

**COURSE
GUIDE**

**CTH210
HISTORY AND RELIGION OF ISRAEL**

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INTRODUCTION

History and Religion of Israel is a one-Semester 2-Credit unit's course. It will be available to all students as a course in Bachelor of Arts and Post-Graduate Diploma Programmes in Theology. The course is also suitable for anybody who is interested in the Theology Study of Christian faith. The course will consist of 12 units which involve the meaning of Israel, Israel as the chosen people, and Israel as covenantal people, pre-history of the Israelites, Israelites salvation history, the history of Israel from the time of Judges to the period of captivity, the history of Israel from the development of prophecy to the period of post-exilic prophets, the history of Israel from the time of Exile to reconstituted state of Israel, the Jewish religious denominations, the religious institutions in Israel, the Jewish major feasts and the significance of feasts in the religious and social life of Jewish people.

The material has been especially developed for students in African Context with particular focus on Nigeria. There are no compulsory pre-requisites for this course. The course guide tell you briefly what the course is about, what you are expected to know in each unit, what course material is about, what course material you will be using and how you can work your way through these materials. It also emphasizes the need for tutor-marked assignments. Detailed information on tutor-marked assignments is found in the separate file, which will be sent to you later. There are periodic tutorial classes that are linked to the course.

What you will learn in this Course

The overall of CTH 210: History and Religion of Israel is to introduce you to the basic issues in the history of creation of man, the people of Israel and their religion. These topics will be studied through integrating, Theological approach. The Bible is the major source to formulate and study theology. However, history and religion of Israel also interacts with science, philosophy and some other liberal arts. Your understanding of history and religion of Israel will equip you to explain Christian faith to other people-Christians and non-Christians. History and religion of Israel is an interesting study and you will benefit from the insights of other theologians.

Course Aims

The aim of this course is to give you an understanding of the following basic facts of Christian history and religion: the history of creation of humankind, the people of Israel and their religion. This will be achieved by aiming to:

- Introduce you to the meaning of the name Israel
- Lead you to examine the usage of the name Israel
- Assist you to narrate the history of the people of Israel
- Expose you to the various forms of religions of Israel
- Highlight the role of religious institutions such as the Torah, the temple, the Priesthood and feasts in the religious and social life of the people of Israel.
- Explain to you the relevance of history and religion of Israel for Christian faith, life and mini
- Hist.stry.

Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out above, there are set overall objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are always included at the beginning of a unit. You should read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the unit to check on your progress. You should always look at the unit objectives after completing a unit. In this way, you can be sure that you have done what was required of you by the unit. Stated below are the wider objectives of this course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you should have achieved the aims of the course as a whole.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Define the meaning and the usage of the name Israel
- Narrate the history of the people of Israel
- Give various forms of the religions of Israel
- Highlight the role of religious institutions such as Torah, temple and priesthood in the religious and social life of the people of Israel.
- Explain the significance of feasts in the religious and social life of the people of Israel.

Working through this Course

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units, read recommended books and read other materials. Each unit contains self-assessment exercises and points in the course you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of this course is a final examination. Below you will find listed all the components of the will and what you have to do.

Course Materials

Major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study units
3. Textbooks

4. Assignment File
5. Presentation Schedule

In addition, you must obtain the materials. Obtain your copy. You may contact your tutor if you have problems in obtaining the text materials

Study Units

There are twelve units in this course broken into five modules of three units and two units. They are as follows:

Module I Introduction to People of Israel

- Unit 1 The meaning of Israel
- Unit 2 Israel as the chosen people
- Unit 3 Israel as covenantal people

Unit 2 The History of Israel from the call of Abraham to Post-exilic Period

- Unit 1 Pre-history of the Israelites
- Unit 2 Israelites salvation history
- Unit 3 The history of Israel from the time of Judges to the period of captivity
- Unit 4 From the development of Prophecy to the period of Post-Exilic Prophets
- Unit 5 From the time Exilic to reconstituted State of Israel.

Module 3 The Religions of Israel

- Unit 1 The Jewish Religious Denominations
- Unit 2 The Religious Institutions in Israel
- Unit 3 The Jewish major Feasts
- Unit 4 The Significance of Feasts in the Religious and Social Life of Jewish People.

The first eight units examine the history of Israel. The next four units discuss the religion of Israel and its relevance in their religious and social life. Each unit contains a number of self-tests. In general, these self-tests questions on the materials you have just recovered or require you to apply them in some ways, and thereby, help you to gauge your progress and to reinforce your understanding of the material. Together with tutor-marked assignments, these exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course.

Set Textbooks

These textbooks are recommended. The first one is compulsory for your study of this course. The Holy Bible (RSV or Catholic Edition)

Mauchline, J. (1978) God's people, Israel, Ibadan: The Caxton Press (West African) Ltd.

Paul de Surgy, (1966), The mystery of Salvation: step by step Throughout the Bible, Great Britain: Sheed and Ward Ltd.

Edwin Thiele (1951), The Mysterious Numbers of Hebrew Kings, New York: Macmillan Press.

Assignment File

In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the assignment File itself and later in this course Guide in the section on assessment.

Presentation Schedule

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

Assessment

There are two aspects to the assessment of the course. First are the tutor-marked assignments; and second, there is a written examination. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information and knowledge acquired during this course. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for final assignment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the assignment. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total course mark. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final three-hour examination. This will also count for 70% of your total course mark.

Tutor-Marked Assignments

There are twelve tutor-marked assignments in this course. You need to submit all the assignment. The best four (i.e. the highest four of the twelve marks) will be counted. The total marks for the best total course mark. Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment File. You should be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set textbooks, reading and study units. However, you are advised to use other references to broaden your view point and provide a deeper understanding of the subject.

When you have completed each assignment, send it, together with TMA (tutor-marked assignment) to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given to the Assignment File. If, however, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is done to discuss the

possibility of an extension.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination of CTH 210 will be of three hour’s duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the tape of self-testing, practices exercises and tutor-marked problems you have come across. All areas of the course will be assessed.

You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination.

You will find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

Course Marking Scheme

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assignment	marks
Assignment	four assignments, best three marks of the four count
final Examination	% of overall course marks
total	5 course marks

Table 1: Course marking Scheme

Course overview

units	title of work	weeks activity
Unit 1	Meaning of the name Israel	
Unit 2	Israel as chosen people	
Unit 3	Israel as covenantal people	Assignment 3
module 2		
Unit		Assignment 4
	History of the elites	Assignment 5
	Elites salvation history from the time of Moses to the period of captivity	Assignment 6

	the history of Israel from the time of Judges to the period of the monarchy	Assignment 7
	from the development of the monarchy to the period of Post-Biblical Judaism	Assignment 8
	from the time of the Second Temple to the establishment of the State of Israel.	Assignment 9
module 3		
Unit		
1	Jewish Religious Institutions	Assignment 10
2	Religious Institutions in Israel	Assignment 11
3	Assignment	Assignment 12
4	Significance of Feasts in the Religious and Social Life of Jewish People.	Assignment 13

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take the complete them, and the assignments that follow them.

How to get the most from this course

In distance learning the study units replace the university lecturer. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer. In the same way that a lecturer might set you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read your set books or other material. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercise for you to do at appropriate points.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and course as a whole. Next

is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study.

When you have finished the units you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a

Reading Section

Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need help, don't hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Reading this Course Guide thoroughly.
2. Organize a study schedule. Refer to the 'Course overview' for more details. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you chose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates for working on each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1 and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the 'Objective' at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.
6. Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow. As you work through the unit you will be instructed to read sections from your set books or other articles. Use the unit to guide your reading.
7. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
8. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
9. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking. Do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule.

When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment from what is written, consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.

10. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in this Course Guide).

Tutors and Tutorials

There are hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board if you need help. The following might be circumstances in which you would find help necessary.

Contact your tutor if:

- You do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings,
- You have difficulty with the self-tests or exercises,
- You have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face to face contact with your tutor and to ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

Summary

CTH 120 intends to introduce you to the basics of history and religion of Israel. Upon completing this course, you will be able to answer questions such as:

- What is the meaning and usage of the name Israel?
- What are two accounts of the history of Israel?
- What are the major forms of the religions of Israel?
- What are the major sects of Jewish sects?
- What are the major feasts of Jewish people?
- What are the significances of religious institutions: Torah, temple and priesthood in the religious and social life of the Jewish people?
- What is the relevance of the history and religions of Israel to Christian faith, life and ministry?

UNIT 1 THEE MEANING OF ISRAEL

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The Meaning of Israel
 - 3.1.1 Origin of the Name Israel
 - 3.2 Usage of the Name Israel
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

You are welcomed to the course, CTH 210: The History and Religion of Israel. Since the history and Religion of Israel is central to Christianity, it is an important course for all Christians to study. In this unit, we shall examine the historical background of the people of Israel and generally explore the Origin of the name Israel and discusses its usage.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- a. Understand the people of Israel.
- b. Trace the origin of the name Israel
- c. Give the usage of the name Israel.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 Origin of the Name 'Israel'

There are two different traditions in Israel regarding the origin of its name. These traditions are ancient because they have been contained in Hosea 12:4-5. According to one account (Gen.32:22-31), the name Israel was bestowed on Jacob at phanuel near East of the Jordan. According to the other account (Gen. 35:9-15), God changed the patriarch's name from Jacob to Israel after he had left phanuel and returned to Bethel. The first account ventures a folk etymology and is boldly anthropomorphic. It also depicts Jacob wrestling with God or the Angel of the Lord and stresses the patriarch's victory, whereas the second account offers no conjecture on the origin or meaning of the name.

3.2 Usage of the Name Israel

The name Israel implies the Biblical name of the people of God and of its anonymous ancestor who was also called Jacob. The Bible insists that the name Israel was conferred on the patriarch Jacob by God. Yet there are divergent accounts of its bestowal on him and various theories regarding its meaning.

Self-assessment exercise 1

(1) Name the two traditions concerning the origin of the people of Israel

4.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the origin of the name Israel, the two accounts concerning the name Israel, the two senses of using the name and the meaning within the constraints of space, the basic aspects of those components have been highlighted in such a manner as would help your understanding of the course. Towards meeting the overall modular goal of introducing the History and Religion of Israel, however, you will still need to read the next four units

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

1. Give two traditions concerning the origin of the name Israel and discuss the two senses of using the name.

6.0 References/Further Readings

The Holy Bible (RSV or NIV). John, Mauchline (1978). God's people Israel: Ibadan: Daystar Press, pp. 50-70

Hester, H.I. (1940). The Heart of Hebrew History: A study of the Old Testament, Missouri: The William Jewell Press, pp. 45-78.

Kwesi, Dickson (1969). The History and Religion of Israel. London Darton, Longman and Todd, pp.30-46.

Max Kadushim (1938), Organic Thinking: A study in Rabbinic Thought. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, P.145-150.

Ziv Yaron (1976), "Religion in Israel," American Jewish year Book, vol. 76, pp. 41-90.
Joseph Friedenson (1978), A History of Agudat Israel, New York: Agudath of American.

Eliazer Don-Yehiya (1981), "Origins and Development of the Agudah and Mafdal parties", Jerusalem Quarterly, No. 20. pp. 84-96.-6.

7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

The two traditions are:

- Phaniel
- Bethel

8.0 Glossary

Patriarchs: These are the ancestors or the forefathers of a community from which the people can trace their culture, traditions and ancestral practices.

UNIT 2: ISRAEL AS THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 Man, the chosen creature of God
 - 3.1.1 The fall of man and its consequences
 - 3.1.2 Consequences of the fall
 - 3.1.3 Promise of salvationz
 - 3.2 Purpose for the choice of Israel
 - 3.3 The Hebrew Patriarchs
 - 3.4 Life among the Hebrews
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In first unit of this module, we have learned about the origin, meaning and usage of the name Israel. We discovered that it is a necessary preliminary step in the effort to introduce History and Religion of Israel to students. In continuation of the quest to gradually lead students to a full comprehension of what the course is about, this second unit explains the second component of the course, title, namely man, the chosen creature of God.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Narrate the story of man as the chosen creature
- Explain the purpose for God's choice of Israel
- Discuss God's choice of the Hebrew patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph).
- Discuss the religious and social life of the Hebrew people.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 Man: The chosen creature of God

There are two accounts of the creation of man. The first and more recent account (Gen. 1:1-2,4), relates to the creation of the universe, whose summit is man while the second, older and account (Gen. 2:4-3,24), which belongs to the Yahwist tradition deals primarily with the creation and destiny of man. The first which would be dated to the (6th Century B.C.), describes in majestic and almost liturgical style, the creation of the

universe and man. It belongs to the "Priestly" tradition and manifests its main characteristics: a preoccupation with theology and liturgy, sober style, logical and carefully arranged presentation.

The second, and oldest account which was dated from 10th or 11th century BC, belongs to the Yahwistic tradition. The fall describes the first state of man and woman, and its consequences, which mark man's present state and put him in the situation of needing to be saved. The subject is treated with a seriousness, delicacy and gravity that make these pages the finest in Genesis.

3.1.1 The fall of man and its consequences

The story of the fall of man does not seem to be uniform. We note that two trees are mentioned: the tree of life that was in the midst of the garden in which man dwelt, so that we can conclude that he had access to its fruits. He enjoyed the gift of personal immortality, until the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was the beginning of man's awareness of moral conflict, and the clash between God's will and his desires which made him to disobey God.

3.1.2 Consequences of the fall

Man suffered the following penalties as the result of his presumption and sin against God. (i) The loss of friendship with God, God drove man out of the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:23-24).

(ii) Death: The blessedness man had been lost; and the gift of personal immortality was denied him. The only immortality which man has now is in his descendants who keep his name alive in the human community.

(iii) Sufferings and Pains. The distressing facts of human life and activity which were not part of God's original plan for mankind: were now experienced by mankind. The serpent's hostility to man, woman's pain at child-birth, man's unending toil for his daily bread are all consequences of the fall of mankind.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Why did man fall?

Activity 1

Search and copy out the exact reasons why man failed from the former glory God bestowed on him

3.1.3 The Promise of salvation

Despite the tragic fall of man, with its consequences of pain and punishment, the door of hope was not closed. A gleam of hope came with the promise of salvation in man's struggle with the devil; God declares that man will have a final victory. This promise is

called the proto-evangelium” because it is the far-off, announcement of the salvation that is to come.

3.1.4 Purpose for the Choice of Israel

Some of the purpose for the choice of Israel include:

- a. God promised that he would not turn back from His purpose and would not fail His people.
- b. God promised that he would be constant in His goodness and would keep righteousness. He would be true to himself.
- c. His people, on their part, must remain faithful.
All these are part of the promise god made to Abraham.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What was the purpose for God’s choice of Israel?

Activity 2

Search and copy out the purpose of God for the salvation of mankind

3.1.5 The Hebrew Patriarchs

The Hebrew Patriarchs are the twelve sons of Jacob who represent the twelve tribes of Israel. These twelve sons are: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Napthali, Gad, Asher, Issacher, Zebulon, Joseph and Benjamin (Gen 29:32-30:24; 35:18). Levi, though one of the twelve sons of Israel is usually omitted from biblical passages listing the tribes of Israel.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Who are the Hebrew Patriarchs?

Activity 3

Search and copy out the other patriarchs of Israel that was not mentioned in this section.

3.1.6 Life among the Hebrews

Some of the life among the Hebrews is:

- a. The Hebrew were nomadic people who live in tents and move frequently, having a time no home, but looking forward for the time they would be at home in the land of promise.
- b. The Hebrew were also wealthy people who had, in addition to their great flocks and herds, abundance of jewelry (rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, jewels set in silver and gold), and precious metals which they used as money.
- c. Their religious life seems to have been very simple. They erected altars, made their sacrifices and offerings of the tithe to God in genuine and simple prayers in time of special needs.
- d. The Hebrew's attitude towards God was one of genuine reverence and real faith.
- e. The Hebrew government was simple, being patriarchal in nature

4.0 Summary

In this module, we have seen that man was the chosen creature of God and he was created male and female in the moral likeness and image of God. We also saw that Man's superiority to the animals and his roles as leader is expressed in the names he gave to the animals and the woman God gave him. As the chosen creature, man was created to live for eternal happiness. But unfortunately, man's disobedience to God for eating the tree of knowledge of good and evil brought sufferings, pains and even death into the world. The friendship between God and man came to an end. The lost of the gift of integrity and the awakening of concupiscence are also noted as the most expensive manifestation of the disorder brought into the harmony of creation by man's revolt. However, God promise salvation or proto-evangelium for man and his descendants.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- (1) Why did man fall?
- (2) What was the purpose for God choice of Israel?
- (3) Who are the Hebrew Patriarchs?

6.0 References/Further Readings

- Soggein, J. Alberto, (1985), "A History of Israel; From the Earliest time to the Revolt of Bar Kochba" 135 SCM Press.
- Edwin Thiele, The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings, (1st ed; New York: Macmillan, 1951
- Thompson, Thomas L, (2000), "The Mythic Past: Biblical Archaeology And The Myth Of Paul de
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Hunt, I. (1962), *Understanding the Bible*. New York.

Schmidt, W.H. (199). *Old Testament introduction*, Trans. Matthew J.O. Connell, St. Paul Publications: Bandra, Bombay.

Daniel J. E. (1976), *Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, , chap.

Ernest Stock describes this phenomenon in "The Absence of Hierarchy: Notes on the Organization of the American Jewish Community, *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 21, no.2 (December, 1970).

Max Kadushin, (1938), *Organic Thinking: A Study in Rabbinic Thought* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary.

7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Why did man fall

- Man fell because he was driven and controlled by his own desire and lust for authority, influence, and power, just as God

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What was the purpose for God's choice of Israel?

- God has this inscriptible and overwhelming love for the people of Israel because of the covenant he had with their patriarchs or forefathers.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Who are the Hebrew Patriarchs?

- They include the 12 sons of Jacob. Their names are as follows: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin

8.0 Glossary

Palestine: Palestine, officially the State of Palestine, is a state located in Western Asia. It is officially governed by the Palestine Liberation Organization and claims the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, its claimed territory has been occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War of 1967

Unit 3 ISRAEL AS COVENANTAL PEOPLE CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 What is a covenant?
 - 3.2 Types of covenants
 - 3.3 The development of Hebrew covenants
 - 3.3.1 Covenant with Noah (or Covenant with Creation)
 - 3.3.1 The covenant with Abraham
 - 3.3.1.1 Abraham's positive response
 - 3.3.1.2 Abraham's migration
 - 3.3.4 The Mosaic covenant
 - 3.3.5 The covenant with David
 - 3.3.6 The covenant with Isaac
 - 3.3.7 The covenant with Jacob
 - 3.3.8 God's covenant with Israel
 - 3.3.9 Similarities and Dissimilarities between the covenants with Abraham and Israel
 - 3.3.9.1 Similarities
 - 3.3.9.2 Dissimilarities
 - 3.3.10 Significance of the covenants
 - 3.3.11 Joseph sold into slavery
 - 3.3.11.1 Joseph a man of destiny
 - 3.3.11.2 Dreams of plenty and famine
 - 3.3.11.3 Joseph and his brothers in Egypt
 - 3.3.11.4 Joseph's character and leadership qualities
 - 3.3.11.5 The Lessons of Joseph's leadership style
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the last unit, we learnt the origin, meaning and the usage of the name Israel. In the subsection on the origin of the name Israel, we have presented two traditions concerning the etymology of Israel. In this unit, our focus will be on the history of Israel as covenantal people.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the development of Hebrew covenants in Old Testament

- Define the term covenant
- Trace the historical development of Old Testament Covenant.
- Explain the differences between a covenant and a treaty
- Examine the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Israel.
- Show how the covenants were fulfilled by God.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 What is a Covenant?

A covenant is an agreement between two parties or a bond that binds two or more persons/parties together. It is a solemn promise made binding by an oath which may be either a verbal formula or a symbolic action (Mendenhall, 1982:714). A covenant in this sense is different from Suzerainty treaty which spelled out the terms of relationship between the Hittite state and the vassals (lesser group of peoples). It is an agreement between parties of unequal ranks—a strong king and a weak one.

Types of Covenants

There are two main types of covenants in the Old Testament.

- a. An agreement between equals called a parity agreement.
- b. The second, between a Lord and his vassal, is known as a suzerainty or vassal treaty

Typically, the parties of the former type of covenant refer to each other as "brothers", while parties to the second call themselves "Lord" and "Son".

