. Hinted at the ultimate victory of man when He said that the seed of the woman would crush the snake or serpent's head. The serpent would attack the heel of man and woman.

All through the Old Testament, and the New Testament, we see God's plan of salvation being manifested. For instance, GOD chose and separated Abraham from other communities. The children of

Israel led by Moses (were delivered) from Egypt,. God sent prophets to teach and warn the Israelites of the dangers of sin. Finally God sent his only son Jesus Christ to die on the cross to save human kind.



## **SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN VIEW OF EVIL AND BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SIN**

### **Similarities**

Both the Biblical and traditional African view or agree that

- 1) God is supreme. God is neither the creator nor author of evil
- 2) Sin comes from the disobedience of God by human beings
- 3) Evil and misfortune are God's curse to man (Biblical) while the traditional African society sees evil as curses by ancestors, and elders. Both curses lead to misfortunes.
- 4) The result of sin and evil is human sufferings
- 5) Sin and evil lead to man being separated from God
- 6) God is the guardian of law and order
- 7) Human beings have the ability to overcome evil

### **Differences**

- 1) Biblical account emphasizes personal nature of sin while in the African concept; sin is more social and communal
- 2) Biblical account attributes evil to disobedience while African concept attributes evil not only to disobediences but other external forces.
- 3) Biblical accounts offer a message of hope to overcome evil while African concept doesn't offer a solution to sin and evil.
- 4) Traditional African concept all forms of suffering as a result of sin while in the Bible suffering is not always a result of sin.

### **Questions**

- 1) Explain the differences between the two creation stories
- 2) State the traditional African view of creation
- 3) Explain how human beings continue with the work of creation
- 4) What is the origin of sin and evil according to traditional African society?
- 5) Give three consequences of sin as stated in Genesis
- 6) State the consequences of evil according to African traditional societies
- 7) Trace God's plan of salvation of human kind

Compare biblical and traditional African understanding of evil and sin.

9) What does the command “Subdue the earth” in Genesis 1 verse 28 mean?

# THE BIBLE

## CALL OF ABRAHAM

### BACKGROUND TO THE CALL OF ABRAHAM (Genesis 11:24-32, 12)

#### Introduction

The background to the call of Abraham is found in the first book of the bible. This is Genesis which is a Greek word meaning “Beginning”. The relationship between Adam and God was good but after Adam disobeyed GOD, their relationship changed because of sin by Eve and Adam. After sometime, God repaired this relationship by calling Abraham and offering salvation.

#### Background

-Abraham lived with his father Terah at a place called Ur. Abraham’s father lived among people who worshiped many gods. One of the god’s whom people of Ur worshipped was the moon. This worship of many gods is referred to as polytheism.

-The family of Terah moved from Ur to Haran. While at Haran, God called Abraham at 75 years old. He was told to.... *“Leave your country, your relatives and your father’s home and go to a land that I am going to show you”*. Abraham obeyed God’s call. He left Haran for a land that was unknown to him. He took his property his wife Sarah and his nephew lot. At the time of the call of Abraham, he was known as Abram and his wife Sarai. God changed their names to Abraham and Sarah. Abraham means Father of many nations while Sarah means mother of nations.

-On arrival in Canaan, he travelled and came to a place called Schechem. God appeared to him once more. Abraham built an altar for the lord at this place. Altars are places of worship. They were regarded as holy and were manifestations of God’s presence. An altar was made of stones.

-After sometime, he separated with his nephew Lot due to their servants having strife over water for their livestock. Abraham left Canaan due to famine. He went to Egypt.

#### Activity

1. *Where did Lot settle?*
2. *Read GENESIS, chapter 11 (24 – 32) and chapter 12 (1 – 9)*

## **FAITH AND GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM (HEBREWS 11: 1 – 6)**

### **THE MEANING OF FAITH**

-Faith is a strong belief, a complete trust or confidence in someone or something. It is also a firm belief, which is not based on any scientific or logical proof. Faith in God is an attitude of complete trust in God.

