SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CRE)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the learner should be able to:-

a. Define Christian religious education
b. Explain the importance of learning Christian Religious Education
c. Explain the Bible as the word of God, its major divisions and its human authors
d. Outline and appreciate the translation of the Bible from the original languages (Hebrew, Greek) to local language
e. Discuss the effects of the translation of the Bible into African languages
f. Respect the Bible as the word of God and apply the acquired insights in their daily life.

1. (a) WHAT IS CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CRE is one of the academic subjects in the school curriculum in Kenya

It is the subject that brings us a vivid awareness of God and how He reveals Himself to us through our personal experience, the creation, the scriptures, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit.

It helps learners to develop as a morally upright person.

(c) REASONS FOR STUDYING CRE

The following are some of the reasons for studying CRE

i. To get a better understanding of God

We get a better understanding of God through the way He reveals Himself to us in our daily experiences. We also come to know God more through the teachings recorded in both the Old and New Testaments

ii. **To enable us to think critically and make appropriate social, moral and spiritual decisions**

As students, we face a lot of dilemmas on moral questions involving matters such as attraction to opposite sex, temptation to steal etc. CRE gives us the basis of making such choices based on Christian Principles.

iii. **To appreciate our own religion and that of others**

In order to live in peace and harmony with others CRE helps us learn and appreciate their religion and respect their cultures and faiths

iv. **To help you acquire principles of Christian living**

This is summed up in the Ten Commandments and in the teachings of Jesus Christ

v. **To help us develop a sense of self worth and identity for ourselves and others**

vi. **To promote international consciousness**

As Christians, we should appreciate every person in every part of the world as God's creation.

vii. **To help us live new lives in Christ**

Through CRE we learn and acquire some values and attitudes which in turn transform us.

viii. **To help form a bridge for further studies and career development**

CRE forms a foundation for further studies and career training

ix. **To identify answers to some life questions**

Some life questions such as why we exist, why people die and what happens after death are answered through CRE

x. **To contribute to the achievement of the national goals of education**

National goals of education deal with the improvement of life and include:-

- **National unity**
- **National development (**economic and social needs)
- **Industrial development and self-fulfillment**
- **Social equality**
- **Respect and development of cultural heritage**
- **International consciousness**

In conclusion, CRE makes a contribution to the total development of a person-morally, spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually and socially

2. THE BIBLE

a. The Bible as God's Word

The Bible is a book accepted by Christians as the written word of God through which God communicates to them.

It is also referred to as the **inspired word of God.** This means that what was written was what God intended them to communicate to other

people. God's power worked through the writers controlling what was being written.

It contains the history of salvation, that is, God's purpose in creating and redeeming human through Jesus Christ

b. <u>Human Authors of the Bible</u>

The authors of the Bible were under direct influence of God and they wrote what God wanted them to write. Some books were written by prophets like Nehemiah, Ezra and Isaiah. Luke's gospel was written by Luke the disciple of Jesus, while Paul wrote various letters to different churches such as Corinth.

c. <u>Literally Forms used in writing the Bible</u>

Literally forms are the different styles that the authors of the Bible used in writing it. Some of the literally forms used were:-

i. **Legislative texts (**Leviticus)
ii. **Wise sayings (**Proverbs)
iii. **Prophetic Speeches (**Jeremiah)
iv. **Prayers (**Nehemiah)
v. **Love Songs (**Song of Solomon)
vi. **Philosophical essays (**Job)
vii. **Religious epics (**Exodus)
viii. **Epistles (**Romans)
ix. **Gospels (**Luke)

d. <u>The Bible as a Library</u>

A library is a collection of books. The Bible is referred to as a library because:-

- Although its one book, it contains many books
- The books were written by different people
- The books were written at different times in history
- The writers came from different backgrounds
- The writers were inspired to write by different circumstances
- The authors wrote for different people and for various reasons

e. <u>Major divisions of the Bible</u>

The Bible has two major sections:-

- **The Old Testament**
- **The New Testament**

The word **Testament** means **covenant.**

The Bible has 66 books, which have been accepted by Christians all over the world as the word of God

39 of the books are in the Old Testament while 27 books are in the New Testament.

Some Bibles used by the Roman Catholic Church such as **Common Bible** and the **Jerusalem Bible** contain 45 books in the Old Testament. The six extra books are commonly referred to as **Deutro-Canonical** or books of **apocrypha.**

The word apocrypha means **hidden** or **secret**. These books are:-

- **Tobit**
- **Judith**
- **Ecclesiasticus**
- **Baruch**
- **Meccabees I and II**
- **Books of Wisdom**

The books accepted by all Christians, make up the **Canon** (a Greek word meaning rule, standard or guidance) **of the Old and New Testament**

THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

The Old Testament Books are grouped into four major sections. These are:

- Books of Law
- Books of History
- Books of Prophecy
- Books of Poetry

i. Books of Law

These are first five books of the Bible. They are also referred to as the **Torah** (meaning law) or the **Pentateuch** which means five. These books are:-

- **Genesis**
- **Exodus**
- **Leviticus**
- **Numbers**
- **Deuteronomy**

They contain the law of God to the Israelites. They also contain the history of the Israelites from creation to the time they entered the Promised Land, Canaan.

ii. Books of History

These contain the history of the Israelites from the time they entered and settled in the Promised Land to the period after the exile. They are **12** in number. These books are:-

- **Joshua**
- **Judges**
- **Ruth**
- **I and II Samuel**
- **I and II Kings**
- **I and II Chronicles**

- **Ezra**
- **Nehemiah**
- **Esther**

iii. <u>Books of Prophecy</u>

These are **17** in number.

Major Prophets are:-

- **Jeremiah**
- **Isaiah**
- **Ezekiel**
- **Daniel**
- **Lamentation**

They are called so due to the larger length of their content

Minor Prophets are:-

- **Hosea**
- **Joel**
- **Amos**
- **Obadiah**
- **Jonah**
- **Micah**
- **Nahum**
- **Habakkuk**
- **Zephaniah**
- **Haggai**
- **Malachi**
- **Zachariah**

iv. <u>Books of Poetry</u>

These are sometimes referred to as **writings** or books of wisdom. These are:-

- **Psalms**
- **Proverbs**
- **Job**
- **Ecclesiastes**
- **Song of songs/ songs of Solomon**

<u>THE NEW TESTAMENT</u>

These are divided into four major divisions namely:-

i. The Gospels
ii. Church History
iii. Epistles/Letters
iv. Revelations/Prophetic

i. <u>The Gospels</u>

The word **Gospel** means the announcing of good news. These are the first four books of the New Testament. Namely:-

- **Mathew**
- **Mark**
- **Luke**
- **John**

The first three books are called the **Synoptic gospels** because they report similar incidents about the life of Jesus.

ii. <u>Historical book</u>

- **Acts of the Apostles**

This book was written by Luke, the author of St. Luke's Gospel. It deals with the history of the Early Church

iii. <u>The Epistles/Letters</u>

These are **21** letters, mainly written by Paul. These letters fall under three categories:-

a. <u>The letters of Paul (Pauline letters)</u>

These are **9.**they are:-

- **Romans**
- **I Corinthians**
- **II Corinthians**
- **Galatians**
- **Ephesians**
- **Philippians**
- **Colossians**
- **I Thessalonians**
- **II Thessalonians**

b. **<u>The Pastoral Letters</u>**

There are **5** Pastoral Letters. These are:-

- **I Timothy**
- **II Timothy**
- **Titus**
- **Philemon**
- **Hebrews**

They are called Pastoral because they are mainly addressed to Shepherds or Pastors. They show high regard for the duties of pastors and how these duties should be carried out

c. **<u>The Catholic Letters</u>**

The word Catholic means Universal. Hence these letters can be applied to any group. They are **7** in number. These include:-

- **James**
- **I Peter**
- **II Peter**
- **I John**
- **II John**
- **III John**
- **Jude**

iv. **Prophetic Book**

This is the book of **Revelation.** It is also called **apocalypse**, a Greek word meaning revelation or disclosure. It talks of God's will for the future.

3. TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE FROM ORIGINAL LANGUAGES TO LOCAL LANGUAGES

a) Bible Translation

The word **translation** refers to expression of words, books, poems, songs and sayings from one language to another.

The Old Testament section of the Bible was originally written in **Hebrew.** It was later translated to **Greek** 200 years before Christ was born. This Greek translation is commonly known as **Septuagint.** This name refers to the seventy scholars and scribes who worked on the translation.

The New Testament was originally written in **Greek**.

During 14th Century AD, the Bible was translated into **Latin.** A language commonly used in the Roman Empire. This Latin translation of the Bible is known as **Vulgate** which means **for common use.** This translation was done by a Christian Scholar known as **Jerome.**

This translation was used for many years by the Christian Churches in Europe up to 16th Century AD when the period of Reformation began.

English and **German** translations were done during this period of Reformation. The Catholic Church, however, continued to use the Vulgate even to date.

As Christian Missionaries left their homelands for new lands, the Bible was translated into the local languages of the people that they evangelized to.

The first Bible translation in East Africa was done by **Johann Ludwig Kraft**. He was a missionary sent by the Church Missionary Society. It took him nine years to translate the Bible in **Kiswahili**. Translation has since been done into a number of Kenyan languages. These are:-

- **Gikuyu 1951**
- **Kikamba 1956**
- **Kimeru 1964**
- **Kalenjin 1968**
- **Luhya 1974**
- **Swahili 1977**

In Kenya, the work of the Bible translation is done by the Bible Society of Kenya. Their work is being complimented by the Bible Translation and Literacy Organization

b) <u>Versions of the Bible used in Kenya today</u>

The word version refers to the style of the language use in the translation of the Bible texts. A version attempts to make the Bible content better understood by the readers

Examples of versions used in Kenya are:-

- **Good News Bible**
- **Revised Standard Version (RSV)**
- **The African Bible**
- **Common Bible**
- **King James Version**
- **Jerusalem Bible**
- **New International Version**
- **English Bible**
- **The Authored Version**
- **The Living Bible**
- **The Gideon's International Version**

4. <u>EFFECTS OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE INTO AFRICAN LANGUAGES</u>

i. The translation ensured that there is effective communication between the locals and the missionaries in passing the word of God.
ii. It led to the development of local languages which had to be written down so as to facilitate the translation
iii. The word of God reached more people in their languages because of the translation
iv. The local people could read the Bible on their own and understand it better
v. It enabled the local people to have a critical outlook on certain issues such as the Similarities and differences between Christianity and African Traditional way of life.
vi. It led to high demand for formal education by Africans
vii. It led to the foundation of more mission schools
viii. More Africans became literate and were now able to communicate with others confidently through writing
ix. It led to the emergence of African Independent Churches and Schools

x. It led to the expansion of the church as more people became believers, leaders in the churches as priests, catechists and lay leaders
xi. The translation has facilitated research and studies in African Religious Heritage

CHAPTER TWO

CREATION AND THE FALL OF HUMANKIND

Specific objectives

By the end of this topic, the learner should be able to:-

a. Describe the biblical accounts of creation and appreciate creation as the work of God
b. Identify and appreciate the attributes of God from the biblical creation accounts
c. Describe the traditional African understanding of creation
d. Explain and appreciate the teachings from the biblical creation accounts
e. Explain the origin and consequences of sin according to the biblical accounts of the fall of man
f. Explain the traditional African concept of evil and discuss the similarities and differences with the biblical concept of sin
g. Explain and appreciate God's plan of salvation

1. THE BIBLICAL STORIES OF CREATION AND THERE MEANING (Genesis I and 2)

The Bible contains two accounts of creation in the beginning of the book of Genesis

1ST CREATION ACCOUNT
Genesis 1:12-2:4

This first account gives a record of what was created on specific days. The story is as follows:-

In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness. The spirit of God was moving over the water

1st Day, God commanded "**Let there be light"**. God was pleased with what he saw. He then separated light from the darkness. He named light **Day** and darkness **Night.**

2nd Day, God commanded "**Let there be a dome to divide the water and to keep it in two separate places"** He named the dome **Sky.**

3rd Day, God commanded "**Let the water below the sky come together in one place so that land would appear."** He named the land **Earth** and the water which had come together He name **Sea.**

3rd Day still God commanded "**Let the earth produce all kinds of plants, those that bear grain and those that bear fruit.**

4th Day, then God commanded "**Let light appear in the sky to separate day from night and to show the time when days, years and religious festivals begin"** So God made two large lights, the **Sun** to rule over the day and the **Moon** to rule over the night. He also made the **Stars.**

5th Day, God commanded "**Let the water be filled with many kinds of living beings, and let the air be filled with birds."** So God created the great **Sea Monsters**, all kinds of creatures that live in the water, all kinds of **Birds.**

6th Day, God commanded "**Let the earth produce all kinds of animal life: Domestic and Wild, Large and small".**

6th Day still, Then God said, "**And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us"** So God created **Human Beings**, male and female and blessed them to have many children

7th Day, by the seventh day, God finished what He had been doing and stopped working. He blessed the day.

