

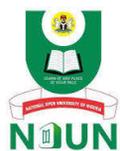
**COURSE
GUIDE**

**CRS 214
PAULINE EPISTLES**

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Printed: 2022

ISBN: 978-978-058-208-1

MODULE 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**UNIT 1: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PAUL****Unit Structure**

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 - 3.2 Early Life and Education
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- 6.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hi. It is with utmost pleasure that I welcome you my dear students to this important course.. As a way of introduction, it is god that you that this course is designed to get students acquainted with the epistles of Paul, the most important figure , after Jesus Christ, in the spread of Christianity in Roman Empire. So important was Paul to the development of Christianity that he is believed to have authored thirteen Epistles out of the Twenty-seven canonised N.T books. He was indeed a Godsent to the development of Christian in a time when persecution stood tall against the spread of Christianity. In the first unit of the course, it is expected that students will be acquainted with the life and times of Paul. This will prove very important to an understanding of Pauline thoughts as presented in his writings. Paul, as a theologian, cannot be separated from his social, religious, and political world which all played a huge part in the shaping of his teachings in his writings. To that, we will walk through now.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand Paul’s dual nationality
- Have an understanding of Paul’s educational background
- Explain Paul’s conversion
- Discuss Paul’s missionary activities
- Have an insight of the possible tradition behind Paul’s death

3.1 The Birth and Nationality of Paul

My dear students, while Paul is regarded as the second founder of Christianity as we have mentioned, it seems funny (but true) that Paul’s date of birth is very much unknown. According to Fitzmyer (2014:1332) by the time Paul wrote the epistle to Philemon, he called himself an old man (*presbytes*) This would place him as a man roughly between 50 to 56 years. This means we can locate his date of birth broadly within the first century AD, the first decade probably. Brown (2014:423) says Paul was born between 5—10 AD. Students, this may correspond with Luke description of Paul as a youth in Acts during the stoning of Stephen. What we are certain about is that Paul has a known nationality. Like his date of birth, Paul is also silent on where he was Paul. Nevertheless, his Grecised name *Paulos* would tell us that he was born in a town outside Palestine. Paul himself boasts of his Jewish background my dear students. This tells us that he was proud of his Jewish ancestry. In Rom 11:1, Phil 3:5, 2Cor 11:22 Paul’s boast of his Jewish background is seen. Students, Paul was so proud of his Jewish background to the point that he called him “a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee” He was even circumcised on the eighty day according to Jewish tradition. As he was a Hebrew, he probably spoke meant that he was a Greek-speaking Jew who spoke Aramaic (Moule 1959). So students, against the popular misconception that Paul’s name was changed to Saul at his conversion, it is better to say that because of Paul’s dual nationality, the Hebrew pronunciation of his name was *Saulos* (Saul) while the Greek pronunciation of his name was *Paulos* (Paul). It was a matter of semantics! Paul was also a full Roman citizen, with all rights and privileges accrued to it at the time. In this sense students, Paul, indeed, had a dual citizenship! He was a Jew and a Roman citizen at the same time.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Give a sketch of Paul’s birth and nationality

3.2 Early Life and Education

We have now let you students into a biographical sketch of Paul's birth and nationality. We will now discuss his early life and career. According to Paul's own words, he was brought up in Jerusalem, being educated at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) who held sway around 20-50 BC (Van Unik 1962). One thing we are certain of is that according to Jewish tradition, Paul would have started his education when he turned five years. This began by studying the Torah. When he was probably done with this process, he may have learnt a craft or trade. It will be here that we will understand his reference to his hand craft as a tent maker. By thirteen years or there about, Paul may have been set to pursue a formal religious education which may have been at Jerusalem as we have noted above. It may have been at this point that he became very zealous of Jewish tradition as he claimed in his writings. May be, it was also after his religious education that he began to appears in Acts narratives of his persecution of the church in Jerusalem, immediately after the death of Jesus.

3.3 Religious background

So far so good students! We are gradually getting a picture of aspects of Pauline life that, as we said, helped shape his writings. I believe our discussion so far has been interesting. If it is, then brace yourselves up for more interesting studies on Pauline life and times. Nevertheless, before doing that, can you attempt engaging in this activity I have included here students?

Activity 1

Consulting relevant studies on Paul, can you distil other aspects of his life and career that we have not addressed so far?

As we have seen how Paul boasts about his Jewish origins, we can rightly argue that he came from a strict law-abiding Jewish family. This would not mean that Paul's father, for example, was a Pharisee, or that was the reasons he became one. This would be an assumption taken too far! What we can infer is that the strictness of Paul's family concerning the Jewish religion rubbed off on him. This was why he identified as a Pharisee, and a very zealous one at that (Phil 3:5). The pharisaic movement was very strong at the time of Paul, having roughly become a sect among the Jews round the second century AD. Its background lay at the restive years of the Maccabean revolts when the policy of Hellenization was introduced by the Greeks (Ituma 2000). The name comes from the Hebrew word *perushim* meaning separated. The Pharisees were mainly regarded as a religiously pious movement of the Jews who wanted to live out the teaching of the Law (Torah). During

the time of Jesus and the early church, the Pharisees held sway in religious affairs of the Jews (Jn 7:48). They went into extinction so to say by the time the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. It was this movement that, as we have seen, that Paul joined at Jerusalem where they were mostly seen. Paul's persecution of the church, as we shall see briefly, was certainly borne out of his Pharisaic beliefs. He was to a large extent influenced by this thought prior to his conversion.

3.4. Paul's Conversion

Paul's conversion came after he had quite a career within Pharisaic Judaism, persecuting Christians (Hultgren 1976). My dear students, can you picture what it may have meant for Paul to become associated with the same people he was persecuting? In Paul's former pharisaic movement's view, he was nothing more than a hypocrite; a betrayal, so to speak. However, Paul's conversion made him more convinced he was on the right track, a conviction he held till his death.

According to Fitzmyer (2014:1333), Paul's conversion is pictured by Luke to have been associated with the persecution of the church. In Acts (8:1-3), Luke narrates how Paul was breathing terror on the Christians, dragging them out to be punished or even killed. He did not directly participate in this act, but he directed the act himself. He himself referred to it in Phil 3:6, stating how he persecuted the church. It was his zeal to persecute the Christians, that made him to get permission from Jewish authorities, to go to Damascus and probably arrest Christians teaching in the synagogues there, and bring them bound to Jerusalem. It was on his way to actualised this that his conversion happened. Paul saw a blinding flash of light and he fell to the ground. He heard a voice asking him why he was persecution the speaker. And he asked "Who are you my Lord?" The speaker went on to tell Paul that he was Jesus whom he was persecuting. After this, Paul was given a task on what he was to do next. This conversion, as Cross points out may have happened around 33 AD. If this date is to be relied upon, it means it was around three years after Jesus' death.

Paul stayed in the city for days without with food or water, having been led into the city by his companions. God had to instruct on disciple of Jesus, Ananias to go and heal Paul of his blindness citing his dramatic change and the mission God prepared for him. After Paul regained his sight, he went to Arabia, staying there about three years (Gal 1:17). However, the narrative of Acts, there was no mention of such a visit. Whatever be the case, after his encounter with the risen Jesus, Paul became a changed person, he became a slave of Christ. His teaching in Jerusalem after his conversion drew the ire of the Jews of course. He

then became an object of persecution himself. So was his life until he was heard of last after he was taken to Rome after his third missionary journey. It is worthy to mention that there are about three recorded versions of Paul's conversion, which all are difficult to reconstruct. One comes from Acts 8, the other from Paul himself in Acts 25:22-26-29) and Acts (25:1-12).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Attempt a reconstruction of the recorded versions of his conversion.

3.4. Paul in Ministry

Having met Jesus at the road to Jerusalem, Paul became a missionary par excellence. His faith in Jesus spurn him on. Of the same faith like him, was his co-missionary named Barnabas. Barnabas was a man of strong faith whom, as the Holy Spirit directed, was to embark on their first Missionary journal with Paul. It was at Antioch that the Holy Spirit told the Antiochan congregation to separate Paul and Barnabas for their **first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-4)**.

It was at this command that the duo, taking along with them John Mark, set out on their First Missionary Journey. They took off from Antioch and went through Cyprus. During this journey, Paul and Barnabas touched Places like Seleucia, Salamis, and the whole Region of South Galatia (Brown 2014:424). The First missionary of Paul end with a return to Antioch where they had set off. Traditionally, it is believed that Paul's first missionary journey spanned through 46 to 49 AD. By 49 AD, the disputes in Antioch led to Paul's visit to Jerusalem and the Jerusalem council. This was the end of Paul's missionary journey.

So, students, we have seen in a sketch, Pauls missionary journey. I know by now you will be curious to know more about Paul's second missionary journey. Ok. To that second missionary journey, we turn to now. Paul's **second missionary journey probably** began around 52AD and ended around 52 AD. It began at Antioch, as did the first missionary journey. It took place mostly in Sothern Asian minor to North Galatia, Macedonia, Corinth and, a return to Jerusalem and then, Antioch. Because of the disputes surrounding John Mark, Paul had to take Silas as his co-missionary while Barnabas had to take John Mark. Paul, during this journey, ran into serious trouble with the Jews owing to his teachings. While Paul has claimed that he was called to the gentiles, it seems that it was during this time when Paul got rejected by the Jews that he turned completely to the gentiles. During this journey, places

like Lystra, Troas, Philippi, Berea, Athens, Ephesus, and Ephesus. These were cities located within the aforementioned regions above.

We will now discuss Paul's third missionary journey. Paul stayed in Antioch for another eighteen months. After this period, he set out for his third missionary journey. During this journey, Paul re-visited the churches he planted in Asia. Probably because of the need to strengthen their faith and resolve doctrinal and theological issues in these churches, Paul had to re-visit the churches he founded. He stayed at Ephesus for more than two years during which time, a riot broke out. He also re-visited Troas, Macedonia, Achaia and Corinth where he spent some time.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Attempt a reconstruction of Paul's missionary journeys with dates.

3.6 The Death of Paul

Whoa Students. So far we have tried to reconstruct a lot of issues surrounding Paul's life and times. Who do believe that such an asset to Christianity would die, maybe, prematurely. It is now time for us to discuss Paul's death, that is how the best missionary of the early church died. How and when Paul died exactly is not known, These were not more than speculations based on uncritical church traditions. First it is believed that after Paul's two-year imprisonment, by Roman governor Felix, and on becoming the governor, Festus, Paul was sent to Rome having appealed to Caesar. Acts 27:1-28 describes Paul's hazardous journey until he got to Rome. In Rome he was probably put under house arrest. Acts of the apostles and Pauline letters are actually silent on what happened after Paul reached Rome. Any other tradition about Paul's death after he reached Rome may be an assumption. Second, we now turn to the assumption we refer to above. There is a tradition that Paul was martyred in Rome under the reign of Nero, a great persecutor of Christians. This may have taken place between 64AD and 67AD. Either ways, what we know is that Paul's life ended at Rome, probably. This was where he was last mentioned of in the whole of N.T. So, class, we have learnt how Paul, indeed, suffered for the sake of Christ, preaching the gospel to the gentiles and probably, dying for this cause.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Describe, briefly, Paul's death

4.0 Summary

These are the take away for students as we summarise:

- Paul had dual citizenship, having been born of Jewish parents and being a Roman citizen too.
- He was born at the first decade of the first century
- His education was at Jerusalem under the tutelage of the great Gamaliel
- Paul was a Pharisee
- He was persecuted and later got converted to Christianity
- He made three Missionary journeys
- He was heard of last at Rome, may be killed under the reing of Roman Emperor Nero.
- Have an insight of the possible tradition behind Paul's death

5.0 References/Further Reading

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2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give a sketch of Paul's birth and nationality

- Paul's death of birth is unknown. Speculations put it to be the first decade of first century AD.
- It was born of Jewish parents who lived outside of Palestine
- He was both a Jew and A Roman at the same time, and He spoke Hebrew (Aramaic) and Greek

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Attempt a reconstruction of the recorded versions of his conversion.