It is not based on concrete or tangible objects. Faith is manifested in the ways of life of a believer.

-Abraham is an example of someone who had faith in God. He showed his faith in action in several ways.

### **HOW ABRAHAM DEMONSTRATED HIS FAITH IN GOD**

1. Although Abraham was old, he left Haran to go to a strange unknown land of Canaan.
2. After he settled in Canaan, Abraham was assured by God of his protection and was given other promises such as he will get a son, and Abraham believed God. Sarah gave birth to a son when she was 90 years old and Abraham was around 120 years old. This was as the lord had promised Abraham.
3. The son was named Isaac that means “laughter” – because Sarah had laughed when she was told that she would have a child in her old age. The child Isaac was circumcised when he was eight (8) days old.
4. Abraham was told by God to circumcise all males in his household including himself. He obeyed.
5. When Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac to God, he was ready to do so.
6. Abraham believed that God would fulfill all the promises he had given to him
7. Abraham demonstrated his faith by building altars

### **GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12:2-3, 15:1-21, 21, 17:1-8, 17:15-18)**

A promise is giving an assurance of something to someone. The promises God gave to Abraham were that:

1. God told him he would give him a land. His descendants would be given the land of Canaan to dwell in
2. His name would be made famous
3. His descendants will be many. Abraham would be made a great nation.
4. God would protect him
5. He was promised a son of their own
6. God would bless him
7. God would bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him
8. Abraham was promised that he would die in peace and in an old age
9. His descendants would be strangers in a foreign land but afterwards would come out with great possessions.

### **THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROMISES MADE BY GOD TO ABRAHAM TO CHRISTIANS TODAY (Gen. 12: 2 – 3, 15: 1 – 21, 21:1 – 7, 17: 15 – 18)**

God called Abraham from idol worship in the same way God continues to call people to serve him.

- 1) Through Abraham, God had a plan to restore the relationship between man and God
- 2) Christians receive the promises of blessings from God through Abraham (God's promises to Abraham fulfilled through Christians)
- 3) As Abraham left his own people, Christians should leave their sinful lives and put their whole trust in God.
- 4) Abraham is seen as the descendant not only of the Israelites but also of Christians
- 5) Christians have faith that God fulfils promises to them as he did to Abraham
- 6) Christians are assured of God's protection
- 7) Through God's dealing with Abraham, God shows that he values a personal relationship with human kind.

Through Jesus Christ Christians enter into an everlasting covenant with God. Just like Abraham entered into a covenant with God.

- 9) The promise to Abraham of Canaan Promised Land is to Christians the hope for new land – heaven
- 10) God continues to make promises to those who believe him
- 11) Abraham is the ancestor (Father) of all believers)

## **COVENANT**

### **Definition.**

A covenant is a solemn agreement between two persons or two groups of people. An agreement is between two separated parties. It's a pact, a treaty. When it is a covenant, it conveys a union or partnership.

### **Characteristics / components of a covenant**

There are components or features that must be in a covenant. A covenant must have a ceremony, sign, witnesses, promises/vows/oaths, obligations / consequences, and participants. A covenant establishes a sacrificial bond between the parties involved. There are obligations or rules by which the parties must abide by, adhere to and observe in order to keep the covenant. A covenant is an agreement and if it is broken, there are consequences for breaking it. In the Bible, there are many covenants.