Summary of first creation Account

Day	Work	Work of division and ornamentation

1	I	Light and Day
2	II	Sky
3	III	Land and Sea
	IV	Vegetation (grass, hearts, trees)
4	V	Sun, Moon, Stars
5	VI	Birds and Sea creatures
6	VII	Animals (cattle and creeping animal)
	VIII	Human beings (male and female)
7	Resting day (Sabbath)	

2nd Creation Account
Genesis 2: 4-25

God had created the universe before but it had no plants because He had not sent any rain and there was no one to cultivate the land. Water was coming up from beneath the earth surface and waters the ground.

God took some soil from the ground and formed a man. He breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live.

Then the Lord planted a garden in Eden where He placed man there.

He made all kinds of beautiful trees to grow there and produce good fruit. In the middle of the garden stood the tree that gives life and the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad.

A stream flowed in Eden and watered the garden. Beyond Eden, it divided into four rivers. These are Pishon, Gihon, Tigris and Euphrates.

God place man in the Garden of Eden in order to cultivate it He told man that he may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. He warned man that if he eats that fruit, he will die the same day.

God then took some soil from the ground to create man a companion. He created all animals and all birds and gave man to name them.

God saw that the animals were not suitable companion for man, so He made man fall into a deep sleep. While man was sleeping, God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh. He formed woman out of the rib and brought her to him.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE 1ST AND THE 2ND CREATION ACCOUNTS

i. God is acknowledged as the creator
ii. Creation includes both the living and non-living objects
iii. Human beings are presented as special creatures with responsibilities and privileges
iv. Human beings share in the life of God

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE 1ST AND THE 2ND CREATION ACCOUNTS

i. The creation of the firmament, light, sun, moon, stars, fishes and creeping things are included in the first account but omitted in the second account

ii. The planting of the garden of Eden and the making of the river are in the second account but omitted in the first account

iii. In the first account, both man and woman are created at the same time and in God's image, while in the second account, man is created from dust while woman out of man's rib.

iv. Creation in the first account is out of nothing but, in the second man is made out of the dust of the ground and plants are made to grow out of garden.

v. In the first account, human beings were created last while in the second they were created first.

vi. Creation in the first account was completed on the sixth day and God rested on the seventh day. There are no days mentioned in the second account, and subsequently no rest is mentioned.

vii. In the first account, everything that God created is good while in the second account, there is no mention of that.

viii. In the first account, the emphasis on marriage is for procreation, while in the second account marriage is for partnership

ix. In the second account, there is mention of the forbidden tree but the first account makes no mention of it.

2. ATTRIBUTES OF GOD FROM THE CREATION ACCOUNTS

The following are identified from the creation accounts

i. There is only one God
ii. He is self-existent: God was there from the beginning.
iii. He is a personal God: he creates human beings to be like Him so that they might enjoy a personal and loving relationship with Him
iv. He is the sole creator
v. He is a God of order
vi. He is good and perfect. He was pleased with His creation which He saw as good. He is the source of goodness and happiness.
vii. He is the sole source of life. Through His breath, He gave human beings life.
viii. He is a moral God interested in the behavior of human beings
ix. He is a spirit
x. He is powerful. He simply spoke and it happened
xi. He is the provider and sustainer of the universe
xii. He is a worker

3. TEACHINGS FROM THE BIBLICAL CREATION ACCOUNTS

i. Man and woman were created for love and companionship
ii. Work and leisure are God's gift to human beings
iii. Human beings are commanded to continue with the work of creation
iv. Human beings occupy a place of honor in God's created order
v. Life should be respected
vi. Human culture (way of life) is ordained by God
vii. The heavenly bodies (sun, moon, earth) were created to serve human beings
viii. The marriage union is monogamous and permanent
ix. God is real

4. TRADITIONAL AFRICAN VIEW OF CREATION

Every community in Kenya has its own myths concerning the origin of man and the world. It is generally agreed in these myths that man originated from God. Myths also try to explain man's relationship with God. Some myths have cultural meanings. They try to explain supernatural phenomena such as death.

AGIKUYU MYTHS OF ORIGIN

The myth tells us that at the beginning of things **Gikuyu,** the founder of Agikuyu tribe, was called by God (**Ngai or Mugai),** and was given a land with forests, rivers, valleys, animals and all other natural things. At the same time, Ngai (Divider of the Universe) made a big Mountain called **Kirinyaga** (Mt. Kenya). The mountain was His resting place when He was on inspection tours. It was also a sign of his splendor and majesty.

After calling Gikuyu, God took him to the top of the mountain and showed him the land He was to give him. This was a beautiful land full of fig trees (**Migumo**) in the centre of the country. God then ordered Gikuyu to descend from the mountain and proceed to the place he had shown him and establish his homestead there. This place was called **Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga** which is in Murang'a county.

Before Gikuyu parted with God, he was advised that whenever he had any need he should make a sacrifice and raise his hands towards **Kirinyaga** the mountain of mystery. God promised him his continued assistance anytime he called on Him.

When Gikuyu arrived at **Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga** his dwelling place, he found that God had provided him with a beautiful wife called **Mumbai.** The name **Mumbi** means creator or molder. Both lived happily and were blessed with nine beautiful daughters.

However, Gikuyu was disturbed by the fact that he did not have sons to inherit his property. He remembered what Ngai had promised him. He therefore made his needs known to God. he was advised to sacrifice a lamb and a kid, pour the blood and the fat of the two animals on the trunk of the fig tree, and then burn the meat as a sacrifice.

After this, he was asked to take his wife and daughters home and then come back to the sacred fig tree where he would find nine handsome young men. God revealed to Gikuyu that the young men would be willing to marry his daughter on his conditions.

When he returned to the place of sacrifice, he found nine young men as Ngai had promised. Gikuyu was overjoyed and knew that his Ngai was faithful to His promise. He took the nine young men to his family, where they were warmly received, entertained and fed well. They spent the night with Gikuyu's family.

The next morning, the issue of marriage was discussed. The young men agreed to marry Gikuyu's daughters on his conditions. The one condition that Gikuyu gave was that he would be willing to give his daughters for marriage only if the young men agreed to live with Gikuyu in his homestead. The young men could not resist the beauty of the daughters of Gikuyu and the hospitality accorded to them. As a result, they agreed to marry them. After a short time, all the nine daughters were married and each established their own family sets. These were joined together under the name **Nyumba ya Mumbi** (house of Mumbi).

The names of the nine daughters comprise the nine clans of the Agikuyu people. These are:

Name	**Clan**
Wachera	Achera
Wanjiku	Agachika
Wairimu	Airimu
Wambui	Ambui
Wangari	Angari
Wanjiru	Anjira
Wangui	Angui
Warigia/Mwithaga/Warigia	Ethaga
Waithira	Aithirandu

TEACHINGS FROM THE AGIKUYU MYTH OF ORIGIN

i. God is the chief architect of the world
ii. He created out of nothing
iii. He provides for the needs of human beings
iv. Man and woman are created by God
v. Human beings lived in eternal bliss

5. THE BIBLICAL TEACHING ON THE ORIGIN OF SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES
Genesis 3, 4, 6-9, 11

Definition of sin

Sin could be understood to mean:

- ❖ To miss a mark, i.e. making an error or mistake of failing to attain a goal.
- ❖ Iniquity
- ❖ Transgression
- ❖ A rebellion or offense against God

Origin of Sin

Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit from the forbidden tree.

Sin is an offense against God. human beings have been endowed with the ability to make moral choices.

Adam and Eve sinned because they yielded to temptation

By yielding to temptation, they exhibited greed; a desire to want what did not belong to them, they wanted to be like God.

The Consequences of Sin

i. Human beings are alienated from God. their friendship with Him changed to fear of God.
ii. What had been innocent and good became shameful. Adam and Eve are now ashamed of nakedness.
iii. Pain will be part of human experience. Eve was told that she will experience pain during child bearing.
iv. The good relationship between God and human beings is ruined. God sent them out of the garden of Eden.
v. The perfect relationship between man and woman is damaged. God told woman that she will still have desire and yet be subject to him.
vi. People will have to toil and struggle to meet their needs
vii. The earth itself is under a curse
viii. There is enmity between man and the wild animals
ix. Death sentence is passed upon all people
x. Murderous feelings began to enter people's hearts, for example Cain killed Abel.
xi. Human beings changed and became prone to sin
xii. The life span of human beings was reduced
xiii. Global violence and forbidden marriages with heavenly beings led God to declare global destruction
xiv. God felt regret and remorse for having created human beings. God punished the world through the floods
xv. God confused human language after the flood. This led to dispersion of races.

6. GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

God's love and grace for human beings, however, could not allow Him to leave them with no hope for salvation.

He took steps to heal the damaged situation and relationship. He looked for Adam and Eve to find out where they were. When He found them, He provided them with clothes and the means to find food.

The snake is a symbol of evil

The woman was told that her seed will crush the head of the snake

This implies that Jesus, who is the ultimate seed of a woman, will defeat the devil.

Jesus brought salvation to the human race. God's initiative in reconciling human beings to Himself is also seen in the call of Abraham.

7. TRADITIONAL AFRICAN CONCEPT OF EVIL

Evil in the African understanding may mean an offense against another person or community. It can also mean an offence against God, spirits and ancestors. It can also mean any misfortune that can befall any individual or community.

There are many views concerning its origin and nature.

Many communities believe that God is good and therefore, did not create evil.

Others hold that evil originates from a source outside God.

The Abakusu, for example, believe that evil is caused by an evil black god (**WERE Kumali)** who was originally created by God but rebelled against God and became evil

Other communities believe that evil is caused by malicious ancestral spirits who have a grudge against the living-mainly due to neglect.

Evil people like witches, wizards and sorcerers who are able to tap mystical power and use it for evil

Evil is also caused by breaking of taboos

Also curses from parents, aunts, uncle and grandparents

Breaking of oaths

Bad omen

Consequences of evil in A.T.S

The consequences of evil in A.T.S are experienced in the here and now (in this world) and not in the hereafter (next world)

Most African communities believe that the consequences of evil have a great impact. Not only to the individuals concerned, but also on the relationship between the individual, wider community, God and ancestors

The consequences are social, religious and physical

The punishment for doing evil is given by God, spirits and ancestors, elders and other members of the community

It is believed that misfortunes such as barrenness, epidemics, illness, poverty, madness, drought, birth of physically and mentally challenged children, rebellious children, unstable families, environmental disasters and even war are punishment for wrong doing

Some also believe that when people die, they continue to experience the same lifestyle and status as they did on earth. Hence those who lead a good life in this life continue to have a good life and form a positive link between the living and God.

8. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN VIEW OF EVIL AND BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SIN

SIMILARITIES

i. God is the Supreme Being and is good. He is not the author of evil. Evil may be caused by an external force namely the devil (serpent) in the biblical creation account, or an evil force (malicious ancestral spirits), witches, sorcerers, evil spirits in traditional African communities.

ii. Both view sin as arising from human beings' disobedience, greed and selfishness

iii. Both view evil as misfortunes arising out of a curse by elders because of committing some offence. In the ATS, parents can curse their children for failing them in some way. In Genesis 3: 14 Adam and Eve are cursed for betraying God. the forth commandment demands that children honor their parents so that they can be blessed with long life. This means that an early death could sometimes be attributed to dishonoring parents.

iv. In both cases evil may result from failing in social or spiritual obligation

v. Both agree that the result of sin and evil is suffering, death and hardships. In the biblical account, Adam will toil in hardship while in traditional African understanding, illness, misfortune, death and poverty are said to result from evil doing.

vi. In both cases, sin and evil results in human beings being separated from God and the end of the original state of goodness and innocence.

vii. In both, God is the guardian of morality, law and order.

DIFFERENCES

i. While the Biblical account emphasizes the personal nature of sin, the African concept emphasizes more on the social nature and consequences of evil. When Adam and Eve sinned, each one offended God individually. However, in the African understanding whatever an individual does affects the whole community.

ii. While the African traditional understanding of evil emphasis the act of evil and its consequences, in the Bible human beings are sinners by nature because they are tainted by the sin of Adam. However, Christ's death on the cross has affected the redemption of humankind.

iii. Although the Bible recognizes other forces that may lead human beings to sin, emphasis is on the moral choices people make. African traditional understanding attributes evil to external forces like spirits or breaking of taboos

iv. The biblical view of sin does not leave human beings doomed to suffer forever. They are offered an escape and a message of hope through Christ's death and resurrection. The African understanding of evil does not offer a final solution to the problem of evil. They continue in the cycle of appeasing the offended forces so as to be forgiven and reconciled.

CHAPTER THREE

FAITH AND GOD'S PROMISES- ABRAHAM

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the learner should be able to:-

a. Outline the background to the call of Abraham
b. Define the term "faith in God"
c. Explain how Abraham demonstrated his faith in God and its relevance to Christians today
d. State the promises made by God to Abraham and explain their importance to Christians today
e. Define the term covenant
f. Explain and appreciate the importance of God's covenant with Abraham
g. Identify covenants in modem life and appreciate their significance
h. State the importance of circumcision to Abraham and his descendants (the Jews) and relate to the African circumcision practice
i. Develop and appreciate a sense to live according to Gods guidance and direction

1. BACKGROUND TO THE CALL OF ABRAHAM
Genesis 11: 24-32, 12: 1-9

Abraham lived with his father **Terah** in **Ur.** He had two brothers, **Haran** and **Nahor.** Haran had a son called **Lot.**

The people in Ur practiced **Polytheism** (worship of many gods or idols) the moon god was one of the gods.

At the time of his call, Abraham was known as **Abram** and his wife as **Sarai.** God changed their names to **Abraham (**meaning "father of many nations') and **Sarah** (meaning mother of nations)

Terah left Ur for Canaan with his son Abraham, Sarah and Lot. On their way to Canaan, they settled at **Haran** about 1000Km from Ur where Terah died.

While at Haran, God called Abraham at the age of 75. He was told by God to leave his native land, his relatives, his father's home and go to a land where God will show him.

He was also promised many descendants, blessings and fame.

Abraham obeyed God's call. He left Haran to an unknown destination. He was accompanied by his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot.

On arrival at Canaan, Abraham came to **Shechem. There,** the Lord appeared to him and told him that he will give him the land of Canaan. Abraham built an **altar** of God **at Shechem.**

From Shechem, Abraham went to **Bethel.** At Bethel, he built another altar for God and worshipped Him.

After awhile, there was famine in Canaan and Abraham left for Egypt where he lived for some years. In Egypt, Abraham was treated kindly by the king and he was given flocks of sheep and goats, cattle, donkeys, slaves and camels, making him a rich man.

2. THE MEANING OF FAITH IN GOD
Hebrews 11: 1-6

Faith is complete trust or confidence in somebody or something.
It is a firm belief without necessarily having a logical proof.
Faith in God implies total obedience and trust in Him
The Bible says that without faith, it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

3. ABRAHAM'S ACTS OF FAITH
Genesis 12: 1-9, 15: 1-6, 17:23-24, 21:1-7, 22:1-19

Abraham is referred to as the father of faith for the following reasons:-

i. He agreed to move from his home Haran to an unknown destination as commanded by God
ii. Abraham believed in God when God promised him a son of his own even though he was old.
iii. He agreed to circumcise himself at the age of 99. His son Ishmael and all male children of his household as a sign of the covenant he made with God.
iv. He circumcised his son Isaac at the age of 8 days and made it a command for all hi descendants.
v. He agreed to sacrifice his own son Isaac when God told him to.
vi. He trusted and believed in the promises God made to him.
vii. He agreed to change his name from Abram to Abraham and his wife's name from Sarai to Sarah as commanded by God
viii. He built altars for God at Shechem and Bethel where he worshiped God.
ix. He believed he will have as many descendants as the stars in the sky as God promised even though he had no son of his own.

Lessons that Christians learn from Abraham's acts of faith

i. God expects Christians to obey and have absolute faith in Him
ii. Christians should learn not to doubt God but to always remember that God fulfill His promise in His own time
iii. Nothing is impossible with God. Despite being old, Abraham and Sarah were able to have a son of their own.
iv. Christians should be prepared to face very difficult situations as tests of their faith
v. Christians are assured of possession of the Promised Land (eternal life) through their faith in Jesus Christ.
vi. Christians should be ready to make sacrifice to God without questioning

vii. Those who have faith are the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

4. GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM
Genesis 12: 2-3, 15: 1-21, 17: 1-8, 15-18

Promise means giving an assurance of something to someone.
God promised Abraham the following:-

i. God will give him a land to dwell in
ii. He will give his descendants the land of Canaan to dwell in.
iii. God would make Abraham's name famous
iv. God would establish an everlasting covenant with Abraham and his descendants. He shall be their God.
v. God would be a shield to Abraham, He will protect him.
vi. God would give him and his wife Sarah a son of their own.
vii. God would make Abraham's descendants a great nation
viii. God would make his descendants be enslaved for four hundred years in a foreign land. God would however free them and deliver them back to their land with great possessions
ix. God would punish the nation that enslaved Abraham's descendants
x. God would make some of Abraham's descendants Kings
xi. God would bless him
xii. God would bless those that blessed Abraham
xiii. God would curse those that cursed Abraham
xiv. God will make all the families of the earth receive blessings through Abraham
xv. God would let Abraham live for long and die in peace.

Relevance of the promises made to Abraham by God to Christians today.

i. God continues to call people from different backgrounds such as evangelists, priests, to serve Him
ii. God continuous to protect Christians in all circumstances
iii. Christians learn that God values personal relationship with Him
iv. Christians are called to leave their past sinful lives and put their whole trust in God Almighty
v. Through faith in Jesus Christ, all people become children of God and receive God's blessings.

5. THE MEANING OF COVENANT

Covenant is a serious or solemn agreement between two persons or groups of person
It can also be referred to as **pact** or **treaty**

Characteristics of a covenant

i. It involves two or more persons making a pact

ii. Once parties involved enter into a covenant, it cannot be broken
iii. If one of the parties decides to break the covenant, serious consequences are expected
iv. There must be a ceremony signifying the signing of the covenant
v. There must be an outward sign that shows that the covenant exists
vi. Vows are exchanged between those signing the covenant

Types of covenants

There are two types of covenants

Conditional covenant

This involves two or more parties that regard each other as equals making a covenant

For example, the Sinai Covenant whereby the Israelites promised to keep God's commandments as God promised to be their God as long as they kept these promises.

In marriage also, both man and woman give each other promise.

Unconditional covenants

These covenants are made between unequal parties such as between kings and their subjects

In this case, the subjects are inferior to their masters and they have to obey the commandments issued by the king without question

Examples of covenants from the Bible

i. The Covenant with Noah in which God entered into a relationship with the whole world and promised to preserve the life of people. **The sign of this covenant is the rainbow** (Genesis 9)
ii. The covenant with Abraham in which god promised to fulfill the promises He made with him. **The sign of the covenant is circumcision.** (Genesis 15, 17)
iii. The covenant with the people of Israel at Mount Sinai in which God promised to be their God. The Israelites promised obedience. **The sign of this covenant is the Law.** (Exodus 24)
iv. The covenant with King David in which God promised him that his dynasty will continue forever (2nd Samuel 7:14-16)
v. Jeremiah's covenant in which God promises to make a New covenant with the Israelites where each individual will come to know God personally (Jeremiah 31: 3-34)

6. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM
Genesis 15: 1-19, 17: 1-22

God appeared to Abraham in a vision where God assured Abraham that He will shield him from danger and give him a great reward.

Abraham asked God what good the reward will do to hi and yet he had no child. He told God that his only heir was Eliezer of Damascus and wondered why his slave should inherit his property.

God told Abraham that Eliezer will not inherit his property but his own son will be his heir.

God took him outside and told him to look up to the sky and try to count the stars. He told Abraham that he will have as many descendants as the stars.

Abraham (who was 100 years old then and his wife 90 years) put his trust in God and because of this God was pleased with him and accepted him.

God then told Abraham that He will give him the land of Canaan.

Abraham wanted an assurance from God that He would fulfill His promises.

God entered into a covenant with him. God told him to bring a **heifer (**cow), a **goat,** a **ram** each of which **three years old** and a **dove** and a **pigeon.**

He then cut the animals into halves and placed them opposite each other in two rows. The birds were not split.

Vultures came down on the bodies, but Abraham drove them off.

Towards evening, Abraham fell into a deep sleep and was filled with fear while he slept. The Lord appeared to him in a vision and told him that:-

- His descendants will be strangers in a foreign land and will be slaves but will leave that land after 400 years. They will however, come out of the foreign land with a lot of wealth and God will punish the nation that enslaves them.
- He will live to a ripe age, die in peace and be buried.

When the sun had set and it was dark, a **smoking firepot** and a **flaming torch** suddenly appeared and passed between the pieces of the animals.

Then the Lord made a covenant with Abraham and promised to him and his descendants the land of Canaan.

Note: the physical manifestations of God are called **Theophany.** In this case, God appeared to Abraham in form of a smoking firepot and flaming torch. Other examples of Theophany are:

- The burning bush in the call of Moses
- The pillar of fire and pillar of cloud during the exodus
- Thunder, lighting, smoking mountain during the making of the Sinai Covenant
- They mighty wind, earthquake and still small voice of calm in the story of Elijah

<u>Importance of the Covenant between God and Abraham</u>

- This covenant was unconditional. God took the initiative to enter into a covenant while Abraham obeyed. Therefore God bound Himself in a personal relationship with a human being.
- As God passed through the pieces of meat, He showed that He will protect Abraham and his descendants.
- This covenant begins a lasting relationship between God and all nations of the earth.
- The covenant confirmed God's choice of Abraham.
- God was initiating His plan of salvation for human kind. God was ready to die in the person of His son, Jesus Christ, so that this covenant would be filled.

7. COVENANTS IN MODERN LIFE

a. Marriage Ceremony

In marriage, the bride, the bridegroom and their families come together.

It happens in customary, civil or church marriages.