- There are about three recorded versions of Paul's conversion
- Reconstructing them will be difficult, though not doable
- Acts 8, Acts 25:22-26—29 and Acts 25:25:1-12 all tell about the conversion of Paul
- It was during Paul's persecution of the church that, on his way, to Damascus, he met Jesus and got converted

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Attempt a reconstruction of Paul's missionary journeys with dates.

- First missionary journey took him and Barnabas to places like Cyprus and southern Galatia and back to Antioch. This was between 46-49 AD
- The second missionary journey took him and Silas like places like Southern Asia Minor, Northern Galatia, Macedonia, Corinth, a return to Jerusalem and Antioch between 50 to 52 AD
- Third missionary journey took him from Antioch to N. Galatia, Ephesus, Corinth, and a return to Jerusalem. This took place between 54 to 58 AD

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Describe, briefly, Paul's death

- No one is certain about how Paul died
- Paul was sent to Rome on his appeal to Caesar by Governor Festus
- He was probably imprisoned in Rome (house arrest)
- He may have been murdered by Emperor Nero
- This may have been between 64-68 AD

UNIT 2: THE POLITICAL WORLD OF PAUL

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The political set up of Palestine
 - 3.1.1 From Alexander the great to Roman occupation
 - 3.2 The Roman occupation
 - 3.3 The Social set up of Palestine
 - 3.4 Summary
 - 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
 - 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hi. In the previous unit, we learnt a lot about the birth and nationality of Paul. This was what we called the life and times of Paul. Right now, in this unit, our focus will be on the socio-political situation of the Jews at the time of Jesus and Paul. An understanding of the socio-political situation of Palestine at the time will help a lot in understanding some events and thoughts in Paul's teachings and life.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand the role of Alexander the Great in the politics of Palestine
- Have an understanding Jewish reactions to the shifting political structure of Palestine
- Explain the origin of Hellenism

3.1 The Political Set-up of Palestine

3.1 From Alexander to Roman Occupation

My dear students, the period of which this should cover is about 300 years. This period is mostly called the inter-testamental period. A dark and restive time for the people of Israel. We will highlight, as brief as we can, the most important dates with the leaders of the time. We begin

with Alexander the Great, the great apostle of Hellenism. Born in 356 BC Macedonia, Alexander became a king at the age of twenty. He was a warrior-King who conquered the whole of Asian minor and Europe. His victory over the Persians would bring to an end the domination of the Persian empire. It was Alexander the Great that would spread Greek culture all over his conquered territories. Most importantly, it was he who spread Greek language over Palestine. At his death at a young age, there was a scramble for his empire by his four generals who included Ptolomy, Antigonus, Cassander and Lysimachus. The kingdom was divide among these four generals. After much infighting, the Ptolemies and Seleucids would control the empire. Palestine, fell into the hands of the Ptolemies. This meant that the Jews were ruled by the Ptolemies around 312 BC down wards.

The first of these Ptolemies was Ptolemy I (323-258 BC) who relocated many Jews to the land of Palestine. He was a very dominant king among all the Ptolemies. He was sure that Greek language became the language of the Jews he transported to Egypt. After him, was Ptolemy II(285-246 BC) who was also called Philadelphus. During his reign, the Jews in Palestine and Egypt, enjoyed peace and a relative period of prosperity as long as they paid tributes to him annually. He allowed the Jews in Egypt to build Synagogues to worship and study. This made Alexander an influential Jewish center which would culminate in the translation of the Septuagint, a very popular Greek OT scripture. After him, ruled Ptolomy IV (221-203) who is described as the most wicked of Ptolemic rulers. His hate for the Jews was massive and he persecuted the Jews. After him, came Ptolemy V (203-180 BC) who was also called Epiphanes which translated, roughly, as the *insane one*. He was the last influential Ptolemaic kings who took control of Palestine.

Dear Students, I hope that you are enjoying our little piece of the history of the Jews under the Ptolemies. We will now see how, after the Ptolemies, the Seleucids took over Palestine. This was in 198 BC under the readership Antiochus III who took control of Palestine. The Seleucids were able to control Palestine till the time the Romans pushed them away in 63 BC. Antiochus III was a ruler who almost became a vassal king to the Romans. He was surrounded by the wrong People who gave him wrong advices. He went to war with the Romans in 190 BC which led to his defeat. He was forced to pay tribute, yearly, to the Romans after this. After him, came Seluecus IV (187-175 BC). He had to tax the Jews heavily to be able to pay the Roman tribute which he inherited from Antiochus III. This brought division among the Jews, particularly the Oniads, under the leadership of Onias the High Priest. This problem did not affect Seleucus ruler ship so much. After him came Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163) who killed Seleucus and took the throne. He was a very erratic man, who kept on removing the High

Priest as he wished. This erratic acts and many others earned his the title Antiochus Epimanes meaning the mad man. Because of his defeats in war in Egypt, he was frustrated to the point of killing many Jews in Jerusalem and destroying their temple. He also desecrated the temple of the Jews by allowing prostitution there. His order that the Jews led to an outright war, or better put, series of wars worship Greek gods named Maccabean revolts. The **Maccabean revolts** lasted many years. But it was led by Mathias, an old Priest at Jerusalem. He organised a guerrilla warfare to fight the desecration of the temple by Antiochus. When Mathias died, his son Judas took over. They attacked the Seleucid armies via guerrilla warfare, scoring many victories in the process. This victories recorded by Judas led to his being re-named Maccabee which means Hammer. He was so victorious that the Temple was purified and re-dedicated. However, the Maccabees had expanded their leadership and became known as the Hasmoneans. In fighting and squabbles for political and the High Priest offices lead to the weakening of the Hasmoneans. During this, the Romans would conquer Judea through the Roman general, Pompey who brought to an end the Hasmonean dynasty. Before long, the whole of Palestine would come under the ruler ship of the Romans.

Activity 1

Consulting relevant studies on Paul, can you distil other aspects of his life and career that we have not addressed so far?

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Give a sketch of the Seleucids rulers over the Jews

3.2 The Roman Occupation

There was a Roman civil war during the reign of Pompey. Julius Caesar defeated Pompey and the emperor. He mad Hyracanus II the entharch of the Jews. It was Antipater, an Idumean, that was the power of the throne. He was the father of Herod, who would rule the Jews during that time. In 43 BC, there was a plan to capture the throne by Antigonious. Funnily, Antogonios, my dear students, was a nephew to Herod. It does sound funny right? This, however, shows the intrigues that went on in the bid to grab power. It was Caesar that appointed Hyracunus II. There was another Roman civil war at that time involving Ocatavius and Mark Anthony on the one hand and Brutus and Caesar on the other. In the build up to this, Caesar had been murdered. Mark Anthony who took over appointed Herod the Tetrarch of Galilee. This title was meant for vassal kings of Rome. The Jews did not like this appointment since Herod was not a Jew. There was another war between the Romans and Parthians. Hyracanus was taken a prisoner with Antigonus reigning in

his place. As a smart ruler, Herod escaped to Rome and persuaded Octavius and the Roman senate to make Mark Anthony restore him as the ruler. Two legions later brought Herod back to Jerusalem with the approval of Rome and he regained the throne. Herod began expanding his kingdom and consolidated it.

Can you guess who was born at this time class? Jesus, of course. It was Herod the great that the synoptics in their birth narratives of Jesus referred to. In a battle between Octavius and Mark Anthony, Mark Anthony was defeated and he was forced to commit suicide. The Roman senate then gave Octavius the title Augustus. It was at his time students that the census that Luke records alongside the birth of Jesus, took place. As for Herod, his rulership was great amid his large building projects. This earned him the ire of many Jews because of its Hellenistic tendencies. Not to be forgotten also was his heavy taxation on the Jews to finance his building projects (Carter 2009).

We will now discuss how Palestine was after the rulership of Herod. But would you think class, that Herod was great ruler considering his heavy handedness seen above? While you think about it, we will discuss Palestine after Herod the great. Herod's kingdom was divided between his sons at his death by Augustus. While Herod Antipas became the ruler Galilee and East Bank of Jordan as a tetrarch, Philip became the tetrarch of north-east part of Galilee and Archelaus became the Ethnarch of Samaria and Judea. Other Herodian grandsons included Agrippa I whom Caligula made the King of Palestine. At his death in AD44, his kingdom was annexed to the Syrian kingdom, and ruled by procurators. The Herodian dynasty was mentioned in the birth narrative of Jesus and the beginning of the church in Acts of the Apostles.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Asses, very briefly, the Herodian rulership of Palestine

3.3 The Social Set-Up of Palestine

So far so great students. We have had a piece of the history of Palestine politically. I believe our discussion so far has been interesting. We will now discuss the social aspect of life in Palestine. Nevertheless, before doing that, can you attempt engaging in this activity I have included here students?

Activity 1

Read related works of the socio-political life of Palestine to identify other Political issues that shaped Roman rule in Palestine.

Socially, there is a relationship between life in Palestine and its political life. People were put in their place in such a society. Thus, among the Jews for example, there were the pious people and they were the commoners, otherwise called the *Am Ha-Aretz* in Aramaic. It was a world where religion defined who was who. Pious beliefs dedicated who should be called the *Am ha-Aretz* and who should not. People took pride in showing their piety. The most important of that time were the Pharisee who dictated and defined piety. The Pharisees were few in number but very powerful religiously. Although there were the Essenes and the Sadducees (Brown 2014:77-79) who were more interested in the politics of restoring the Jewish autonomy, the majority of the Jews of Palestine belonged to the *am Ha-Aretz*. According to the Pharisees, these people were not strictly applying rabbinical stipulation in their everyday life. Hence they were regarded as sinners, or people of the land. Either category of the *Am Ha-Aretz* who included those disparaged for not applying rabbinical teachings in the life or those who did not even study the Torah at all, were treated with scorn by the Pharisees. Students, it was a case where religious teachings ruled life as I had mentioned before. Do you think such still happens in our world today? Do you think we have outgrown such religious bigotry? Your guess is as good as mine. But, in Palestine of those days this was a reality. We could read about how life was dominated by the Pharisees in the Gospels.

There were also the case of the Jews of diaspora. These were Greek-speaking Jews who lived outside Palestine. By the time of Jesus and Paul, the Jews had been migrating a lot. In cities like Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Rome, Galatia among others, the Jews were found living in these places. Many of them were assimilated into Greek culture. Hence, another name for them was Greek-Speaking Jews. The Palestinian Jews sometimes discriminated this category of Jews because of of Greek assimilation. Paul, as we learnt, was definite one of them. These Jews tried to adapt themselves into cultures they lived. This also included religion although many of the Jews of the diaspora practised Judaism. Philo of Alexandria was an influential Jew of the diaspora whose philosophical theology was at home with many Jews of the diaspora then (Brown 2014:88, Murphy 1991). His work, of course, tried to bridge Judaism and Hellenism. Students are to know that there were even some kind of discrimination between the Palestinian Jews and the Greek speaking Jews. This played out in the case of Act of the apostles who the early church was torn apart by such Palestinian/ Greek-Speaking Jews discrimination.