Korosec identified six basic elements in the structure of Late Bronze Age Hittite treaties, but it should be noted that not every treaty contained all of these elements (Mendenhall, 1992: 1180). These elements are as follows:

- (a) Title / Preamble: This identified the giver of the treaty, his titles and the nature of the relationship between that parties (whether parity or suzerainty).
- b) Historical Prologue: The history of the relationship between the two powers was recalled in order to make the vassal feel obligated to the suzerain because of the benefits he had received in the past.
- c) Stipulations: Typically these were casuistic in form, i.e. "If you do such and such a thing, then you act in disregard to your oath
- e) The list of witnesses: The deities of both the suzerain and vassal are called upon to witnesses and enforce the treaty.
- f) Blessings and Curses: Obedience to the terms of the covenant brought corresponding blessings and disobedience and curses similar to those described in Deuteronomy 28. Later Iron Age covenants significantly contained only curses.
- g) Oath & Solemn Ceremony: The most common method of ratifying a treaty involved the cutting up of an animal. The unspoken implication was that if the covenant was

broken, then the offender would become like the animal. It is thought that from this ceremony is derived the common Hebrew idiom *karat berît* - "to cut a covenant" (Gen. 15:18; Jer. 34:18) (Hillers, 1969:41). Whatever the original derivation of the term it seems to have meant simply "to make a covenant" (Nicholson, 1986: 102).

h) Note of Sanctions: If the treaty were to be broken the suzerain could then act as the agent of the deities and attack the vassal kingdom.

Tutor-Marked Assignment 1

Defined the term covenant and show how it is different from a treaty.

Activity 1

Search and copy out the other ingredients that are supposed to be party of a covenant that were not mentioned in this section and explain them?

3.3 The Development of Hebrew Covenants

Archaeology has provided us with examples of covenants making dating from around 750 BC as far back as the third millennium. The idea of the development of this covenant in Old Testament is implicit in the promises made to many patriarchs of Israelites. It began with Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 and it is reflected in God's merciful promise to Cain (Gen. 4:15) in marking him so that no one would slay him. Properly the covenant idea does not appear before God's promises to Noah.

3.3.1 Covenant with Noah or Covenant with Creation

The first reference to covenant in Scripture is found in Gen. 6:18. However, the way in which it is used here when God speaks of "establishing his covenant" with Noah indicates that this was merely the continuation of a relationship that was already in existence (cf. Gen. 17:7, 19, 21; Exod. 6:4; Lev. 26:9; Deut. 8:18; 2 Kings 23:3; Jer. 34:18). The terms of this pre-existing relationship are not stated explicitly, but W. J. Dumbrell (1984) has argued that it is possible to deduce them from the earlier chapters of Genesis and the contents of the description of its renewal in Genesis 9.

- a. Divine image and kingship. Man was created in the image of God and established as ruler (under God) of all of creation (Gen. 1:26-28; cf. 9:1, 7).
- b. Rest. The setting aside of the seventh day (2:2-3) is an important theme in Scripture (Deut. 3:20; Josh. 11:23; 14:15; Heb. 4:11).
- c. Covenant Demand. The divine command given in Gen. 2:15-18 was intended to prevent man from moving beyond his assigned sphere of control and intruding on an area rightly reserved for Deity alone. Adam's failure to do so and its consequences are described in chapter 3.

3.3.2 The Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15 & 17)

The Lord made covenants with Abraham twice (Gen. 15 & 17), but both are developments of the initial promises made in Genesis 12:2-7. The promises form three distinct strands:

- a. Descendants (12:2; 15:5; 17:4-5; 22:17);
- b. Land (12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:18)
- c. Blessing to the nations (12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). Elements a) and b) can be seen expressed in the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 1:8, 11; 4:37 -38; Josh. 1:2-6; Psalm 105:8-11; Jer. 3:18).

3.3.2.1 Abraham's positive Response and migration

Abraham responds positively to God's command and call through obedience, submission and worship (Gen 12:4-5 12:7-9, 17:3-17). He obeyed God and left for where he was commanded to go (Gen 12:4-5). He departed into the unknown, with no security apart from God's words to follow the call he heard. He submitted totally and did not argue with Him. He arrived in Canaan and built an altar to worship God. Abraham began his journey from the city of Ur of the Chaldees, and moved northward to Haran, the valley in Mesopotamia. He journeyed southward and entered Canaan around 18050 BC, where he was going and came to the plan of Moreb, where he felt impelled to pitch his tents.

It was here Abraham built an altar to God who appeared to him and promised that he would give the land of Shechem to him. But the Canaanites were in the land and for this reason Abraham moved to Bethel.

Tutor-Marked Assignment 2

Why did God choose Abraham as the founder and father of the Hebrew race?

Activity 2

Search and copy out the brief history of Abraham

3.3.3 The Mosaic Covenant

After four generations of Abraham's descendants had suffered slavery in Egypt it was time for the promise made in Genesis 15:16 to be fulfilled (Exod. 2:24). Revealing Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Yahweh sent Moses to lead His people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land (3:7-14; 6:2-5). At Sinai the terms of the covenant are revealed in a form that follows very closely the contemporary Hittite suzerainty treaties.

3.3.4 The Covenant with David

Running side by side with the treaty of Israel in the Deuteronomic history is the promise to David. Here we are impressed again with God's patterns of taking up his promises and repeating them, each time in a larger and more comprehensive framework. God not only remembers his promises, but each time he speaks of them he throws in additional blessings for good measures. The promise to David, spoken through the prophet Nathan, is found in 2 Sam. 7:12-17. The word covenant does not appear there, though the idea is present. In Psalms 89:3-4, 27-28, God's covenant with David is described in much the same terms as his covenant with Abraham. Again its immutable character based on God's initiative is evident-the promise element is to the heir (Ps. 89:3-4; 2 Sam. 7:13). Here, however, a new element is added: to say that he will take David's throne for himself and make it his own to ensure its permanence (2 Sam. 7:16).

3.3.5 Covenant with Isaac

The terms of the covenant are made clear in Genesis 17 that the promises made to Abraham would be fulfilled through the line of Isaac and not Ishmael (17:18-21). Isaac received his own divine visitations (26:2-5; 26:24). On both occasions it is made clear that he is the recipient of the promise because of the faith of his father. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when Isaac the promised child, was born by Sarah his wife who had been barren (Gen 17:21; 21:2-4). Isaac grew into boyhood and was naturally the idol of his parent. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac

3.3.6 God's covenant with Jacob (Gen 24-36)

In a similar way Jacob was assured that even though he received his father's blessing by deceit (27:1-29) he would receive the promises made to Abraham by divine choice (28:13-15; 35:9-12). Following the massacre carried out by his sons at Shechem, Jacob carried out what appears to be a rededication of himself and his household to Yahweh. By putting away all the foreign gods (cf. 31:30-35) and their earrings (cf. Exod. 33:6) they put their trust in Yahweh alone. In response to this act of faith they were protected from reprisal from the Canaanites (35:1-5). His sons became the heads of the twelve tribes of the nation, and thus are kept continuously before the Hebrew people in their history. Jacob (supplanter), in a memorable experience during the night on the river Jabbok, as he moved back to his old homeland, became Israel (prince of God). This change in name is significant.

3.3.7 The Covenant with Israel

At Mount Sinai, God made covenant with Israel which gave them moral, civil, and religious laws to live by. Then were building and furnish a place of worship for Him. He also gave them regarding the priests and worship. The implications of this covenant were for Israel: (a) To be totally obedient to God (b) To be God's treasured people (c) To be a Holy nation (d) To recognized God's saving deeds (e) To worship and reverence God (f) To honor the name of God (g) To love/relate properly with others (h) To respect human life (i) To respect the property of others and (g) To maintain the standard of faith.

The covenant was to be the frame work of religious education of God's people dominated by personality of the prophets, wise men and poor of Yahweh

3.3.8 Similarities and Dissimilarities between the covenant with Abraham and Israel

3.3.8.1 Similarities

I will take you through some of the similarities. They are:

Both covenants followed the pattern of Suzerainty treaties of the Ancient Near East. For example, they both have preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, and blessings and cursing, oath, God's revealing of Himself by a personal name, demands of obedience for their blessings, sealing of the covenant with blood and accepting of the terms for the covenant or readiness to obey.

3.3.8.2 Dissimilarities

I will take you through some of the similarities. They are as follows:

1. The covenant of God with Abraham was an everlasting one, while God's covenant with Israel was to be renewed by each new generation
2. God's covenant with Abraham announces what God's will do at the end of history, while the covenant of God with Israel announces what God response during history to each generation of Israel.

These who keep the laws will be blessed and those who disobeyed will be disciplined.

3.3.8.3 Significance of the Covenants

Lying behind the covenant is the sovereign will of the gracious God: I will be God, and you shall be my people (Lev. 26:12). His will now directs a particular course of events. The importance of this can hardly be overestimated. Now the life of Israel (and thus of each person in Israel) has taken on a unique meaning. History itself receives direction and significance. This is because God has entered into history and has tied himself to particular events, which he promises will have everlasting consequences. The end is only dimly envisioned, but this is because God sets the terms and fixes the goals.

3.3.9 Joseph, a man of Destiny (Gen. 37-50)

There is no admirable or attractive man in all of the Old Testament than Joseph. He possessed so many desirable qualities that one is inspired by even the most casual study of his life. Joseph was the first born of Jacob and Rachel, Benjamin being the last son. He was the most favorite son of his father. His father's indulgent favoritism towards him made his senior brothers to be jealous and envy. His brothers had to wear the ordinary short tunic of men who must work for their living, while Joseph wore a long tunic, reaching to the feet and fitted with long sleeves, very elegant, double but not adopted for practical purpose

3.3.9.1 Joseph Sold into Slavery

The ten older brothers of Joseph who were shepherds out of anger and envy felt that the situation had become unbearable and so they plan of getting rid of him. But by the counsel of Reuben, they were prevailed upon not to shed innocent blood and so they then decided to sell Joseph into slavery in the temporary absence of Reuben to some Midianites merchants who transported him to Egypt, while his brothers went home to their father with a trumped-up story of Joseph's death and circumstantial evidence to support it. They took Joseph's coat, rent it, dipped it in the blood of a kid and then took it to Jacob, their father with the declaration that they had found it by accident. Their father would naturally assume that his son, Joseph had been slain by wild beasts.

3.3.9.3 The Dreams of plenty and Famine

Joseph remained in prison for two more years, and Pharaoh himself had two dreams which none of his wise men could interpret. The butler remembered Joseph who had interpreted his dream and favoured him. At his suggestion, Joseph was sent for and upon hearing the dreams, he announced their meanings as coming from God. He advised Pharaoh to appoint a food commissioner to store up supplies in the years of plenty against the years of famine which were to follow.

3.3.9.4 Joseph and his brothers in Egypt

When the brothers of Joseph came into Egypt, they did not recognize him. They thought that the hard life of a slave had long since killed him. But he recognized them and tested them by rough treatment. He accused them of being spies, and agreed to sell them corn only on the condition that their brother, Simeon should be kept as a hostage until they bring the younger brother, Benjamin, to take his place. Reluctantly, they agreed to these terms. And after their departure, they were surprised to find that the money each of them had was placed in his sack of corn. Upon their return, they told their aged father Jacob of their experiences but he vowed that Benjamin should never leave him. But as the famine continued, Judah persuaded him to let Benjamin go with him, vowing that he would assume full responsibility for him. When Joseph came at noon and saw Benjamin, he was so overcome with emotion that he retired for a while to weep alone.

Joseph revealed himself to his brothers when he tricked them for stolen his money. But when they denied the charge and Benjamin's sack was found with the money, Joseph declared that Benjamin must remain in Egypt. The intercessory plea of Judah, explaining the grief this loss would bring their aged father, and offering himself for his younger brother's release, made Joseph to open the secret to them.

3.3.10 Joseph's Character and Leadership Qualities

Some of leadership characters of Joseph include: generosity, wisdom, discernment, self-reliance, and trust in God, competence, trustworthiness, a forgiving spirit, usefulness, clean living, perseverance, and the ability to see things in perspective of God's guidance, among others.

3.3.11 The Lessons of Joseph's Leadership Style

We can learn many lessons from the style of Joseph's leadership as leaders of tomorrow. These lessons are as follows: (a) That God use suffering to purge Joseph's life and encouraged him to be humble, God can also use sufferings sometimes to produce godly character in our lives. (b) That sufferings and injustice can easily make us better and resentful, lent we must trust that God is in control of all that happen to us. (c) Joseph learns to work hard, even as a slave and prisoner. His life illustrates the truth of Jesus' promise that if we are faithful over little things entrusted into our care; God will set us over much.

Tutor-Marked Assignment 3

List ten leadership character and qualities of Joseph that made him a successful leader in Egypt?

Activity 3

Do you agree that Joseph was called to preserve lives? If yes discuss. If no, argues against it with 5 valid points

4.0 Summary

We have learnt how God gave his assurance to covenanted people of Israel to be always present with them. God in His grace communicated the purpose and promise to keep the covenant, and the children of that covenant came to wear in the flesh a distinctive mark. However, the sign of the covenant made after the flood had been the rainbow, a sign which remained, irrespective of what man might do. In the same way, the testing of Abraham's faith is a splendid example of trustful obedience

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- (1) Defined the term covenant and show how it is different from a treaty.
- (2) Why did God choose Abraham as the founder and father of the Hebrew race?
- (3) List ten leadership character and qualities of Joseph that made him a successful leader in Egypt?

6.0 References/Further Readings

J. Elazar, "Land space and Civil Society in America, "in Land Settlement Policy, Raleigh, N.C.: North Carolina State University. <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/History/Persians.htm/Exile.html>

Mayani, Zacharie "Les Hyksos et le Monde de la Bible" Redford. Donald (1992) "Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Time" (Princeton University Press).

7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Defined the term covenant and show how it is different from a treaty.

- A covenant is a sacred mutual understanding between two people that is sometimes consummated and done with blood, the breaking of which may affect the defaulted party. The difference between a covenant and treaty is on the basis of its use of blood and also presidency of a deity over the terms of the covenant.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Why did God choose Abraham as the founder and father of the Hebrew race?

- The scripture said that Abraham trusted, had faith and obeyed God. I believe this is why God chose him as the father of the Israelites.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

List ten leadership character and qualities of Joseph that made him a successful leader in Joseph was:

- Courageous
- Persistent
- Disciplined
- Honest

8.0 Glossary

Suzerain: Suzerainty is the rights and obligations of a person, state or other polity who controls the foreign policy and relations of a tributary state, while allowing the tributary state to have internal autonomy

Deuteronomical Books: The deuterocanonical books are books and passages considered by the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, and the Assyrian Church of the East to be canonical books of the Old Testament, but which Protestant denominations regard as apocrypha

MODULE 2**UNIT 1 PRE-HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES****CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The formative periods of Israelites history
 - 3.1.1 The call of Abraham and migration
 - 3.1.2 The Birth of Isaac
 - 3.1.3 The Career of Jacob
 - 3.1.4 The Career of Joseph
 - 3.1.5 The chronological dates of events in the formative period of Israelites history
 - 3.1.6 The characteristics of Arameans nomads
 - 3.1.7 The Sedimentary Palestinian
 - 3.2 Current Approaches to the study of Pre- History of Israelites
 - 3.2.1 Conservative Approach
 - 3.2.2 Archeological Approach
 - 3.2.3 Tradio-Histirical Approach
 - 3.2.4 Patriarchical Narrative as History
 - 3.2.5 Information's from Tel-el-Amarna
 - 3.2.6 Archeological Evidence in Support of the Patriarchs as Historical Figures
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the first module, you learned about the people of Israel. You were presented with the origin of Israel, the choice of Israel by God and God's covenants with the Israelites. In this module, which is made up of three units, you will treat the history of Israel from the call of Abraham to the institution of monarchy to further enhance your knowledge of the history of the people of Israel. This history which covers the period of ancient Israel beginning with Abraham can be viewed from biblical perspectives, giving scant attention to post-biblical period. This is because it is difficult to understand the history of Israel within the modern archaeological contexts of the Ancient near Eastern religion.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Narrate the events that took place in the formative periods of Israelites history

- Give current approaches to the study of Israelites history.
- Discuss the history of Hebrew patriarchs as founders of the Hebrew race.

2.0 Main Body

3.1 The Formative Periods of Israelites History

The formative period explores the history of the beginning of Hebrew people as a nation which covers the period of four hundred years from around 1500 BC. The Book of Genesis traces the formative period (sometimes called pre-history) of Israel, to four patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, also known as Israel and Joseph.

3.1.1 The Call of Abraham and his positive Response

The call of Abraham is predicated on the following promises of God. (1) A great nation fulfilled in the Hebrew people (2) A great name, fulfilled in the Hebrews, Christians and Mohammadans as all call him religious father (3) A land, fulfilled in the possession of Canaan by the Hebrew, and (4) A blessing to all nations. Abraham responded positively to God's covenant and went as God commanded him (Gen. 12:14)

3.1.2 The Birth of Isaac

Abraham's son, Isaac, was born in Canaan, and never left it. He was weaned and the event was celebrated. But when Ishmael his half brother was borne by Hagar, the slave woman, Sarah demanded her unconditional expulsion with the child. They were banished to dwell in the desert where Ishmael grew up later becoming renowned in the use of the bow. He later married an Egyptian and bore twelve sons and one daughter. These sons of Ishmael became the ancestors of the Arabs. Isaac grew into boyhood and was naturally the idol of his parents. The greatest trial and test of Abraham's faith was when God commanded him to take this boy, his only son and offer in sacrifice.

3.1.3 The Career of Jacob

Jacob (supplanter) was notoriously tricky and unscrupulous, with great ambitions for himself. He could without hesitation for himself stoop to deceive his own brother and even his blind old father. But God can take a man like Jacob with worthy ambition but whom admittedly is inclined to deception in his actions, and change his character so as to use him for a great purpose

Self-assessment exercise 1

Describe in brief the formative periods of Israelites history.

Activity 1

Search and copy out the processes that is involved in the call of god, using any biblical figure as an example.

3.1.4 The Career of Joseph

Joseph was attractive man who possessed so many admirable qualities such as generosity, high ideas, unselfishness, clean living, a forgiving spirit that inspires one, even the most causal study of his life. He was the first-born son of Jacob and Rachel, Benjamin being the last. Joseph was the most favourite son of his father Jacob. He had

two remarkable dreams, the meaning of which was unmistakable and the thoughtlessly related these to his elder brothers. This together with the undisguised favouritism their father had already exhibited toward him, aroused the anger and jealousy of his brothers who planned to slay him at initial stage but were dissuaded by Reuben not to shed blood of all innocent soul. Later in the temporary absence of Reuben, they decided to sell him as a slave to the mid- mite merchants on their way to Egypt. They took him to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, an officer of the pharaoh, where Joseph behaved wisely and soon was in high favour with his masters that he was placed in the high position of the household. Joseph's great temptation came when Potiphar's wife became infatuated with him and used every means to induce him to commit adultery with her: Joseph's refusal to commit, and Joseph had no chance to defend him against the accusation, he was placed in prison. There in prison, God was with Joseph and he was rose to a place of authority over all the other prisoners. He remained in prison for two years.

3.1.5 The Chronological Dates of Events in Formative Periods of Israelites History

The chronological dates include:

- a. The birth of Abraham in Mesopotamia in 1976 BCE
- b. The birth of Ishmael, Abraham's first son at the age of 87, in 1890 BCE
- c. The birth of Isaac in 1876 BCE and the birth of Jacob in 1816 BCE.

3.1.6 Characteristics of Nomadic Arameans

Some of the characteristics include:

- a. The nomadic Arameans have a social mentality which places much emphasis on the value of "person" as compared to "things" this mentality.
- b. They had no property that could be called their own.
- c. Their wealth that which was made up of flocks (cattle), was the common properties of the community just as he himself belongs to the tribe

3.1.7 The Sedentary Palestinians

Unlike the nomadic Arameans, the sedentary Palestinians, that is, the Ammonites practiced Agriculture and trade as their main occupation. From archaeological record and history, they are known to have developed the system of civil law which was generally not very different from that found elsewhere in western Asia. Like their method of government or political system, it is also reliably learnt that their religious system, was more developed and complicated than that of the nomads. They had a sanctuary with complex system of rituals while gods of fertility feature prominently among deities worshipped.

3.2 Current Approaches to the Study of Israelites History

The following methodological approaches may be highlighted.

3.2.1 The Conservative Approach

This approach is also called the orthodox or the traditional approach and is held among the conservatives. These groups of scholars hold the view that the bible is of supernatural origin and its autograph is completely devoid of error. This means that every word of the Bible was divinely inspired or dictated. A section of this conservation groups however holds that though the bible is divinely inspired, yet its evidence would be illustrated, supported, and if need be, its apparent contradictions harmonized with materials drawn from extra biblical texts and archaeological data. Those who held this view are called the liberal. The first groups of conservative unlike the later believe accurate historical dates could be worked out from the biblical account even of the creative narrative assumptions

3.2.2 Archeological Approach

This approach to Israelite history aims at substantiating the biblical data with appeals to evidences which is external to the biblical text but supportive of it. As a tool in the Old Testament story, the archaeological approach can be described as comparatively new and reactionary method.