Several agreements are made and both sides promise to be loyal to each other for the rest of their lives.

b. Baptism

This happens in the Christians Churches. The new believers, infants or adults, are expected to keep vows from the day of baptism for the rest of their lives

c. Loyalty

Leaders in public service, for example, heads of state, government ministries, members of parliament, senators, governors, administrators such as chiefs and church leader must be sworn in before they take over their new responsibilities.

8. CIRCUMCISION

a. The importance of circumcision for Abraham and his descendants

Genesis 17: 1-16

God appeared to Abraham and reassure him of the promises He had made earlier. God promised to make an everlasting covenant between Him and Abraham and his descendants.

Abraham was expected to obey and do what was right and pleasing to God. As a sign of obedience to the Lord, God commanded Abraham to circumcise all males of eight days old including slaves born within and those brought from foreigners

Those who failed t be circumcised would be considered as outcasts

Abraham's name was also changed from Abram and Sarah, his wife was changed from Sarai.

Abraham was circumcised at the age of 99. His son Ishmael (by Haggar, the slave girl) who was 13 years old was also circumcised.

From that day, circumcision was to take place on the eighth day. It was a mark of identity for all true Jews, the chosen people of God. Circumcision was now going to be an outward sign of inner faith

It was also to be a physical sign that Abraham and his descendants had entered into a covenant with God.

b. <u>Similarities between the African and the Jewish rite of circumcision</u>

i. Circumcision is a physical mark of identity for both the Africans and Jews
ii. The rite of circumcision gives a sense of belonging/ mark of unity to both Jews and Africans
iii. Circumcision is perceived as a religious function in both communities
iv. The practice of circumcision is passed on from one generation to another
v. Those who fail to undergo the rite are considered outcasts
vi. In both communities, the rite of circumcision is taken as an important stage in a person's life.

c. <u>Differences between the Jewish rite of Circumcision and the African practice of circumcision</u>

i. the Jewish community circumcised eight day old males while the African community circumcised adolescents between 10-18 years old
ii. In the Jewish community, circumcision is a physical sign for those joined to God in faith. In the African community it is not only a sign of identity but also marks the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood
iii. In the African community the initiates acquire new status and responsibilities. They enter warrior group, marry, and own property, where as in the Jewish community this is not possible since circumcision is performed on eight year old males.
iv. In Jewish practice, only boys are circumcised. In some African communities, even girls are circumcised through clitodectomy.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SINAI COVENANT-MOSES

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the learner should be able to:-

a. Give the historical background to the call of Moses
b. Describe the call of Moses
c. Outline the ten plagues
d. Explain the Passover
e. Describe Israelites journey during the wilderness including how they worshipped
f. Describe the Sinai Covenant

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Genesis 37: 1-36, 50: 1-26; Exodus 1-2

The history of the Israelites dates back to the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who are considers being the great ancestors of the Israelites. Jacob had twelve sons. His son Joseph was his favorite. This made his brothers envy and hate him. As a result, they conspired and sold him to the Ishmaelite traders who later took him to Egypt and sold him to Portiphar, an army officer of Pharaoh.

In Egypt, the Lord was with Joseph and he became a successful man in Portiphar's house. Later on, he interpreted Pharaoh's dream which saved the Egyptians from severe famine. He was then appointed by Pharaoh to be a governor in charge of all the food stores in Egypt. After some years, there was severe famine in Canaan and Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy food. They unwillingly landed in the hands of Joseph. Joseph treated them kindly, and gave them food. At later date, he sent for whole family to come and settle in Egypt. When they arrived in Egypt, Joseph and Pharaoh settled them in the fertile land of Goshen.

The Pharaoh, who ruled the Egyptians at the time of Joseph, was a Hyksos King. Hyksos were Semitic people who had conquered the Egyptians. Joseph was from the same Semitic group as that one of the King and because of that, his family enjoyed protection from Pharaoh. After some

years, Joseph and the Pharaoh who loved him died. Then, there came a new king from Egyptian community who did not know anything about Joseph. This King feared that the Israelites, being Semites unlike the Egyptians, might turn and join their enemies in fighting them. Therefore, the new King ordered that the Israelites be enslaved so that their number and strength could be reduced.

The King's order proved futile as the number of the Israelites continued to increase. The King commanded that every new born baby boy should be killed by being drowned in River Nile.

It is during that time that Moses was born. His mother hid him for three months. When she could no longer hide him, she made a waterproof basket, laid the child inside and placed it among the reeds at the bank of River Nile.

At River Nile, Moses was rescued and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter.

In Pharaoh's palace, he was given the best education and training of the time. One day, Moses killed an Egyptian when he was defending an Israelite. He killed the Egyptian as a sign of identifying himself with his people, the Israelite. When he learned that Pharaoh had discovered what he had done, he ran to the wilderness to escape punishment.

Explain ways in which Moses background prepared him for his leadership

- He grew up in the palace as prince, getting the best education befitting a royal.
- Being nursed by his Mother at the place ensured he doesn't lose his identity as an Israelite
- Moses grew up to be an intelligent man, an attribute he used later in his Mission as a leader of God's people.
- Living in the wilderness as a shepherded, and experiencing all the difficulties of the wilderness also prepared him adequately to be a shepherded of God's people.

1. THE CALL OF MOSES
Exodus 3:1-22

When Moses escaped into the wilderness after killing the Egyptian, Jethro, a priest in Midian, took him in. he became a shepherd, tending Jethro's flock and later married one of his daughters.

One day, when Moses was near Mount Horeb, commonly referred to as Mount Sinai, looking after his father in-laws sheep, he saw a strange sight. A bush was on fire but was not consumed. He went near to see what it was.

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flaming fire out of the midst of the bush. When Moses moved near to see the strange sight, God called him by name and instructed him, "Do not come any closer. Take off

your sandals, because you are standing on a holy ground." The removal of shoes by Moose was a sign of spiritual nakedness before God.

God told Moses that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then God told him that He had seen the suffering of His people, the Israelites in Egypt. He told Moses that He had come down to liberate them from the land of bondage

God commanded Moses to go back to Egypt and free the Israelites from the hands of the Egyptians. **Moses protested by saying that he was not worthy to go before Pharaoh**

Moses had killed an Egyptian and had run away from Egypt. He was afraid of being arrested if he went back there.

God assured Moses that He would be with him. He gave Moses a sign of assurance that when he liberates the Israelites from Egypt, they should worship Him at Mount Sinai.

Moses asked God what His name was. God told him, "**I am who I am" meaning** that God was what He was in the past and would always be the same God.

He instructed Moses to tell the Israelites that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He assured Moses that the Israelites would respond to him positively. However, Pharaoh would not let them go until several terrifying occurrences would force him to release the Israelites.

Despite the assurances Moses was given by God, he complained to God that the Israelites would neither believe nor listen to him.

God gave him two signs he was to use in performing miracles as proof that he was God's messenger.

- **First, he was told to use the rod he had in his hand which would turn into a snake**
- **Secondly, he was to place his hand in his pocket and on pulling it out, it would be affected with leprosy.**

Moses still complained to God that he was not eloquent speaker, but just a stammerer

God assured Moses that the Egyptians would finally cooperate with the Israelites when the time came for them to leave Egypt. They would acquire a lot of property from the Egyptians. **God also told him that his brother Aaron was to be his spokesman.** Then Moses went back to Jethro's home, gathered his family members and started his journey to Egypt.

<u>Attributes of God from the call of Moses</u>

- God is loving and caring
- God is transcendent; He is beyond human understanding. He cannot be limited to time and space.
- God chooses whoever He wills to carry out His plans

- ❖ God expects total obedience and faith on the part of those He chooses.

2. THE TEN PLAGUES
Exodus 7: 14-11: 1-10

A **plague** may be a disease or an unfortunate occurrence in one's life.

When Moses approached Pharaoh, Pharaoh proved difficult and would not release the Israelites. God intervened with ten severe plagues. God sent to the Egyptians as follows:

i. **the plague of Blood**
ii. **the plague of Frogs**
iii. **the plague of Gnats**
iv. **the plague of Flies**
v. **the plague of Death of Animals**
vi. **the plague of Boils**
vii. **the plague of Hail**
viii. **the plague of Locusts**
ix. **the plague of Darkness**
x. **the Passover**

i. The plague of Blood

Moses was commanded by God to tell Aaron to strike the waters of the Nile with his rod. He did this in the presence of Pharaoh and the waters of the Nile turned into blood.

ii. The plague of Frogs

The Lord commanded Moses to tell Aaron to stretch his hand over the streams, canals and ponds. Aaron did as was commanded; and there were frogs all over the land of Egypt. When the Egyptians were overwhelmed by these frogs, Pharaoh asked Moses to pray for their removal

iii. The plague of the Gnats

Gnats are small two-winged biting flies. This plague was so severe that even the magicians of Egypt acknowledged the hand and power of God. The Gnats covered the land, people and animals. Pharaoh did not give in

iv. The plague of Flies

Flies came to the land of Egypt in swarms. They invaded Pharaoh's palace and the houses of his officials while there were no flies in the houses of the Israelites. Pharaoh deceived Moses that he would release the Israelites if the flies were removed. Moses prayed to Yahweh and the flies left. Pharaoh however, did not release the children of God.

v. The plague of Death of Animals

God sent a plague that killed all the Egyptians animals. Their cows, donkeys, camels, sheep, goats and horses were killed. However, the animals of the Israelites were not affected. Still Pharaoh refused to release them

vi. <u>The plague of Boils</u>

Moses and Aaron were told by God to cast ashes into the air. This act produced sores and open wounds on Egyptians and their animals. Pharaoh remained stubborn and did not release the Israelites

vii. <u>The plague of Hail</u>

God sent severe hailstorm which affected Pharaoh as well. It was the worst storm Egypt had ever experienced. Everything left in the open was destroyed and all people who had not taken shelter were killed. Moses prayed to God and stopped the storm, Pharaoh refused to release the Israelites.

viii. <u>The plague of Locusts</u>

Locusts came to the Egyptian land, but Pharaoh refused to release them

ix. <u>The plague of Darkness</u>

The Lord sent darkens over the whole land of Egypt. No one could see anything or anyone for three days. Pharaoh now softened and told Moses that he could take his people and go to worship God with all his people but leave the animals. Moses told Pharaoh that they had to leave with all their animals so that they may go and sacrifice to their God in the wilderness. Pharaoh refused to release them yet again.

After this plague, Moses promised never to appear before Pharaoh again. However, God was still concerned about the freedom of the Israelites and, therefore, He sent Moses to Pharaoh one last time.

3. <u>THE PASSOVER</u>
<u>Exodus 12: 1-3</u>

The term **Passover** is driveled from the Hebrew word **Pasach** meaning 'to pass over' with the aim of sparing or protecting.

In the tenth plague, the first born sons of the Egyptians and those of their animals were to die, starting with the son of Pharaoh to the son of a slave in Egypt.

<u>Instructions for the Preparation of the Tenth plagues</u>

Moses called all the elders of Israel and gave them the following instructions:-

i. **On the tenth of that month, each man had to choose either a lamb or a young goat for his household**. If his family was too small

to eat a whole animal, then he and his next door neighbor were to share the animal. **The animal chosen was to be male, one year old and without blemish.** Using a young animal signified the **innocence of the sacrifice** an animal without blemish signified the **purity of the sacrifice.**

ii. The animal chosen was to be killed on the evening of the fourteenth day of that month. **The animal's blood was to be smeared on the two door posts and the lintel of the Israelite's houses.** The blood was to act as a **sign of distinguishing the Israelites' houses** from those of the Egyptians. This was to ensure that the angel of death would spare them when he killed the first born sons of the Egyptians.

iii. **The lamb or animal for sacrifice was to be roasted whole,** meaning with its head, legs and inner parts. **Roasting was the quickest method of coking** since the Israelites were in a hurry.

iv. **The meat was to be eaten that night with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.** This was because there was **no time to ferment the dough**. The bitter herbs signified the **bitter experiences of slavery in Egypt.**

v. **They were to eat the sacrificial meat after they were dressed up and packed their luggage.** This was because they were in a hurry to leave

vi. **The Israelite women were to ask for jewels, silver and clothing from the Egyptians women on the eve of departure.** These items were to **act as compensation for the free labor** the Israelites had given in Egypt.

vii. **Everyone was to remain indoors until morning in order to be protected from the angel of death**

viii. **The Passover was to be commemorated annually and its significance taught to the coming generations**

The Israelites carried out all the instructions given. On the 14th night, the angel of death or "the destroyer" passed over the Israelites' houses, sparing them and killing the first born sons of the Egyptians. Pharaoh's son was not spared, neither the sons of slaves in the Egyptian houses, or the male offspring of their animals. There was wailing and crying throughout Egypt.