### **Examples of covenants in the Bible**

**1. Adamic covenant** – Agreement between God and Adam

**2. Noahic Covenant** – God's covenant with Noah where God promised to preserve life of man and not to destroy it with water. The sign of the covenant is the rainbow. In Gen 9 verse 3, GOD told Noah, "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you...Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. Verse 4 says, "But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it"

**3. Abrahamic covenant** – Gods covenant with Abraham. He promised to fulfill promises He gave to Abraham.

### ***These promises were:***

- (1) Increase numbers of descendant of Abraham. He will be father of many nations,
- (2) Be GOD of his descendants

(3) Abraham will have a son an heir,

(4) Given land of Canaan and other lands from the river of Egypt to River Euphrates, and all for heirs of Abraham (Gen. 15: 17 – 18)

(5) Circumcision of all males at 8 days after birth even none Israelites living in their land (6) Covenant with Isaac

**4. Mosaic Covenant** – is a covenant between the Israelites and GOD. Moses led Israel to Mt. Sinai. God promised to be their God. Israelites were given the law written by GOD in “tablets of stone, with law and commands I have written for.... instruction”. (Read exodus 23).

**5. Davidic Covenant** – covenant between David and God – God promised him that his dynasty would rule forever.

**6. Messianic Covenant** – new covenant between Christians and God through Jesus Christ.

### **God’s covenant with Abraham and its importance (Genesis 15:1-19)**

The covenant was established after God appeared to Abraham in a vision. During the visitation of God, Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah 90 years. He was promised a son. Abraham wanted assurance from God. God told him to bring him the following items for sacrifice.

#### **Items for sacrifice**

☐ Three (3) years olds: heifer, goat, ram and a dove and a pigeon.

☐ Abraham then cut these animals into two halves and placed them opposite each other.

☐ The birds were not split.

☐ After it was dark, smoking fire and a flaming torch suddenly appeared and passed between the pieces of animals.

☐ Towards evening, Abraham fell into a deep sleep. While he slept the Lord appeared to him and told him that:

☐ His descendants will be strangers in a foreign land and be slaves for 400 years. But they will come out of this land with a lot of wealth and God will punish the nation that will enslave Israelites.

□ He, Abraham will live up to a ripe age, and die in peace. Then the Lord made a covenant with Abraham and promised to give him and his descendants the land of Canaan. God himself passed through the sacrifices and bound himself to keep the promises.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND ABRAHAM (GEN. 15: 1- 19)**

- God bound himself in a personal relationship with a human being
- As God passed through the meat, he showed Abraham he would always protect him. This passed on to the descendants of Abraham
- This covenant between God and Abraham begins a lasting relationship between God and all the nations of the earth.
- Throughout this covenant God was initiating his plan of salvation for human kind
- The promises made to Abraham were fulfilled in New Testament blood of the lamb – death of Jesus Christ
- It emphasized the importance of faith followed by obedience that Abraham shared.

### **COVENANTS IN MODERN LIFE AND THEIR IMPORTANCE**

Modern covenants are

- (a) Marriage
- (b) Baptism
- (c) Oath of loyalty and
- (d) Ordination of clergy

#### **Marriage ceremony:**

In marriage, the bride, bridegroom and their families come together. When the two families come together a relationship is developed. They make an agreement and both sides are seriously involved in the ceremony, whether the marriage is civil or religious. During the marriage ceremony the couple makes vows/promises to each other, before a priest/ pastor and the congregation. Two officials witness these



agreements. Rings are exchanged as a sign of a lasting relationship. A certificate is given in some cases as a testimony (sign) of this agreement. There is eating and drinking.

### **Baptism:**

In a Christian baptism, a covenant is entered into between the believer and God. The believer makes vows before God. The priest and the whole congregation witness this agreement. In some churches, a card is issued to the person who has been baptized as a sign of Christian membership. The baptized can now take the Holy Communion, which is a Christian Ceremony. But when an infant is baptized, parents take the vows on behalf of the child.

### **Loyalty /oath:**

Leaders in public service for example the president, ministers, Members of Parliament, and Governors are sworn in before they take over their new responsibilities. They swear (take an oath) and promise to carry out their duties firmly and without fear or favor.

### **Ordination of the clergy:**

Church leaders, nuns and priests take oaths and make vows to God and to the congregation in a ceremony attended by worshippers.