3.2.3 Traditio-Historical Approach

The third approach to Israelite history can be traced to Herman Gunkel its founding father. It became popular and generally acceptable through the work of Albrecth Von Rad, Martin North and Douglas Knight. This approach which is still very popular among Old Testament scholars rests on the following assumptions. That:

- (1). The Old Testament tradition took literary shape only after centuries of oral tradition (transmission).
- (2) The writers of the document were therefore more like redactors or editors rather than authors.
- (3) The Old Testament traditions like other secular literatures could be divided into genres, saga, prose, poetry.
- (4) The determining factor of nature of each tradition is therefore its individual unit or genres
- (5) The patriarchal tradition belongs primarily to the unit or saga.
- (6) The individual sagas had their particular function in the setting of life they were used to. And the function of many of these were etiological a story told about the past to legitimate a current practice).

Apart from some minor differences in method, there appears to be a consensus among scholars on this school of thought for the following points:

- (a) That Israel as a people or united tribal confederacy came into existence in the land of Canaan.
- (b) The tribal unit of confederation resulted from a demand of the internal revolt within Canaan against

the Canaanite city states; economic and political structures. The oppressive measures of the overlords made the peasants join forces with the pastoralists to seek liberation and freedom.

(c) The new society that emerged called Israel was different in the context of its tribal affiliation and covenant relationships.

(d) The antiquarian thesis which sought Israelite origin in nomadic culture and in the concept of a general conquest from outside should or must be thrown overboard. In the light of the above, the

institution of the monarchy was therefore a return to pre-revolutionary affairs and this represent a pagan life and faith of liberated Israel. Thus, the four approaches represent the current tools used by scholar in

the field of Old Testament studies, most scholars who work on the different period of early Israelite history, proper to use different approaches than stick to one approach.

3.2.4 Patriarchal Narrative as History

The chronological reconstruction of the history of Israel contained in the patriarchal narrative is as difficult as proving the historicity of the personages (individuals) involved in the stories. Literary criticism has revealed the discrepancies, duplications and at times contradictions contained in the narratives which make the work of the historian difficult, but extra biblical evidence from archaeology favours the acceptance of the narrative history.

Tutor-Marked Assignment 2

List and discuss five approaches to the study of Israelites history.

Activity 2

Criticize the above enlisted approaches. To be submitted in 30 minutes.

3.2.5 Information from Tel-el-Amarna

Among other things, we are told is that: (1) toward the end of the 18th dynasty, there was famine in Palestine and many Semites migrated into Egypt. This account corroborated the story of Jacob and his sons when there was famine in Palestine and they sought shelter in Egypt. (2) Officers in Egypt with Semitic names are mentioned especially that of a governor in a corn growing district, a position similar to that held by Joseph in Genesis. (3) Inscription on a tombstone gives a pictorial representation of Egyptian officials receiving Asiatic refugees seeking permission to enter Egypt in time of famine. From the above it is clear that the 18th dynasty witnessed the elevation of Semitic officials to high position in Egypt as well as mass migration of some Canaanites into Egypt because of famine.

3.2.6 Archaeological Evidence in Support of the Patriarchs as Historical figures

The following can be said with confidence about the patriarchs that:

- (a) The patriarchal narrative recorded in chapter 12-50 of Genesis fit the period 17-12 century BC.
- (b) The incident recorded in Gen. 15:1-4 regarding Abraham's fear that the slave Eliazer might become his heir reflect the custom of slave adoption well explained in the NUXTEXT.
- (c) A childless couple could therefore adopt a slave who would inherit after them.
- (d) The surrender of the slave girl Haggai to Abraham by Sarai on account of her childlessness is supported in the NUXTEXT as the custom of the Semites around the great rivers Tigris and Euphrates.
- (e) In the NUXTEXT a wife of childless is obliged to provide her husband with a substitute. (b) The fruit of such union is recognized by law. This may be the reason why Abraham was willing to send Haggai away (Gen. 21:10). (f) Nuzian customs also validates Jacob/Laban story as facts of history.
- (g) The adoption of Jacob into Laban's household and the conditions laid on him (Gen. 13:50), and Rachel and Leah indignation against their father Laban (Gen. 31:15) and stealing of his own god was intended to entitle them to their father's inheritance.

Tutor-Marked Assignment 3

Give the information from Te-el-Amarna as archeological evidence in support of patriarch's history?

Activity 3

Search and copy out any other evidence archaeological evidence that as not mentioned above you might have come across in your personal studies?

4.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learned about the pre-history of Israelites, especially how before 1500 BC, the people were into slavery in Egypt and were ruled by a foreign dynasty called the Hyksos. This dynasty was later driven out by Amos I, the first king of the eighteenth dynasty that reigned between 1550-1525 BCE. He founded the 18th Egyptian dynasty which ushered in a new age for Egypt known as the "New Kingdom". The Egyptian Empire was maintained in the area of what was to emerge as Israel up to the reign of Rameses VI in about 1150 BCE.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- (1) Describe in brief the formative periods of Israelites history.
- (2) List and discuss five approaches to the study of Israelites history.

(3) Give the information from Te-el-Amarna as archaeological evidence in support of patriarch's history.

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

The formative periods of Israelites History.

- The formative period of the Israelites started from the call of Abram, through the series of covenants god had with Abraham, the birth of Isaac and the career of Jacob

Self-assessment exercise 2

Approaches to the Study of Israelites History

- Conservative approach
- Patriarchal approach
- Tradition-historical approach

Self-assessment exercise 3

The information from Te-el-Amarna as archeological evidence in support of patriarch's history.

- The patriarchal narrative recorded in chapter 12-50 of Genesis fit the period 17-12 century BC.
- The incident recorded in Gen. 15:1-4 regarding Abraham's fear that the slave Eliazer might become his heir reflect the custom of slave adoption well explained in the NUXTEXT.
- A childless couple could therefore adopt a slave who would inherit after them etc.

8.0 Glossary

Welhausean Documentary Hypothesis: The documentary hypothesis is one of the models used by biblical scholars to explain the origins and composition of the Torah. A version of the documentary hypothesis, frequently identified with the German scholar Julius Wellhausen, was almost universally accepted for most of the 20th century.

Nomadic Arameans: The ancient Arameans have traditionally been viewed as “camel nomads”¹ who “spread out from the fringes of the Syro-Arabian desert,” whence a segment of “the Aramean tribes invaded northern Mesopotamia, and founded there a series of little states

UNIT 2 ISRAELITES SALVATION HISTORY**CONTENT**

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- 2.0 learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 The Egyptian experience
 - 3.1.2 Moses Career
 - 3.1.2.1 Preparation for Moses career
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 - 3.2.3 The conquest of Canaan
 - 3.2.4 Wandering in the Desert
 - 3.2.5 The covenant of Mount Sinai
 - 3.2.6 The Israelites Experiences in Canaan
 - 3.2.7 The Hittite Treaty
 - 3.2.8 The Similarities between Hittites treaty and Israelites Covenant
 - 3.2.9 Israelites Tribal Associations.
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the first unit of this module, you learned about the history of Israel, from the call of Abraham to the institution of the monarchy. In this unit, we will examine Israelites salvation history which covers several years starting with Joseph's death in Egypt to about 1400 BC. The major events to be considered in these periods of Israelites salvation history are: The status of the Hebrews in Egypt after the death of Joseph, the birth and preparation of Moses, to deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the Exodus, including: The experience at Mt. Sinai, the forty years of wandering, the advance of Israelites towards Canaan through Moab Eastern Palestine, and the conquest of Canaan under Joshua.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this study, you should be able to:

- Narrate the story of Israelites deliverance from the land of Egypt
- Give account of Moses as a leader
- Explain the experiences of Israelites in Egyptian bondage
- Give account of Israelite's experiences in Canaan
- Discuss some of the major Judges in Israel
- Narrate the story of the conquest of Canaan by Joshua
- Give account of the institution of the monarchy in Israel.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 The Israelites Experiences in Egypt

After the death of Joseph, a new Egyptian dynasty emerged. This dynasty regarded the Hebrews as political danger in the land and so reduced them to the condition of slaves. The Israelites who were now quite numerous were oppressed under Serti I (1310-1290) and Rameses II (1290-124), and forced to do hard labor such as painting of frescoes Rekhmre's tomb (15th century), and making of bricks. To break their spirits and at the same time, utilize their labour force (Ex 1:8ff), the people were subjugated to more hard works. This measure in the end was not regarded as adequate measure and so the Pharaoh ordered that all male children born to the Israelites should be put to death. It was during this time of suffering and death that God decided to send deliverers to the people of Israel who will take them out of the land of Egypt to the promise land of Canaan. God then chose Moses leader to accomplish this noble task. The tradition that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt is confirmed by the Old Testament, in the Exodus events, which constitute the central pivot or element in the later religion of Israel (cf. Deut. 6:31-35; Deut. 26:5-9).

3.1.2 The Career of Moses

The career of Moses include:

- a. He learnt how to shoot and throw arrows (archery) and other physical exercises.
- b. Moses was further recruited into the army and supervised building projects, among others.
- c. From the point of view of his human format ion, both his careful upbringing, familiarity with the Egyptian liturgy and temples, the contact with Jethro, his father- in-law and priest of Mediante sanctuary were all providential preparations for his role as a liberator, legislator and religious leader of the Israelites.

3.1.2.1 Preparation for Moses Career

The career of Moses falls into three periods of forty years of training and preparation in Egypt. The second period was spent in the land of Midian, and was a time of

unconscious preparation. The third was the period of actual accomplishment of his task. The story of his preservation as a child from harm is not without parallels in the traditions of other people than the Hebrews. That, a woman, should seek to save her child from death was natural. That, a woman should put him in the basket of papyrus reeds and placed him by the bank of river Nile where women came to bathe, shows the resourcefulness of a mother's love. That, an Egyptian princess should show pity for a helpless infant, and arrange for his nurture needs is not a romantic story telling. And if it to be objected that permission would never have been given by Pharaoh for the nurture of a Hebrew child within his own household in violation of his own decree, the rejoinder may be made that there was no occasion to regard one child as a political danger. So, Moses with his own mother as a nurse was brought up in the royal household and in due course instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt.

3.1.2.2 Moses call

Moses call was a dramatic one. He met with God at the burning bush and God sent him back to Egypt to ask Pharaoh to allow his people to leave for where he wanted them to be. Moses complained that he was not an eloquent speaker. Aaron was then assigned to help him. Moses discharged his duties according to God's will (Ex 23). His previous royal training helped him to accomplish his task.

3.1.2.3 Moses patriotism

Moses patriotism is clearly manifested in his refusal to be called son of Pharaoh's daughter and shared in the sufferings of his people thus showing them patriotism when he killed the Egyptian who was beating his kin's man. He taught his fellow Jews to remain faithful always in the saving power of God. In all circumstances, Moses kept God's commandments and showed love to his fellow Jews by constantly interceding to God for them as a faithful leader.

3.1.2.4 Moses personal character and leadership qualities

Moses had many desirable personal and leadership qualities which made him a successful and accomplished leader in Israel. These personal and leadership qualities include: (a) Obedient (Ex 5:1-5, 7:6; 14:16, 21,27). (b) Firm and flexibility (Ex. 32:9-13). (c) Confidence in God's strength (Ex 14:13-14). (d) Trustworthy leader (Ex 14:31). (e) Patient (Ex 14:1-4). (f) Communicated with God formally (Ex 5:22-23). These aforementioned personal and leadership qualities made Moses a successful leader. Jochebed taught him (Moses), God's way as a child (Ex 6:20). For example, He murder of the Egyptian taught him that he could not liberate his people by himself. He learned humility and survival skills as an exile.

3.1.2.5 Moses as a Successful Leader

Moses accepted God's call with reluctance and his forty years in the desert had destroyed all the ambitions and pride in him. He was not afraid to express his frustration

and honest feelings to God (Ex 5:22-23). He was obedient to God (Ex 7:6). He trusted God and did not complain of the people as discouraging him (Ex 14:10-14). He was teachable. And so did not feel too big to take godly instruction from those beneath him (Ex 18). He was willing to even die for the sins of the people (Ex 32:32). He was more concerned about God's reputation than his own (Ex 32:11-13; Num 14:13-16). He prayed for his people and interceded for them (Ex 21:11-13; Num 14:19). He stood for the truth and refused to compromise in spite of pressure and popular opinion (Num 14). Saving the people was more important for Moses than his personal reward or ambition (Num 14:12). He instituted for Jewish history, a new form of leadership and was a servant of God, not a strong man who ruled by military power or accumulated wealth.

3.1.2.6 The Problem of Moses with Egyptian Authority

Despite all these personal and leadership qualities, Moses still consider his task of delivering the Hebrew people from the bondage as not an easy one. He had two great problems to face. The first problem was how to make the impossible Pharaoh to allow the Israelites go. The second problem was how to persuade the people themselves that they could and must leave Egypt (Ex 3:19; 5:1-13). Moses had the assurance of God's help and he soon had the need of it. The people were fearful and have lost consciousness of their mission as a race (Ex 14:10; Num 13:31-14:4). For long, they had been slaves, and their confidence in themselves had been destroyed by the years of servitude. They were completely defeated and demoralized and Moses was to build up their morale, persuade them that they could and must leave Egypt. With strong courage, Moses appeared before the Pharaoh to get his consent for their people to leave Egypt.

3.2.1 The Ten plagues

The order of ten plagues is as follows (1) water turned to blood, (2) Frogs, (3) Lice, (4) Flies, (5) Murrain, (6) Boils, (7) Hail, (8) Locusts, (9) Darkness, (10) Death of the first-born of animals and human beings.

3.2.2 The Exodus from Egypt

The departure from Egypt is one of the fundamentals of Israel's faith, along with the creation and election of Abraham. The exodus account is very central in the both political and religious history of the people of Israel. It portrays them to have lived or sojourned in the land of Egypt, where God, out of his own saving grace took them out of the land of slavery to the promised land of Canaan. The exact date when the Exodus from Egypt took place is still disputed. The arguments for dating the Exodus even in the 15th century B.C are being more and more discounted, while those indicating the 13th century B.C. are gaining found and adherent

Self-assessment exercise 1

Give chronological account of the Exodus of Israelites from Egypt to the promise land of Canaan.

Activity 1

What were their experiences in Canaan?

3.2.3 Crossing of the Red Sea

As the host of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt, deliverance was to be completed, only after the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 7:41). The crossing of the “sea of Reeds” was to place the children of Israel finally beyond Egyptian domination. After their first confusion, the Egyptian pulled themselves together, and rushed in pursuit of the Hebrews, but just as their situation became critical, God intervened to save his people. When Pharaoh drew near: The people of Israel cried out to the Lord...Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord driven the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them, with all Pharaoh’s horses, chariots and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down upon the host of the Egyptians, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, dogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. Then the Lord said to Moses: “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariot and upon their horsemen”. So Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its wonted flow when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled into it, and the Lord routed the Egyptians in the midst of the sea...not so much as one of them remain.

3.2.4 The conquest of Canaan

At a point later, they crossed the Jordan River and began the conquest of Canaan itself. According to the book of Joshua, chapter 7:, the conquest was completed in the three stages:

- (a) Campaign in the centre (Joshua 7:9)
- (b) Campaign in the south (Joshua 10)
- (c) Campaign in the North (Joshua 11).

3.2.5 Wandering in the Desert

However, between the Exodus and the point of entry into Canaan, the Israelites were wandering in the Sinai Peninsula. It was at Sinai that God revealed himself to them and entered into union with them, establishing a covenant which spelled out the terms of their reciprocal relationship.

This Peninsula claimed to contain mountain which is regarded sacred and frequented by Pilgrims even before the advent of Christ. Some had suggested its location in North-Western Arabia called Median because it contains Volcanoes, since the Old Testament picture of Sinai is that of volcanoes. Some suggested the northern portion of Sinai

because some Old Testament passages suggest Kadesh to which Old Testament wandering names are associated. No one however seems to know neither the actual location of the route taken by the Israelites during the wandering nor even the location of the places named in the account of the wandering. In the biblical narrative, there are materials of early and late traditions and we are not in a position to say exactly what the details were but all the Old Testament says is that it was at this time and place that Israel received the law and covenant

3.2.6 The Covenant on Mount Sinai

Nevertheless, the general picture of Moses as the founder of Israel's religion is probably accurate because such leaders were required by the people at Sinai. Moses is portrayed as introducing the worship of Yahweh to the Israelites. The question then arises; how did Moses himself come about the worship of Yahweh? Yahweh had his first encounter with Moses during his first visit to the mount. This could imply that Yahweh was located at Sinai and worshipped there by other people before the time of Moses. These other people may have become the knits clan to whom Moses' father in-law belongs. Jethro may have been a worshiper of Yahweh. This possibility that Moses learnt the worship of Yahweh from the Kenites is called the Kenite Hypothesis. Though this is probable, it may not be true

3.2.7 The Israelites Experiences in Canaan

Israel as a people with organized twelve tribes from regional bases is found only in Canaan. Before that time, they were tribes with no systematic form of organization. What is found in Canaan as the people Israel is a mixture of different elements. Old Testament gives the impression that all the Israelites were the descendants of the sons of Jacob whose families numbered 70 souls in Egypt. This raises some doubt because apart from the difficulty of so few people producing so many descendants in Egypt, there are statements in Old Testament to the effect that Israelite migrants were such as the Midianites and the Edomites (Exodus 12:37-38). Israel also absorbed groups which he found already living in Canaan. This she did, either by conquest or absorption or through peaceful negotiation with the tribes on their own volition. A famous example of this is the treaty which Israel sought with the Gibeonites in Joshua 9:3). Also, the fact that several Canaanite cities are listed in Joshua as part of the tribe of Manasseh indicated that Gibeon was not the only Canaanite group absorbed into Israel. Shechem which later became the tribal capital of Israel belongs to this group.

3.2.8 The Hittite Treaty

It begins in a preamble in which the king identifies himself, followed by a prologue in which he speaks in the first person. He mentions what he has done for his vassals and the things for which the vassals ought to be grateful. The second section contains a statement of obligation to be imposed on the vassal who includes complete loyalty to the king and respect to other vassals. The payment of tributes and military service to be rendered by the vassals are also stipulated. Added to this is the submission of legal disputes with other vassals of the king. Provision is made for keeping a copy of the

treaty in the shrine of the vassal and for a public reading of it at regular intervals. Section five all the gods who are witness to the treaty. It closes with section six which contains all the blessings for obedience to the terms of the treaty and curse for disobedience.

3.2.8 The Similarities between Hittite treaty and Israelites Covenant

These similarities between Hittite treaty and Israelite covenant can be found in:

- (1) The preamble which is also parallel is Exodus 20:2 and Joshua 24:2
- (2) the prologue which is also found in Exodus 20:2 and Joshua 24:2.
- (3) The statement of obligation which in the Old Testament is contained in the proscription of relationship with other gods and the recognition of other Israelites as vassals of Yahweh as contained in the Ten Commandment
- (4) The provision for keeping of the ark which contains the tables of the Lord in the sanctuary. In Deut. 31:9-13, Moses commanded the reading of the law at regular intervals. Blessings and curses similar to the Hittite treaty are found in the covenant with Israel (cf Deut. 27 and 28).

3.2.9 Israelites Tribal Associations

For 200 years in the land of Canaan, Israel had a tribal association based entirely on the covenant. This tribal association traced its origin to the sons of Jacob born by his two wives. At an early period, Levi was given a special provision in Israel but it was ceased to be part of the twelve tribe's organizations. To make up for this loss, the tribe of Joseph was divided into two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. While Manasseh was divided in two parts by her occupation of western and eastern portions of the conquered land, the organization of the twelve tribes was centered on the shrine which in the early days was a tent containing the Ark of the Covenant. This tent was located at Shiloh, the centre of Palestine.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Give reasons why the Israelites demanded for a human king?

Activity 2

Search and copy out the exact list of covenants God made with the people of Israel on their way to Canaan.

4.0 Summary

We have seen that Israelites salvation history started with the patriarchs who were the founder of Hebrew people as a race. Through the help of Moses and Aaron, God's plan of salvation for the people of Israel was to be accomplished. This promise of God which was later ratified by the sign of circumcision of every male child came to be fulfilled in

the birth of Isaac. Thus, the people of Israel departed the land of Egypt between 1300-1200 BC and wandered in the wilderness of sin before crossing the red sea into the promise land of Canaan

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- (1). Give chronological account of the Exodus of Israelites from Egypt to the promise land of Canaan. What were their experiences in Canaan?
- (2) Give reasons why the Israelites demanded for a human king

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

Chronological account of the Exodus of Israelites from Egypt to the promise land of Canaan. What were their experiences in Canaan

- The children of Israel were faced with many life threatening situations on their way to the promise land. One of the challenges they encountered in Canaan was the fear of either fighting the giants that possessed the land or run the risk of loosing the land. Although it was not an easy venture, but god saw them through. Joshua and Caleb are the forces that facilitated and initiated the idea that reduced the abused threats of the original Canaanites and hence triggered the conquest of the land by the Israelites.