The tenth plague broke Pharaoh's heart and arrogance. He called Moses and Aaron and commanded them to take the Israelites out of Egypt.

Attributes of God from the Ten Plagues

The plagues revealed that Yahweh was:-

- More powerful than the Egyptian gods
- Aware of the problems of the Israelites
- Determined to save His people
- Working through His prophet, Moses

- Was just
- Requires absolute obedience

4. THE EXODUS

The journey from Egypt to the wilderness by the Israelites is what is called the **Exodus** which means "**going out".**

a. The crossing of the Red Sea
Exodus 14: 5-31

The people of Israel had been in slavery for 430 years when Moses led them out of Egypt. Moses wanted them to get away as quickly as possible. This is because God had warned Moses that Pharaoh would pursue them. He led them south, towards the Mountain of God, Mount Sinai.

Just as God had been with His people in Egypt, so was He with them when they left. He went before them during the **day in a pillar of cloud** and during the **night in a pillar of fire.**

Pharaoh took 600 chariots, horsemen and soldiers, and pursued the Israelites. He hoped to bring them back because he did not want to lose the slave labor. Pharaoh's army soon came close to the Israelites. The Israelites saw a cloud of dust at a distance and knew that the Egyptians were after them. They were afraid and angry at Moses. They said it would have been better for them to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert.

Moses assured the Israelites that God would not abandon them. Yahweh ordered Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea that was ahead of them. A strong wind parted the water and the people of God crossed on dry ground to safety.

Pharaoh's soldiers, who had also reached the sea, began to cross. When they reached the middle of the sea, the water began to flow back and filled the path the Israelites had used. The chariots and horses could not move. They tried turning back but this was not possible. God ones again told Moses to hold out his hand over the sea, and the water flowed over the Egyptians until none of them was left alive.

b. God provides water in the wilderness
Exodus 15: 22-27, 17: 1-6

From the Red Sea, Moses led the Israelites towards Mt. Sinai through the desert. Soon, the people were thirsty and hungry.

Their faith in God came under severe test as they began to grumble because they could not get water to drink at Marah and Rephidim. They wondered why Moses brought them into the wilderness to suffer.

Moses sought God's guidance in a bid to appease the Israelites. At Marah, the bitter waters were turned sweet after God told Moses to throw a tree into the water. At Rephidim, God told Moses to strike a rock with his rod and water flowed from it.

After this, God promised to protect the Israelites from diseases if they obeyed Him because He was their leader.

c. God provides Manna and Quails
Exodus 16: 1-13

The people of Israel lacked food while in the wilderness. When they complained and mourned to Moses, God provided food for them

God provided Manna and each morning the people gathered the day's portion. Manna was white seed-like substance that tested like biscuits made with honey. He also provided Quails which came in large flocks. A Quail is a round-bodied bird with a small tail.

d. Defeat of the Amalekites
Exodus 17: 8-16

While at Rephidim, the Israelites were attacked by men from the tribe of Amalek. Moses had become too old to fight, so he asked Joshua, the son of Nun, to lead the people to battle. Moses stood on a hill with his hands held out to God in prayer.

Whenever the Israelites saw his hands held up, they knew God was in control, but whenever Moses got tired and put his hands down, they lost hope and the Amalekites began to win. Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands and eventually the Israelites won

5. THE MAKING OF THE SINAI COVENANT
Exodus 19, 20: 18-21, 24: 1-8

a. i. Preparation

God made a covenant with the Israelites at Mount Sinai in the wilderness. He brought them here so that He could enter into a personal relationship with the whole community of Abraham's descendants

God called Moses to the mountain to ask him if the Israelites were willing to obey Him. If they were, He promised to make them:

- **His People**
- **A Kingdom of Priest**
- **A Holy Nation**

When Moses came down to the foot of the mountain, he told the Israelites what God had said. The Israelites promised to do what the Lord had spoken. As He had promised earlier, God told Moses to inform the

Israelites that He would come down in a thick cloud to meet them. God wanted to confirm to the people that Moses was His true prophet.

In preparation for God's coming, the Israelites were to;

- **Make themselves holy by washing their garments**
- **Mark the boundaries on the foot of the mountains so as to prevent any person or animal going up the mountain.**
- **Abstain from sexual relationship**

On the third day, Moses took the Israelites to meet their God. God manifested His presence in form of **thunder**, **lightening**, **earthquake** and a **thick cloud** that covered the whole mountain. There was also a **loud trumpet blast** that made the people tremble

Moses went up the Mountain and was given the Ten Commandments. Moses came back from the mountain and told the people about the laws and ordinances which were to guide them as a covenant people.

All the people answered in one voice, and said **"All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do"**

ii. <u>Sealing of the Covenant</u>

The following morning, Moses prepared a ceremony to seal the covenant. He built an altar at the foot of the mountain on which he placed twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord.

Moses took half of the blood and poured it on the altar, the place of meeting with God. He then took the book of the covenant, in which the divine laws had been written down by him, he read it in the hearing of all people and they all said, "**all that the Lord has spoken, we will do and we will be obedient."**

Then Moses took the remainder of the blood and sprinkled it over the people. The sprinkling of the blood implied that the covenant was binding the Israelites to God.

God concluded the covenant ceremony by giving Moses the two stone tablets on which the laws were written.

b. <u>The Ten Commandments</u>
<u>Exodus 20:1-17</u>

These are the main laws which God gave Moses. The Greek name for them is **Decalogue.**

These laws were either **conditional laws** or **absolute laws**

Conditional law states that if a certain thing happens, then a certain consequence will follow.

Absolute laws were unconditional, whereby everything had to be followed without question or discussion

The Ten Commandments are divided into two major groups, these are:-

i. **Those which define the people's duty towards God**

Under this category, fall the first four commandments

ii. **Those which define one's duty towards others**

Under this category fall the last six commandments

The Ten Commandments are:-

i. **You shall have no other gods before Me**

The Israelites were to worship God alone. Christians are urged to love God with all their heart, mind and soul.

ii. **You shall not make for yourself a graven image**

God was not to be depicted in any form or description such as images or idols

iii. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**

This commandment forbids the use of God's name in light or careless manner without regard to His holiness. One should not swear in God's name

iv. **Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy**

The Sabbath Day was instituted by God at creation. Since God rested on this day after completing the work of creation. This is still applicable today.

v. **Honor your father and mother that your days may be long**

This means that God's gift of life is passed on to us through our parents. Parents sustain their children by providing for them in every way they can. Therefore, they deserve respect, obedience and love from their children. This is the only commandment with a blessing.

vi. **You shall not kill**

It is God alone who gives life and it should be Him alone to take it. Christians are called upon to preserve, respect and protect life. Therefore, acts like abortion and murder are evil and thus condemned by God.

vii. **You shall not commit adultery**

It is wrong to have sexual intercourse with somebody else's wife or husband, for such an act will sow discord in the community.

viii. **You shall not steal**

Stealing indicates lack of trust in God's providence. Practices like slavery, robbery, cheating in trade and refusal to pay debts are condemned.

ix. **You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor**

False accusations destroy respect and love among God's people.

x. **You shall not covet your neighbor's property**

This commandment condemns greed of any nature. Christians are encouraged to practice self control and acquire what they need justly.

Besides the Ten Commandments, the Israelites were given other rules and regulations to govern their daily lives. Those rules dealt with matters concerning religious ceremonies, treatment of slaves and strangers, theft, loses and repayment, violence and bodily injury.

c. <u>The Breaking of the Covenant</u>
<u>Exodus 32: 1-35</u>

Although the Israelites had promised to keep the covenant, they did not take long before they dishonored their pledge to obey God. This happened when Moses had gone to the mountain to receive the written Ten Commandments

He had left Aaron in charge of the people. When Moses delayed in coming back, the Israelites became impatient and restless. They asked Aaron to make them a god that would lead them, for they did not know what had happened to Moses.

Aaron told them to take off the rings of gold which were worn by their sons, daughters and wives and bring them to him. Then, he melted them and molded a bull calf and the Israelites said that that was their god which had brought them out of Egypt.

They also built an altar for god. They offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to it and indulged themselves in eating, drinking and sex.

In the meantime, God revealed to Moses that the Israelites had broken the covenant. God threatened to destroy them. Moses interceded for them and God changed His mind.

As Moses came down the mountain, he found the Israelites singing and dancing around the golden calf. This annoyed him and he threw down the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written on. Moses took the golden calf, burnt it into powder, mixed it with water and made the Israelites drink. Then he called those who had not sinned and ordered them to take their swords and kill those who had sinned.

d. <u>The Renewal of the Sinai Covenant</u>
<u>Exodus 34: 1-35</u>

The renewal of the covenant came after Moses had pleaded with God not to destroy the Israelites after they broke the covenant. God spared the Israelites.

The Lord commanded Moses to cut two stone tablets and go up to the mountain. Then He told Moses that He would make a covenant with the Israelites again.

Conditions that God expected the Israelites to fulfill with the renewal of the Sinai Covenant

- to obey what God commands them
- not to make any treaty with the those who live in the land where they were going
- To break down the altars, sacred stones and false gods of the inhabitants of Canaan.
- Not to worship any other god
- Not to make cast idols
- To keep the feast of the unleavened bread
- To rest on the seventh day
- To dedicate all their first-born male children and first-born male of their domestic animals to God
- To offer to God the first fruits of their crops

After all these commands, God promised the Israelites that He would:

- **Protect and preserve them**
- **Bless them**
- **Make them prosper** so much that the surrounding nations would enquire about their source of wealth and success.

After these promises, God asked Moses to write these words in new set of stone tablets. This showed that the covenant between God and the Israelites was now renewed.

6. HOW THE ISRAELITES WORSHIPPED GOD IN THE WILDERNESS
Exodus 20: 22-26, 23: 14-20

Worship refers to the reverence paid to God. It may also refer to the recognition given to God as the creator and controller of the universe.

During this period in the wilderness, the Israelites worshipped God as individuals and as a community. This occurred at specific places, at different times and in a particular manner. All worship involved:-

- Offering of prayers
- Petitioning God for desired favors
- Thanking God for His protection and providence
- Singing songs of praise
- Offering sacrifices and offerings by priests

- Observing the Sabbath Day

Various aspects of Israelites worship and where it occurred:-

a. <u>SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS</u>

In sacrifices, animals were used where as in an offering, agricultural produce was used. Sacrifices included:

i. **Burnt offerings/holocaust**

Here the sacrificial animal was completely burnt and therefore, entirely removed from human possession and given to God.

ii. **Atonement/ sin offering**

This type of sacrifice was offered when one had sinned either against God or his/her fellow human beings and wanted his/her sins to be forgiven. The one who had sinned brought an animal before God and it was offered as a sacrifice. In this case, the animal died on behalf of the person who had sinned.

iii. **Peace offering/communion sacrifice/fellowship offering**

In this sacrifice, part of the meat of the sacrificial animal was eaten by the people and other parts which consisted of fat and blood were burnt on the altar for God. The purpose of this sacrifice was to bring the worshippers into union with God.

iv. **Gift offering**

In this offering, the best animal or grains that God had blessed the concerned party was chosen and offered to God as a thanksgiving

v. **Meal offering/drink offering**

This type of offering involved both vegetable and animal offerings. Meat offering could be offered alone, but was usually offered together with fresh agricultural produce.

vi. **Incense offering**

Incense is a substance composed of sweet smelling herbs. It is burnt before God and it was a sign of God's holiness and His acceptance of the sacrifice.

b. <u>FESTIVALS</u>

Festival is a celebration commemorating a past event such as a day of independence in a given country.