The importance of modern day covenants

- They bind different groups
- They act as a security
- They strengthen relationships
- They unite people together
- They create loyalty
- They create peace, harmony and bring a sense of permanence

## **THE TESTING OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH (GEN. 22: 1 – 18)**

God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to go and sacrifice his only son Isaac. This was the son he loved so much. He was to travel to Mount Moriah. On reaching Mt. Moriah, he built an altar, and arranged wood on it. He tied up his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood. He lifted a knife to kill him. "But the Angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven. Abraham! Abraham! Do not lay a hand on the boy...Do not do anything to him. Now I know you that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son" (v 11-12). Abraham had obedient reverence for God because he did not keep back his only son from God. God provided a ram for sacrifice. He named the mountain "the Lord provided" God was pleased with Abraham and promised him blessings, many descendants' victory, and protection.

### **Activity**

**Read Genesis 12:1 – 9, 15:1 – 6, 17:23 – 24, 21:1 – 7, 22:1-19**

### **IMPORTANCE OF FAITH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE TODAY**

1. A Christian today is acceptable to God through his faith in God through Jesus Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God.
2. A Christian can only serve God if he has faith in him. Faith enables a Christian to serve God
3. Faith enables a Christian to accomplish what appears to be impossible
4. Through faith, Christians are able to trust God to fulfill his promises to them
5. Faith is the foundation of the Christians salvation
6. Faith in God gives a Christian the power to overcome all temptations.
8. Christians should expect to have their faith tested just like Abraham was.
9. Faith enables Christians to patiently wait on God's promises
10. Christians through faith in God help the poor, make right decisions and are able to understand and know God better.

### **JEWISH AND AFRICAN PRACTICES OF CIRCUMCISION**

#### **IMPORTANCE OF CIRCUMCISION TO ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS (GEN. 17: 1 – 16)**

The rite of circumcision was started by Abraham and has been practiced by the Jews up to the present times.

In the Old Testament, it was important because:

- (i) Through circumcision: God assured Abraham that he would fulfill His promises to him.
- (ii) Circumcision was a sign that Abraham and his descendants had entered into a covenant with God. It was an outward sign of inner faith.
- (iii) Circumcision was a mark of identity for the Jews
- (iv) It was a sign of obedience to God
- (v) It was an acceptance of God as the only true God and their willingness to remain faithful to him

In the New Testament

- (vi) Circumcision doesn't qualify one to be a child of God. One is accepted as a Christian without circumcision as long as they have faith in God.
- (vii) A true descendant of Abraham is the Christian who truly believes in God and lives according to His will regardless of colour, race or creed.

## **CIRCUMCISION IN AFRICAN COMMUNITIES**

Circumcision is one of the rites of passage among the African people. It marks the transition from one stage to another. Many ethnic communities in Kenya still practice the rite of circumcision. During circumcision ceremonies, prayers are offered to God for the well-being of the initiates (those who are being circumcised) and the prosperity of the whole community. Initiates learn secrets of their community and society. They are taught myths, origin, religious beliefs, and sex education. In some communities, initiates are given new names or ornaments to signify their new status.

## **JEWISH AND AFRICAN PRACTICES OF CIRCUMCISION**

### **Similarities**

In both Jewish and African communities, circumcision:

- (a) Is a mark of identity
- (b) Provided a sense of belonging
- (c) Was observed as a religious experience
- (d) was compulsory
- (e) Was a tradition passed from one generation to another

- (f) Is a time for shedding blood
- (g) Was a time for offering prayers to God for the well-being of the initiates
- (h) Was a time for giving gifts
- (i) Was a ceremony for initiation
- (j) Was a time for giving the initiates names
- (k) Took place in sacred places.