Self-assessment exercise 2

Reasons why the Israelites demanded for a human king

- The Israelites enabled for a king because they were tired of being ruled by judges and they wanted to be like other surrounding nations who had a king, responsible for taking them to war, not just a prophet or judge who would issue an order and seat at home.

8.0 Glossary

Payment of Tributes: A payment in money or other valuables made by one ruler or nation to another in acknowledgment of submission or as the price of protection or security.

Ark of the Covenant: The Ark of the Covenant, also known as the Ark of the Testimony or the Ark of God, is believed to be the most sacred relic of the Israelites and is described as a wooden chest, covered in pure gold, with an elaborately designed lid called the mercy seat. According to the Book of Exodus, the Ark contained the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. According to the New Testament Book of Hebrews, it also contained Aaron's rod and a pot of manna.

UNIT 3 THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM THE TIME OF JUDGES TO THE PERIOD OF CAPTIVITY

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 The Rise of Judges
 - 3.1.1 Functions of the Judges
 - 3.1.2. The Major Judges
 - 3.1.2.1 Othmel
 - 3.1.2.2 Ehud
 - 3.1.2.3 Deborah and Barak
 - 3.1.2.4 Gideon
 - 3.1.2.5 Jephthah
 - 3.1.2.6 Samson
 - 3.1.2.7 Ruth
 - 3.2 The united monarchy
 - 3.3 Origin of the monarchy
 - 3.4 The institution of monarchy
 - 3.4.1 Monarchy Tradition
 - 3.4.2 Anti-monarchist Tradition
 - 3.4.3 Comments on Monarchist and anti-Monarchist Tradition
 - 3.5 The Reign of Samuel
 - 3.6 The Reign of Saul
 - 3.6.1 Saul leadership qualities
 - 3.6.2 Saul and David
 - 3.6.3 David's Introduction to Saul
 - 3.6.4 Tension between Saul and David
 - 3.6.5 David's flight
 - 3.7 The Reign of David
 - 3.8 The Reign of Solomon
 - 3.9 The Divided kingdom
 - 3.9.1 The kingdom of Israel
 - 3.9.1.1 Jeroboam I, the Agitator
 - 3.9.2 The kingdom of Judah
 - 3.9.2.2 The Reign of Jehu
 - 3.9.2.3 Jehoachz and Jehosah
 - 3.10 The fall of Samaria
 - 3.10.1 The last days of Samaria
 - 3.10.2 Judah until its fall
 - 3.10.3 Hezekiah
 - 3.10.4 Manasseh
 - 3.11 Josiah Reformation
 - 3.11.1 Eliakim

3.12 Captivity

4.0 Summary

5.0 Tutor-marked Assignments

6.0 References/Further Readings

7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the last unit, you learned the salvation history of Israelites. In the subsection on the Exodus from Egypt you were told that the departure was one of the fundamentals of Israelite's faith which portrays them to have sojourned in the land of Egypt, where God out of his saving grace took them out of the land of slavery to the promised land of Canaan. In this unit our focus will be on examine the experiences of Israelites from the time of Judges to the period of captivity.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain what led to the reign of Judges in Israel.
- Discuss the roles of some judges in Israel.
- Give reasons for Israelites demand for a human king.
- Give accounts of the institution of monarchy in Israel.
- Discuss the nature of captivity of the people of Israel by the Assyrians and Babylonians.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 The Rise of Judges

The crises in Israel resulted to the rise of some leaders called "Judges", These judges rose to power during the period of "Dark Ages" of Hebrew history. It was a time of decline, apostasy, disorder and demoralization in all areas of life-economic, political, social, moral and religious activities. The oft- recurring statement in the Book of Judges is that "the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of God: and God sent an oppressor to persecute and enslave them.

3.1.1 Functions of the Judges

The function of these Judges was to serve as military leaders to deliver the people from their oppressors. In some cases, the functions of the judges involved political and judicial. In some instances they served as religious leaders and were highly respected by the people in the society.

3.1.2 The Major Judges

The names of the major Judges include:

(a) Othniel of Judah, (b) Ehud, a Benjamite, (c) Deborah, the prophetess, and Barak, (d) Gideon from Manasseh, (e) Abimelech, son of Gideon, (f) Jair of Gilead, (g) Tola of Issachar, (h) Jephthah of Gilead, (i) Ibzan from Bethlehem, (j) Elan of Zebulun, (k) Abdon and (l) Samson of Dan. Some people include both Ruth and Samuel as judges, while others do not. Of this, six are regarded as leaders and are as follows: Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson.

3.1.2.1 Othniel

Chronologically, Othniel came as the first deliverer, and apparently served not many years after the death of Joshua. The people of Judah had yielded to the temptation of indulging in the wicked ceremonies of Canaanite worship, having forsaken the worship of God. Othniel, the nephew of Caleb, rose up a deliver and in an encounter, the details of which are not given, defeated the enemy, drove them out and this delivered the people of Judah.

3.1.2.2 Ehud

Ehud, a man of Benjamin delivered the Israelites from the invader of Moab, East of the Jordan valley. Eglon, king of Moab, crossed the Jordan, captured Jericho and for eighteen year oppressed the tribes east of the Jordan as well as the people of Benjamin and Judah. Ehud, a left-handed warrior from Benjamin, went to the palace of Eglon and asked for a private interview with the king.

3.1.2.3 Deborah and Barak

Deborah, a prophetess from Ramah in Ephraim and Barak a man of Naphtali rallied an army to fight these invaders (the Canaanites) who occupied much of the valley of Esdraelon and oppress the Hebrews. Deborah persuaded Barak to undertake to raise an army. Barak was able to assemble an army of ten thousand men on mount Yabor, over-looking the valley of Esdraelon

3.1.2.4 Gideon

His story of deliverance of the Hebrews against the Midianites is the most familiar one in the book of Judges. The Midianites, the Amalakites and the Arab tribes from the East under the leadership of Zebah and Zalmunnah with the two chiefs Oreb and Zebah attacked the Israelites, destroying crops and inflicting the severest sufferings on the people for seven years. Gideon, the deliver, came from the tribe of Manasseh and slew the Midianites at the Lord's command.

3.1.2.5 Jephthah

Jephthah an illegitimate son which was without respectable standing was commissioned by God to deliver Israelites from the hands of the Ammorites. The oppression of the people of Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim who were guilty of idolatry was so severe and prolonged that they cried for a deliverer. Jephthah agreed and promised that if he was victorious, he would be given proper recognition among his people.

3.1.2.6 Samson

Samson is one of the strongest and most pathetic characters in the bible. The Biblical account of his remarkable exploits which culminated in his tragic death are not possible in this connection, however, the story of his birth has indicated that he was endowed with supernatural strength and set apart for a special mission. But as one reads the story of his youth, his determination to marry a Philistine girl, his frivolous behavior, the prodigal use of his powers for his own selfish purpose, his indulgence in forbidden pursuits, his immoral conduct, his capture by the enemy and his death, a sense of being disappointment comes over him

3.1.2.7 Ruth

The story of Ruth is a lovely and wholesome one believed to have written around 1100 BC. The exact date of the book is uncertain, however, some feel that it should be placed at end of the period of Judges. It is the story of Elimelech and his wife Naomi and their two sons who lived in the vicinity of Bethlehem. During a severe famine, the family left their ancestral home and took up their abode in Moab, East of the Dead Sea

3.2 The United Monarchy

This period covers more than one hundred years. It begins with the closing years of the judges and terminated with the death of Solomon around 975 B.C. During this period, the life of the Hebrew nation under went a radical change with the influence of Samuel, the statesman, prophet and priest chosen by God to lead his people. But due to increasing pressure from the Philistines and other neighbouring tribes, the Israelites were forced to unite under King Saul in c. 1050 BCE.

3.3 Origin of the United Monarchy

As the wealth returned to the region at the end of the Late Bronze Age and the collapse of trade with Egypt and Mesopotamia recovered, new interior trade routes opened up. The route running from Kadesh Barnea in the south, through Hebron to Jerusalem and the one running from Lachish to Samaria, Shiloh and Shechem through Galilee to Megiddo became great commercial linking points. These new routes threatened the trade monopoly of the Philistines, who sought to dominate the inland routes, either directly, through military intervention against the growing strength of the tribes of

Israel, or indirectly, through promoting and employing mercenaries to positions of power.

3.4 Institution of the Monarchy

There are two accounts or traditions of Israelites choice of king: The anti-monarchist tradition (I Sam.

8:1-22; 10:17-27) and the monarchist Tradition (I Sam. 9:1-10,16).

3.4.1 Monarchist Tradition (I Sam 8:1-22; 10.17-27).

This first account is a little more difficult, and to some extent contradictory to the second account. It shows how Samuel first rejected the popular demand for the king and later acceded to it only after a divine command. Samuel having been aware of the people's wishes, called a public assembly to Mizpah to hear their statement. The demand for a king displeased him. That a prophet should be their leader was in order, for a prophet would act as God directed him so that true religion would prevail. But a king might become intoxicated with power and utterly turn away from God, acting in pride and presumption which could lead to Israel's ruin.

3.4.2 Anti- Monarchist Tradition (I Sam. 9:10-11, 16, 11:1-15)

The second account which is more vivid, memorable and intelligible, describes how Yahweh himself guided the secret election of Saul as king of Israel; how Saul defeated the Ammorites, and how the people acclaimed him as king. According to this account, Saul, a man of Benjamin, was sent by his father to find some strayed asses, and passing near Ramah, was advised by his servant to seek the advice of the seer, Samuel: He is a man held in great honor, all that he said come surely to pass". Saul accepted the advice and found that it was a festival day in Ramah

3.4.3 Comments on Monarchist and Anti-Monarchist Traditions

Some of the comments include:

- a. The monarchist tradition is taken to be near the events.
- b. The argument is that the monarchy is the natural fruit of the unity that was being achieved towards the close of the period of
- c. Judges, for unity was imperative in the face of the growing peril. The last judge anointed the first king, and this first king has a charismatic nature: he is chosen by God and possessed by his spirit, and the spirit moves him to great exploits.
- d. The thing is that despotism, cruelty and vindictiveness of rulers in ancient times were well known to the Israelites. Their fathers had experienced it in Egypt under Pharaoh; all the petty states around them groaning were under such rulers.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give two accounts of the institutions of Monarchy in Israel and briefly comment on them

Activity 1

Narrate the circumstance that led to the naming of Samson as one of the judges.

3.5 The Reign of Samuel

The transition from the dark and chaotic days of the judges to the glorious era of the kings soon find out that there was no say of securing the prosperity and peace of the nation was nor a sudden nor an accident one. It came through Samuel, who is called by some as the last of the judges.

3.6 The Reign of Saul (I Sam. 9-18).

The years of Saul's reign are dominated with great opportunities. The account of his rule opens with description of a military episode the Ammorites attack under their king Nahash. A number of men were dismissed from the army but 3,000 were retained to begin a standing army. War started at Geba where Jonathan was the commander and was formally declared throughout Israel and the people came to meet Saul at Gilgal, a place suitable to deplore armies and at the entrance of the gorge valley deep and narrow with rocky sides. The number of the enemy was enormous. They occupied Michmash, a Benjaminite city, some 70 miles NE of Jerusalem. Saul withdrew down the gorge to Gilgal while Jonathan still remained at Geba at the South of the gorge. Many of the Israelites were terrified and they showed great cowardice. According to the biblical record, Saul made seven military campaigns during his period of reign as a king in Israel. These include: the campaign against the Ammorites at Jabesh-Gilead, against the Philistines, several against Moab-Edom and Zobah, against the Amalekites, against the Philistines under Goliath, and against the Philistines, at Mt. Gilboa which resulted in his death. Saul first mistake was his failure to wait before assuming the role of a priest when he had received instruction from Samuel.

3.6.1 Saul Leadership qualities

Saul possessed several admirable qualities as a leader. He was a man of large physique and attractive appearance. He was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upwards. He was modest and humble. He did not seek the office and was not eager to serve. His obedience to God and humility in the beginning were very commendable. He had the ability to organize and to execute. He was also an able military leader as indicated by the decisive victories in the early part of his career. He had the qualities of a leader and made a good beginning. The situation offered Saul a great opportunity and was the first king, the one to blaze the trail and set pattern for later rulers. He was all but unanimously accepted. He had all the authority of his kingly office. He had the

benefits of the wise counsel and the valuable experience of Samuel, the honored and respected leader for so many years. He stood on the threshold of a new day.

Self-assessment exercise 2

What were two mistakes of Saul that made him to be rejected by the people as a king?

Activity 2

Narrate the circumstance surrounding the change of leadership in Israel from judges to kings

3.6.2 Saul and David

The following events must be examined when discussing Saul and David. There are:

3.6.3 David's Introduction to Saul

There are two separate accounts of David's introduction to Saul. According to the first one (I Sam. 16:14-33), Saul had become subject to fits of Melancholia and there was sought a musician who might be able to soothe the king's spirit. In this way, David was chosen as a harpist. The second account shows how David appeared before the public eye (I Sam. 17:55-18:5). According to this account there was war with the Philistines and the armies confronted each other in the valley of Elah. It was expected Saul's amour-bearer would have been in the field with the king, but it is said that, whereas his three eldest brothers were there, he himself was shepherding near his home in Bethlehem.

3.3.5.4 Tension between Saul and David

When David, after slaying Goliath and was praised with loud acclaim by women who sang praises: "Saul has slain his thousand and David his ten thousand," tension was created between Saul and David. These praises however, were not uttered in response to Goliath's death alone, but were in line with the former tradition which describes David as the king's amour-bearer. From this time forth Saul became fiercely jealous of David and his bouts of melancholy increased. He saw David, not without reason as one who might split the kingdom by faction and undo all the good work that had been done.

3.6 5 David's Flight

The narrative, when studied carefully in its literary deserves careful analysis of events which could be broadly divided into three dimensions:

(1) David was driven from Saul's court and had to live a fugitive life in the fields and caves of Judah and the south country, but he was not simply an innocent sufferer. He lived the life of an outlaw, and gathered to himself a band of mal-contents (I Sam. 22:1,2).

(2) David had undoubtedly a personal attractiveness and this made Jonathan, his friend and Jonathan stuck with him through thick and thin. Saul found that the members of his own court were very unwilling to inform against David (I Sam. 22: 7,8).

(3) That, Saul is shown as jealous and relentlessly pursuing his enemy. That he had received severe provocation must likewise be admitted. Saul was merely human and when the expelled David gathered about him his company of followers, Saul cannot be blamed for taking a serious view of the situation.

3.6.6 The Death of Saul

After being hunted throughout the length and breadth of Judah, David betook himself to the Philistines (I Sam 27.). This step he took as the last desperate remedy. Anywhere else Saul would seek him; he would not dare to seek him among his inveterate foes. It was some time after this that the Philistines gathered together again for battle with Israel, but their encampment was not in one of the valleys running from Judah to the coastal plain near their own five towns, but away at Shunem in the plain of Esdraelon. That may have meant that Saul was attempting to get possession of that plain to bind the northern tribes into the kingdom. Be that as it may, the Israelites opposed them in Mount Gilboa. This was the final crisis of Saul's reign and he was ill prepared for it.

3.3.5.7 The Reign of David

The ancient traditions recount the rise of David (c. 1000-c 961) to prominence as a valiant warrior in Saul's militia, the jealousy of Saul that eventually led to David's life as the exiled leader of an outlaw band, and David's adventures as the prince of Siceleg (Ziklag) in the employ of the Palestine ruler of Geth (Gath). These traditions have the form of popular sagas and are of different and variant origin, but they agree essentially in their pictures of David as a very talented warrior. The loyalty he inspired in his small band of marauders and his partial friendship with the Philistines gave him freedom to develop his power in the south, where he protected the established towns by his raids against pillaging nomads. After Saul's death, David reigned as king in Hebron for about 7 years and emerged, after, Abner and Is-Baal was killed, as the only hero who could possibly save Israel from Philistine oppression. When the elders of the northern tribes had submitted to him and accepted him as the king of Israel, he wisely moved the capital to Jerusalem, which had been conquered by his own army of loyal mercenaries, was not connected with tribal traditions, and was centrally located on the border between the southern and the northern tribes.

Self-assessment exercise 3

Narrate the story of David flight from Saul?

Activity 3

How did the killing of Goliath ignite the hatred Saul has for David?

3.8 The Reign of Solomon

The successes of David were consolidated and organized by the reign of Solomon (c. 961-c. 922 B.C), who was fortunate to reign in a period when the great powers, Egypt and Assyria were at their weakest, when the Sidomians were interested in maritime expansion and trade, and when the Armenians had not completely recovered from David's victories. Solomon and his kingdom were thus at peace, a peace ensured by the chariot army and garrisons that he established at great expenses throughout his kingdom, of which the excavations at Megiddo have provided noteworthy evidence. He freely engaged in all kinds of commercial endeavors with the surrounding countries allying himself with Hiram of Tyre in the production of metals and other trade and taking advantages of and exploiting the newly established camel trade over the vast wastelands of Arabia.

3.9 The Divided Kingdom

The causes of this schism were both indirect and direct. Indirectly, the causes go back for some time. For many years there had been keen rivalry between the strong tribe of Judah in the south, with its capital city of Jerusalem, and some of the tribes further north. We have seen this showing up in at least two instances. Upon the death of Saul, Judah was quick to accept David as king while the northern tribes set up a rival kingdom under Ishbosheth. Later in the reign of David, Sheba, who probably knew of the old feeling of jealousy, was able to launch a rebellion against King David which he might well have succeeded. So the idea of division was not a new one. The direct cause was the foolish behavior of Rehoboam who succeeded Solomon. When Rehoboam went up to Shechem for the confirming of his coronation the northern tribes under Jeroboam, who had hastily returned from Egypt after the death of Solomon, flatly demanded a statement of the new king as to his policy. They were tired of heavy taxes and tyrannical treatment by their king. Rehoboam wisely asked for time to prepare an answer. Three days were allowed for this. During this time the king sought advice from two groups. The older and wiser men urged him to be cautious and considerate, warning him of the peril.

The younger men, probably his friends in the court, advised that he treat the people harshly and put them in their place at once by a bold threat. At the end of the three days the king appeared before the assembly to announce his decision. He had foolishly decided to follow the course recommended by his luxury-loving associates, and as the people faced him, he declared roughly; "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. The reaction was immediate. Contrary to what Rehoboam probably expected, they shouted defiantly, what portions have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: Now see to thine own house, David." The die was cast.

3.9.1.1 Jeroboam I, the Agitator

Around 920 BCE, according to the biblical account, Jeroboam led the revolt of the northern tribes, and established the Kingdom of Israel (I Kings 11-14). B.S.J. Isserlin, in his examination of the Israelites, shows, from an analysis of the geographical setting,

the origins of the Israelites, their neighbours, the political history of the monarchy, the socio-economic structure, town-planning and architecture, trade, craft and industry, warfare, and literacy as well as art and religion, that the kingdom of Israel was typical of the secondary Canaanite states established at about this time. Economically, the kingdom of Israel seems to have been more developed than its southern neighbour. Rainfall in this area is higher and the agricultural systems are more productive. According to the biblical account, which cannot be checked by outside sources, there were 19 separate rulers of Israel. Politically, the kingdom of Israel seems much less stable than Judah, maintaining a form of charismatic leadership by merit and competition between ruling families who seem to have depended much more on links with outside powers such as Tyre, Aram and Assyria in order to maintain their authority. This need to placate powerful neighbours was demonstrated early on during the reign of Jeroboam, when, despite reputed actions of establishing fortifications at Tirzah, Shechem and Israel was invaded by Egyptian Pharaoh Sheshonk I (the Biblical Shishak) of the Libyan 22nd dynasty. The Kingdom of Israel appears to have been most powerful in the first half of the ninth century BCE, during which time Omri (a. 885-874) BCE) founded a new dynasty with its capital city at Samaria with support from the Phoenician city of Tyre.