The festivals in the Israelites community included:-

i. The Passover/ Feast of the Unleavened Bread

This feast was held annually at the beginning of each year. Unleavened bread would be eaten for seven days of the first month in every New Year. The feast was a commemoration of the Israelites' liberation from Egypt.

ii. The Feast of Weeks/ Pentecost

This feast originally marked the end of the wheat harvest. Later, it was conducted 50 days from the Sabbath following the Passover, hence the name Pentecost.

iii. The feast of tabernacles

This festival marked the end of the agricultural year. It took place in autumn when the fruits had been harvested.

c. ALTARS

Altars are earthly marked meeting places between God and people.

The Israelites built an altar in places where they received a Theophany or God's physical manifestation. Examples of altars are like the ones Moses built at the place where Amalek was defeated and at the foot of Mount Sinai.

d. THE TENT OF MEETING

This was a portable structure in which the Israelites worshipped God in. it was also called a **Tabernacle**

The outer court of the Tabernacle consisted of an altar for burnt offerings and a basin where priests washed their feet and hands.

The interior part of the Tabernacle had two chambers. The outer one contained an altar for incense, the golden sick and bread of the presence table. The second chamber was known as the most holy place because it contained the Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box that was covered by pure gold and the inside contained the two stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written on. It was taken care of by the Levites who were appointed priests the time of Moses.

The Tabernacle symbolized the presence of God among His people. Only appointed or elected people would approach the Tent of Meeting. Priests would go inside the tabernacle to offer prayers and sacrifices to God on behalf of other people.

Identify the elements of Israelites worship which have found place in the Christian worship today

i. The Passover feast which marked the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt. This is also referred to as The Lord's Supper in the New Testament and Christian worship today.
ii. use of prayers and songs
iii. **o**bserving the Lord's Day (Sabbath) by modern Christians
iv. offerings are also given in form of money, goods and services
v. building of altars

7. THE ISRAELITES' NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURE OF GOD
Exodus 33, 34

Although God introduced Himself to Moses as Yahweh, the Israelites only came to know Him through their experiences in the wilderness.

The renewal of the covenant showed that the broken covenant relationship could now be formerly restored. Yahweh showed that He is a merciful and compassionate God by giving them a second chance.

The favored position of the Israelites in God's presence was a source of envy by other nations. They were God's chosen nation

In the wilderness, the Israelites came to know God as their healer. He promised to heal all their diseases if they obeyed Him.

Despite the Israelites' sins, God fulfilled His promises to them of a land of their own. He had promised to drive away their enemies.

They came to recognize Him as God of Victory for He defeated the Canaanites, Perizzites, Hittites and Jebusites who had occupied the Promised Land.

The Israelites realized that they could depend upon God as He was faithful.

CHAPTER FIVE

LEADERSHIP IN ISRAEL-DAVID & SOLOMON

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the leaner should be able to:

i. explain the reasons for Kingship in Israel
ii. Explain reasons against Kingship in Israel

iii. Explain King Soul's failures
iv. Explain the lessons that can be learnt from King Soul's failures
v. Explain and appreciate the importance of David as King of Israel and as ancestor of Jesus Christ
vi. Explain the qualities of a good leader drawn from King David's leadership
vii. Explain and asses King Solomon's achievements and failures
viii. Explain the importance of the Temple in Israel
ix. Desire to seek God's guidance in leadership

INTRODUCTION

Leadership refers to the manner in which a community's way of life is ruled or controlled.

When the Israelites settled in Canaan for the first 200 years, they were ruled by **Judges.**

THE FIRST Judge was Joshua who took over after Moses died in the wilderness. The last Judge was Samuel.

However, Yahweh, the God of Israel, remained the sovereign ruler of His people.

DUTIES OF JUDGES

- They led the Israelites to war against their enemies
- They settled disputes among the people
- They acted as religious leaders and led the Israelites in worship. They received God's Spirit who gave them the knowledge and power to carry out these duties
- Some of the Judges acted as God's prophets.

1. REASONS FOR KINGSHIP IN ISRAEL
1st Samuel 8: 1-9

The Israelites were led by Judges from the time they settled in Canaan. However, it reached a time where they made a decision to have an earthly king to rule over them. Some of the reasons for Kingship are:-

i. **Samuel's sons, Joel and Abidjan, were corrupt and took bribes**

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his two sons to be judges in his place. The two sons lacked good leadership qualities of their father. They were corrupt and took bribes. The Israelites went to Samuel and asked him to choose a king to rule over them.

ii. **The Israelites wanted a warrior king to lead them to war and bring victory to Israel.**

The place where the Ark of the Covenant (Sanctuary) was kept had been destroyed by the Philistines. The Philistines had also taken the Ark of the Covenant. Canaan; therefore, faced threat of being a Philistine empire. As a result, the Israelites wanted a warrior king who would lead them into battles against the philistines so as to recover the stolen ark.

iii. **The Israelites wanted kings like the other nations around who had kings**

Moabites, Philistines, Amalekites and Phoenicians all had kings. The Israelites saw that they were the only nation in that region who had no king. Hence, they wanted one.

iv. **The Israelites wanted a physical leader whom they could see and approach**

This implied that they were rejecting Yahweh as their unseen ruler

v. **The Israelites wanted a stable political government ruled by laws and order**

They wanted a government that had enough security established through a regular army and perhaps one with an established law courts to try and punish wrong doers.

2. REASON AGAINST KINGSHIP IN ISRAEL
1st Samuel 8: 10-20

By demanding a king, the Israelites were seen as rejecting Yahweh as their unseen ruler. God told Samuel to give the Israelites strict warnings and explain how the king would treat them. For example:-

i. **The king would conscribe the Israelites'' sons forcefully into the army**
ii. **The king would introduce forced labor**
iii. **The king would grab people's land or vineyards for government use**
iv. **The king would turn people into slaves**
v. **The king would force their daughters to work for his wives' sons and for the royal house in general**
vi. **Israel would become like other nations which did not know Yahweh and then they would cease to be a covenant people.**
vii. **Yahweh would reject them when they cried to Him.**

The elders request for a king threatened to destroy the true identity of Israel as a "people of God" and as a covenant people

3. KING SAUL'S SUCCESS AND FAILURES
1st Samuel 13: 8-14, 15: 7-25

Saul was son of Kish from the tribe of Benjamin. God commanded Samuel to anoint him.

King Saul's success

i. Saul was Yahweh's own choice
ii. Saul received God's spirit, which gave him power to act as God's appointee like it had happened with the judges.
iii. Through Yahweh's help, Saul fought against all Israel's enemies everywhere and won. For example he:-
   - ❖ Fought against the Amalekites
   - ❖ Led a successful war against the Philistines
   - ❖ Defeated the Amalekites

King Saul's failure

i. He became impatient and offered sacrifices to God at Gilgal instead of waiting for Prophet Samuel

Samuel had told Saul that he would meet him at Gilgal and offer sacrifices to God before the Israelites' army went to fight the Philistines. Saul waited for seven days and Samuel seemed late in coming. The Philistine army started closing in on the Israelites. Saul's army started running away to escape from the Philistines. Saul feared that unless he received God's blessing before going to battle, the Philistines would destroy them. Saul decided to offer a sacrifice to god as a matter of urgency.

Just as he finished offering sacrifice, Samuel arrived and was angry with Saul and rebuked him. Saul had appointed himself as a mediator between God and the people. (He was neither a priest nor a prophet to do that work) therefore, Samuel prophesied the end of his rule.

ii. **He failed to carry out the law of total destruction of an enemy conquered**

The Law of **Herem** or the **Ban** required that when the Israelites went to war against any enemy, they were to destroy everything: man, woman, child, cattle and all property belonging to the enemy.

However, when Saul led his army against the Amalekites and defeated them, he did not destroy everything as Samuel had commanded him to do. Saul and his army kept the best sheep, lambs, cattle and everything else that was good, he intended to offer them as burnt sacrifices to God. He also captured King Agag alive and spared his life.

Samuel met Saul and he was disappointed with him and refused to listen to Saul's excuses as to why he had disobeyed God's commandment. Samuel told him that to obey God was better than mere sacrifice to Him.

iii. **The spirit of god left Saul and was replaced with an evil spirit that tormented him**

iv. **Saul turned against David because David had become popular with the Israelites.**
v. **He consulted a median in trying to bring back Samuel's spirit, hence practiced idolatry**

Lessons learnt from king Saul's failures

Saul's failures have messages for both Christians and other leaders, for example:-

i. Need for patience
ii. Need for obedience and faith in God
iii. Need for political leaders to listen to advice from Church leaders
iv. Need for not turning against rivals
v. Need for sincerity in worship of God

4. KING DAVID'S IMPORTANCE
1st Samuel 16:1-23; 2nd Samuel 6: 1-15

After Saul was rejected as king of Israel, Samuel was guided by God to go to Bethlehem. To the home of a Shepherded called Jesse who had eight sons. God would then show him who among those sons would be anointed as the next king of Israel.

Seven of Jesse's sons were brought before Samuel; one at a time but God told Samuel that he had not chosen any of them. However, when the youngest son, David, a shepherded, was brought before Samuel, God told Samuel that that was the one, he should anoint him.

Samuel then took the olive oil and anointed David in front of his brothers. The spirit of the Lord then took control of David and was with him from that day on. However, this anointing had to be kept secret from Saul; otherwise he would plan to kill David. David had to wait until Saul died before he would take over. David was then employed in the service of Saul to be playing a lyre and harp to sooth Saul whenever he was possessed by an evil spirit.

As long as David worked for Saul, he remained faithful servant of the King. He was loved by Saul's family. He even married one of his daughters. He became a personal friend of one of Saul's son called Jonathan.

Many years later, Saul and his sons were killed in a battle against the Philistines. David then became the next king and ruled for over 40 years as king of Judah and Israel. His successes lay in the fact that he knew and obeyed God in all his undertakings.

KING DAVID'S ACHIEVEMENTS

I. He was **chosen by God**
II. He received **public anointing** at Hebron where he signed a treaty with the elders. This meant that he had been acknowledged by all the twelve tribes of Israel as their king.
III. He **received the spirit of God** from the time he was anointed.
IV. He **was a brilliant military commander.**

He broke the Philistines' control over Canaan. He also waged successful wars against Moab, Ammon, Edom, Amalek and Aram (Syria). He concluded a treaty with the Phoenician King, Hiram of Tyre.