### **Differences**

In Jewish community,

- i. Circumcision was a rite for boys while in African society it was for both boys and girls. But it was for boys in a few communities.
- ii. Boys were circumcised when aged 8 days while in the African society; it was between 15 to 25 years old.
- iii. Circumcision was for boy's organ while in African societies several forms of initiation were done, for example, removal of teeth, and body piercing among others.
- iv. Circumcision was a command from God while for the African communities it was in obedience to customary law where ancestors were invoked to protect the initiates.

Among the African societies

- v. Circumcision was a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood while for the Jews it was not.
- vi. The initiates were given specialized education while the Jews were not.
- vii. The initiates were grouped into age groups, and were secluded from the community while among the Jews it was not so.
- viii. The rite of circumcision according to seasons while the Jews once a child is born, they are circumcised on the 8th day.
- ix. After circumcision, the initiates were allowed to marry, enter a warrior group, own property but for the Jews the initiate was still a child.

### **Questions**

1. Explain why Abraham is referred to as the father of faith

2. Give five actions from the life of Abraham that shows his faith to God
3. List some of the promises God gave to Abraham
4. Compare and contrast the Jewish and traditional African practice of circumcision
5. What is the importance of faith to Christians?
6. State the elements of a covenant
7. Give examples of covenants in the bible and the modern society
8. Discuss the circumstances that led God to enter into a covenant relationship with Abraham.

# LEADERSHIP IN ISRAEL



## Introduction

- When the Israelites had settled in Canaan, they did not have an earthly King. Their unseen ruler was God. Such a community was called a Theocratic community.
- God ruled through some judges who were appointed.

## The role of judges in Israel

1. They led the Israelites into war against enemies such as the Philistines.
2. They settled disputes among the people.
3. They acted as spiritual leaders and officiated in worship.
4. They offered sacrifice on behalf of the people.
5. Some of the judges acted as the prophets of God.
6. The judges foretold the future.
7. The judges condemned the injustices in Israel.
8. They reminded the people of God's ways.

## Reasons why the Israelites demanded for a King

### 1 Samuel 8:1-9

They demanded to be given a King because: -

1. Samuel had grown old.
2. He had imposed his sons Joel and Abijah as judges over the Israelites.
3. The two sons were not like their father for they lacked leadership skills.
4. They were corrupt and took bribes.
5. They wanted a King so that they would be like other nations in Canaan.

6. They wanted a stable political government ruled by law and order.
7. They had been influenced by political government of the Canaanites.
8. They wanted a king who would lead them into war against their enemies such as the Philistines and bring back the Ark that had been taken.
9. They wanted an earthly king who they could see and consult in time of problems

## **Reasons against Kingship in Israel**

*1 Sam 8:10-20*

- Samuel was very upset by the request for a King because:
  1. By demanding an earthly King, it meant that they had rejected Yahweh as their king.
  2. They were going to lose their identity as Gods chosen people
  3. The leaders to be appointed were going to lack leadership qualities.
  4. The King would oppress them.
  5. Some of their sons would be recruited to serve as soldiers in his army.
  6. Others would be put into forced labor.
  7. Their daughters would be put to work as cooks and perfumers.
  8. The king would take the best of their flock.
  9. The king would take their lands and good vineyards.
  10. At that time, they would cry to God but God will not listen to them; · the people refused to listen to Samuels warning and went ahead with their demand for a king. So the Lord told Samuel to do as they wanted.

## **The Choosing of Saul as the first King of Israel**

*1 Sam 9:10*

- After the Israelites had appealed to Samuel that they wanted a King, Samuel told the Lord what the people had said and the Lord instructed him to do, as they wanted.
- Saul the son of Kish was appointed as the first King of Israel.

## **Achievements of King Saul**

1. He was Gods choice who was to save the Israelites from the power of the Philistines.
2. He received the spirit of God, which made him to prophesy like one of the prophets of God.