3.4 Summary

We have been able to discuss the following in this unit:

The social setting of Palestine

The Pharisees

The *Am Ahrezt*

The Jews of diaspora

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 3

Who were the *am Ha- Aretz*?

3.5 References/Further Reading

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

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2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give a sketch of the Seleucids rulers over the Jews

- The Seleucids came to Power in 198 BC
- Antiochus III was their first leader from 223— 187 BC
- Seleuchus IV succeeded him in 187 and ended his reign in 175 BC
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC) was the las king of the Seleucids

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Asses, very briefly, the Herodian rulership of Palestine

- Herod the Great was the First of the Herods that ruled Palestine mostly from 37-4 BC
- His other sons who succeeded him were Herod Antipas, Philip and Archelaus
- His grandson included Herrod Agrippa I
- Of all these Herodian rule, it was Herod the Great that his ruler ship was memorable.

- He was heavy handed in ruling the Jews and imposed a lot of taxes upon the Jews
- He used these taxes to finance his large building projects and to pay the required Roman tribute

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Who were the *am Ha- Aretz*?

- Has its origin in Aramaic meaning people of the land
- It was used by the Pharisees to designate those whom they regarded as *commoners*
- Commoners here, means sinners who failed to live by the rabbinic teachings
- A vast majority of the Jews at the time belonged to the *am Ha-Aretz*

UNIT 3: THE RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL WORLD OF PAUL

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The Jewish Religious Background
 - 3.2 The Greco-Roman Religious Background
 - 3.3 The Philosophical Background
- 4.0 Summary
- 6.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

1.0 Introduction

Hello students. Welcome once more to this interesting unit. It promises to be as interesting and eye-opening as well. We had learnt about the social set-up of Palestine in the last unit. This unit is furthered by a discussion on the religious and philosophical world of Paul. These two issues are very important to our understanding of Pauline thoughts in his writings. We will turn into that now.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify the religious groups that existed among the Jews
- Identify the Gentile religious groups that existed in the NT
- Be abreast with the philosophical groups that existed in the NT

3.1 The Jewish religious Background

My dear students, we had learnt how the Hellenization of the Seleucids set up ripple effects among the Jews of the inter-testamental period. Many of the religious groups that existed in the world of Paul, among the Jews, had their roots traceable to this time. Even with the victory of the Maccabees against the Hellenization, more problems came among the Jews. This was also a problem. Among the sects that had its roots to the

Macabean revolts was the **Pharisees**. We had earlier identified the root of their name from the Hebrew word *perushim*, meaning separated.

The Jewish historian Josephus, was the first scholar to identify this group as a sect within Judaism. They seemed to be more religious than the other Jews (Ant, War I:110). They were more interested in resisting all forms of Hellenism in the Jewish life. After the war, they became a chief player in the religious affairs of the Jews. They were more interested in living out the law which included the oral law distinct from the law of Moses, yet believed to have been traced to him by the Pharisees (Brown 2014:77). Top among their beliefs included i) A strict observance of the Sabbath ii) The application of the oral law to everyday life. The oral law here included the traditions of the elders. iii) Resurrection of the dead and iv) A belief in angels. Another religious group that existed side-by-side with the Pharisees, were the **Sadducees**. The Sadducees had their roots in the Maccabean revolts too. However, they were interested in politics rather than religion per se. They were probably a part of the Zadokite priestly line, and has its lineage traced there (Brown 2014:76). During the Maccabean revolts, they were very much aligned with the Temple priests at Jerusalem and had remained there in the time of Jesus and Paul. They became identified with the Hellenised aristocracy until the days of Maccabees to the time of Jesus and Paul. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead like the Pharisee. Equally, they were not too interested in the religious piety of the Pharisees. Nevertheless, they championed the observation of Temple rites and rituals.

Another sect worthy of mention at this time is the **Essenes**. The Essenes probably can be dated around 200 BC. Saldarini (1988) places them with the context of the rise of Jewish apocalyptic expectations. There is a possibility that they spring out from the Maccabean revolt too but we are not too sure. What Josephus tells us is that the Essenes were a community whose piety was admirable, and who had withdrawn to the desert in order not to be tainted with the 'sins' of their day (War 2.8.2-13). Excavations from the Dead Sea scrolls show that the community of the Essenes was monastic in orientation with a strong ethical code. They were an end-time community of pious Jews who withdrew to the desert, and awaited the coming of the messiah at which time God will destroy all evil and punish their enemies. Their community was located at Qumran, and had strict laws guiding them. It was even believed, although not strongly, that John the Baptist may have belonged to this community noting his dietary habits mentioned in the synoptic gospels.

Our next stop will be a look at the **Scribes**. This group were professional lawyers. Tradition places them with the context of Ezra, the great scribe of O.T. This group were concerned with copying and re-copying the law of the O.T. They also had the function of interpreting

the law. They were associated with the priestly class of Jerusalem. Because of their-believed knowledge of the law, they were highly respected even more than the laws they copied. We can see Jesus make mention of them in the synoptic especially, for their hypocrisy. The **temple** deserves a mention too. Built by Solomon, destroyed by the Babylonians, rebuilt in the time of Ezra, and finally destroyed by the Romans in AD 70, the temple at Jerusalem was the most holy site of the Jews. It was the centre of Jewish religious rites yearly.

It began with the day of Atonement on the 10th of the month Tshiri between September and October. Burnt offerings were offered and the scape goat was sent away bearing Israel's sins upon it. It seems the most import of the ritual carried out in the Temple was the Passover. This was celebrated in the week beginning the Nisan, between March and April to mark the Exodus event. Every Jews travelled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, and was expected to kill and roast a lamb which is killed in the temple. It was a big feast for the Jews to the point that all of them, trooped back to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. The High priests officiated upon all the temple rites and rituals. Thus, these high priests became a very powerful force in the religious affairs of the Jews. The last of these we will discuss here are the **synagogues**. According to Okwueze (2015), the synagogues probably developed during the time of Exile where there was an absence of the Temple. By and Large, at the rise of Pharisaic Judaism, the synagogues became an important religious institution among the Jews. The Pharisees held sway there. According to Edershiem (1988) the principal duty of the synagogue was that it was where the law ere expounded, including service if songs. The scribes expounded the law and the scriptures at the synagogues. They instructed the young using two exegetical methods—the *halacha* and the *haggada*. While the *halacha* involved the interpretation of the law as regards practical obligations, the *hagadda* was used in getting theological ideas from the OT.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Give some of the beliefs of the Pharisee.

3.2 The Greco-Roman Religious Background

3.3 Religious background

Continuing our discussion, we can classify religious practices in the Greco-Roman context into three which are the traditional pantheon of deities, the mystery Religions and State religion. Have you heard of thee religions before students? If you have not, pay attention as you will be taken through some aspects of these religions in this unit. We begin with

the traditional pantheons of deities deals with polytheistic religion of the Greeks which were somehow incorporated into the religious beliefs of the Romans. This explains the dual names that some of these gods have. Examples of these gods include Jupiter, Artemis, Janus, eus, Athena, Venus, Aphrodite, Mercury etc. Each of these gods were associated with a particular city of the Greco-Roman world. Equally, each of them were believed to have performed a particular function. They were temples and priests that attended to them (Brown 2014:85). They had annual festivals in their honour. A Roman emperor like Augustus promoted the traditional ceremonies in honour of these gods as Brown (2014) says. Examples of these gods were seen in Pauline journeys and writings. An example is seen in Acts 19:23—40 where Paul was believed to have offended the worshippers of Artemis. The next we discuss is the **mystery religions** which were diverse in the Greco- Roman world. These included secret dramas and ceremonies through which the initiated communicates and shares with immortality of gods. Though this, the initiates become bounded with in an enduring fellowship with a god. The worshipper came from a diverse background. Mystery religion were esoteric as its teachings and practices were solely known to those who have been initiated. It was a mystery and could have been the background of Paul's reference to Paul as a *mysterion* in I Cor 15:51. Eleusinian mysteries, which was a Greek mystery religion was one of the most famous of these religions (Brown 2014:86). Others included the Dionysus, Isis, Osiris, Adonis, *mithras* among others. They had many adherents as well.

We will look at **Emperor Worship** otherwise known as **state religion**. As the Roman emperor grew in power, some of them arrogated for themselves divinity. They came to be regarded as gods. Emperor Augustus began to arrogate such claims of divinity first. He was regarded as the god of the empire and was prayed to a such. He did not however force the people to worship him. By being gods in their own right, people in the empire willingly prayed to them. It was Emperor Domintian that actually made it compulsory for him to be worshipped as god in the Empire. Other before him, we have noted, did not force people to worship them.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Would you consider emperor worship a form of Religion in the sense of what religion is?

3.3 The Philosophical Background

So far so good students! I believe our discussion has been interesting. You may have come across Philosophy as a discipline in your other course, I believe. So, I need not tell you that Philosophy began among the Greeks who had studious minds, and questioned a lot of things in their world then. Here, we will try to synthesize some of the philosophical schools that abound in the days of even before Paul. Nevertheless, we have a little activity for the class to engage in before we proceed with that.

Activity 1

Read studies on the religious background of the NT and state why there was religious pluralism in the NT

We begin with **Platonism**, a philosophical school associated with Plato. Plato was the great Athenian Philosopher. Plato taught that the world consisted of an infinite number of particular things which were imperfect copies of the real one. By implication, things that existed in the world were mere *shadows* or replicas of the real ones. This type of teaching led to what is called dualism. Dualism somehow appeals to Christian teachings to the point that it has been suggested that Johannine gospel somehow propagates this type of teaching. This type of teaching was a problem in the early church and even now. Platonism was popular at the time of Jesus and Paul although going through some modifications a s time went by. Thus there was middle Platonism and Neo-Platonism. We now turn to Gnosticism, an esoteric philosophical teaching that very nearly tore the early church apart. Etymologically, this philosophical teaching derives from the Greek word *gnosis* which means knowledge. Thus according to Onwu (2004) and Brown (2014:92) the propagators of this teaching claimed to possess the knowledge through which people could escape this world and connect back to God. This teaching according to Brown (2014:92) found its home in the eastern part off the Roman empire. It claims to have answer to the questions of human origin, the destiny of humans, and how humans could get to their end which is connecting back to God. Gnosticism spread so fast among Eastern Roman Christians that it took a long time to fizzle out. Next, we look at **Epicureanism**. This was a philosophical teaching associated with Epicurus. It was founded around 307 BC. According to the teaching of Epicurus, the greatest good to seek is modest pleasure so as to achieve tranquillity and freedom from fear. Epicurus, of course, was an atomic materialist who attacked superstition and divine intervention in people's lives. His teaching was a form of Hedonism since it believes that pleasure is the highest good humans should seek. He praised simplistic pleasure, the abstaining from bodily desires, which included

sex and appetites. This kind of philosophy was anti-divine and anti-religion.