V. He captured the old fortress of Jerusalem from the Jebusites and made it his **capital city.** Jerusalem was a neutral site belonging neither to the Southern nor to the Northern tribes of Israel.
VI. He removed the **Ark of the Covenant** from the house of Abinadab in Shiloh and brought it to Jerusalem with a great ceremony, singing and dancing. He then brought priests of Jerusalem and attached them to the royal court.
VII. He expressed **faith in God.** In this, he managed to kill Goliath, the great Philistine warrior. He consulted God before going to war and never forgot to thank God for whatever blessing he had bestowed on him.
VIII. He was a **skilled musician** and composed many Psalms that were used and are still being used in temple and church worship.
IX. David **respected the prophets of God** and always consulted them whenever he wanted to do anything.
X. He **expanded the geographical boundaries** of Israel through conquests and after which he would annex the land.
XI. He was **a great diplomat** and established good political relations with the neighboring kings.
XII. He was a **shrewd administrator** who chose wise elders and counselors to advice him.
XIII. God promised to establish an **everlasting kingdom** for David where his descendants would live in security never to be disturbed by anybody.
XIV. David ruled over Israel, administering **law and justice** to all people.
XV. He insisted on **taking census** of all Israel.
XVI. He had remarkable leadership qualities. For example he was a **brave man, eloquent in speech, patient and God fearing.**
XVII. David was **humble.** He was **ready to accept** sins he had committed and **repent.**
XVIII. David received **great favor** from the Deutronomist by asserting that David was an ideal king.

5. DAVID AS AN ANCESTOR OF JESUS CHRIST
2nd Samuel 1-29; Luke 1:26-33

After building a palace for himself, David intended to build a temple for God. He consulted Prophet Nathan to find out whether it was in order to do so. The prophet approved the idea. However, later that night Nathan received revelation from God which stated that David was not to build the temple. God instead made the following promises to David:-

- **God promised to keep David and his descendants safe from all enemies.**
- **God would give David's descendants a place to settle**
- **God promised to raise up an heir from the house of David to sit on the throne**
- **He promised to let David's son be the one to build a temple for Him. God's relationship with this king would be like that of a father to his son**
- **God promised to establish an everlasting kingdom for David**
- **God promised to make David's name great or famous among all other leaders of the earth.**

Some of these promises were fulfilled through Solomon his son, who also built a temple for God. David's reign was also marked by period of peace and prosperity.

The promises made to David were also fulfilled in the New Testament through the coming of Jesus Christ in the following ways:-

1. Jesus was born by a girl in Galilee who had been promised in marriage to Joseph, a descendant of King David.
2. Angel Gabriel in his annunciation message to Mary says that Jesus will be king like his ancestor David.
3. Zachariah in his Benedictus says that God has risen up a savior descended from the house of David.
4. Jesus was born in Bethlehem which was also the birth place of David.
5. The blind man at Jericho hailed Jesus as the son of David and looked to him to restore his sight.
6. Jesus was hailed by the crowd as the Messiah, descended from David during His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
7. The early apostles like Peter and Paul, in their Sermons, made a number of references to Jesus as a descendant of David
8. Saint Paul asserted that the Good News of salvation is about the son of God that took human nature and was born from David's lineage
9. In his genealogy, Saint Mathew also says that Jesus was a descendant of David.

6. QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER DRAWN FROM KING DAVID

I. Courage/bravery

David was a courageous military commandment who led his people to wars.

II. **Faith**

David was a God-fearing man and expressed his total trust in God by consulting Him before engaging in any adventure

III. **Gratitude**

David always thanked God for any success or favors he received from Him

IV. **Loyalty**

David drew the support of his subjects by concluding a number of agreements or treaties with both the men of Judah and Israel in which the subjects promised their loyalty to him and he did likewise.

V. **Justice**

David is said to have administered justice to all his subjects without favoring anyone. He never practiced tribalism or nepotism.

VI. **Wisdom**

David was a wise man; he chose wise legal advisors to assist him in his rule and chose Jerusalem, a neutral spot for administration hence tribal jealousies.

VII. **Humility**

King David was ready to admit his mistakes and accepted criticism and rebukes from religious leaders such as prophets. He was ready to repent when he realized his mistakes.

VIII. **Kindness**

David forgave Saul and spared his life even though the latter wanted to kill him.

7. KING SOLOMON'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES
1st Kings 3-11

Solomon was the son of David. He was appointed by his father to succeed him. He was anointed by Zadok, the priest. He ruled for 40 years like his father David.

KING SOLOMON'S ACHIEVEMENTS

a. He was a **successful merchant**. He achieved this by establishing and developing trade with the neighboring countries.
b. **He built up a professional army equipped with horse-drawn chariots.**
c. **Solomon appointed government officials who assisted him in his administration.**
d. **He developed a diplomatic relationship with foreign countries by marrying the daughters of the Kings of Egypt, Moab, Edom, Tyre etc.**
e. He was a great wise man and was praised for this.
f. He built the temple for God.

g. Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant to the Temple of Jerusalem. This represented God's presence among His people.
h. He built himself a palace that took 13 years to complete.
i. He composed 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs

KING SOLOMON'S FAILURE

i. **He married foreign wives** who worshipped other god's
ii. He built temples for the Pagan gods worshipped by his wives
iii. **He introduced forced labor** in the building of palace & the temple
iv. **He killed his own half brother, Adonijah,** he suspected he could be his rival to the throne
v. **He practiced nepotism.** Solomon's own tribesmen from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were exempted from forced labor.
vi. He introduced high taxation in Israel.
vii. He valued himself more than God; he spent only seven years in building the Temple, but 13 years in building his own palace.
viii. He was extravagant in the way he used the wealth belonging to the state of Israel.
ix. King Solomon sold part of Israelite territory: 20 towns of Galilee to Hiram, the King of Tyre in repayment for a debt he was unable to settle.
x. He hired the skills of pagan craftsmen who designed, decorated and furnished the Temple of God.

THE DEATH OF SOLOMON AND THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM
1st King 12

When Solomon died, his son, Rehoboam succeeded him. A delegation of elders from the ten tribes of the North led by Jeroboam I. son of Nebat, met Rehoboam at Shechem. They presented their memorandum and told him they were willing to accept him as their king if he would give them some assurance of better treatment. They wanted him to rule them less harshly than his father Solomon had done.

Instead of listening to their grievances, he threatened them even with worse treatment than his father.

The delegation was angered with the harsh reply and rebelled against Rehoboam. They made Jeroboam I King of the Northern tribes. This split the kingdom into two; Israel comprising ten tribes and Judah comprising two tribes.

The Kingdom of Judah retained Jerusalem as its capital city. Jeroboam fortified two cities, Shechem and Penuel from where he ruled Israel in turn. He finally settled at Tirzah to the north of Shechem.

8. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEMPLE IN ISRAEL

a. It **symbolized God's presence among His people** through the Ark of the Covenant which was kept in the Temple.
b. It was a **dwelling place for God.** On the day of dedication to God, God's glory filled the Temple in form of a thick cloud.
c. It was **a house of worship and prayer.**
d. it **was a place where all first-born male children were dedicated to God**
e. **all the Jewish religious festivals or feasts** such as the Passover and Pentecost **were celebrated in the Temple**
f. **The temple was a training place for the Jewish religious teachers.** These are the Scribes
g. The Temple **was the place where the prophets and priests lived.**
h. The Temple was **the only place where all rites of purification were carried out.**
i. **It was used as a law-court** by the council of Jewish religious leaders called the Sanhedrin.
j. The Temple was the only place where sacrifices to God were offered by the priests
k. Religious **ceremonies like naming and circumcision of baby boy took place in the Temple** on the eighth day.
l. It was the place where the right types of animals for sacrifice were brought by the Jews who had travelled long distances to celebrate the annual feasts.

CHAPTER SIX

LOYALTY TO GOD-ELIJAH

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the leaner should be able to:

a. Identify the factors that led to the spread of idolatry in Israel
b. Explain the effects of Idolatry in Israel
c. Describe the Mount Camel's contest
d. Explain how Elijah fought corruption in Israel
e. Outline the reasons why Elijah faced danger and hostility as a prophet of God
f. Explain the relevance of Elijah's prophetic mission to Christians today

1. FACTORS THAT LED TO THE SPREAD OF IDOLATRY IN ISRAEL

Idolatry refers to the worship of idol. (An idol is an image representing a god**).** The following contributed to the Israelites idol worship:-

a. <u>The local Canaanite Religion</u>

Characteristics of the Canaanites religion that made it be a constant temptation to the Israelites

i. It was a **nature religion.** The worshippers aim was to control forces of nature such as rain and drought.
ii. The aims of the religion were to ensure **continued fertility** of land, flock and people.
iii. It was a **cyclic religion** which meant that seasons were repeated in contrast to Yahweism which was **linear.**
iv. It comprised **family of gods**
   - the high god was called **El**, the King and the father of years
   - The "wife" of El was **Asherah**, a goddess of fertility.
   - The storm god was called **Baal,** also referred to as the god of rain and fertility
   - The female partner of Baal was called **Baalath** which means Lady although her personal name was **Ashtarte**
   - The sister of Baal was called **Anat**, a goddess of war and love.
   - **Mot** was the god of drought, famine and death
v. **Symbols** were used to represent each god. i.e Baal was in the form of bull and stone pillar, Asherah by a sacred pole.
vi. **temple prostitution** was practiced. It was believed that if a barren couple imitated Baal and Ashtarte when having sex, they would be able bear children.
vii. there were **many places of worship** such as temples under sacred trees and on top of the hills
viii. **sacrifices including human beings were offered** to these gods
ix. **Festivals and feasts** were also celebrated. For example:
   - Feast of Unleavened Bread which was carried out at the beginning of the barely harvest
   - Feast of weeks celebrated during the wheat harvest

<u>Characteristics that made Israelites an easier target to Canaanites Religion and way of life</u>

i. Israelites transformed from pastoral life to agricultural life
ii. The belief that a god was only powerful in his own land
iii. The Israelites were attracted to the visible gods of the Canaanites as opposed to the invisible Yahweh
iv. The Israelites' failure to effect God's command to destroy all the cultic objects and temples used in the worship of Canaanite gods

b. <u>Religious Schism between Judah and Israel</u>

Schism refers to a division within or separation from an established church/religion but not necessarily involving a difference in doctrine.

After the separation of the two kingdoms, Jeroboam feared that the people of Israel, will be won over by Rehoboam in Judah if they continued going to Jerusalem to worship, so he did the following:-

i. **He made two golden calves and placed one at Bethel and the other one at Dan to act as the visible representation of Yahweh**
ii. He ignored Jerusalem as centre of worship and set up two rival places of worship at Dan and Bethel
iii. **He made the Israelites to offer sacrifices to the two golden bulls representing Yahweh**
iv. He built other places of worship on hilltops thus copying the practices of the surrounding nations.
v. He chose priests from ordinary families to serve Yahweh at the centers of worship instead of the tribe of Levi
vi. He instituted religious festivals or feasts in the month of his choices
vii. He burnt incense at the altar of idols

c. <u>King Ahab's Marriage with the Phoenician Priests</u>

When Omri, Ahab's father, seized power, he made great political achievements for Israel. He formed an alliance with the king of Phoenicia.

To strengthen further the political union between the two countries, Israel and Phoenicia, Omri arranged for the royal marriage of his son, Ahab to Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre.

Immediately Ahab became the king of Israel, he tried to please his wife by allowing her to introduce her religion to Israel.

She imported her Baal (Baal-Melkart) to Israel which was the official protective god of Tyre.

She also imported 450 prophets of Baal and supported them out of the public treasury

King Ahab built a temple for Baal-Melkart, equipped it with an altar and an image of Asherah-mother goddess

Jezebel began a strong complain that resulted with the Israelites being forced to worship Baal hence Baalism became the official state religion.