3.9.2.1 The Reign of Jehu

Jehu, a captain in Jehoram's army was anointed by Prophet Elisha and commissioned to destroy Jehoram and all descendants of Ahab and Jezebel. He fulfilled the mission by slaying the kings of Israel and Judah, since both kings were descendants of Ahab. Also, Jehu ordered the eunuchs to throw Jezebel on the housetop down to the street and her broken body was devoured by the scavenger dogs. He had proved himself a ruthless destroyer and dealt a severe blow to Baal worship. However, as king, he proved a disappointment. He not only showed no concern for the worship of God, but actually gave his hearty support to the worship of the calves at Bethel and Dan as set up by Jeroboam. No wonder that the prophet Hosea condemned his actions of unjustifiable cruelty. (Hosea 1:4) During the latter part of Jehu's reign, most of the holdings in eastern Palestine were lost to the Syria king Hazael. The Assyrian monuments state that Jehu had to pay tribute to the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser II.

3.9.2.2 Jehoahaz and Jehoash

Jehu's son, Jehoahaz succeeded him on the throne. Hazael, the cruel king of Syria, who had successfully contended against Jehu, soon came again to ravage the territory east of the Jordan and to massacre its people. He compelled Jehoahaz to cut his army down to fifty horsemen, ten chariots and 10,000 infantry. There is nothing good reported of his reign of seventeen years. He died leaving the throne to his son Jehoash (Joash). Joash followed the practice of his predecessors in supporting idolatry in spite of the warnings of the aged Elisha. When Elisha was stricken with his last illness, Joash called on him and wept at the prospect of death for the prophet. Elisha told him to open the window facing the east and to shoot his arrow in that direction. He shot three arrows, but was told by the dying prophet that in not shooting a larger number he had limited his victories to three. After the death of Elisha, Joash gained three victories over the Syrians and recovered the cities formerly taken by them. There is also a statement to the effect that

Joash “fought with might against Amaziah, king of Judah.” Being challenged by Amaziah to come and “let us look one another in the face” Joash accepted the challenge and “Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to his tent.

3.8 The fall of Samaria

Tiglath-pileser III (called also, Phanue, the name he took when he became king of Babylon), by victories over Urartu, had freed his armies for campaigns in Syria. Manasseh of Israel, who had killed Sellum a month after the latter’s seizure of the throne, was forced to pay tribute to Tiglath Pileser in 738. After Manasseh’s son, Pekah was killed by an anti-Assyrian faction led by Pekah. It was not long before Phanu reacted to Israelite revolt. Meanwhile, Pekah had strengthened his alliance with Razin, king of Damascus. While Israel and Damascus were trying to force Judah, now ruled by Ahaz into anti-Assyrian coalition by threatening to replace him with Ben Tabeel, the Assyrians were busy in the north giving the final blows to Urartu. It was in these circumstances that the prophet Isaiah encouraged Ahaz to trust in Yahweh alone, but Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-Pileser for help and sent him a vassal’s tribute. In 733 the Assyrians marched on Philistia to cut off any body that might come to coalition from Egypt, conquering a good part of Galilee as they passed through it.

3.10.1 The last days of Samaria

Israel’s misfortune led to another palace revolution. Hosea had assassinated Phacee and quickly sent tribute to the Assyrians, and was thus allowed to reign as a vassal king over a much-reduced kingdom. Ahaz made his vassalage official by submitting to the Assyrians at Damascus and thus rendered any move that Judah might attempt against Assyria an act of rebellion. At the same time, the Assyrian religious cult was forced onto Judah, and Yahwism was endangered. The Next Assyrian king Salmanasar V, in the course of a campaign against Tyre, invaded Samaria and laid siege to its capital. King Osee, who had vainly hoped to receive military aid from the king of Sais in the Egyptian Delta and had refused to give his annual tax to Assyria, was taken prisoner by Salmanasar. But the city of Samaria withstood the siege for almost 3 years.

3.10.2 Judah until its fall

Since the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, is certainly to be dated in 701 and since it occurred in the 14th year of Ahaz’s son Hezekiah, king of Judah, the date c. 715 for the beginning of Hezekiah’s reign seems better than that indicated by the synchronism afforded by 2Kgs 18.1-2-10. Hezekiah had a long reign in a period that saw the greatest extent of the Assyrian empire. That the tiny kingdom of Judah was not completely absorbed by the mammoth empire, as Israel had been absorbed remains one of history’s tantalizing problems. Sacred history has given an answer that transcends the historian’s purview: Judah was saved because of a religious, and, hence, also a national revival that procured for it Yahweh’s protection. Whatever his judgment of this theological interpretation the historian must admit that Judah could not have had a national renewal without a preceding religious revival.

3.10.3 Hezekiah

During the 1st half of Hezekiah's reign, the times were generally propitious for his reform. Assyria had temporary problems at home, and except for the campaigns of the Assyrian army against Azotus (Ashdod), Palestine was left in peace until Sennacherib's invasion of Judah 701. The reform which wiped out the Assyrian cultic importations was motivated by the pure Yahwism preached by Isaiah and Micah. It then, apparently for the first time attempted to destroy all local sanctuaries, even those dedicated to Yahweh, and to make the temple in Jerusalem the sole focus of the orthodox cult. The vital school of religious thinkers behind the attempt, probably never successful in Hezekiah's time, remained dormant under the long and idolatrous reign of the weak Manasseh (Manasesh), to reappear in its full vigor under king Josiah of Judah.

3.10.4 Manasseh

Under Hezekiah's son Manasseh, a ravaged Judah returned to its vassal status, paying tribute to Asarhaddon (Esarhaddon) in 673 and to Assurbanipal (Ashurbanipal) in 668. The religious reform was suppressed and God's prophets lay hidden. The next king Amon was murdered by his own officials, but another group started a counter revolution gained control of the small kingdom for Amon's son Josiah, when he was still a boy.

3.11 Josiah Reformation

Josiah reigned until his tragic death in the battle of Maggedo, when he vainly tried to prevent the Egyptian army under Nechao (Necho) from invading Syria. Under Josiah a religious reform, with which the Bible is almost exclusively concerned, accompanied and abetted a national resurgence that was possible because of the Assyria's entrance into a fatal decline. As the Judean political and military reorganization progressed, the reform expelled from the land all foreign influences, religious and cultural. The discovery in Josiah's 18th year of at least the legislative part of the book of Deuteronomy (I Kgs 22-23.) added impetus and purpose to the renewal and led to the suppression of local sanctuaries and the concentration of priests in Jerusalem.

3.11.1 Eliakim

After the death of Josiah the anti Egyptian faction in Judah set his second-oldest son Shallum (Shallum) to the throne under the name of Joachaz (Jechoachaz). But after a reign of only 3 months, he was deposed by the Egyptians and taken prisoner into Egypt. The Egyptians then installed, as their puppet king of Judah, Josiah's oldest son, Eliakim, who took the throne name of Joakim (Jehoakin). Despite the enormous tribute that Judah had to pay Pharaoh Nechao. Joakim received no substantial military aid from Egypt when the Chaldean king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar (Nebuchadnezzar), invaded Palestine in 603-602 and he was forced to become a vassal of Babylon. But the 3 years later, egged on by Egypt, he threw off the Babylonian yoke. In 598 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar set out to punish his rebellious vassal in Judah. Joakim, however, died shortly before the Babylonian army encamped before Jerusalem. As the only way to save the city, his son and successor, Jehoiachin, after a reign of only 3 months and 10 days, offered himself, his family, his whole court, and most of the nobles as prisoners. This was the first deportation of Judeans to Babylon. On the shaky throne of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar

set Joakim's younger brother Mathania, who took the throne name of Sedecia (Zedekiah).

3.12 Captivity

After the fall of Samaria and the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews were taken away as captives to Babylonia. Only a small remnant of poor, discouraged and leaderless people was left in Judah. Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah as governor to control them. But insurrection soon broke out among those left in Judah and Gedaliah was murdered by Ishmael, a member of the royal family, and civil war resulted. Most of the people fled to Egypt, and continued to live there even after those from Babylonia returned to Jerusalem.

In 722 BCE, nearly twenty years after the initial invasions and deportations, the Assyrian king Sargon finally finished what Tiglath-Pileser III began in 740 BCE. He completed the conquest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel by taking captive the capital Samaria after a three year siege (which happened to kill Shalmaneser V) and deporting the remaining Israelites, including the ruling class, to the cities of the Medes and other disputed areas, generally believed to be in or near the vicinity of conquered lands occupied by the Assyrian Empire. Conversely, peoples from those lands were deported to Samaria. Thus, the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom were dispersed amongst the nations by being planted in the epicenter of the human migration tides of Eurasia.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

What led to the division of the kingdom of Israel in the time of Jeroboam

Activity 4

Critically narrate the incidences that precipitated the fall of samaria?

4.0 Summary

In this unit, we have learnt that the Judges rose to the position of power after the various tribes of Israel had gained a foothold in Palestine and then to term struggle for survival among their hostile neighbours. In the struggle of Israelites for survival they were certain great crises in which one or more of the tribes were involved. It is of these crises that we read in the stories of the Judges. The chief function of these judges was to serve as military leaders to deliver the people from their oppressors. In some cases their work continued as statement or political and judicial leaders after the crises was past.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

1. Give two accounts of the institutions of Monarchy in Israel and briefly comment on them
2. What were two mistakes of Saul that made him to be rejected by the people as a king

3. Narrate the story of David flight from Saul.
4. What led to the division of the kingdom of Israel in the time of Jeroboam

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

Give the two institutions of Monarchy in Israel and briefly comment on them

- The anti-monarchist tradition (I Sam. 8:1-22; 10:17-27).
- The monarchist Tradition (I Sam. 9:1-10,16).

Self-assessment exercise 2

What were two mistakes of Saul that made him to be rejected by the people as a king

- He offered sacrifices in the place of the priest against the instructions of God
- He ate the showbread that was meant for sacrifice

Self-assessment exercise 3

Narrate the story of David flight from Saul.

- After the killing of Goliath by David, the people of Israel acknowledged David more than Saul. This were made manifest in their songs where they said that Saul has killed thousands while David has killed ten thousand. This singular act of the people infuriated Saul and he sort to kill David. Resulting from the above, David fled the town to where he went hiding from the sight of Saul.

Self-assessment exercise 4

What led to the division of the kingdom of Israel in the time of Jeroboam

- King Jeroboam took unwise counsel of increasing the tax burden of the people of Israel from his peers as against the directive of his wise men and council of elders.

8.0 Glossary

Phoenicians: Phoenicia was an ancient thalassocratic civilization originating in the Levant region of the eastern Mediterranean, primarily located in modern Lebanon. The territory of the Phoenician city-states extended and shrank throughout their history, and they possessed several enclaves such as Arwad and Tell Sukas.

Rabbi: A rabbi is a spiritual leader or religious teacher in Judaism. One becomes a rabbi by being ordained by another rabbi, known as semikha, following a course of study of Jewish texts such as the Talmud.

Sennacherib's Campaign: Sennacherib's campaign in the Levant in 701 BCE was a military campaign undertaken by the Neo-Assyrian Empire to bring the region back under control following a rebellion against Assyrian rule in 705 BCE

Unit 4 From the Development of Prophecy to the Period of Post-exilic Prophets

CONTENT

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 - 3.2.2 The Prophet's Message
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- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

The first two modules of this course have dealt with the introductory aspects of the history of Israel. You were taught that the history of Israel as the chosen and covenantal people began with the call of Abraham to the period of captivity. The covenantal idea was implicit in the promises that God made with the Hebrew patriarchs, namely, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. In this module, you will learn about the post-exilic

period of Israelites history. This period covers the development of prophecy and prophets in pre-exilic and post-exilic periods of Israelites history.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Make a historical survey of the period
- Trace the history of prophecy and prophets in Israel
- Name the great prophets.
- List the types of prophecy in Israel.
- Give the common ground of eight century prophets in Israel.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 The meaning of Prophecy

Prophecy is the power of being able to foretell future events or the art of making things to come true. A prophet is therefore, essentially one who speaks in the name of another, and the Israelite prophets were those who speak in the name of Yahweh (cf. Jer 1:9; Is. 30:2). They are men of action counsellors, preachers, and champions of the cause of God.

3.1.1 Historical Survey of the Period

After the fall of the Northern kingdom, a period of great political unrest ensued in the land of Israel. Many kings who reigned were besieged and the people carried away captives and settled in other parts of the kingdom. Many Jews who might have resisted the prevailing trend had become supine and listless, content only to make what they could out of the opportunity situations during the eighth century called for the development of prophecy in Israel. Thus, prophets such as Ezekiel, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Amos and Hosea taught the doctrine of individual responsibility, explained the purpose of punishment and affirmed the possibility of finding favor again with God. As against the notion of solidarity in punishment, they upheld the principle of individual retribution and foretold the new covenant.

3.1.2 History of Prophecy in Israel

3.1.2.1 The Seer

A seer was a prophet with the ability to foresee the future and predict coming events. For example, Saul was advised by his servant to seek the help of Samuel (I Sam 9:6). The gift of foreseeing the future and predicting coming events was commonly that came their way. Judges were corrupt and the prophets had to alleviate the rigour of it by legislation

3.1.2.2 The Ecstatic Prophets

These were groups of prophets, who went about the country in companies and who, by rhythmic movements as in a dance, by music, or bodily lacerations, sought to induce a state of sentient life, they became. They believed more fitting vehicles of God's spirit and proclaimers of His world. Such as ecstatic prophets were not peculiar to Israel and probably had their origin in Asia Minor. They represent a level of prophecy which in due course was superseded in Israel. As a type they remained prominent in the service of Baal after they had faded out in the service of God

3.1.2.3 The Solitary Prophets

In the history of Israel, a third type of prophets was found who were neither ecstatic nor members of a community, but solitary workers who were valiant for their faith, were unafraid to criticize the established order in religion or on politics. And while they might be in touch with the guilds of prophets, were never of them

3.1.2 The Great Prophets

These are prophets who did not arise as an inexplicable phenomenon without antecedent of forerunners. The guilds of prophets prepared the way for them, and the solitary prophets like Nathan, Micaiah, Elijah and Elisha were their prototypes. But with the eighteenth century prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah and their successors, formed this category of great prophets.

3.1.3 The Prophet's Sense of Vocation

The great prophets were not ecstatic nor members of any guild nor had no hereditary offices, but they were prophets because they believed God called them to be prophets. In a word, they had a sense of vocation (cf Amos 7:14). Thus, Amos thought and as he thought, he became convinced that God entered into his thoughts and directed them.

3.1.4 The Prophet Message

Some of the messages of the prophets include:

- a. Their message was addressed to the contemporary situation.
- b. The messages of the prophets contain prophetic interpretation of history and the future. The prophets in their utterances dealt not only with the contemporary events, but they looked both before and after.
- c. They interpreted the course of past history and made known the shape of coming events. God, they believed, was working out His purpose on the plane of human history.
- d. More importantly, the prophets in their utterances spoke also of the future.
- e. Sometimes, the prophets not only declared that judgment would come from God upon the sinful people, but they specified the occasion of the judgment, or its nature or the agent through whom it would be accomplished

3.1.5 False Prophets

The false prophets were of several kinds:

(1). There were these who claimed to have received a message from God in a dream and in good faith proclaimed that message.

(2). There were those who claimed to maintain a tradition and communicated to their hearers a theological inheritance. They induced them to give the pleasing answer, so that their words were liable to be time, serving and politic, not God-inspired and fearless.

3.1.6 Prophetical Writings

These were the books written under the inspiration of the prophets. The historical and cultural backgrounds of the books are adequately understood and the sequences of thought in the verses are extremely difficult to grasp because often there is no sequence of writing. What is preserved for us in the case of most great prophets is a collection of utterances belonging to many occasions, often arranged in no kind of chronological order.

3.2 The Prophets in Post-Exilic Judaism

It is essential to mention some of the major prophetic figures of the ninth century BC. These include Elijah, Amos and Hosea.

3.2.1 Elijah

He appeared during the reign of Ahab (874-853) and his wife Jezebel, daughter of the king of Tyre, when faithfulness to the true religion was endangered by the introduction of the cult of Baal in Samaria. Elijah appeared to defend the faith of Israel, and compelled the people to choose Yahweh to the exclusion of Baal. "If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (I Kgs 18:21). After his victory over the prophets of Baal, Elijah was pursued by Jezebel, and as the only prophet of Yahweh left, and went on pilgrimage to the sources of Yahwism, to Horeb the mountain of God

3.2.2 Amos

He appeared around 750 B.C during the reign of Jeroboam II. Amos, a shepherd from Tekoa near Bethlehem, went into Samaria to announce the word of the Lord. As a straightforward and honest peasant, Amos vigorously denounced injustices (the oppression of the simple people), the corruption of the judges, moral decadence and the formalism of religious practice (Am. 2:6-8; 5:12, 2;21-2;6:4ff). He foretold punishment to come; the day of darkness and not light (Am. 5:18)

3.2.3 Hosea

He appeared shortly after Amos and denounced the same abuses, but he laid greater stress on worship, religious life and attacked formalism. "For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God, rather burnt offerings" (Hos. 6:6). He too foretold punishment for Israel. "The Lord...will remember their iniquity, and punish their sins. They shall return to Egypt" (Hos. 8:13). But the punishment will be the saving of the

chosen people. The suffering they are to go through is a call of God's love to return to him.

3.2.4 Isaiah

He was a man of culture, from an important family of Judah who carried out his ministry in Jerusalem, from 740 B.C onwards. His message is strongly marked by belief in the holiness of Yahweh, "The holy one of Israel". He preached justice and devotion-for without these worship is merely an empty formalism. He called for trust in God alone, and not in political alliances which endangered the true religion by making contacts with false religions. "Do not fear what (this people) fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall regard as holy

3.2.5 Micah

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah's left a far smaller collection of the effect his ministry produced in Jerusalem (Jer. 26:18-19). From the Judean country side, Micah's concrete and direct language is somewhat reminiscent of Amos; and he is like him, too, in his love of simple people. the beginning of his book speaks of the fall of Samaria, and the punishment hanging over Judah, but the prophet retains some hope, and the rest of the book speaks of messianic restoration, returning, yet again to the theme of the "remnant" and stressing the Davidic origin of the messiah (Micah 5:2).

3.3 Pre-Exilic Prophets (Seventh Century Prophets)

Among the last of the pre-exilic prophets, Jeremiah appears, along with Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk, as the most important.

3.3.1 Jeremiah

He was born around 645 BC, of a priestly family living near Jerusalem; Jeremiah was a man of sensitivity and deep piety. Called by God in 627 B.C, he was throughout his ministry a model of fidelity in spite of suffering. Though Jeremiah loved his country dearly, he had constantly to announce unhappiness for it. Peace loving, he had to struggle continually with violent enemies. Affectionate by nature, he had to live alone and persecuted. Despite the discouragement that constantly tempted, and into which he sometimes fell, Jeremiah proclaimed the word of the Lord. His life was to all appearances a failure, but he was of major importance in the religious development of Israel, during and after the exile

3.3.2 Ezekiel

Ezekiel, son of Buzi, belonged like Jeremiah to the priestly world. He was a priest in Jerusalem which explains why the theme of the temple is so important in his works, and which together with the vision recorded in Ezekiel 1:3-28, gave rise to the sense of the sacred and of the glory of God, which is so marked in his prophecy. Taken to Babylon in 598, with the first group of exiles, Ezekiel was called by God in 593. He began by foretelling the fall of Jerusalem as a punishment for the sins of Israel (Ezek 4- 12), but after the city had been sacked in 587 B.C, Ezekiel became the prophet of hope. For more than twenty years, this extraordinary man was the centre of the fiery preaching which

served the conscience of Israel from a torment in which any other national conscience would have perished

3.3.3 Deutero-Isaiah

The work of religious renewal begun by Ezekiel was pursued, towards the end of the exile, by a distant disciple, Isaiah. It was the period when Cyrus' victories over the various people of the East had awakened a great hope in the exiled Jews. It was also the time when Deutero-Isaiah announced the end of the exile, and foretold the universal and final arrival of Yahweh. His message is to be found in the consolation of Israel (Is 40-55). Those who were in anguish over the length of the trial, Deutero-Isaiah gave them new hope (Is 40:1-2).

3.3.4 Common Grounds of Post-exilic prophets

The pre-exilic prophets were speaking in God's name to the same situation, namely:

- (1) The offering of due sacrifice with appreciate ritual will not ensure God's favour or appease His anger
- (2) Injustice and oppression must cease not simply because they are anti-social, but because they are sin against God's creatures and so against God.
- (3) Selfish indulgence and luxurious living
- (4) God is God of righteousness and justice.

3.3.5 Significance of Prophecy in Religious life of the Israelites

The whole of Old Testament bears witness to the major importance of prophecy in the religious life of Israel. One section of the Bible consists solely of the writing of the prophets, and there are also historical books that recount the activities of various prophets. And in the Pentateuch, Numbers proclaims Moses, to whom God speaks "Mouth to mouth", or as we should say, face to face, as being greater than the prophets to whom God only revealed himself in visions or dreams (Num.12:6-8), and Deuteronomy recognizes in him as the greatest of the prophets (Deut. 34:10). God spoke to his people through those he sent, and thus when prophecy stopped, it seemed to them that God was punishing them by silence (Ezek. 7:26).