Stoicism is the next philosophical school we will look at. It was, to large extent, a philosophy for the educated. It is traceable to Zeno, a philosopher who shared his thoughts on the agora in the *stoa or a porch*. Classically, stoic philosophers were called philosophers of the porch. The core of stoicism is that virtue lies in self-sufficiency. And the belief in the ordering of intention. For the stoics, two important things exist. These are the power to control the things we can control (beliefs, actions, judgements etc) and indifference to the things we cannot control. This way, we achieve happiness. Such was the effect of stoicism on the educated that one Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius became a staunch follower.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Examine the teachings of Epicurus briefly

3.4. Summary

The following points have been made in this unit:

- The origin of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and the scribes
- The temple and its uses
- The synagogue and its uses.
- Kinds of religion in the Greco-Roman world including mystery religions, Emperor worship, Greek mythical gods
- The philosophical schools that existed in the NT times including Platonism, Epicureanism, and stoicism

3.5 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Onwu, E.N (2004) *Basic issues in the close of New Testament Era*. Nsukka: AP Express Publishers

Saldarini, A.J(1988) *Pharisees, Scribes and the Sadducees in Palestinian society*. Willington: Glazier

5 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give some of the beliefs of the Pharisees

- They believed in the oral law
- They held a belief in angels

- They believed in resurrection
- They held a belief in saints

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Would you consider emperor worship a form of Religion in the sense of what religion is?

- No. It was not a religion in a strict sense of what religion entails
- It had no rituals *per se*; One can just pour libation in the morning in the honour of the Emperor
- It had no sacred personages like priests and the like
- It had no festivals *per se*

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Examine the teachings of Epicurus briefly

- The core teaching of Epicurus is that people should seek pleasure and avoid pain
- His teaching had no place for gods or religion

UNIT 4: THE EPISTLES: AN INTRODUCTION

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 Defining an Epistle
 - 3.2 Form and Structure of Hellenistic Epistles
 - 3.3 The form of Pauline Epistles
 - 3.4 Other literary traditions in Pauline Epistles
 - 3.5 Summary
- 4.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 5.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hello students. Here we are again, getting closer to discussing the Epistles of Paul. We begin, however, with a discussion on the epistle, and what it means. I believe that you must have heard the word epistle.

In this unit, we will introduce you to what an epistle is, its forms and structure in the ancient world, the Pauline epistles and their forms, and other literary traditions in Pauline epistles.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Define an epistle
- Identify part of Hellenistic epistle
- The forms of Pauline Epistles

3.1 Defining the Epistle

Back to our comment in the introductory part of this unit “I believe that you have heard the word epistle before.” If you did, then you will know that it is an English word meaning a letter. Epistle is the Anglicised form of the Greek word *epistole*. An epistle may be defined as a written communication, be it personal or official (Walls 1962). In the Pauline world, the Greek word epistle represented the definition given above. According to Brown (2014). Christian literature show that the epistles is

a good genre of their writing style. So, we will take the definition given here to apply to the context of Pauline world as long as defining an epistle is concerned.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Define an Epistle, giving its etymology.

3.2 Form and Structure of Ancient Epistles

Since personal and private communications abound in the ancient world, studies exist on the forms and structure of ancient epistles. For example, Greco-Roman epistles followed a particular form. This does not mean that its form are cast in stone! We can deduce the following form/structure in Roman letters for example:

- i. An opening salutation which will contain the writer's name, the receiver's name, and a greeting
- ii. A prayer, blessing or thanks giving
- iii. Final greeting and or/ fare well

3.3 The forms of Pauline Epistles

Following the above identified structure of ancient epistles, we will discuss the form of Pauline epistles. The first of these would be the **Opening**. Paul follows the conventional Geek style of writing an epistle. Here, the writer indicates who he is, and the recipients of the letter including a formal greeting. In Paul's case he extends this form to a point where he states the specific purpose of the letter. A typical example of this form is seen in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. In I Cor:1 – 2, we see Paul following this convention of identifying himself, and the recipients of the letter. Next, we will look at the introductory **thanks giving or blessing**. Here, Paul follows this Greek convention of thanking the gods for benefits received. Here, in Paul's case, he thanks God for the benefit given to him, and what he has done in the lives of those he would popularly refer to as the *saints*. Examples of Paul's thanksgiving in his letters are seen in Col 1:3-14, I Thess 1:2-13, Eph 1:15-19. Though Paul followed Geek idea of thanksgiving in his letters, its contents are usually ungrained in the OT and Jewish ideas. **The body of the Epistles** is the next we will look at. Paul has a particular pattern of writing the body of his epistles. He is known to have a particular sentence style through which he communicates his ideas. Paul was good at using what has been called the *parakaleo* sentence structure which shows his *urging* his recipients to do something. This is seen in 1 Cor1:10 and Rom 1:13. Other of his ideas in the body of the letter is usually marked off by the use of sentences that indicate that he was changing the subject to another discussion. He usually concludes the body of the letter by using eschatological sentences which indicates his

conviction. In the **closing part of the epistle**, Paul observes the Greek style of writing epistles. Paul uses benedictions or what is better called the doxology formula. This deviates from a typical Greek way of closing an Epistle using the health wish or farewell wish.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2
Highlight the form of a Hellenistic epistle

3.4. Other Literary Traditions in Pauline Epistles

Paul was a genius in writing epistles. This is shown in the fact that he incorporated other forms of literary writing in his epistles. He uses the **liturgical forms** because it has been accepted that Pauline letters were mostly meant to be read aloud to the hearing of the congregations. His liturgical forms are classified into the blessings, grace benedictions, the doxology, the hymns, including the confessional statements. The next literary tradition identifiable in Paul epistles is the rhetoric, identified among Greeks and Romans writers. It follows this pattern: an exordium, the *narratio*, the *probatio*, and *peraratio*. This translates as the introduction, statement of facts, the argument, and the conclusion. The introduction and the conclusion is supposed to have a great influence on the recipients in Greco-Roman rhetoric's. This is a fitting formula found in Paul's letter to the Galatians as has been argued by Longnecker (1990).

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 3
What are other literary forms found in Pauline Epistles?

3.3 Summary

In this unit, the student has been exposed to these:

- i. That an epistle is a written communication between two people irrespective of its being personal or public
- ii. Forms of Epistles in Greco-Roman setting
- iii. Paul structure his epistles along those of Greco-Roman forms
- iv. Other literary forms can be found in Pauline Epistles

4.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)

Brown, RE (2014) *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Longenecker, B (1990) "Galatians" *Word Bible Commentary*. Dallas: Word

Walls, AF (1962) "Epistles" in *New Bible Dictionary*. Leicester: Inter Varsity Press

5.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define an epistle, give its etymology.

- An Epistle is a written communication between people which can be personal or public.
- Its etymology is the Greek word *epistole* which means epistle

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight the form of a Hellenistic epistle

- Opening salutation containing the writer's and recipient's name and a greeting
- A prayer, blessing, or thanksgiving
- Final greeting and farewell

MODULES 2: THE MISSIONARY EPISTLES

UNIT 1: THE THESSALONIAN CORRESPONDENCE

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The City called Thessalonica
 - 3.2 Paul's ministry in Thessalonica
 - 3.3 Authorship and Date of the Epistles
 - 3.4 Occasion of the epistles
 - 3.5 Message and theology of the Epistles
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

1.0 Introduction

Hi my dear student. Just a recap. You learnt about 1&2 Thessalonians in the last unit. As you saw, the two epistles are regarded as the earliest of all Pauline epistles. That said, this unit exposes you to another of Pauline epistle called the Galatians. This epistle becomes very important since it deals with an issue that was problematic in the early church. That issue was the problem of Gentile inclusion in the Church or the Christian commonwealth. We will take a closer look at the Epistle of the Galatians now.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Pauline authorship of Galatians
- Understand the epistle as having an epistolary structure

3.1 The Destination of the Epistle

In Gal 1:2 and 3:1 mention the destination of the epistle as the churches in Galatia. Students, it has not been easy to conclude on which part of Galatia that the epistle was sent to. As Brown (2014:475) asks "Where did the addresses of Gal live?" By implication, arguments surrounding

the destination of Galatians has been on if it was Southern Galatia or Northern Galatia that the epistle was sent to. Determining this, students, is no mean task. However, we will try our best to make sense of which of the regions of Galatia the epistle was sent to. Theory that the letter was sent to **Southern Galatia** was proposed by Scholars like W.M Ramsay and F.F. Bruce. Their argument rests on the fact that Paul had evangelized cities of the province Southern Galatia as seen in his first missionary journey around 46-49AD. These included Antioch, Lystra and Derbe. But our record in Acts never placed these cities in terms of provinces. Rather it mentioned them by names alone. Equally, while we can believe that Paul's mission in these cities converted both Jews and Gentiles, the information in Galatians does not indicate that Jews formed part of the church of Galatia. This somehow works against this theory. The next belief regarding the destination of the epistle would be **Northern Galatia**. This theory is made easy with the mention of the Galatians by name in Gal 3:1 which shows, with specification, that it was the Galatians that were written to. By this it is better to believe that during Paul's missionary journey, he moved northward to the Galatians territory proper which was mentioned in Acts 18:23. While a lot of issues still surround the actual destination of the epistle to Galatians, it is safer for us to assume that the epistle was directed to Northern Galatians because as we have shown, it seems that the natural meaning of the name Galatia refers to North Galatia. Even the church fathers believed that it was North Galatia that the epistle was addressed to. This had been the position of the Church.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Do you think that the epistle to the Galatians was directed to Northern Galatia?

3.2 Authorship of the Epistle

Paul is believed to have been the author of Galatians. Students, scholars have not proved otherwise (Martyn 1985:410-24). Even a scholar like F.C Baur, the sceptic of the Tübingen school did not question its being Pauline. Based on **external evidence**, Ignatius of Antioch was said to have used the epistle. Marcion's canon, did not exclude it from Pauline writings. Even church fathers like Clement of Alexandria, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus all attested to it being Pauline writing. Regarding internal evidence, Gal 1: Equally, in the closing part of the epistle, Gal 5:2 bears the mark of Pauline authorship. All these show that Paul, indeed, authored the epistle.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Using external and internal evidence, Prove Pauline authorship of the Epistle to Galatians

3.3 The Literary form of Galatians

The epistle to the Galatians departs, radically, from the Hellenistic epistolary structure. Unlike Paul, he misses the thanksgiving section. Rather he began with a salutation (1:1-5) and then goes on with a rebuke (1:6-4:11). Next, we see an autobiography in Gal 1:13-2:21. This is followed by an argument from the scripture (Gal 3:6-29), a request (Gal 4:12-6:10). Another autobiography follows in Gal 4:12-20. An allegory from scripture is then seen in Gal 4:21-31, then an ethical instruction in Gal 5:1-6:10 followed by a subscription in Gal 6:11-18.

Self- Assessment Exercise 3

Why do you think Paul did not follow the known Hellenistic epistolary structure in Galatians?

3.4 Occasion for the Epistle

Simply put, what occasioned the writing of Galatians was the acceptance of the Galatian Christians of some false teaching propagated by some Jewish teachers. After Paul had left Galatia, some Jewish Christian teachers probably came to them with a message different from what Paul preached (Brown 2014, Fitzmyer 2014). These Jewish teachers questioned Paul's apostolicity, and claimed he was not preaching the true Gospel. They encouraged Galatian Christians to observe Jewish rites and rituals if they wanted to be true Christians (Barclay 1987). This created confusion and agitations in the church at Galatia. Paul therefore wrote the epistle to Galatia as a response to the situation and teaching of the Jewish Christian teachings. It there had a focus on justification by faith and not by work which shows that the works of the law cannot save the Christians of Galatia, unless the wanted to go back to the bondage of the law.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

What occasioned the writing of Galatians?