3. He fought and conquered the Israelite e.g. the Amorites, the Moabites and the Amalekites.

### **Failures of King Saul**

*1 Sam 13, 15, 18:6-9, 28:3-15, 3*

1. He offered sacrifices to God at Gilgal yet he was not a priest.
2. he spared Agag the king of the Amalekites.
3. He spared the best sheep and cattle of the Amalekites for selfish gain.
4. He cheated Samuel that he wanted to offer the animals as sacrifice to God.
5. He listened to the voice of his subjects and army to spare the animals and Agag.
6. He became jealous and plotted to kill David.
7. He consulted a medium so that he could talk to the spirit of Samuel.
8. He killed the priest of God, (1 Sam 22.)
9. He committed suicide when he went to war against the Philistines

### **Lessons Learnt from the Failures of King Saul**

1. Christians should obey Gods command and prophets
2. It is important to have faith in God.
3. A Christian needs to be patient.
4. Christians should not be influenced by greed for wealth and earthly desires.
5. God does not value incense sacrifice instead he is more pleased with obedience
6. Leaders need not to be jealous of others Saul was jealous and plotted to kill David.
7. There is need to respect every ones responsibility.
8. Saul never respected the position of Samuel.





## Choosing of David as the king of Israel

*1Sam 16:1-15*

- David was the son of Jesse from the tribe of Judah.
- God instructed Samuel to go and anoint David to succeed Saul as a King of Israel.

## Achievements of King David

1. He was chosen by God. God told Samuel to come and anoint him as king of Israel.
2. He was a skilled Musician and composed the book of Psalms that is used in the church even today (*1Sam 16:14-23*).
3. He brought back the Ark of the Covenant from the house of Abinadab to Jerusalem with great celebration. The Ark had been taken away by the enemies. (*2Sam 6:1-5*).
4. He conquered the city of Jerusalem and made it its capital city. (*2sam; 5:6-25*).
5. He was a brilliant military commander. The name David means Army Commander. He waged successful wars against Moab, Ammor, Amelekite and Aram.
6. He killed Goliath who was a great warrior of the Philistines because he had great faith in God. (*1Sam 17*).
7. He expanded the boundaries of Israel through military conquest.
8. He was a good administrator. He administered through law and justice to all people. He chose wise leaders to advise him.
9. David was a humble king who was ready to repent whenever he committed a sin. He repented after taking Uriah's wife. (*2 Sam: 11*).
10. He was publicly anointed as a King of Israel. He was made king over Judah and was later accepted by the whole Israel.
11. He established good diplomatic relations with the surrounding nations for example;

he signed a treaty with Syria and through the treaty Israel benefited both economically and politically.

12. He laid foundation of building the great temple which was later completed by Solomon. (*2Sam 7:1-17*).
13. God promised to establish an everlasting kingdom for David where his descendants would live in peace. Jesus is a descendant of King David.
14. He united the Northern and Southern kingdom and made it into one nation.

## **David as the ancestor of Jesus**

2 Sam 1:29, Luke 1:26-33

- Nathans prophesy about the Messiah is seen as having been fulfilled in the work of Jesus Christ in the following ways: -
- Jesus Christ who was the Messiah is seen as being born from Davids lineage.
- Mathew in the Genealogy of Jesus tells that Jesus was a descendant of King David. (*Matt 1:1*).
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem, which was referred to as the city of David. (*Luke 2:4*)
- In their sermons, the early apostles like Paul and Peter made a number of references to Jesus as a descendant of King David. (*Romans: 1:3-5*).
- The blind man at Jericho hailed Jesus as son of David and looked to him to restore his sight. (*Lk 18:35-36*).
- During Triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was hailed by the crowd as the Messiah descendant from the house of King David. (*Math. 21:9*).
- Angel Gabriel told Mary that the son would be great and will be called the son of the Most-High.... (*Lk. 1:26-33*).
- Jesus foster father was a direct descendant of King David

## **Qualities of a Good Leader drawn from David**

1. Modern rulers should be **courageous** and ready to die with and for their subjects like David was a strong Military Commander.
2. Modern leaders should have **faith in God** and realize that authority comes from God.
3. Leaders should be thankful to God. David was thankful not only to God but also to his people.