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give two reasons why prophecy is a major element in the religious life of the Israelites.

Activity 1

Explain the role of the prophets in the unity of the ancient kingdom of Israel.

4.0 Summary

Prophecy in Israel as indicated in this unit was meant to correct social injustices, idolatrous worship and forgetfulness of Yahweh in the society. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, prophets were raised up by God to exhort the people on failures to keep the covenant that made some form of cleansing suffering necessary. Thus, Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant, brought the law and the prophet to fulfillment; though he was not merely a prophet, he was God himself speaking to men the word, the incarnate logos of God.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

Give two reasons why prophecy is a major element in the religious life of the Israelites.

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give two reasons why prophecy is a major element in the religious life of the Israelites.

- Israel has from the beginning of their existence controlled and instructed by prophets who tell them the mind of God
- Israel believes in a god that has always delivered them from any problem according what has been written concerning them.

8.0 Glossary

Incarnation: Incarnation literally means embodied in flesh or taking on flesh. It refers to the conception and the embodiment of a deity or spirit in some earthly form. Or the appearance of a god as a human. If capitalized, it is the union of divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ.

Idoltrous Worship: The worship of someone or something other than God as though it were God. The first of the biblical Ten Commandments prohibits idolatry: “You shall have no other gods before me.

MODULE 3 THE RELIGIONS OF ISRAEL

Unit 1 From the Time of Exile to Reconstituted State of Israel

CONTENT

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 - 3.1 The Reformation
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1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned about the development of prophecy and prophets in pre-exilic and post-exilic periods of Israelites history. You were presented with meaning of prophecy, historical survey of the period, common grounds of pre-exilic and post-exilic prophets as well as the significance of prophecy in the religious life of the Israelites. In this unit, you will learn the history of Israelites from the time of exile to the period of reconstitution of the Jewish state in 400 BC. This period for the Jews was not only full of humiliation and sorrows, but of radical changes in every area of their lives.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Narrate the process of restoration of the nation's glory carried out by King Cyrus.
- Assess the contributions of prophet Zachariah, Ezra and Nehemiah in the building of Hebrew nation and in bringing back of the remnants from exile to Jerusalem.
- Compare the forces that motivated the struggle of Maccabees and the rule of the Hasmoneans.
- Discuss the Jewish sects such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and the Zealots.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 The Period of Exile

The long, hard years of humiliation and sorrows in exile had some beneficial results in the life of the Jews people. Some of the benefits include:

- (1) They were thoroughly cured of adulatory
- (2) The synagogue came into existence instead of the smaller houses which served as centres of worship
- (3) They did a great deal in the collecting of their literature during the time
- (4) Religion for them became distinctly more spiritual and personal.
- (5) The Law of Moses took on a new significance for them.

These benefits became more meaningfully during the reign of King Cyrus who played a big role in the life of the Jews. He reversed all former policies by making it possible for all peoples who had been brought in by force and who wanted to return to their homes to do so.

3.2 King Cyrus Edict

This is the policy of leniency, which allowed not only the Jews the privilege of returning home but which gave them protection and assistance as well as freedom of worship. The generous nature of the proclamation is given in Ezra 1:2-4 thus: Thus said Cyrus, king of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth have Jehovah, the God of heaven, given me; and he was charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all His people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whoever is left, in any place where he sojourns, let the men of his place help him with silver and with gold, and with goods, and with boasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

3.3 The Return of Judah to Jerusalem

Many Jews who were in Babylonia at the time went back to rebuild the wastes of Judah. Most of them were satisfied with their new home, especially since Cyrus manifested a lenient attitude toward them as citizens. They became well established and had formed strong friendships in Babylonia culture. There were about sixty thousand Jews to return to Israel. The first group was led by Zerubbabel, while the other group went back under Ezra and Nehemiah.

3.4.1 The Inter-Biblical Period

The period between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New is known as the inter- testamental period. The period is divided into four stages. These are:

- (1) Persia 538 B.C (400)-332 B.C

- (2) Greek 332-167 B.C
- (3) Hebrew Independence, 167- 63 B.C
- (4) Rome, 63 B.C. 70 A.D.

There are fourteen books of Jewish writings which belong to inter- Biblical period and are known as the Apocryphal (“Secret” or “hidden”). These writings, historical and religious in nature, are not included as part of our Canon of the Bible, though there has been frequent debate and difference of opinions on the matter. Even though they are not included in the list of inspired books, they have great value in the understanding of Jewish history and life of this period. They are:

1. I Esdras II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther (additions).
2. The wisdom of Solomon (The Book of Wisdom), Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Song of the Three Holy children (The Song of Song),
3. The History of Susana, The History of the Destruction of Bel and Dragon
4. The prayer of Manasseh, I Maccabees and II Maccabees.

These colourful character and religious books (deutero-Canonical, apocryphal and Institutions help one to understand the New Testament. Inter-Biblical period was a difficult and ye a crucially important one in the history of the Jewish people and it covers the time between the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and the futile revolt against Rome in A.D. 135. This history between the Testaments is divided into four stages.

3.4.2 The Persian Empire

In 539 BC, the Babylonian Empire fell to Persia under King Cyrus who appeared in the history of the Jews as a Messianic figure. In 550-333 B.C.E, the Persian Empire ruled over much of western Asia, including Israel. Like most imperial powers during the Iron Age, King Cyrus is reputed to be the brain behind the Persian kingdom. Cyrus first appears in history when in 559 B.C. at the age of forty, he inherited the small kingdoms of Anshan. When Cyrus became the Lord of Babylon, he adopted a benevolent policy towards those former Babylonian provinces.

3.4.3 Restoration of the Temple

The exiles did not return in one great caravan but kept coming back after 538 in separate groups and various tribes. Sabasra (Shesbazzar), apparently a son of Joachim, the king of Judah who had been deported in 598 led the first group. Their hopes of rebuilding the Temple were soon frustrated by the necessity of providing food and lodging for themselves in depopulated and desolate land and by the opposition of the Samaritans who considered Jerusalem under their control. The first group of resettle succeeded in only leveling the Temple area and arranging the foundations of the Temple. Another Davidic prince, Zorobabel (Zerubabe), succeeded where his uncle had failed. Encouraged by the Prophetic utterances, and perhaps by the loosening of Persia control over Palestine, while the king of Persia, Darius I, was securing his throne, the

Judeans under the leadership of Zerubabel and the high priest, Josue (Joshua), son of Josedel began again in 520 B.C.E to rebuild the Temple.

3.4.4 The Reform of Ezra

It is reported that in 458 B.C. Ezra, a secretary in charge of Jewish affairs in the Persian court, came, armed with a royal decree, to reorganize the Judean community in accordance with the law of Israel's God in which he was an expert. He read part of the Law of Moses to the assembled people which they accepted by celebrating the rites of the feast of Booths (Tabernacles). The law thus became the official constitution for the hieratic society. The out come of Ezra's severe strictures on marriages with non- Jews is unknown, for his report ends abruptly. These structures certainly caused a great commotion among the faithful and in all probability were not very effective as evidenced by Nehemiah grappling with the same problem. Ezra's commission was temporary, and he probably returned to his duties in Babylon when it expired.

3.4.5 The Reform of Nehemiah

Ezra's religious reform gave birth to a national resurgence that had as its prime objectives the rebuilding of Jerusalem's fortified walls. Nehemiah, a high official in the Persian couth heard of these events and won from Artaxerxes a commission to repair Jerusalem's battlement. Soon after he arrived in Jerusalem, he received a further commission as temporary governor of the Judean enclave. He stood firm against the threats and connivances of the Samaritans and their Judean collaborators and completed the basic fortifications within a few months. He then proceeded to populate the city, and regulate its social institutions. He returned to the Persian court in 433 B.C. but was again present in Judean some years later, when he was forced to reconfirm his reform by having the community solemnly accept the obligations of God's law. After Nehemiah's time until the Greek conquest in 333, hardly anything is known of the Judean ethnarchy. Thanks to the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, Judea had become a land ruled by its own sacred law and thus enjoyed a certain autonomy and even the power to coin its own money.

3.4.6 The Greek Empire

The Greek empire which began to emerge as a nation several centuries before Alexander the Great occupied the South-east fringe of Europe and Aegean isles-the territory now called Greece. The Greeks developed the most effective language the world has known. They also made a contribution unequalled by any other people in philosophy, literature, sculpture, architecture and other liberal arts. They gave to the world such men as Thucydides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Alexander, Demosthenes and many others. In the 4th century before Christ, their culture was to be taken by zealous apostles far east into the Orient itself. Before the victory of Alexander the Great at Issus in 333 B.C. Greek influences had already spread into Palestine, but soon after that the whole of the near east began to take on the Hellenistic appearance. His father Philip who was the king of Macedonia, one of the chief states of Greece had two great ambitions: first, to see Greece attain a place of leadership in the world, and second, to prepare his son, Alexander to realize this dream. He was able to give to his

people a conception of their possibilities as a nation and he inspired in Alexander an ambition to rule the world.

3.4.7 The Maccabean Period

The history of the Maccabees recorded in the book of Maccabees recounts the direct threat to the existence of the Jews since their exile in Babylonia. He endeavored to conquer Egypt itself from the Ptolemies but was unsuccessful. Seleucus IV came to the throne in 187 B.C and ruled until 176 BC. The hard years for the Jews came with Antiochus Epiphanes IV who succeeded his father Antiochus the Great. He is given by history to have ruled the Selachian kingdom established by Seleucus 1 between 175-163 B.C. He attempted to complete Hellenization of the Jews by strengthening his hold on Palestine, destroying the core of Jewish unity, and dedication to Yahweh's law, through the process of Hellenization. He also attacked Judaism by forbidding the practice of fundamental Jewish customs, such as their dietary laws and circumcision, and by forcing them to idolatry.

3.4.7.1 Antiochus IV Epiphane's

Antiochus IV is given by history to have ruled the Selachian kingdom established by Seleucus 1 between 175-163 B.C. He succeeded his father Antiochus the Great and belonged to the Antiochian dynasty. Surnamed Epiphanes (God made manifest), Antiochus IV was taken hostage after the battle of Magnesia in 190 BC and held in Rome for 15 years. Within this period, his father, Antiochus the Great died. A succession dispute arose as Heliodorus, the chief minister to Antiochus III murdered Demetrius the rightful heir to the throne within this period, Antiochus IV was released and, supported by Rome; he eliminated Heliodorus and seized the throne. Antiochus IV was a very vigorous man and pursued war expeditions like his father even if he was not as successful. For example, his advancement on Egypt was frustrated by the Romans. Having been frustrated at all angles, he could not but divert all his ambition to Jerusalem. After unsuccessful expeditions to Egypt he rallied his army under Appolonius and attacked the Jews on a Sabbath Day. As could be expected he met with little opposition and cruelly murdered the male Jews, enslaved the women and children and built a garrison in the city.

3.4.7.2 Mattathias

Mattathias was a priest of Modein and father of Judas Maccabeus during the reign of Antiochus IV and the era of Hellenism, in which the emissaries of Antiochus erected a pagan altar at Modein. And in order to show their loyalty to the government, the Jews were compelled to offer sacrifices at the pagan altar which was contrary to the Jewish laws. The aged priest of the village, Matthias was asked to come forward first to set a good example for the others. Mattathias refused to sacrifice at the pagan altar. A Jew, who was afraid of the wrath of Antiochus, made his way to the altar to offer the sacrifice. Mattathias, who was enraged, approached the altar, slew the apostate Jew and the emissary of Antiochus. With his sons, Mattathias destroyed the heathen altar and fled to the hills to avoid the certain reprisals which might be expected from Antiochus. Others joined the family of Mattathias.

3.4.7.3 Judas Maccabeus

Judas avoided open attacks but he got series of victory by his use of surprise attacks. He defeated the Syrian army three times, first under Apollonius who died at the same battle. At Beth-horon he defeated a second army under a commander named Seron, and a third time at Emmaus under Nicanor and Georgias. While all these were going on, Antiochus IV was on a campaign against the Parthians and Lysias who was left behind wanted to put a stop to the Jewish conflict. He was however, defeated so woefully that he had to inaugurate a revision of the Seleucid policies. Later, a letter came from Antiochus IV and the Romans to the Jews (II Macc. 11:27-33; 34-38). In his letter, Antiochus specifically allowed the Jews “permission to enjoy r own food and laws” and at the same time extended amnesty to all rebels who returned to their home town within fourteen days.

3.4.7.4 Jonathan

After the death of Judas, Jonathan reassembled and organized an armed resistance. First, he attacked an Arabian tribe in Transjordan which killed his brother John. Bacchides only saved his life by fleeing when he attacked Jonathan. It is said that Jonathan took the position of High Priest He died. But in some sources, it is said that Jonathan died before Alcimus. Jonathan is said to have expelled the followers of the Quran “teachers of righteousness “from office. He had thus become so powerful that he was not only able to survive without trouble as a result of a change of administration in Syria but also was successful in obtaining further concessions in the struggle for power. He succeeded in luring Jonathan to acontias, and had him imprisoned (1 Macc 12:39-49). It was there that he had Jonathan killed, when he could not get the throne that Simon and been elected to head.

3.4.7.5 Simon

After Jonathan’s murder, Simon established contact with Demetrius II who, more than ever, was dependent upon the support of the Maccabeans. In recognition of Judas sovereignty, Demetrius marked the new change in alignment with an amnesty decree, of a grand permanent exemption from taxation. For that reason the author of 1 Maccabees noted that in 142 B.C. the yoke of the Gentile oppressors was removed from Israel (Macc. 13:41) and marked the decisive break to the Maccabean rebel.

3.4.8 Roman Occupation

The Roman Empire occupies an important place in the history of the world. For centuries, it dominated the civilized world in which Jesus lived and did his work. The Jews were subjects of Rome, and like all their neighbours, were governed by Roman officials. They represented this domination chafed under its restrictions and so frequently rebelled against it, but to no avail. Their rebellion against Roman authority brought their national destruction, especially when Titus burnt Jerusalem and scattered them abroad in 70 A.D. The Jewish sects of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the Qumran community originated in this troubled Maccabean period and continued their bitter rivalry during the 1st century B.C. It was a land divided and ravaged by civil war between the two claimants to the royal high- priesthood of the

Hasmonean dynasty. Antiochus and Hyrcanus, supported by the Sadducees and Pharisees defeated the Roman General, Pompey when he marched on Jerusalem in 63.

3.4.9 The Modern State of Israel

The independent Republic of Israel was established on May 14th, 1948 in a part of ancient Palestine. The state of Israel occupies Galilee, the Plain of Esdraelon, the Mount Carmel range, the coastal plain and the Shephelah, (the foothills of ancient Judah) from Carmel south to the Gaza Strip, including a corridor to Jerusalem, and finally the Negeb reaching to a point at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqada. It is therefore, an irregular, generally narrow strip about 265 miles in length with disproportionately long borders, 590 miles on land and 158 on water. Its total area of 7,992.6 square miles is somewhat smaller than that of Massachusetts. It is bordered on the north by Lebanon and Syria, on the east by Syria and Jordan, and on the south by the Gaza little of the strip and Sinai Desert, both held by Egypt. Modern Israel includes but little of the heartland of ancient Israel-the highlands of Samaria and Judea. The largest cities in Israel are Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem.

3.4.10 The Government of Israel

The State of Israel is a republic headed by a president who is elected for a five year. The Knesset is a one-chamber parliament of 120 members who are elected for a 4-year term by secret ballot and the universal direct suffrage. Electors choose between national lists of candidates; seat being allocated in proportion to the number of votes obtained by each list. The government consists of the prime minister and a number of ministers who may, or may not be members of the Knesset. Because of the great diversity of views on the nature of the state, no constitution has been adopted. A certain number of basic laws deal with most of the topics usually set forth in the constitution. The most important laws passed by the Knesset are the following: the law of return, (1950) providing that every Jew shall be entitled to come to Israel as an immigrant; the Equality Rights-for-women Law (1951); the Nationality Law (1952); the Compulsory-and free-Education Law (1949); and the National Insurance Law (1953).

3.4.11 The Emergence of Jewish Sects

This is traceable to the inter-Testamental period, especially between the years 200 B.C-200 A.D. The political and religious tumult was so traumatic for the Jews that the unity of their religious vision disintegrated irreversibly. The cause of these religious squabbles was the influence of Hellenism on the life and culture of the Jews in Palestine. Many Jews were willing to “acculturate” Hellenism but others stood vehemently against it. Those who resisted Hellenism in it’s entirety at the beginning were known as the “Hasidim” or Hasidian The unity within the Hasidim, however, did not last as some of their members advocated for some compromise in the scene of “giving to Caesar what belongs to Caesar”, while others saw nothing wrong in combining both their religious role with a political office.

3.4.11.1 The Sadducees

Traditionally, the name “Sadducees” has been linked to the name of Zadok, a priest of the time of David and Solomon. In spite of the attempts to explain the origin of

the word nothing is actually known about its meaning or the origin of the group. There is no reference to a group called the Sadducees until the reign of John Hyrcanus (134-104 BC).

Some of the characteristics of the Sadducees include:

- a. They appear as loyal supporters of the Hasmonean kings, unlike the Pharisees who refused to support John Hyrcanus
- b. They restricted association to the priestly and aristocratic families. They denied the reward and punishment for the Soul in the afterlife which implied that belief in the existence of immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body ruled out and rejected divine intervention in human affairs.
- c. They believed that man is absolutely responsible for his actions. While the Sadducees had great political powers during the reign of John Hyrcanus, they lost many of their important positions during the reign of Queen Salome of Alexandra (76-67 BC) who favoured the Pharisees
- d. The Sadducees played an important part in the arrest and trial of Jesus. Undoubtedly, they saw the message of Jesus as a threat to their own power. They probably saw the incident commonly called the “cleansing of the Temple”

3.4.11.2 The Pharisees

Some of the characteristics of the pharisees include:

- a. They were however, the most powerful sect in the time of Jesus. We need to remember that the criticism of the Pharisees and the Sadducees which we find in the New Testament was often as a result of a prejudiced desire to show that Christianity was better than both groups. B. They saw the alien domination of the Holy Land ‘Pharisee’ is thought to have come from the Hebrew word “perush” which means “separatists” or the separate ones
- c. Some scholars interpret the name “Pharisee” to mean ‘people who expound or explain’, because the main work of the Pharisee was to expound or explain the Jewish Law.
- d. Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead, good and evil spirits, and rewards and punishments, and these beliefs were influenced by Persian ideas

3.4.11.3 The Samaritans

The Samaritans were those who settled in the territory generally referred to as Samaria. Initially, Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. With the dispersion during the exilic period, Herod the Great renamed this capital city Sabaste in 27 B.C. that is, the Greek equivalent of Augusta. The term Samaria then came to designate the entire territory beyond the Jordan River, comprising various cities, some of which Christ visited during his public ministry (Jn 4:4). Common presumptions, usually influenced by Jewish prejudice and polemics, take the Samaritans to be a generation of half caste people, the accidental consequence of the cultural intercourse

between the Jews left behind during the deportations and the foreign peoples that came to settle in Israel. Some scholars, however, prefer to see them as the other Jewish tribes who seceded from the Davidic dynasty after the death of Solomon, and later got colonized by the Assyrians during the mass conquest.

3.4.11.4 The Zealots

The party of the Zealots being one of the most formidable Jewish sects was founded by Judas the Galilean who led a revolt against the Roman domination in 6 A.D. A suggestion that Israel should pay tribute to pagan overlords was intolerable to the Zealots. Consequently, they considered it a sin to acknowledge loyalty to Caesar, for God alone was to be reckoned as king of Israel. They were called zealots because they followed the example of Mattathias and his followers who manifested Zeal for the law of God when Antiochus IV tried to suppress the Jewish religion. They were more or less fanatical Nationalists who did not only believe in prayer but in physical combat. The Romans called them “Sicarii” meaning “assassins” the name which comes from their practice of assassinating their political enemies in crowded streets.

3.4.11.5 The Essenes

The Essenes were one of the leading Jewish sects. They flourished in the second century BC and rank after the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Concerning their origin, history, and tenets, there has been much inclusive controversy. The sect arose about 150 B.C (the first named Essene is Judas, 100 BC) and disappeared towards the end of the first century A.D. They worshiped one God, Creator and Ruler of all things. They had great reverence for Moses, and they kept to the strict observance of the Sabbath to the later. They were also fanatical adherents to the law of circumcision. This sect came out of the syncretic tendencies that were manifested by their neighbours, that is, the mixture of the syncretic elements in their tenets and customs.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Explain briefly how the government of the modern state of Israel is run.