3.4 Message and Theology of the Epistle

An expose on the relationship between the gospel and the law remains the greatest message of Galatians. As Paul writes in the epistles, justification of Christians is by faith and not by works of the law. Observance of Jewish rites and rituals are irrelevant to the salvation of Christians. Even if one wants to keep the law, it has to be based on Christ's standards. For it is through his spirit that Christians can keep the law and not by the power of humans. The higher standard in the life of Christians is that of Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

What is the message of Galatians?

3.4 Summary

In this unit, the students have taken through these important issues regarding the epistle to Galatians:

- The controversial nature of the destination of Galatians
- Both Southern and Northern Galatians have been argued to have been the destination of the epistle to the Galatians
- Paul authored the epistle as internal and external evidences have shown; In fact scholars are of the opinion that Paul was the author of the epistles with a doubt.
- The Core message of Galatians is the relationship between law and Grace

4.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)

Barclay, JMG (1988) *Obeying the Truth: A study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians*. Edinburg: Clark

Brown, RE (2014) *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Fitzmyer, J.A(2014) "The Epistle to the Galatians" *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

Martyn., JL (1985) "A Law-observant Mission to the Galatians" *SJT* 38:307-324

5.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Do you think that the epistle to the Galatians was directed to Northern Galatia?

- Yes, I believe in the North Galatian destination of the Epistle of Galatians
- This is the traditional position of the church
- The natural meaning of Galatia is Northern Galatia
- The Acts of the Apostle mentions Paul's missionary journey where Paul visited Galatia, that is, north Galatia geographically.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Why do you think Paul did not follow the known Hellenistic epistolary structure in Galatians?

- This is difficult to determine
- But one can argue that the nature of the controversy at the Galatian church may have prompted Paul to abandon his known Hellenistic style of writing epistles
- By implication, Paul may have abandoned the Hellenistic form of writing an epistle because of the urgency of the problem at Galatia

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

What occasioned the writing of Galatians?

- The main reason that Paul wrote the epistle to Galatians was to respond to the false teachings of some Jewish Christians in the Church
- These Jewish Christians had taught Galatian Christians that they must obey all Jewish rites and ritual if they are to be seen as Christians
- By implication, these Jewish Christians taught Galatian Christians that they must be law observant if they must be seen as Christians
- This was against what Paul had taught the Galatian Christians on the position of the Christian before the law.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

What is the message of Galatians?

The message of Galatians is to clarify the position of the Law in the salvation of Christians.

UNIT 2: EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The ancient City of Rome
 - 3.2 The church at Rome
 - 3.3 Authenticity and date of Romans
 - 3.4 Occasion of the Romans
 - 3.5 The message of Romans
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

1.0 Introduction

Hello students. Welcome to the last unit of the module. I believe you have enjoyed our discussion so far. Guess what? There is still more to come from this unit. The epistle to the Romans is usually regarded as a compendium of Paul's theology, it is a very interesting epistle to study. Equally, in this unit, you will learn about the origin of the church of Rome and the possible reason Paul wrote the Epistle. I therefore urge you to pay a very close attention as we walk through this interesting epistle.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify Paul's relationship with the church at Rome
- Point out the purpose of the Roman epistle.
- Understand the issues surrounding the authorship of Romans

3.1 The Ancient City of Rome

The city of Rome was the capital city of the Roman Empire. By the time the letter was written, it was believed the Roman population was around one million.

3.1 The Church at Rome

There is evidence that Paul founded the church at Rome. This is not contestable in the scholarship of the epistle to the Romans. According to Brown (2014), the origin of the church at Rom is unknown. According to Lamp (2003), by the time the Paul wrote, there is an evidence that the church at Rome had be established. Equally, he argued that it was probably Jewish Christian missionaries that took the gospel to Rome. They also established, probably a church there. By the time Paul write his letter to the Romans, the church seemed to have been dominated by the Gentiles. This may have been because of the banishment of the Jews from Rome by Emperor Claudius around AD 49. They were fomenting trouble in Rome on issues relating to Christ. This is also seen in Acts 18:2 where Paul met Aquila and Priscila who were part of those expelled from Rome.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

How would you account for the origin of the church at Rome?

3.2 Authenticity and date of Rome

We will approach the issue from the point of view of internal and external evidence. From **external evidence**, church father like Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Marty, Poplycarp, Hippolytus, Marcion and Muratorian canon all attested to the authorship of Paul. Equally, the Old Latin and Syriac versions attributed the authorship of the epistle to Paul.

Internal evidence from the epistles itself shows that Paul wrote the epistle. In Rom 1:1, Paul identifies himself as the author of the epistle. He also make personal references that can only be identified with him (Rom 11:13;15:15-20). The style of writing, including the theology and the argument in the epistle favours Pauline authorship. The time of its writing can also be determined with certainty. Paul wrote the epistle while he was at Macedonia. Or after he had visited Macedonia. There is can be said that the epistle was written at the end of Paul's third missionary journey. So Paul had visited Ephesus after his time at Macedonia after which he landed at Corinth. From this calculations, it usually believed that Paul wrote the epistle between 57 AD and 59AD.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Was Paul the author of Romans?

3.3 Occasion of Romans

We can broadly categorise why Paul wrote the epistle to Romans into a) **Missionary purpose** where it has been said that Paul wrote to the Romans to ask the Roman Christians help out in the collections need for Paul's mission to Spain. This is what is reflected in Rom 15: 28. B) **The second purpose** of the epistle is conciliatory. There was tension in the Church of Rome between the Jews and the Gentiles which attracted Paul's attention. Paul wrote to address this tension stating that Christians are one through faith in Christ. Here, decent matters no more. C) **Apologetic purpose**. This means that Paul also wrote defending the gospel that he preached. This is better called self-apologia.

Self- Assessment Exercise 3

What was the purpose of Paul's writing of Romans?

3.5 Message and of Romans

As a compendium of Paul's theology, the epistle to the Romans contains certain messages that are the core of Paul's theology. These are **God and Revelation**. In the epistle, Paul believed that the revelation of God is found in the order of creation and the special revelation in Christ. Paul argues that the creation is a manifestation of the one and only God. This God is a God of righteousness, wrath, mercy, kindness and love. There is also the message of **reconciliation of God and Man**. Here, Paul argues that humanity has been subjected to the anger of God because of the bondage of sin, law and death. In this sense, Christ became a reconciliation between God and humanity by his death on the cross. It is his death that reconciles humanity with God. There is also the message of **Justification and sanctification**. According to Paul, the life of a believer begins from justification which moves on to salvation and sanctification.

3.4 Summary

In this unit, the students have been exposed to these issues in Romans:

- That the origin of Church of Rome is obscure.
- In contemporary scholarship, it is believed that Jewish Christians founded the church at Rome
- By the time Paul wrote the epistle, the Gentiles have dominated the church at Rome owing to the expulsion of the Jews from Rome by Claudius
- The epistle was written at the end of Paul's third missionary journey

- Paul wrote the epistle because of issues like attracting the attention of the church at Rome to support his missionary activity in Spain, the issue of tension in the church of Rome and as a self-apologia.

4.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)

Brown, RE(2014) *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Lampe, P(2003) *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the first two centuries*. Philadelphia: Fortress

5.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

How would you account for the origin of the church at Rome?

- The church at Rome was not founded by a known person.
- Paul was not even its founded
- The church had existed prior to the letter of Paul to the church at Rome
- It was probably founded by Jewish Christian missionaries who took the gospel to Rome
- At the time of its founding, it was a multi-cultural church
- By the time Paul wrote, the church was dominated by Gentiles, owing to the fact the Emperor Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome owing to the trouble they made on the account of the belief in Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Was Paul the author of Romans?

- Yes, Paul was the author of the epistle to the Romans
- External evidence like the testimonies of Clement of Rome, Tertullian, Marcion, and the Muratorian canon, show that Paul was the author of the epistle.
- Internal evidence from the epistle shows that Paul wrote it.
- In Rom 1:1 Paul mentions his name and made a personal reference that is squarely identified with him.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Paul's What was the purpose of Paul's writing of Romans?

- Paul wrote the epistle for three reasons
- First, he need financial aid from the Church of Rome for his missionary activities in Spain.
- He wrote the epistle for conciliatory purposes since they were tensions in the church of Rome
- Third, Paul wrote the epistle as a form of self-apologia

MODULES 3: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

- Unit 1: The Prison Letters
- Unit 1: Epistle to the Ephesians
- Unit 2: Epistle to the Colossians
- Unit 3: Epistle to Philemon
- Unit 4: Epistle to Philippians

UNIT 1: EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS**Unit Structure**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 Destination of the epistle to the Ephesians
 - 3.2 Authenticity of Ephesians
 - 3.3 Occasion of the Epistle
 - 3.4 The message of the Epistle
- 4.0 Summary
- 6.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hello Students. We are indeed progressing. We have looked at the ecclesiastical Pauline letters, believed to have been written in the early part of his ministry. In this unit, we will discuss the Ephesian epistle. The epistle to the Ephesians is regarded also as Paul's prison letter. This epistle is among the finest of Paul's epistles. I invite you to pay attention as we discuss important issues regarding the Ephesians Epistle.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Establish Paul's authorship of the epistle to the Ephesians
- Discuss the date of the writing of Ephesian Epistle
- Explain the destination of the epistles
- Have an insight of the possible tradition behind Paul's death

3.1 Destination of the Epistle to the Ephesians

My dear students, the problem with the destination of the Epistle to the Ephesians is that the mention of the sentence “To the saints who are in Ephesus and also the faithful in Christ Jesus” is missing in its original Greek manuscript (Brown 2014:626). This may mean that the true recipients of the epistles may not have been known. Beginning with Archbishop Usser in the 17th century, doubts have been raised about the destination of the epistle. For example, Marcion, the great heretic had doubted the Ephesian destination, believing rather that the letter was meant to be read for the church in Laodicea. This has also been an argument that the letter was meant to read by all churches in many different cities other than Ephesus. This therefore explains the missing “to the saints at Ephesus” in the original manuscript of the letter. These are all conjectural theories which fails to explain critically why Ephesus should not be accepted as the destination of the letter. Besides, it would interest students to know that Ephesus as the destination of the letter was not doubted in the early church.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Was Ephesus the destination of the Epistle to the Ephesians?

3.2 Authenticity and Date of the Ephesians

Pauline authorship of Ephesians has been challenged. F.C Baur began this challenge in the 18th century. This set in the argument against Pauline authorship of the letter. Some of these are based upon these:

- Style and language of the epistle. Here it has been argued that the epistle departs from well-known Pauline style of writing. Paul’s favorite words do not occur in Ephesians
- Theology of the Epistles deviated from that of the eight authentic letters of Paul. An example is the cosmic Christology of the epistle. For example Christ role assumes a cosmic dimension and the words heavenly places were mentioned about five time in the letter. This is not seen in any of the authentic Pauline epistles. The ecclesiological interest of the epistle is also some else that make some scholars argue against Pauline authorship. Its focus on church-related issue may mean it was an epistle that came after Paul.