4. Modern leaders should be **loyal** to their oath of office. David kept his without favoring some people.
5. Leaders should be **kind**. David was a kind leader. He pardoned many of those who had offended him.
6. A good leader should be **humble**. David was a humble person. He consulted Gods prophets.
7. A leader should be able to **admit his mistakes**. David realized his mistakes and asked for **forgiveness**.
8. Modern leaders should be **willing to delegate duty** as David did. David had a team of advisors and administrators.

## **Achievements and failures of king Solomon**

· After David died, his son Solomon took over as king in Israel.

### **Achievements of king Solomon**

*1Kings 4:29, 3:16, 4:20-27, 10:14, 11:3*

1. He was considered to have been a wise ruler. The wisdom was given by God.
2. He built the great temple and dedicated it for the service of the Lord. 3. He brought the Ark of the Covenant into the temple.
4. He established trade links with the neighbouring communities and made Israel a prosperous nation.
5. Solomon wrote several Proverbs still being used in our churches today.
6. He is regarded to be one of the richest men who ever lived. He had 1000 women in his palace.
7. He is remembered for his great administrative skills. He had soldiers, officers, commanders and chariot captains.

### **Failures of king Solomon**

*1 kings 9:10-14, 9:15-19, 11:1-13, 11:9-1)*

1. He sold a piece of land of Israel to Hiram King of Tyre, which was against the will of God.
2. Solomon introduced forced labour in Israel.
3. He married many foreign wives, which was against Gods command.
4. He allowed the foreign wives to introduce idolatry in Israel.

5. He built high places for the worship of the foreign gods and offered sacrifices to them.
6. He built his palace for 13 years while built the temple for 7 years, 7. He used foreign materials to build the temple.
8. He taxed the Israelites heavily to maintain his large number of wives.
9. King Solomon lived lavishly.
10. He made treaties with foreign nations, which was against Gods Command.
11. After becoming king, Solomon killed his own half-brother (Adonijah) on the suspicion that he could rival him for the throne; this was against Gods Command.

## **The schism between Judah and Israel and the spread of idolatry in Israel**

*2 Kings 12*

- Schism refers to the division that occurred in Israel that brought up the formation of the Northern Kingdom under Jeroboam and the Southern Kingdom under Rehoboam.
- The Southern Kingdom remained with only two tribes i.e. Judah and Benjamin and the Northern kingdom had ten tribes.
- After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam became the king of the Israel. The people therefore approached him to relax his rules from the dictatorship that his father had practiced.
- Rehoboam told them to go and come after three days.
- He then went and consulted the elders who told him to do as the people had said.
- He ignored the advice of the elders and went to his fellow young men who advised him to be even harsher than his father was.
- When the people went back to him he said he refused to relax his rule. When the people heard this, they rebelled against him and established the Northern kingdom that came to be known as Israel with Jeroboam as the king.

## **Importance of the Temple to the Jewish People**

1. The temple symbolized Gods presence among the Israelites.
2. It was a house where the Israelites offered prayers to God.

3. It was the place where the first-born male children were dedicated to God.
  4. The temple was a place where the Israelites offered sacrifices to God.
  5. The Ark of the Covenant, which symbolized Gods presence, was kept in the temple.
  6. It was a place where the priests and prophets resided.
  7. The rites of purification were carried out in the temple.
  8. It acted as a symbol of unity in Israel.
  9. The Jewish ceremonies such as the Passover feast and the feast of the Tabernacle were formed in the temple.
  10. The temple also served as a commercial centre. The animals for sacrifice were brought in the temple.
  11. The temple acted as a court. The Jewish elders sat in the temple to judge cases. (the Sanhedrin)
- It acted as a training place for the priests, Rabiis and scribes. It was where the people were taught the Mosaic Laws