Activity 1

Search and copy out the Assess the process of hellenization enforced on the Jews by Antiochus II.

4.0 Summary

In this unit, we saw that the reconstruction of the Israelites nations started by King Cyrus. The long years of Jewish humiliation by and sorrows in exile were brought to an end by Cyrus who had concern for the welfare of his subjects, and reversed all former policies and by enacting an edict which gave the people protection, assistance and freedom of worship. Many Jews returned from exile in Babylon to take part in reconstruction process of the nation. This paved way for inter-biblical period, and formation of modern state of Israel.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

Explain briefly how the government of the modern state of Israel is run.

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

Explain briefly how the government of the modern state of Israel is run.

- The independent Republic of Israel was established on May 14th, 1948 in a part of ancient Palestine. The state of Israel occupies Galilee, the Plain of Esdraelon, the Mount Carmel range, the coastal plain and the Shephelah, (the foothills of ancient Judah) from Carmel south to the Gaza Strip, including a corridor to Jerusalem, and finally the Negeb reaching to a point at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqada. It is therefore, an irregular, generally narrow strip about 265 miles in length with disproportionately long borders, 590 miles on land and 158 on water. Its total area of 7,992.6 square miles is somewhat smaller than that of Massachusetts. It is bordered on the north by Lebanon and Syria, on the east by Syria and Jordan, and on the south by the Gaza little of the strip and Sinai Desert, both held by Egypt.

8.0 Glossary

Hellenism: The acculturation of the people of Israel by alien cultures

MODULE 3**UNIT 1 JEWISH RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS****CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
- 3.1 The Jewish Religious Denomination
 - 3.1.1 The Jewish major Forms of Israelites Religion
 - 3.1.2 Judaism
 - 3.1.2.1 The Secular-Traditional Spectrum
 - 3.1.2.2 The Orthodox Spectrum
 - 3.1.3.3 The Secular Religious Status Quo
 - 3.1.3.4 The Chief Rabine
 - 3.1.3.5 Buddhism
 - 3.1.3.6 Samaritans
 - 3.1.3.7 Hinduism
 - 3.1.3.8 Bahai
 - 3.1.3 Sanctity of Jerusalem, Mount Gerizin and Haifa/Acre
 - 3.1.3.1 Religious Tension within the Jewish Community
 - 3.1.3.2 Religious Tension between Jews and Christians
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-marked Assignments
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In unit five of module 2, you learnt about the history of Israel time of exile to reconstituted state of Israel. You were told that Jews experienced many years of humiliation and hardship under Persian and Palestine kings, until the reign of King Cyrus whose policy of leniency allowed them freedom to return to Jerusalem. In this module, you will learn about the religion of Israel as a central feature of the country that plays a major role in shaping the culture and lifestyle of the people. Religion played a central role in Israel's history not only as a country in the world where a majority of citizens are Jewish but also as a result of its population.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss all forms of Judaism
- Explain the origin of Islam in the Jewish nation.
- Give the historical development of Christianity in Israel.
- Discuss other religious minorities in Israel.

3.0 Main Body

3.1 The Jewish Religious Denominations

The origin of Israelite religion is ascribed to mosaic tradition which makes frequent references to the Exodus traditions (Am 2 9-11) where God made a covenant with the people of Israel. The external forms of Israelite worship bear different form from the native Canaanites which they have they have been principally drawn. Animal sacrifice was normative (Is 1:11; Am 5:4); there was also the offering of incense and cereal sacrifices (Is 1:13, Am 5:22). Festivals were kept at ancient shrines like Galgal and Bethel (Am 5:4-5) on the occasion of Sabbaths, feast days and new moons (Is 1: 13-14, Am 8:4-5, Am 4-5). Tithes were paid for the support of the sanctuaries (Am 5.4), and sacred banquets were eaten there (Am 2:8). Prophecy with its living word of God provided a religious direction for monarchic Israel that is unparalleled in any other ancient people maintained the covenant ideal imperturbably in the face of institutions that should otherwise have brought its eventual extinction. Prophecy was always harsh in its criticism of the monarchy, but it did not seek to abolish it. In general, prophetic religion was indifferent to human institutions. The religion of Israel that began in historical events was also strongly affected by them in its subsequent developments. These forms of religious organizations are broadly grouped under major and minorities forms of Israelites religion.

3.1.1 The Major Forms of Israelites Religion

3.1.2 Judaism

Most citizens in the state of Israel are Jewish, and most Israelite Jews practice Judaism in some form. In the last two centuries the largest Jewish community in the world, in the United States, has divided into a number of Jewish dominations. The largest and most influential of these dominations are Orthodox Judaism, Reform Judaism, and Conservative Judaism. All of the above denominations exist, to vary degree, in the State of Israel. Nevertheless, Israelites tend to classify Jewish identity in ways that are strikingly different from American Jewry.

3.1.2.1 The Secular Traditional Spectrum

The secular traditional spectrum of Judaism covers a wide range of ideologies and levels of observance, and is based on a self definition phenomenon rather than an organized movement. However, the Shomer Masoret generally perceives them as partly observant. Many Jewish Israelites feel that being Israelite (living among Jews, speaking Hebrews, in the land of Israel), is in itself a sufficient expression of Judaism without any religious observances. This conforms to some classical secular-Zionist ideologies of Israelite-style civil religion. In 2007, a poll by the Israelite Democracy Institute found that 27% of Israelite Jews say that they keep the Sabbath; while 53% said they do not keep it at all

3.1.2.3 The Orthodox Spectrum

The Orthodox spectrum deals with “Techillim neged Tilim” (“Psalms (reacting) to counter Missiles”). This was a slogan initially coined during the First Gulf War, 1991, and turned into a popular slogan- sticker ever since, especially among the Israelite Religious Zionism (“National Religious”) community and the Haredi Judaism sector.

The spectrum covered by “Orthodox” in the Diaspora exists in Israel, again with some important variations. The Orthodox spectrum in Israel includes a far greater percentage of the Jewish population than in the Diaspora, though how much greater is hotly debated

3.1.2.3 The Secular Religious Status quo

Secular religious status quo, agreed upon by David Ben-Gurion with the religious parties at the time of the declaration of independence in 1948 is an agreement on the religious Jewish role in government and judicial system of Israel. The agreement was based upon a letter that was sent by Ben-Gurion to Agudat Israel dated 19 June 1947. Under this agreement, this still operates in most respects today:

- The Chief Rabbinate has authority over kashrut, Shabbat, Jewish burial and personal status issues, such as marriage, divorce, and conversions.
- Streets in Haredi neighbourhoods are closed to traffic on the Sabbath.
- There is no public transport on that day, and most businesses are closed. However, there is public transport in Haifa, since Haifa had a large Arab population at the time of the British Mandate.
- Restaurants who wish to advertise themselves as kosher must be certified by the Chief Rabbinate.
- Importation of non-kosher foods is prohibited. Despite this, there are a few local pork farms in kibbutzim, catering for establishment selling white meat, due to its relatively popular demand among specific population sectors, particularly the Russian immigrant of the 1990s. Despite the status quo, the Supreme Court ruled in 2004 that local governments are not allowed to ban the sale of pork, although this had previously been a common by-law.

3.1.2.4 The Chief-Rabbine

The chief-Rabbinate was established during the British Mandate of Palestine by the British administration established as an official dual Ashkenazi-Sephardi “Chief Rabbinate” (rabbanut harashit) that was exclusively Orthodox, as part of an effort to consolidate and organize Jewish life based on its own model in Britain, which encouraged strict loyalty to the British crown, and in order to attempt to influence the religious life of the Jews in Palestine in a similar fashion. In 1921, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1864-1935) was chosen as the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi and Rabbi Jacob Meir as the first Sephardi Chief Rabbi (Rishon LeTzion). Rabbi Kook was a leading light of the religious Zionist movement, and was acknowledged by all as a great rabbi of his generation. He believed that the work of secular Jews toward creating an eventual Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael was part of a divine plan for the settlement of the land of Israel.

3.1.2.5 Buddhism

The Buddhist Community in Israel practices Tibetan Buddhism. The small community of Buddhists in Israel is made up of scholars from all schools of Buddhism. Presently, Buddhism has a large population of followers, especially in countries like Thailand,

China, Mongolia and Sri-Lanka. Some of these states in America have Buddhist temples which attest to the emergence of Buddhism in the United States.

3.1.2.8 Bahai

The small Bahai Community in Israel was made up of European migrants who had unified themselves in an organization initially known as the vaad Ha'ir, which is not live or preach in Israel. Thus, the Bahai members from other countries wishing to visit Israel had to seek written permission from Bahai world centre in Haifa prior to their visit.

3.1.2.6 Samaritans

Israel is home to significant populations of Samaritans and Karaites in the world. As of November 1, 2007, there were 712 Samaritans. The community lives almost exclusively in Kiryat Luza on Mount Gerizim and in Holon. Ancestrally they claim descent from a group of Israelite inhabitants from the tribes of Joseph and Levi.

3.1.2.7 Hinduism

The small Hindus community in Israel is mostly made up of representatives of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In 2002, most of the devotees lived in Katzir-Harish. Today, the Hindu community is found in many parts of Israel and surrounding countries like India, Nepal and Bali in the Indonesian archipelago. Substantial Hindu communities are also found in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Fiji, the Caribbean, East Africa, and South Africa. Scattered Hindu is found in most parts of the western world.

Self-assessment exercise 1

List three major religions of the Israelites.

Activity 1

Explain in details the Secular religious status quo, agreed upon by David Ben-Gurion

3.1.2.5 Sanctity of Jerusalem, Mount Gerizim, and Haifa/Acre

Jerusalem plays an important role in three monotheistic religions, namely-Judaism, Christianity, and Islam-and Haifa and Acre play a role in a fourth, Bahai. Mount Gerizim is a holy site to what can be considered a fifth-Samaritanism. The 2000 Statistic Yearbook of Jerusalem lists 1204 synagogues, 158 churches, and 75 mosques within the city. Despite efforts to maintain peaceful religious coexistence, some sites, such as the Temple Mount, have been a continuous source of friction and controversy. Jerusalem has been sacred to the Jews since the 10th century BC. The Western Wall a remnant of the Second Temple, is a holy site for Jews, second only to the Temple Mount itself. Christianity reveres Jerusalem not only for its role in the Old Testament but also for its significance in the life of Jesus. The land currently occupied by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is considered one of the top candidates for Golgotha and thus has been

a Christian pilgrimage site for the past two thousand years. In 1889, the Ottoman Empire allowed the Catholic Church to re-establish its hierarchy in Palestine.

3.1.3.1 Religious tensions within the Jewish community

The State of Israel allows freedom of religious communities, both in law and in practice. Freedom House reports: “Freedom of religion is respected. Each community has jurisdiction over its own members in matters of marriage, burial and divorce. “Religious tensions exist between Jewish haredi Israelite. Haredi Israelite males devote their young adulthood to full time Talmudic studies and therefore generally get exemptions from military service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Originally the exemption from uniform conscription was intended to apply to a small number of elite religious students. Many leaders of haredi yeshivas encourage student to apply for exemptions from service, ostensibly to protect them the secularizing environment of the IDF. Over the years, the number of exemptions has grown to about 10% of conscript able manpower.

3.1.3.2 Religious Tensions between Jews and Christians

Messianic Jews who are members of Messianic congregations, and separately Jehovah’s Witnesses and evangelical Christians, are among the most active missionary movements in Israel. Their proselytizing has faced frequent demonstrations and intermittent protests, most prominently by the haredi anti- missionary group Yad LeAchim, which infiltrates those movements, as well as other proselytizing groups including Hare Krishna and Scientology, and maintains extensive records on their activities. Attempt by Messianic Jews to evangelize other Jews are seen by many religious Jews as incitement to “avodah zarah” (foreign worship or idolatry). Over the years there have been several arson attempts and firebombing of messianic congregations. There have also been attacks on Messianic Jews and hundreds of New Testaments distributed in Or Yehuda were burned. While missionary activity is legal, it is illegal to offer money or other material inducements, and legislation banning missionary work outright has been attempted in the past. Orthodox Jewish communities in Israel have come under scrutiny for the negative stereotyping and scapegoating of Christian minorities in the region, including violent acts against Christian missionaries and communities.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Give three reasons for the tension between Christians and Judaist in Israel.

Activity 2

Search and copy out the contemporary significance of Jerusalem to Christians today?

4.0 Summary

Religion in Israel is a central feature of the nation which play a major role in mouldings the culture lifestyle as well as the history of the Israelites. The people of Israel define their religious affiliation by degree of their religious practice. Israel was founded to provide a national home, safe from persecution, to be Jewish people. Most citizens in the state of Israel are Jewish, and most Israelite Jews practice Judaism in some form. The largest and most influential of these denominations are Orthodox Judaism, Reform Judaism, and Conservative Judaism. Many Jewish Israelites feel that being Israel is in itself a sufficient expression of Judaism without any religious observances. This conforms to some classical secular Zionist ideologies of Israelites-style of civil religion

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

1. List three major religions of the Israelites.
2. Give three reasons for the tension between Christians and Judaist in Israel.

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

List three major religions of the Israelites.

- Bahia
- Buddhism
- Hinduism

Self-assessment exercise 2

Give three reasons for the tension between Christians and Judaist in Israel.

- Judaist do not believe in Jesus Christ
- Differences in doctrine
- Differences in liturgy

8.0 Glossary

Judaism: It is an Abrahamic religion tracing its origin to the Hebrew people of the ancient middle east, as documented in their religious writings, the Tanakh.

UNIT 3 RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN ISRAEL

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 The Torah
 - 3.2 The Temple
 - 3.3 Priesthood
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Tutor-marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In this unit, specific focus will be brought to bear on the religious Institutions in Israel, which play significant roles in the three Jewish monotheistic religions, namely: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. These religious institutions include: the Torah, Temple and Priesthood.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the significance of Torah in the religions of Israelite.
- Give a historical survey of the institution of priesthood in religions of Israelites.
- Describe the sanctity of the Temple in religious worship of the people of the Israel.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Torah (Pentateuch)

The term Torah also known as “Pentateuch” derives from the Greek “Pentateuchos, which means “five containers” in which scrolls were kept. It also refers to the five Books of Moses. These books tell the stories of creation of God’s promises to Abraham and his descendants, of the Exodus from Egypt, of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai and how God brought the people of Israel into the Promised Land.

3.1.1 Genesis

The Book talks about the origin of the world, of man, of sin and of God’s people. The English title “Genesis” was give to the Septuagint translation of the book because of its concern with the origins of the world (Gn 1.1;2.4), of the human race, and, in particular of the Hebrew people.

3.1.2 Exodus

This book describes the departure of the Hebrew people from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. It recounts the history of the chosen people from the point where the book of Genesis leaves off. It recounts the oppression by the Egyptians, the ever-increasing descendants of Jacob and their miraculous deliverance by God through Moses

3.1.3 Leviticus

The title of the book is derived from Levi', the name of the third son of Jacob, whose descendants were the Levitical priests dedicated to caring for the tabernacle and later, the Temple. The book is so called because it contains the rules to be followed in the worship and the duties of the Levites and priests. The book is almost entirely concerned with laws and rubrics and served as the liturgical handbook of the Levitical priesthood meant to teach the Israelite that they should always keep themselves in a state of legal purity, or external sanctity, as a sign of intimate union with the Lord

3.1.4 Numbers

This book derives its name from the designation "arithmo" given to it in the ancient Greek translation. The Greek word meaning numbers was apparently chosen in reference to the census figures in chapters 1 & 26 as well as the arithmetical data elsewhere in the book. The Book is a combination of law and history. Among the Jews, it is called "bemidbar in the wilderness" which is taken from the first verse of the book.

3.1.5 Deuteronomy

This is the fifth and last book of Pentateuch. The book derives its name from via the Latin from the Septuagint Deuteronomy which literally means the second law because it deals with the inauguration of the law of the covenant. It is one of the most important books in the Bible.

Self-assessment exercise 1

List the five books of Torah or Pentateuch.

Activity 2

Search and copy out the similarities and differences that exists among the five books of the Pentateuch

3.2 Temple

The term "temple" as derives from the Hebrew word "Beit Hamikdash" meaning "House of the Holy" or "The sanctified House", and only the Temple in Jerusalem is referred to by this name. The Temple is also called by a variety of other names in the Hebrew Bible, such as Beit YHWH (House of God) or simply Beitechah (Your House) or Heichal (Temple).

3.2.1 Location of the Temple

There are basically three theories as to where the Temple stood, they are:

- (1) The Temple was where the Dome of the Rock is now located
- 2) The Temple was located a little to the north of the Dome of the Rock
- (3) The Temple was located a little to the east of the Dome of the Rock.

Other theories have the Temple either located to the north or to the South of the Temple Mount. Scholars generally reject more outlandish theories that claim the Temple was located some place other than Jerusalem or even outside the land of Israel. The main courtyard had thirteen gates. On the south side, beginning with the southwest corner, there were four gates:

- The Shaar Ha'Elyon (the Upper Gate)
- Shaar HaDelek (the Kindling Gate) where wood was brought in
- Shaar Ha'Bechorot (the Gate of Firstborn), where people with first-born animal offerings entered.
- Shaar HaMayim (the Water Gate) where the Water Libation entered on Sukkot.

On the north side, beginning with the northwest corner, there were four gates:

- Shaar Yechonyah (The Gate of Yechoyah), where kings of the Davidic line enter and Techonyah/Yehoyachin left for the last time to captivity.
- Shaar Koban (The gate of the Offerings), where priests entered with kodeshei kodeashim offerings
- Shaar HaNashim (The Women's Gate), where women entered into the Azara or main courtyard to performed offerings
- Shaar Hashir (The Gate of Songs), where the Levites entered with their musical instruments.

On the east side was Shaar Nikanor, between Women's Courtyard and the main Temple Courtyard, which had two minor doorways, one on its right and one on its left. On the western wall, which was relatively unimportant, there were two gates that did not have any name.

3.2.2 Destruction of the Temple

The Talmud (Yoma 9b) provides theological reasons for the destruction: Why was the first Temple destroyed? Because the three cardinal sins were rampant in society; Idol worship, licentiousness, and murder...And why then was the second Temple-wherein the society was involved in Torah, commandments and acts of kindness-destroyed? Because gratuitous hatred is equal in severity to the three cardinal sins: idol worship, licentiousness, and murder.

3.2.3 The Role of Temple in contemporary Jewish services

Part of the traditional Jewish morning service, that part surrounding the Shema prayer, is essentially unchanged from the daily worship service performed in the Temple. In addition, the Amidah prayer traditionally replaces the Temple's daily tamid and special-occasion Mussaf (additional) offerings (there are separate versions for the different

types of sacrifices. They are recited during the times their corresponding offerings were performed in the Temple. The Temple is mentioned extensively in Orthodox services. Conservative Judaism retains mentions of the Temple and its restoration, but removes references to the sacrifices. References to sacrifices on holiday are made in the past tense, and petitions for their restoration are removed. A mention in Orthodox Jewish services includes:

- A daily recital of Biblical and Talmudic passages related to the korbanot (sacrifices) performed in the Temple.
- References to the restoration of the Temple and sacrificial worships in the daily Aidah prayer, the central prayer in Judaism.
- A traditional personal plea of the restoration for the Temple at the end of private recitation of the Amidah.
- A prayer for the restoration of the “house of our lives” and the shekhinah (divine presence) “to dwell among us” is recited during the Amidah prayer.
- Recitation of the psalm of the day; the psalm sung by the Levites in the Temple for that day during the daily morning service.
- Numerous psalms sung as part of the ordinary service make extensive references to the Temple and Temple worship.
- Recitation of the special Jewish holiday prayers for the restoration of the Temple and their offering, during the Mussaf services on Jewish holiday.
- An extensive recitation of the special Temple service for Yom Kippur during the service for that holiday.
- Special services for Sukkot (Hakafot) contain extensive (but generally obscure references to the special Temple service performed on that day.

The destruction of the Temple is mourned on the Jewish fast day of Taisha B’Av. Three other minor fasts (Tenth of Tevet, 17th of Tammuz, and Third of Tishrei), also mourn events leading to or following the destruction of the Temple. There are also morning practices which are observed at all times, for example, the requirement to leave part of the house unflustered.