However, there points on which to argue for Pauline authorship of the letter. These are based on **internal and external evidence**. On **internal evidence**, the opening of the letter in 1:1 mentions Paul as the author of the epistle. There are also materials in the epistle that contains autobiographical information which suggests Pauline authorship. **External evidence** also shows that Clement of Rome, Ignatius of

Antioch, Hermas and Polycarp all attested to its Pauline authorship. Dating the Epistle will have to be based on the time of Paul's imprisonments. Traditionally, it is believed to have been written by Paul during his first imprisonment. This may have been in the 60s AD. Therefore, Ephesians may have been written in the 60s AD.

3.3 Occasion of the Epistle

There was no situation that led to the writing of the Ephesians epistle. Unlike other Pauline epistles that have a certain situation as the occasion for writing, Ephesians was not written as a reaction to any situation. It was just written for the churches in Ephesus, and probably for wide readership in other churches in the empire.

Activity 1

Attempt a reconstruction of anti-Pauline authorship of Ephesians?

3.4 The message of Ephesians

The message of Ephesians includes the greatness of God, who is magnified as the father of Jesus, and in all he has done in Christ Jesus. There is also the message of how Christ is exalted. This is what we have identified as the cosmic Christology of Ephesians. He was exalted above principalities and powers (Eph 1:21-22). There is also the message of the present dimension of salvation. There is also the message of the status of believers which is found in their new relationship with Christ. The unity of humans, the cosmic struggle in terms of principalities and powers, and the ethical obligation of Christians are all the messages of Ephesians. The life of the church, that is ecclesiology is also the focus of the message of the epistle.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight the message of Ephesians?

4.0 Summary

These are the take away points for students as we summarise:

- Ephesians is regarded as part of the prison letters of Paul
- Its destination is seriously contended owing to the omission of the name Ephesus in the original manuscript.
- It is mostly believed that it was meant to be for general readership.

- Its message include issue that deal of cosmic Christology, the present state of believers status, ecclesiology, principalities and powers and ethical issues.

5.0 References/Further Reading

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Kobelski, PJ (2014) “The letter to the Ephesians” *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Attempt a reconstruction of anti-Pauline authorship of Ephesians?

- Paul is mentioned as the author in the epistle in 1:1
- Church fathers like Clement, Ignatius, Hermas all attested that Paul wrote the letter
- Polycarp also attested to Pauline authorship

You may add other points

UNIT 2: THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The ancient city of Colossae
 - 3.2 The church at Colossae
 - 3.3 Authenticity and date of the epistle
 - 3.4 Occasion of the Epistle to the Colossians
 - 3.5 The message of the epistle to Colossians
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Here is to introduce you to another of Paul's prison letters called the epistle to the Colossians. It is regarded as one of the shortest of all of Paul's letters but has a value twice its size and length. It is to this epistle we turn our attention to.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand the ancient city of Colossae
- Discuss the circumstances surrounding the church at Colossae
- Establish Pauline authorship of the epistle

3.1 The ancient city of Colossae

My dear students, the city called Colossae was an important commercial town (Brown 2014:599). It was located at the western coast of Asian minor, about 110 miles from Ephesus. The city was noted for its purple wool being a textile centre. Its population was estimated at about 10,000, and was very much Hellenised. It was a city mixed up with the Jews, Phrygians, and Greek (Horgan 2014). It was in this city that a church was founded but Paul or any other apostle of the early first century AD.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Describe the city of Colossae

3.2 The Church at Colossae

The origin of the church in this city is unknown. Acts of the apostles does not mention it and did not picture Paul having his evangelism there. Although the Jews were quit of great number at Colossae it was evident that Gentile made up the church there. The mention of Epaphras a Gentile in 4:10 supports this fact. This is also supported in Cl 1:21, 1:5-8.

3.3 Authenticity and Date of Colossians

It was in the 19th century that Paul's authorship of Colossians began to be doubted, notwithstanding the addition of the words "to the Colossians" in the epistles. About four points are raised in this regard. First is the style of Colossian which does not tally with that of authentic Pauline letters. Second, is the Christology which does not resemble that presented at Philippians. Third is the issue of heresies which was a second century Gnostic teaching. Fourth is its similarity with Ephesians which makes some scholars think that Paul would not be repeating himself in the epistles. However, based on external evidence, Pauline authorship is favoured. The church has traditionally ascribed Paul the authorship of the epistle. Barnabas, Tertullian, Clement all knew about the epistle and its association with Paul. Internal evidence also suggest that Paul write the epistle. Its opening greetings indicates that Paul wrote the epistle.

Dating the epistle may have to depend on the acceptance of either Pauline authorship or not. Since we accept it as having come from Paul, and also during his imprisonment, the epistle may have been written between 63 to 67 AD (Brown 2014).

Activity 1

Using critical studies on the epistle to the Colossians, pinpoint other issues that make you doubt Paul's authorship of the epistles

3.4 Occasion of the Epistle

What led to the writing of Colossians was the arrival Ephaphras in Rome with a not-too-good news about the heresy going on in the church of Colossae. This heresy, of course, was Gnosticism which was a problem to many churches in eastern Roman empire. The purpose of writing the epistle may include the need for Paul to express personal interest in the church at Colossae. Again, it may have been to warn against a reversion to their old pagan ways of life. Also, the possibility of refuting the Colossian heresy may have been part of the purpose of writing the letter.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What was the reason Colossians was written?

3.5 The Message of the Epistle to the Colossians

Christology may be the greatest contribution of the epistle to Pauline theory. But we to understand the as the author was tackling Gnosticism, the emphasis on Christology by the author could be understood. In this regard, the message of Colossians include that Christ is God and not a mere created being. Also that He has conquered all principalities and power by his death on the cross. Equally, the idea that all Christians have died to their old life in Christ and entered into a new life in Christ is a message in the letter. There is also the ethical dimension which treats interpersonal relationship, and in the family as well. Here the emphasis on the household codes stresses the ethical message of the letter.

What was the reason Colossians was written?
Why did Paul write the epistle to the Colossians?

4.0 Summary

The following lesson are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- The city called Colossae was an important commercial town.
- It was located at the western coast of Asian minor, about 110 miles from Ephesus.
- The city was noted for its purple wool being a textile centre. Its population was estimated at about 10,000, and was very much Hellenised.
- The church at Colossae was predominantly gentile in make-up

- Rejection of Paul's authorship of the letter is Based of style, Christology and heresies in the epistle.
- Paul, based on internal and external evidence, is believed to have written the epistle
- Paul wrote the epistle owing the disturbing new of heresies in the church there as brought to him by Epaphras

5.0 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Horgan, MP PJ (2014) "The letter to Colossians" *NJBC* . London: Bloomsbury

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Describe the city of Colossae

- Colossae was a city located in the western part of Asian minor.
- It was a commercial city that was hellenised
- Its population at that time was estimated to have been around 10,000 inhabitants

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Why was Colossians written?

- Colossians has about four core messages
- It was written to refute the Colossian heresy which was a belief in Gnosticism
- It was also written as a way of achieving personal introduction by Paul to the Colossian church

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Why did Paul write the epistle to the Colossians?

- The author wrote to tackle Gnosticism, a heresy found in the church there
- For Christological emphasis
- For ethics, that is, interpersonal relationships in the households

UNIT 3: THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 **Main Contents**
 - 3.1 Introducing the Epistle to Philemon
 - 3.2 Occasion of the Epistle to Philemon
 - 3.3 Authenticity and date of the epistle to Philemon
 - 3.4 Theological significance of the Epistle
 - 3.5 The message of the epistle to Colossians
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

1.0 Introduction

Here is to introduce you to another of Paul's letter called the epistle to Philemon. It is regarded as being related to the epistle to the Colossians which we had studied. It is an epistle of Paul written to an individual on a particular case. Both Philemon and Colossians were believed to have been written from the same place. It is to this epistle we turn our attention to next.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand why the epistle is very short
- Explain the circumstances that led to the writing of the epistle
- Explain the relationship between Onesimus and Philemon
- The theology of the epistle
- Understand the ideas about slavery in first century AD

3.1 Introducing the Epistle

Hi Students. Have you ever read the epistle to Philemon before? If you did, one thing you will notice is that it is very short. According to Brown (2014) it has about 355 words. That is amazing right? In fact it is the shortest of all of Pauline writings. It is also the most personal of all of Pauline writings. It deals with very sensitive issue in the early

Christian era. This is the problem of slavery and how Christians are to relate with it. Its pattern of writing is very close to that of ordinary Hellenistic letter writing.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Introduce the epistle to Philemon

3.2 Occasion of the letter

This epistle may be dated between 58 to 60 AD during the time of Paul's imprisonment. It was addressed to a very wealthy man called Philemon. Philemon was a Christian, probably converted by Paul. The core of the letter revolves around Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, who probably ran away. It seems that Onesimus found his way into Paul's missionary party and stayed with him. He was a Christian convert as well. But Paul knew about slavery and how it functioned in the early Christian era. He knew it was not right to keep Onesimus. He was not his master. So, Paul decided to send him back to his rightful master despite his usefulness to him in the ministry (Fitzmyer 2014).

3.3 Authenticity and Date of Colossians

Paul is believed to have been the author of the epistle to Philemon. However, before we get into that proper, there is an attached activity for you to engage in students.

Activity 1

Read critical studies on how slavery functioned in the first century. Then use it as a point to understand why Paul sent Onesimus back to his master

As with other Pauline(authentic) letters, Paul identifies himself as the author of the letter. In Phil 1:1 Paul directly refers to himself as the author of the epistle. Equally, Timothy I seems to have been a joint author as well. It may have been that Timothy had a personal relationship with Paul as well. Regarding dating of the epistle, it would be dependent on the place of writing of the epistle. This is a guess work, of course. Rome is the best guess in this regard. Since, Colossians was written at the same place, it would be safe to assume that the letter was written at 62 AD (Brown 2014).

3.4 The nature of the Epistle to Philemon

The shortness of the letter, its personal appeal to only a person, Philemon and the manner through which Paul handled the case is so personal. This means that it is to be regarded as a private letter, and not a public letter. Some factors work against this claim. First its length exceeds that of a personal letter. Paul had always wished that his letters were read in the midst the church. The technicality in the language also makes that letter a fit for a public letter (Martin 1981). But we are to know that as long as Christian issues and worship is concerned, private issues are also public issues since all is one in the body of Christ (church).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Is Philemon to be regarded as a personal epistle?

3.5 Theological significance of the epistle to Philemon

Theologically, the significance of the epistle lay on these:

- The nature of slavery in first century and the Christian response to it.
- The nature of Paul's imprisonment, including his personal relationships with his friends and acquaintances
- The nature of pastoral diplomacy
- Forgiveness as grace and how it should work in the church since Paul implored Philemon to take Onesimus back based on love

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Highlight some theological significance of Philemon epistle

4.0 Summary

The following lesson are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- The epistle to Philemon is the shortest of all Pauline writings with about 335 words.
- Its teaching on slavery makes us understand how slavery was a social issue in world of the early church
- It teaches hoe slaves are to be treated with love and humanity since Paul implored Philemon to consider Onesimus as his brother in Christ.
- The church at Colossae was predominantly gentile in make-up

- Although there are points that work against the epistle being regarded as a private correspondence, there are good points also for it to be considered a public epistle 5

5.0 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Fitzmyer, JA (2014) “The letter to Philemon” *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

Martin, RP (18981) *Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: WE Eerdmans

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Introduce the Epistle to Philemon

- It is the shortest of all Pauline writings
- It has about 335 words
- It was written by Paul around 62 AD
- It gives us a window into slavery and its problems in the first century AD

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Is Philemon to be regarded as a personal epistle?