3.2.4 The Role of the Temple in other Religions

3.2.4.1 The Role of the Temple in Christianity

In addition to the Hebrew Bible, the Temple is mentioned many times in the New Testament. In this scriptures, Jesus prays there (Mark 11:25-26) and chases away money changers and other merchants from the courtyard, turning over their tables and accusing them of desecrating a sacred place with secular ways. According to the New Testament Gospel, it was to the Temple Court that Jesus was brought as a child, to be presented at the Temple (Luke 2:22) and to attend festivals (Luke 2:41). Jerusalem historian, Dan Mazar, reported in the Jerusalem Christian Review on the numerous archaeological discoveries made at this location by his grandfather, Prof. Benjamin Mazar, which included the first century stairs of ascent, where Jesus and his disciples preached, as well as “mikvaot” (or baptismal) used both Christian and Jewish pilgrims

3.2.4.2 The Role of the Temple in Islam

Imam Abdul Hadi Palazzi, leader of Italian Muslim Assembly, quotes the Qur'an to support Judaism's special connection to the Temple Mount. According to Palazzi, "The most authoritative Islamic sources affirm the Temples," He adds that Jerusalem is sacred to Muslims because of its prior holiness to Jews and its standing as home to the biblical prophets and kings David and Solomon, all of whom he says are sacred figures also in Islam. He claims that the Qur'an "expressly recognizes that Jerusalem plays the same role for Jews that Mecca has for Muslims".

3.2.4.2 Priesthood

The priesthood is an essential part of the Jewish religion. It is a unique office found in Jewish monotheistic religions and other religions of the world such as Judaism, Islam, Christianity, African Traditional Religion, among others. Priesthood is an institution of consecrated people, especially chosen or set apart by God for a special mission. This mission is broadly divided into mediator and mediums roles. The Christian priesthood, which is our main concern in this unit, is the unique and eternal priesthood of Christ. It is the priesthood of the New Covenant and Christ is the High priest.

The role of the priest include:

- a. Priests perform these roles as those who participate in one priesthood of Jesus Christ and as mediators between God and creation, with the institutionalized church behind them and the people before them, accountable to both.
- b. They are ordained ministers called to be leaders in daily search for holiness and daily witness of fidelity. Although the ministerial (Sacerdos) priesthood compliments the common priesthood of the faithful which every baptized person shares in it, there is distinction between the two in terms of function and status
- c. The offering of sacrifices

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What are the three fold functions of Jewish Priest?

Activity 2

Search and copy out the significance a temple to Muslims.

4.0 Summary

In this unit, we have seen that the Jewish religious institutions are veritable ingredients in shaping the socio-cultural and religio-political life of the people of Israel. For the Jews, law consists of immutable core (the Torah), surrounded by layers of interpretive applications, each of which becomes bonded to the original over time, expanding the

whole Corpus. Thus, Jewish culture has come to look upon the Torah as instruments or law that they are bound to but not bounded by them.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

1. List the five books of Torah or Pentateuch and discuss them.
2. What are the three-fold functions of Jewish Priest?

6.0 Reference/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

List the five books of Torah or Pentateuch:

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

Self-assessment exercise 2

What are the three fold functions of Jewish Priest?

- To offer sacrifices
- Plead to God on the behalf of the people
- Direct the people in times of war

8.0 Glossary

Immutable: The inability of something to change its nature, shape, forms, and pattern.

Radical Islam: the concept of the radical Islam is that which is brokered by force. The consciousness of its bearer is such that they are capable of doing anything to propagate or take their believe to any land or country.

UNIT 2 THE JEWISH FEASTS

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 The Major Jewish Feasts
 - 3.1.1 The Passover
 - 3.1.2 The Feast of unleavened Bread
 - 3.1.3 The Feast of Tabernacles
 - 3.1.4 The Feast of Pentecost
 - 3.1.5 The Feasts Fulfilled in Christ
 - 3.1.5.1 Feast of Trumpets
 - 3.1.5.2 The Day of Atonement
 - 3.1.5.3 Hanukkah
 - 3.1.5.4 Feast of First Fruits
 - 3.1.5.5 The Feast of mourning
 - 3.1.5.6 The New Year Feast
 - 3.2 Significance of Feasts in the Religious and Social life of Jewish People
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the present unit, you will be exposed to the Jewish feasts and their significance in the religious and social life of the Israelites. Feasts provide social direction for the community which invariably touches the life of the whole Jewish people. Some of these feasts are communal ones, and are celebrated by the whole Jewish nation.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, the you should be able to:

- Discuss the major feasts of the Jewish people.
- Explain the four Jewish feasts fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Major Jewish Feasts

There are seven major feasts of Jewish people. These include: the feast of Passover, the feast of unleavened Bread, the feast of Pentecost, the feast of Tabernacle, the feast of Trumpets and the feast of Hanukkah, the last four feasts are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

They are: the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Atonement, the feast of Tabernacle and the feast of Hanukkah.

3.1.1 The Feast Passover

Passover was the first feast celebrated by the Jewish people after their exodus from the land of Egypt. The origin of the word Passover is uncertain, but it is related in popular etymology to the passing over of God when he struck down the Egyptians and spared the Hebrews..

3.1.2 The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The feast of unleavened Bread was celebrated a day after Passover supper and it lasted for seven days. During this period of celebration, the Israelites ate bread without leaven (Lev. 23:6-11). The Israelites left Egypt in a hurry and had no time for leaven in bread. The unleavened bread symbolized the purging out of the sins of Egyptians (I Cor. 5:7-8), the beginning of the Exodus of the Jewish people out of Egypt and crucifixion of Jesus. The Hebrew people were to eat unleavened Bread and to eat the paschal standing and dressed for their journey to indicate the atmosphere and haste of the departure.

There are three main acts in the Passover celebration:

- (a) The slaying and eating of the Passover lamb
- (b) The sprinkling of the doorposts and lintels with the blood of the lamb
- (c) The eating of unleavened bread and bitter herbs with loins girded, shoes on the feet and staves in hand, as men ready for a journey.

3.1.3 Pentecost

This feast of Pentecost took place fifty days after the feast of first fruits. Pentecost, which means fifty, was the feast all Jewish males were required to celebrate at the temple in Jerusalem. It celebrates the giving of the Torah. Jewish born tradition teaches that King David was born and died on this day, and that Enoch was taken up to heaven on this day (Gen. 5:24).

3.2 The Feasts Fulfilled in Jesus Christ

There are four feasts fulfilled in Jesus Christ, namely: The feast of Trumpets, the feast of Atonement, the feast of Tabernacle and the feast of Hanukkah. These four feasts as discussed above are connected with Jesus Christ, our paschal lamb that was slain.

3.2.1 The Feast of Trumpets

This feast occurs on Tishri I in the fall (September to October). On this day the high priest blows the ram's horn (the shofar r/v) announcing the beginning of the New Year. A Jewish tradition gives this day a fourfold meaning:

1. New year day
2. The day of remembrance
3. The day of Judgment
4. The day of blowing Shofar.

On this day Isaiah 60-61 is read in the synagogues to teach the lesson that eventually the Lord will be revealed as King and be accepted as the ruler of the world.

3.2.2 The Feast of Atonement

This occurs every fifty years in the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25). On this day, Aaron, the high priest made atonement for Israel. On October, 1973 Israel was saved from annihilation when the Arabs overran their defenses in the Yom Kippur war. The Day of Atonement is also the possible date when Israel will mourn as they see their messiah whom they have pierced.

3.2.3 The Feast of Tabernacles

This feast was instituted by God at the end of the fruit harvest (September to October). During these seven days feast, the Jewish men were required to attend feast in Jerusalem and to live in booths in the wilderness for forty years (Lev. 23:33-34).

3.2.4 The Feast of Hannukkah

It is not one of the appointed feasts, but celebrated because it commemorates the cleansing and rededication of the second Temple in 165 BC. On the day before Hannukah Israel has witnessed four events:

1. In 520 BC, the foundation of the second Temple was laid.
2. In 165 BC the Temple was recaptured and cleansed
3. In 168 BC Antiochus stopped the Temple sacrifice.
4. In AD 1917 Jerusalem was freed from Turkish rule.
5. Possible date for the miraculous defeat of Russian invasion: Gog and Magog

3.1.5 The Feast of First Fruits

This is the third of the seven feasts of Israel which bring the first fruits of the harvest into God's house to acknowledge Him as their source (Ex. 23:19). Four historical events happened on this day:

1. Noah's Ark rested on Mount Ararat (Gen. 8:4), first fruits of a new beginning.
2. Israel miraculously crosses over the Red Sea (Ex 14:13-14), First fruits of a new nation reborn from the bondage of Egypt.
3. Israel eats the first fruits of the Promised Land (Josh 5:10-12). Nisan 16 last day God reined Manna. On Nisan 17 Israel ate the first fruits of the Promised Land. This is celebrated by Israel to this day.
4. Jesus Christ rose from the dead (1 Cor 15:20). Jesus was crucified on Nisan 15 and on Nisan 17 rose from the dead-resurrections.

3.1.6 The Feast of Mourning

There were four fasts of mourning Israel practices established to commemorate tragedies in connection with the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem when the Babylonian army conquered Israel in successive invasions from 606 BC to 587 BC. The fast of mourning on Tammuz 17 is a three-week period of mourning leading to the fast of Tisha Be-av on Av 9 (July). Four spiritually significant events happened on Tammuz 17.

1. Moses broke the tablets of the Law when he sees Israel's idolatry.
2. Babylon breaks through the walls of Jerusalem and stops.
3. The final fall of the Jewish resistance at Massada in Nisan 15. 72 AD

3.1.7 The New Year

This is the feast of cleansing and the beginning of the New Year celebrated in our mid march. On this day:

- The tabernacle was dedicated during the Exodus second year after (Ex. 40:2, 33-34).
- The Temple was cleansed by Hezekiah (2 Chron 28:23).
- Ezra and the exile began their return to Jerusalem from Babylonian (Nisan 1, 457 BC, Ezra 7:9).
- The decree is given to Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem by the Persian King Artaxerxes Longimanus in Nisan 1, 445 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8).
- The Millennial Temple will be cleansed on Nisan 1 (Ezekiel. 45:18)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Why is a feast of Pentecost described as the feast of fifty days?

Activity 2

Search and copy out Give reasons why the feast of Hannukah is very important to the Jewish people?

4.0 Summary

In this unit, we have examined the different types of feasts of the Jewish people and the once fulfilled by Christ as the basis of mourning the moral, religious and social life of the Jewish people. These feasts play various roles in the society to enhance the growth and development of Jewish culture, customs and traditions.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

Why is a feast of Pentecost described as the feast of fifty days?

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

Why is a feast of Pentecost described as the feast of fifty days?

- This is because the feast of Pentecost took place fifty days after the feast of first fruits

8.0 Glossary

Shofar: A shofar is an ancient musical horn typically made of a ram's horn, used for Jewish religious purposes. Like the modern bugle, the shofar lacks pitch-altering devices, with all pitch control done by varying the player's embouchure

Millennium Rule: The Millennium is the 1,000-year period of peace and righteousness following the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, who will reign over the earth during that time.

UNIT 3 SIGNIFICANCE OF JEWISH FEASTS**CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Body
 - 3.1 Significance of Jewish Major Feasts
 - 3.1.1 The Feast of New Year
 - 3.1.2 Passover Sanctification
 - 3.1.3 The Passover Supper
 - 3.1.4 The Feast of Trumpets
 - 3.1.5 The Day of Atonement
 - 3.1.6 The Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - 3.1.7 The Feast of Tabernacles
 - 3.1.8 The Feast of Mourning
 - 3.1.9 The Day of the First Fruits
 - 3.1.10 The Feast of Hanukkah
 - 3.1.11 The Feast of Tisha Be-Av
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Tutor-marked Assignment
- 6.0 References/Further Readings
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)
- 8.0 Glossary

1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned about the feasts of Jewish people. You were presented with the feasts of Jewish people. In this last unit of module 3, you will examine the significance of feasts in the religious and social life of the Israelites.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the significance of the major feasts of the Jewish people.
- Differentiate between the major Jewish feasts and the feasts fulfilled by Jesus Christ.
- Identify the role played by Jewish feasts in the religious and social life of the people of Israelites.

3.0 Main Body

3.1.1 The Feast of New Year.

It was celebrated on mid march and is for cleansing and the beginning of New Year. It is also meant to commemorate the dedication of the Tabernacle during the Exodus from Egypt, two years after (Ex. 40:2, 33-34), the cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah (2 Chron 29:23), the beginning of Ezra and exiles as well as the attacks of the Temple Mount by Rome, forcing the priests to stop the daily sacrifices.

Self-assessment exercise 1

Mention two significances of the feast of New Year.

Activity 1

What is the difference between the feast of the new year and new year celebration?

3.1.2 Passover Sanctification

It was celebrated to mark the followings:

- The sanctification of the Passover Lamb during the Exodus (Ex. 12:3-6).
- The Crossing of Jordan River and the entering of Israelites into the promised land, forty years later (Jos. 4:9).
- The death of Jesus Christ on this day, Palm Sunday, by the priests and political system as well as crucifixion on Nisan 14 (Dan 9:26).
- The Giving of vision of the millennial Temple to prophet Ezekiel (Ez. 40:1-2).

3.1.3 The Passover Supper

The Feast of Passover supper was to remember:

1. God's covenant with Abraham concerning the Promised Land on Nisan 14. And 430 years after this promise, Israelites left Egypt for the Promised Land.
2. The eaten of the Passover Supper in preparation for the Exodus (Ex. 12:14).
3. To renew the covenant-the first Passover (Gen. 17:10-11; Jos 5:3, 5:11-12).
4. The finding of the Book of the Law and its reaffirming under King Josiah (2 Chron 34:2-14). The first King he did as a result was to celebrate the Passover Feast on Nisan 14 in obedience to God.
5. The dedication of the Second Temple in Nisan 14, 515 BC and celebration of Passover (Ez. 6:16-19).
6. Jesus celebration of the last supper with His disciples and offers a new covenant (Lk 22:19-20).

Self-assessment exercise 2

Discuss three significance of Passover sanctification?

Activity 2

Briefly explain the story behind the instructions of god in observance of the feat of the Passover?

3.1.4 The Feast of Trumpets

The Feast was meant to announce the beginning of the New Year. It was also New Year day, the day of remembrance, the day of Judgment and the day of blowing the Shofar. On the feast of trumpets, Isaiah 60-61 was read in the synagogues to teach the lesson that the Lord will be revealed as King and be accepted as the ruler of the world as stated earlier in this unit.

3.1.5 The Day of Atonement

It is the day to mark three important events in Jewish history, namely:

1. The making of the atonement for Israel by Aaron, the High Priest.
2. The saving of Israelites from annihilation when the Arabs overran their defenses in the Yom Kippur war on October, 1973.
3. The possible date when Israel will mourn as they see their messiah whom they have pierced.

3.1.6 The Feast of Unleavened Bread

1. This feast occurs the day after Passover Supper and lasts for seven days to commemorate the beginning of Israelites Exodus from the bondage in Egypt.
2. The crucifixion of Jesus-our Passover Lamb
3. The final fall of the Jewish resistance of Massala in Nisan 15, 72 AD.

Self-assessment exercise 3

Why the feast of unleavened Bread was celebrated a day after Passover?

Activity 3

Specifically itemize the instructions god gave to the people of Israel about the feast of the unleavened bread?

3.1.7 The Feast of Tabernacle

The Tabernacles feast was instituted by God at the end of the fruit harvest (September to October) to remember:

1. The dedication of Solomon's Temple (2 Chron 5:2-3; IKgs 8:1-2).
2. The birth of Jesus Christ, His crucifixion, and the sending of Holy Spirit on the feast of Pentecost Sivan 6, Jesus was conceived on the date of December 25.
3. Jesus millennium rule also began on this day Tishri 15 (Zah 14).

3.1.8 The Feast of Mourning

It is three week period of mourning leading to the fast of Tisha Be-av on Av 9 (July). The fast of mourning commemorates:

1. The breaking of the tablets of the law by Moses when he sees Israel's idolatry.
2. Babylon breaks through the walls of Jerusalem and stops the daily sacrifices.

3.1.9 The Day of First Fruits

This is the day Israelites brings the first fruits of the harvest into God's house to acknowledge Him as their source (Ex. 23:19) to mark the followings:

1. The resting of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat (Gen. 8:4), First fruits of a new beginning.
2. Israelites miraculous crossing over of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13-14). First fruits of a new nation reborn from the bondage of Egypt.
3. The eaten of the first fruits of the promised lay by the Israelites (Josh 5:10-12) Nisan 16, the last God reined Manna. On Nisan 17 Israel ate the first fruits of the Promised Land. This is celebrated by Israel to this day.
4. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (I Cor 15:20). Jesus was crucified on Nisan 15 and on Nisan 17 rose from the dead-first fruit of all other.

3.1.10 The Feast of Hannukkah

Hannukkah was not one of the appointed feasts, but it was celebrated to commemorate the cleansing and rededication of the second Temple in 165 BC. The eight-day Jewish celebration known as Hanukkah or Chanukah commemorates the rededication during the second century B.C. of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, where according to legend Jews had risen up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt. Hanukkah, which means "dedication" in Hebrew, begins on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar and usually falls in November or December. Often called the Festival of Lights, the holiday is celebrated with the lighting of the menorah, traditional foods, games and gifts.

3.1.11 The Fast of Tisha Be-Av

The fast of Tisha Be-Av was the day of mourning and remembrance of Israelites loss of their first Temple. Eight disasters in the history of Israelites have occurred on this day:

1. The twelve spies returned with their report of the Promised Land, ten are negative. Israel loses faith and is condemned to die in the wilderness (Num. 14).
2. The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC (Jer. 52:5-14).
3. The Second Temple was destroyed by the soldiers of Rome in AD 70 (Dan. 19-26).
4. Jerusalem in AD 71 was plowed by the Roman Army and sated (Micah 3:12).
5. Simeon Bar Cochba's army is destroyed by Rome in AD. 135.
6. On July 18, 1290 England expelled all of the Jews from their country.
7. On August 12, 1492 Spain expelled all Jews and Christopher Columbus, part of Jews
8. Headed for America.
9. Russia in WWI launched persecutions against the Jews.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Give three significances of the feast of Hannukkah

Activity 4

Search and copy out the first 7 Jewish celebrations mentioned in this unit.

4.0 Summary

In this unit, we have examined the major Jewish feasts and their significance as the basis for studying the history and people of Israel. Seven Jewish feasts such as: the feast of Passover the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of Pentecost, the feast of Tisha Be-Av, the feast of Jewish New Year, the feast unleavened Bread, the feast of the Day of Atonement, the feast of Trumpets, the feast of first fruits, the feast of Hannukkah and the feast of mourning, were discussed extensively for better understanding of the history and people of the Israelites. Even the four feasts fulfilled in Christ Jesus, their roles are of vital importance to the Jewish society.

5.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

1. Mention two significances of the feast of New Year.
2. Discuss three significance of Passover sanctification?
3. Why the feast of unleavened Bread was celebrated a day after Passover?
4. Give three significances of the feast of Hannukkah

6.0 References/Further Readings

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7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

Self-assessment exercise 1

Mention two significances of the feast of New Year.

Marks the commemoration of:

- The dedication of the Tabernacle during the Exodus from Egypt two years after (Ex. 40:2, 33-34).
- The cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah (2 Chron 29:23)

Self-assessment exercise 2

Discuss three significance of Passover sanctification.

The Feast of Passover supper was to remember:

- God’s covenant with Abraham concerning the Promised Land on Nisan 14. And 430 years after this promise, Israelites left Egypt for the Promised Land.
- The eaten of the Passover Supper in preparation for the Exodus (Ex. 12:14).
- To renew the covenant-the first Passover (Gen. 17:10-11; Jos 5:3, 5:11-12).
- The finding of the Book of the Law and its reaffirming under King Josiah (2 Chron 34:2-14). The first King he did as a result was to celebrate the Passover Feast on Nisan 14 in obedience to God.

Self-assessment exercise 3

Why the feast of unleavened Bread was celebrated a day after Passover

- To commemorate the beginning of Israelites Exodus from the bondage in Egypt.

Self-assessment exercise 4

Give three significances of the feast of Hannukkah

- Hanukkah reaffirms the ideals of Judaism
- Commemorates in particular the rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem by the lighting of candles on each day of the festival.
- Hanukkah commemorates the Maccabean (Hasmonean) victories over the forces of the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 175–164 BCE) and the rededication of the Temple on Kislev 25, 164 BCE

8.0 Glossary

Zionism: This is a nationalist movement that espouses the establishment of, and support for a homeland for the Jewish people centered in the area roughly corresponding to the Land of Israel, the region of Palestine, Canaan, or the Holy Land, on the basis of a long Jewish connection and attachment to that land

The Maccabean Revolt: This was a Jewish rebellion led by the Maccabees against the Seleucid Empire and against Hellenistic influence on Jewish life. The main phase of the revolt lasted from 167–160 BCE and ended with the Seleucids in control of Judea, but conflict between the Maccabees, Hellenised Jews, and the Seleucids continued until 134 BCE, with the Maccabees eventually attaining independence