- No, it is to be regarded as a public epistle
- Though, it was addressed to an individual, Paul had always wanted his epistles to be read in the churches
- Its length also exceeded that of private letters in the first century AD
- Its language is equally made for public readership

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Highlight some theological significance of the epistle

Some of the theological significance of the epistles is that we learn from it:

- The nature of slavery in first century and the Christian response to it.
- The nature of Paul’s imprisonment, including his personal relationships with his friends and acquaintances
- The nature of pastoral diplomacy

UNIT 4: EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The ancient city of Philippi
 - 3.2 The Church at Philippi
 - 3.3 Authorship
 - 3.4 Place of writing
 - 3.5 Date of writing
 - 3.6 The message and theology of Philippians
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hello students, I hope that our last discussion on Philemon was interesting. Among other things, you learnt how slavery was a problem in the world of the early church. You also learnt how Paul rested laws guiding the practice of slavery by returning Onesimus back to his master in love. In this unit, we will discuss the epistle to Philippi. This is regarded as the last of the prison letters of Paul. Therefore I invite you to pay attention as we discuss important issues regarding this epistle.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Discuss the historic city of Philippi
- Discuss the composition of the church at Philippi
- Understand the arguments around the place of the composition of the epistle
- Have an insight of the theological teachings of the epistle.

2.3 The ancient city of Philippi

My dear students, have you wondered why most of the cities Paul evangelised or wrote was great cities of the ancient world? We have seen those of Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, Galatia among others. Here we see the ancient city of Philippi. According to Brown (2014), it was at

Philippi that Mark Antony and Augustus had defeated Brutus and Cassius, the assassins of Julius Caesar. Philippi was a located in the Mediterranean sea, and was a commercial city located along the port of Neapolis. This was where the Roman highway crossed Macedonia. It was here that Paul founded his first church in Europe. From Acts 16, it seems that Paul has a brief stay at Philippi. It was among the Jews and the gentiles that he evangelised. This also tells us that both Jews and Gentiles lived in the city. It was in this city that Paul drove out the evil spirit in a slave girl who was a source of money for her owners.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Describe Philippi as a historic city?

3.2 The church at Philippi

As we have discussed above, the church at Philippi was the first church Paul founded in Europe. Paul had many encounters in the church at Philippi. It was here that Paul silenced a slave girl with fortune telling powers at the angst of her owners. It was here the Philippian jailor wanted to take his own life after an angel of the Lord had broken open the prison gates. It was here that the Philippian jailor also got converted. From the names mentioned in Acts 16, which included Epaphroditus, Euodia, Clement among others, one can infer that many Greeks were found in that church. By implication, it seemed that Gentiles were an integral part of the church at Philippi.

3.4 The message of Ephesians

The message of Ephesians include the greatness of God, who is magnified as the father of Jesus, and in all he has done in Christ Jesus. The is also the message of how Christ is exalted. This is what we had identified as the cosmic Christology of Ephesians. He was exalted above principalities and power (Eph 1:21-22). There is also the message of the present dimension of salvation. There is also the message of the status of believers which is found in their new relationship with Christ. The unity of humans, the cosmic struggle in terms of principalities and powers, and the ethical obligation of Christians are all the messages of Ephesians. The life of the church, that is ecclesiology is also the focus of the message of the epistle.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight some encounters that Paul had and Philippi?

3.3 Authorship

Paul is the author of the epistle to Philippians (Byrne 2014). No doubt about this. Based on internal evidence, Phil 1:1 shows clearly that Paul wrote the epistle although Timothy was also mentioned as a co-author. Also Paul uses the personal pronoun I (*ego*) in the letter indicating that it was he who wrote it. This was used about 51 times in the letter. External evidence also favours Pauline authorship. Church fathers like Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Polycarp, all made use of the epistle and even quoted it as coming from Paul.

3.4 Place of Writing

There are controversies concerning the place where Paul wrote this epistle. One thing we are sure of is that Paul wrote this letter when he was in Prison. Some to determine the dating of the epistle, one has to factor in some of the following issues. One, Paul was in prison when he wrote the letter. Two, Timothy was with him when the letter was written. Third, Paul was facing a trial at the time the letter was written. Fourth, evangelism was going on around him at the time he wrote this letter. Five, he had plans of vision the Philippian church if acquitted. Six, it was in a praetorium that Paul was held. In this regard, about four cities offer us a possibility of being the place Paul wrote the epistle. These are Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, and Caesarea. We therefor conclude in line with Brown (2014) that either of these four cities was the place of writing of Philippians.

Activity 1

Argue for and against any of the four mentioned cities as being the place of writing of the epistle to Philippians

3.5 Date of writing of Ephesus

Depending on one's choice of the place of writing of the epistle, the following dates may be useful as regard the dating of the epistle. AD 60 to AD 63 if one accepts Rome as the place of writing the epistle, AD 54 to 57 if one accepts that Ephesus was its place of writing, AD 50, if one accepts Corinth as it place of writing, and AD 58 to AD 60 if one accepts Caesarea as its place of writing.

3.6 The message and theology of Philippians

Among the message of the epistle is that Christians are to be steadfast in times of trial. They should have strong faith in Christ. This may be because Paul was also at trial when he wrote the letter. This teaching goes against the conventional belief among people of the time that suffering and sin have a relationship. However, in Philippians, Paul argues otherwise. It is the spirit that gives peace which comes with joy anchored on total reliance on Christ.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

What is the central message of the epistle to the Philippians?

5.0 Summary

The following lessons are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- Philippi was a city with a great history
- Mark Antony and Augustus killed the killer of Julius Caesar at Philippi
- It was a commercial city
- The church at Philippi was the first church Paul planted in Europe
- Places like Rome, Corinth, Ephesus and Caesarea have been suggested as the places Paul wrote the epistle.
- The central message of the epistle is on the steadfastness of Christians amidst trials

6.0 References/Further Reading

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Bryne, B (2014) "The letter to the Philippians" *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

7.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Describe Philippi as a historic city?

- Philippi was located in the Mediterranean sea.
- It was a commercial city located along the port of Neapolis.
- The assassins of Julius Caesar were killed at Philippi
- It had a mixed population of Jews and Gentiles

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight some encounters that Paul had and Philippi?

- Paul cast out an evil spirit from a slave girl who had powers of fortune telling.
- This led to the owners inciting the people against Paul
- It was here that the Philippian jailor tried taking his own life when he thought that Paul and Silas had escaped
- Paul converted the Philippian jailor and his family amongst others there before his departure

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What is the central message of the epistle to the Philippians?

The central message of the Philippian epistle is that Christians should be steadfast in the times of trial

Modules 4: Pastoral Epistles

- Unit 1: Introduction to Pastoral Epistles
- Unit 2: First Epistle to Timothy
- Unit 3: Epistle to Titus
- Unit 4: Second Epistle to Timothy

Unit 1: An introduction to the Pastoral Epistles

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 Authenticity of Pastoral epistles
 - 3.2 Arguments for Pauline authorship
 - 3.3 Arguments against Pauline authorship
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

This module introduces students to the pastoral letters. These are epistles believed to deal with the church. Hence, they are called pastoral letters. These are also epistles that many scholars have serious doubts about Paul being their authors. We will therefore be walked through some of these listed above in the cause of this module.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand Paul's dual nationality
- Have an understanding of Paul's educational background
- Explain Paul's conversion
- Discuss Paul's missionary activities
- Have an insight of the possible tradition behind Paul's death

3.1 The Authenticity of the pastoral Epistles

Students of Pauline studies may not have heard of the name J.B Schmidt. Nevertheless, it was this man, who first called to question Pauline authorship of the Pastoral letters in 1804. Schlemarcher and F.C Baur all followed suit and questioned Pauline authorship of the pastoral

epistles. The core of the argument is that they were written after Paul had died, and reflects a more developed church structure other than what was in existence in the time of Paul. There is a theory that it was written by the Pauline school, that is by, someone who followed the Pauline tradition. Piecing together these arguments are not an easy deal. So, in the following sub-sections, an attempt will be made to look at the pros and cons of these arguments.

3.2 Arguments for Pauline Authorship

To get through these arguments, we will consider both **external and internal** evidence that favour Pauline authorship. Clement of Alexandria, Polycarp of Smyrna, Eusebius of Caesarea, Tertullian, Muratorian canon, and Marcion all attributed the pastorals to Paul. The syriac version of the NT dated around 150-200 AD included the three epistles as Pauline letters. These all show how the Pauline authorship was upheld in the early church. Internal Evidence also supports Pauline authorship of the pastorals. They contain characters that are found in Pauline writings, that is, the authentic ones. In I Tim 1:18, 4:14, all contained personal issues that are identifiable with Paul. In 2 Tim 1:4 ff, the issue of Timothy's tears, the fate and ministry of his mother and grandmother are all mentioned. These are issues that Paul is aware of.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

What evidence support Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles?

3.3 Arguments against Pauline Authorship

Historically, Paul may not be the favoured author of the pastorals. There are conflicting issues that do not tally with Paul's missionary journeys of Acts and Luke who recorded it. This is also the linguistic argument which shows that the pastorals don't fit into Paul's known language (Wild 2014: 982). Hanson (1971) argues that in line with P.N Harrison's work of 1921 to show that about 306 words that appear in the pastorals are not seen in other of Pauline writings. Only 542 in the whole of the pastorals would find their home when compared with the words used in the authentic Pauline writings. About 1, 635 words that come from authentic Pauline writings are missing in the Pastorals. And what is more. The language of the pastorals are more in tune with those of the church fathers of first half of the second century AD. There is also the bizarre use of secretaries in the Pastorals which work against Pauline authorship. By implication, Paul, who was a fast thinker and writer, would not have relied upon secretaries to write down his letter as we see in the pastorals. These secretaries took down verbatim dictations in the practice of their day. Paul, would not have been at home with such a

secretary. In all these, the most serious argument against Pauline authorship of the Pastorals would be the theology found in them. The developed church structures and the overly argument about who qualifies for which position in the church, certainly post-dated Paul. By implication, the kinds of ecclesiology we find in the pastorals are post-Pauline. Common sense may tell us that Paul did not live to witness such a well-developed church structure as compared to the type of house churches that he communicated with in his authentic epistles.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Give the most valid point on which to argue against Pauline authorship of the Pastoral epistles.

4.0 Summary

The following lessons are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- It J.B Schmidt that first called Pauline authorship of the Pastorals to question in 1804
- Other Like Schleimarcher followed him in 1807 and Baur in 1835
- There are many grounds to argue against Pauline authorship of the pastorals which included historical, linguistic and theological arguments.

5.0 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Hanson AT (1971) *Studies in Pastoral Epistles*. London SPCK

Wild, RA (2014) "The Pastoral Letters" *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What evidence support Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles?

- Church fathers like Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Polycarp of Smyrna all quoted the pastorals and attributed them to Paul.
- The Muratorian canon as listed them as having come from Paul.
- The syriac version written around 150-200AD supported its Pauline authorship
- It had a mixed population of Jews and Gentiles

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Give the most valid point on which to argue against Pauline authorship of the Pastoral epistles

- The most valid point that works against Pauline authorship of the Pastoral epistles is their theology developed from a very complex and well-structure church organization.

UNIT 2: THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The recipient of first Timothy
 - 3.2 The situation and date of first Timothy
 - 3.3 The message of First Timothy
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

The first unit introduced students to the pastoral letters. There, students were exposed to issues relating to Paul's authorship of the pastoral epistle. Students also learnt that it was in 1804 that JB Schmidt first questioned Paul's authorship of the pastoral epistles. In this unit, students would study one of the pastoral epistles called First Timothy. This is an interesting epistles especially for pastors and leaders of the church. Hopefully, there are many of you students in the category mentioned above who will learnt a lot from this epistle.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand the personality of Timothy
- Discuss the circumstances surrounding the writing of first Timothy
- Summarise the message of First Timothy.

3.1 The recipient of first Timothy

Timothy was one of those whom Paul met, and who accompanied him to Jerusalem. Paul had met Timothy at his home town of Lystra (Brown 2014: 653). It may have been here that Timothy joined the Pauline team of missionaries for about fifteen years. The bulk of his missionary activities were during Paul's second and third missionary activities. During this years, he was sent on trusted apostolic assignments, like the

one mentioned above. We can see further examples in 1Thess 3ff and 1 Cor 4:17. So much was Paul found of him that he called his co-worker in Christ. Paul was a father Figure to him, and was his spiritual father (1 Cor 4:17). Timothy's mum was Jewess who converted to Christianity during Paul's missionary journey at Lystra may be. Paul trusted Timothy to the point of say "I have no one like him (Phil 2:20-22). From Paul's descriptions and statements, Timothy was a youth (1 Tim 4:12, 2:22). Here, Paul advises Timothy against youthful exuberances. Equally, Timothy was very prone to illness. Paul's statement in 1 Tim 5:23 indicates that he was prone to illness. It was this Timothy, that Paul addressed the epistle of First Timothy to.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Describe the personality of Timothy

3.2 The situation of First Timothy

Paul had planted a lot of churches during his missionary activities. In 1 Tim 4:10 we see how this mission work extended to Gaul, with churches in Crete, Miletus and Nicopolis. Before long, these churches began to feel the heat of heretical teachings that was spreading fast in that world. Therefore, there was the problem of Judizers and Gnostic heresies (1 Tim 1:3-7, 19-20, 4:1-2, 6:20, 2Tim 4:3-4). The presence of heretical teachings was too much in the church that former church workers had been pushed off their positions (Titus 1 1:5, 10:11). This was the situation of the churches where Timothy resided which was Ephesus. The epistle of First Timothy was thus sent to Timothy on how church leaders are to selected in the church of Ephesus where he was in charge of while same was done to Titus who was in charge of the church at Crete. This letter may have been written around AD 65, though this is nothing but conjectural.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Highlight the situation the led to the writing of First Timothy

3.3 The message of First Timothy

Broadly put, we can categorize the message of First Timothy into:

- An emphasis on the Apostolic Doctrine in which Paul wanted Timothy to uphold the apostolic doctrine in the church of Ephesus where he was in charge of (Stott 1997).
- Conduct of Public worship where how worship should be conducted but in private and public is emphasized. More controversially, also is the role of women in worship.

- Pastoral oversight which deals how to run the church effectively using ordained pastors and deacons.
- Local leadership which deals with how local church leaders are to be equipped to deal with heretical teachings
- Social responsibilities

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

What is the message of First Timothy?

4.0 Summary

The following lessons are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- Timothy was the recipient of the epistle to First Timothy
- He was a native of Lystra, a half Jew who joined the Pauline missionary activities at Lystra
- He was a youth and prone to illness
- He was Paul's trusted ally and spiritual son
- The epistle to First Timothy was written to equip Timothy for the task he had at Ephesus as a church leader.

5.0 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Stott, J (1997). *The message of 2 Timothy*. Leicester: Intervarsity Press

Wild, RA (2014) "The Pastoral Letters" *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Highlight the situation that led to the writing of First Timothy?

- The churches that Paul founded in areas like Ephesus and Crete were being attacked by heretical teachers
- These teachers had pushed off many of the workers of the church and may have put themselves in their places.
- The epistle was therefore written to set the criteria upon which church leaders are to be selected

You may add other points

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

What is the message of First Timothy?

The message of the first epistle of Timothy includes:

- A teaching on the apostolic doctrine
- Teaching on Public worship
- Pastoral Oversight
- Local leadership
- Social responsibilities

UNIT 3: THE EPISTLE TO TITUS

Unit structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The recipient of Titus
 - 3.2 The situation and date of Titus
 - 3.3 The message of Titus
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

The first unit introduced students to first Timothy. There, students were exposed to issues relating to the situation of the epistle, and its message. In this unit, an epistle believed to have been written at the same time with First Timothy will be studied. Issues it discusses related to those of First Timothy. I therefore invite students to pay close attention to this unit as related issues of church life and practice would be studied.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand the relationship between Paul and Titus
- Discuss the circumstances surrounding the writing of Titus
- Identify the date of the Epistle
- Identify the major themes of the epistle

3.1 The recipient of Titus

We heard the name Titus firstly in the NT when there was controversy over circumcision. Here, ardent Jews were pressuring Paul to circumcise Titus. He had brought him to Jerusalem together with Barnabas. However, Paul refused to circumcise him may be because he was a Gentile. Titus was among Paul's converts who joined his missionary team. Paul had sent him on apostolic delegations too. One other thing that we know of Titus is the he took 2 Corinthians with him. This shows he was part of the missionaries of Paul to the Corinthians.

We know also that he was left at Crete to complete the re-organisation of the church there.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Give a sketch of NT mention of Titus

3.2 The situation of First Timothy

Having been left at Crete, the epistle to Titus seemed to have been an encouragement to Titus. Paul wrote the epistle to encourage him as a brother in the faith. Thus in the letter, Titus was admonished a lot on qualities to look out for while selecting church leaders. There was also a warning of the reputations of those living at Crete. This was done so that he would take precautions. Titus was also encouraged to make a return to Nicopolis, just for a visit. In all this, we see that Paul disciple Titus in the process of his church leadership. This epistle therefore is just like that of First Timothy as we have observed. In Stott (1997) thoughts, the epistle to Titus has the following message based on chapters. First is the message **of the doctrine and duty in the church** (1:5-16) where Paul discusses the qualifications and duties expected of different church leaders. Second is **the doctrine and duty in the home** (2:1-15) which deals with ethical issues based on gender and years. Third, **is the doctrine and duty in the world** (3:1-11) where Paul discusses roles and obligations of Christians in public life.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Highlight the message of Titus

4.0 Summary

The following lessons are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- Not much is known about Titus
- From few available records in the NT, Titus was one of the Converts of Paul
- He was left at Crete probably to oversee a church that Paul founded there
- The main message of the epistle of Titus concerns duties in the church, the home and the public.

5.0 References/Further Reading

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Stott, J (1997). *The message of Timothy and Titus*. Leicester: Intervarsity Press

Wild, RA (2014) “The Pastoral Letters” *NJBC* . London: Bloomsbury

6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give a sketch of NT mention of Titus

- The first known mention of Titus in the NT was when some core Jews want Paul to circumcise him
- He was also mentioned as part of Pauline converts
- He probably hand carried the second epistle to the Corinthians
- He was also mentioned as the one being left in Crete to oversee the church there

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight the message of Titus

The message of the Titus revolves around three core issues:

- Duties of Christian leaders in the church
- Duty of Christians in the home
- The duty of Christians as regards public life

UNIT 3: THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Contents
 - 3.1 The situation and date of Second Timothy
 - 3.2 The message of Second Timothy
- 3.0 Summary
- 4.0 References/Further Readings/Web Resources (This will come at the end of the unit)
- 5.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

(Note: SAEs should come after each main section/sub-section. At least 3 SAEs should be embedded within the unit)

2.1 Introduction

Hello student. We are gradually coming to the end of our module. This is the last of the epistle to be discussed in the module and unit as well. Here, we will do a kind of re-visit of Paul's epistle to Timothy. By implication, we will study the second epistle of Paul to Timothy. Issues to be discussed here are related to the ones we discussed in the first epistle of Paul to Timothy. So I urge you to pay a rapt attention as you walked through this last epistle of Paul in the unit and module as well.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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

- Explain the situation that led to the writing of second Timothy.
- Determine the date of the second epistle to Timothy
- Understand the situation of Paul at the time of writing the epistle

3.1 The situation and date of second Timothy

The circumstance out of which this epistle grew can be adapted from the epistle itself. The sayings in 2 Tim 1:16 and 2:9, indicate that Paul was still in chains when he wrote the epistle. Could this be another imprisonment apart from the one mentioned in Acts 2? If we accept that it was a different imprisonment, then we will have what is called the double imprisonment theory of Paul. While this be likely and unlikely at the same time, it was during Paul's imprisonment that the epistle was written. Stott (1997) thinks that Paul was expecting his death, imminently, when he wrote the epistle. As such, it was his last will and testament to the church.

On another level, we can see the letter as a handover note from an old guard to a new one. Paul, being the old guard here, was handing over to a young Timothy, to continue from where he stopped. Regarding the date the epistle was written, it has something to do with the date of Paul's death. If Paul was believed to have been killed together with Peter, then his death has to be placed sometime during the reign of Emperor Nero (AD 67-68). Then, the date of the epistle to second Timothy range from 64-67 AD. This is if one choses to believe the view of Eusebius that both Peter and Paul were killed at the time.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 1

Give a sketch of the situation of the writing of Second Timothy

3.2 The Message of Second Timothy

We will follow the outline of Stott (1997) in discussing the message of Second Timothy.

According to Stott, chapter one of the epistle contains the charge to guard the gospel. Here, Timothy was being **charged to guard the gospel (chapter one)** he was entrusted to prevent the creeping in of heretical ideas in the church. Paul reminded Timothy himself that he heard him preaching what is standard as long as the gospel is concerned. There is also **the charge to suffer for the sake of the gospel (Chapter Two)**. To Timothy, Paul reminds in chapter four of the qualities of a good soldier of Christ. He is to be a good-work man who was also to understand not only the pains of a good work man, but his gains also. In chapter three, Paul charges Timothy to **continue in the gospel**. In chapter four, Paul charges Timothy **to preach the gospel**.

Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) 2

Highlight the message of second Timothy

4.0 Summary

The following lessons are to be taken by the students from this unit:

- Second Timothy was written shortly before the death of Paul
- Based on our discussion, Paul believed that his death was very near
- The epistle could be regard as a hand over note from Paul to young Timothy
- The main message of the epistle revolves around the charge to guard the gospel, charge to suffer for the sake of the gospel, charge to continue in the gospel and charge preach the gospel.

5.0 References/Further Readings

Brown, R.E (2014). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Bangalore: TPI

Stott, J (1997). *The message of Timothy and Titus*. Leicester: Intervarsity Press

Wild, RA (2014) "The Pastoral Letters" *NJBC*. London: Bloomsbury

6.0 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the content

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Give a sketch of the situation of the writing of Second Timothy

- The second epistle of Timothy was written when Paul was imprisoned.
- Paul was expecting an imminent end of his life then
- Second Epistle to Timothy was written as a handover note from Paul to young Timothy.
- He was also mentioned as the one being left in Crete to oversee the church there

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Highlight the message of second Timothy

The message of the epistle revolves around four core issues:

- Charge to guard the gospel
- Charge to suffer for the gospel
- Charge to continue in the gospel
- Charge to preach the gospel.