2. <u>THE EFFECTS OF IDOLATRY IN ISRAEL</u>

i. **Syncretism-**the process in which certain beliefs or practices from different religions are fused. Yahweh became one of other gods as the Israelites fused/mixed elements from Canaanite gods to the worship of Yahweh.

ii. Former places of worship for the Canaanite gods were turned into places of worship for Yahweh without removing the Canaanite symbols such as altars and pillars.
iii. The Canaanite agricultural calendar was adopted by Israel for the timing of the pilgrimage festival.
iv. Names of the Canaanite gods (i.e. El, the father of all gods) was used for Yahweh
v. The Canaanite sacrificial system was incorporated into Israelite worship. For example peace offerings, burnt offerings and cereal offerings were originally Canaanite
vi. Under the influence of Jezebel, king Ahab declared Baalism a compulsory state religion
vii. Queen Jezebel ordered the destruction of the altars of Yahweh
viii. Prophets of Yahweh were killed
ix. 450 prophets of Baal were made the officials of the royal court

3. ELIJAH'S FIGHT AGAINST FALSE RELIGION AND CORRUPTION

Introduction

- Elijah was a prophet from the Northern Kingdom of Israel
- He prophesized during the reign of King Ahab, sixty years after Jeroboam I had been ruler of Israel
- This was a time when the worship of Yahweh was on the verge of extinction because of threats from Queen Jezebel.

a. Elijah's fight against false religion 1st king 18: 17-46

God told Elijah to go and meet the king. As soon as King Ahab saw him, he called him trouble maker. Elijah had stated that there would be no rain in the capital (Samaria) until he say so. This was because of Israelites unfaithfulness

Elijah asked the king to gather all Israelites together with the 450 prophets of Baal to a **contest at Mount Carmel**

The contest was to determine there and then, who was the Lord, who had the power to control rain and fertility

Elijah told them to bring two bulls. The prophets of Baal to take one and offer a sacrifice to their god and Elijah to offer the other one to God They were not to light any fire and the people agreed that the God who answered by fire would be the true God

The prophets of Baal were the first to offer their sacrifice. After preparing the altar, they started praying to their god. Shouting and dancing around the altar.

However, there was no answer. By midday, Elijah started mocking them in four different ways. He told them to pray harder because Baal is:-

- **The philosopher, inventor-**he is musing or pre-occupied
- **The patron of Phoenician merchant-**he is busy or gone aside
- **The patron of his sailors-**he is on a journey or business trip
- **The winter sleeper, the vegetable god-** he is asleep and must be awakened.

Baal failed to answer his prophets by bringing fire to consume the sacrifice

After this, Elijah repaired the abandoned altar of Yahweh; he set up twelve stones, to represent each of the twelve tribes of Israel. He poured water on the wood. The purposes of these rituals were:

- **To enhance the fire miracle by ensuring that the altar was wet**
- **To bring down rain by imitating the falling of rain**

After this, Elijah prayed to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for help. Immediately after his prayer, the supernatural fire descended from heaven and consumed the sacrifice.

Elijah then condemned the prophets of Baal to death. Afterwards, Elijah performed rain ceremony. On that day, rain fell in great torrents.

Lessons learnt about the nature of God from the contest at Mount Carmel

- Yahweh is the only God. Baal is no god at all
- Yahweh is a living God who controls forces of nature
- He is the Lord of nature
- Yahweh is a powerful God
- **Yahweh is a merciful God who back wayward hearts**
- Yahweh is a jealous God who will have no other gods besides Him
- Yahweh is a God of justice who punished idolaters and other sinners
- Yahweh answers prayers

b. Elijah fight against Corruption
1st King 21: 1-29

Corruption can be defined as any form of injustice done to the innocent by those in position of leadership

King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard which was close to his own palace at Jezreel, Samaria's second capital. Ahab offered to buy the vineyard at a generous price or have it exchanged with another one.

But Naboth refused to sell or exchange the inheritance for the one reason that it was a family estate.

Naboth's refusal to sell or exchange the vineyard made King Ahab gloomy and he even refused to eat.

Jezebel, his wife, consoled him and told him not to worry as he was King and would get the vineyard.

She forged letters in the King's name and accused Naboth of blasphemy and treason. Naboth was not given time to defend himself, he was stoned to death in accordance to the law.

The land hence became a state property and Ahab went to possess it.

God sent Elijah to go and pronounce divine judgment on the house of Ahab for what he had done. He was to tell Ahab that his dynasty was going to be destroyed.

Ahab put on sack clothes as a sign of repentance. God hence promised to effect punishment during the reign of his sons and not him.

As for Jezebel, God said that dogs will eat her body in the city of Jezreel.

Forms of corruption found in our society today are:-

- Tribalism
- Bribery
- Cheating in business
- Stealing
- Robbery with violence
- Dishonesty
- Misuse of public funds/property
- Grabbing of personal and public land

c. Ways in which Christians can help in reducing corruption in Kenya

- Respecting oneself and others
- Respecting laws set up in the constitution
- Building a fair and just society by applying life skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking and making appropriate moral decisions
- Pray for the corrupt to change their behavior
- Set good example of acting as good role models for others
- Educate people on the evils of corruption
- Report those who engage in corrupt practices to the relevant authorities.

4. REASONS WHY ELIJAH FACED DANGER AND HOSTILITY AS A PROPHET OF GOD

1st king 18: 1-46. 19: 1-21, 21: 1-26

Because of Elijah's work as prophet of God, he had direct conflict with the king and Jezebel. The two wanted to kill him for the following reasons

- **Elijah had pronounced a three year drought in Israel**

- **Prophet Elijah had put to death the 450 prophets of Baal during Mount Camel contest**
- **Elijah had boldly condemned King Ahab for taking away Naboth vineyard**

5. <u>WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF ELIJAH'S PROPHETIC MISSION TO CHRISTIANS TODAY?</u>

i. Church leaders should remain courageous and firm in condemning any form of social injustice in society
ii. Christians should remain faithful to God through word and deed even if this would cost them their lives
iii. Christians should not despair in their missionary work but lean on God for encouragement and providence
iv. Christians should pray to God in faith as God would answer them
v. Christians should advocate for rights of the poor and speak against any form of oppression
vi. Christians should not give false evidence against their neighbors like Jezebel did to Naboth
vii. Christians should be persistent like Elijah in their struggle against injustice
viii. God is able to establish an intimate relationship with His faithful.

SECTION TWO

AFRICAN RELIGIOUS HERITAGE-MORAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Specific objectives

By the end of this section, the learner should be able to:-

a. Explain the importance of blood kinship in the African communities
b. Explain the factors contributing to harmony and mutual responsibility in the African Community
c. Explain the importance of rites of passage
    i. Birth and naming
    ii. Initiation
    iii. Marriage
    iv. Death
d. Explain the changing attitude of African communities towards the rites of passage
e. Explain the role of specialists in the Traditional African communities
f. Discuss and evaluate continuity and change of the African understanding of community land, property, worship, medicine, old age and dressing

KINSHIP SYSTEM IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETY

Kinship refers to relationships

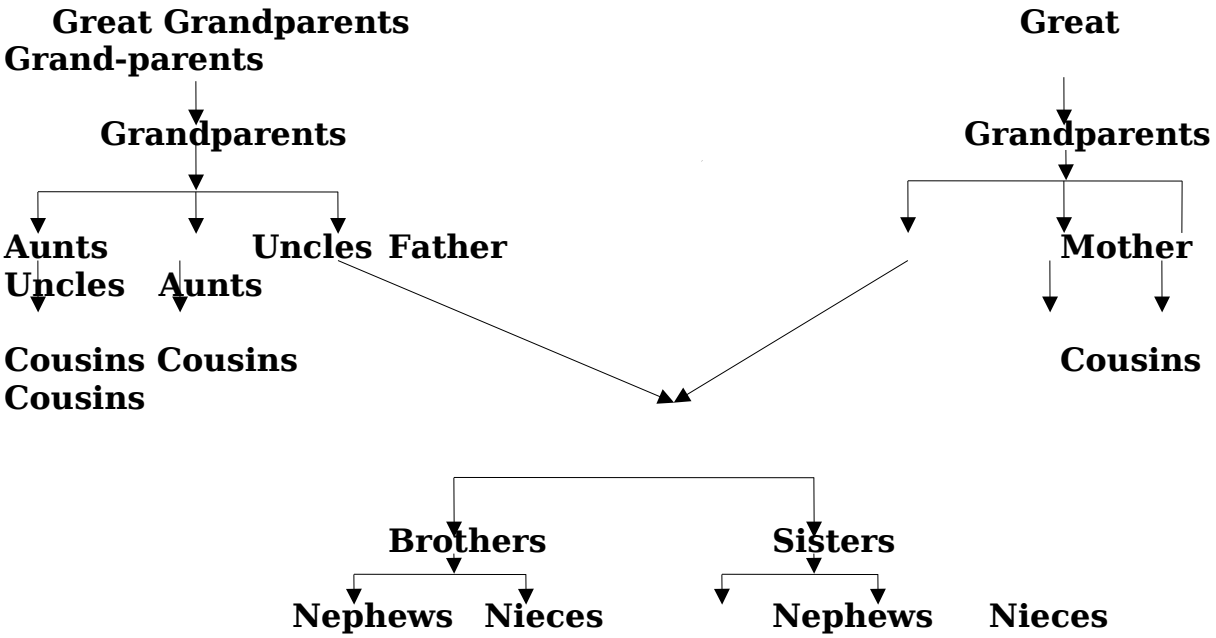
In A.T.S, each individual is related to the other person either through **blood** or **marriage**

Blood relatives include parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents

Through marriage, the husband or wife acquire more relatives who are referred to as **in laws**

Every marriage brings new links thus increasing and strengthening the kinship ties.

FAMILY TREE



IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD KINSHIP IN AFRICAN SOCIETY

The kinship system extended to ancestors who were seen as part of the living. Kinship was important because:-

i. It controlled relationship among people
ii. It governed marriage so that clans related could not marry
iii. It encouraged communal living and unity. It bound members of the community together

iv. It took the responsibility of solving social problems. This provided security to all concerned
v. It emphasized the brotherhood of human beings and promoted harmony in the society. It was the duty of each member of the community to ensure that the society lived in harmony
vi. Each person learnt the values of the society during the rites of passage. This gave members a sense of belonging
vii. Wishes of the ancestors and spirits were respected so that they did not curse the family
viii. Family problems were solved to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts
ix. Each adult was responsible for discipline the children
x. Children were taught how to behave toward older people

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO HARMONY AND MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY

These factors include:-

i. **Division of labor**
ii. **Communal worship**
iii. **Leisure activities**
iv. **Rites of passage**
v. **Sharing**
vi. **Social norms/rules and regulations**
vii. **Punishments for law breakers**
viii. **Communal work**
ix. **Virtues**

1. DIVISION OF LABOR

Various tasks to be performed were fairly distributed among the people

Elders **-**they played political roles and they were the chief counselors
-they maintained laws and order
-they settled disputes

Old women **-**they looked after the grandchildren
-They educated girls on their roles as future wives and mothers

Young unmarried men **-**They provided security for the community

Small boys **-**Helped in handling animals
-Teamed up with their fathers and young men in some of their activities
-They learnt through observation and acquired skills such as smelting, hunting and building

Girls -They help their mothers in household duties like cooking, looking after babies, fetching firewood and water
-they learn some skills such as weaving and pottery.

2. SHARING

They shared material things and participated in all activities depending on age, sex and status

Rites of passage

The whole community participated in ceremonies related to **birth, initiation, marriage and death.**

All kinsmen, friends and neighbors actively participated in the ceremonies by sharing responsibilities, eat and feast together.

3. COMMUNAL WORSHIP

During such occasions, people come to thank God for a good harvest or after victory in battle. In such a function, sacrifices are made and prayers

offered. During such times of crisis, for example, when there is a disaster, an epidemic or serious sickness, people gather and offer sacrifices to God and to the ancestral spirits in order to appease them.

4. LEISURE ACTIVITIES

In African Traditional Society, leisure is integrated with other activities although after work; people rest and share jokes. People are occasionally entertained by the youth through singing and dancing during times when there is little work to be done. In the evenings, men are entertained by the youth. As the elders watch the youths perform, they encourage and correct them accordingly and also they identify certain talents among the performers

5. SOCIAL NORMS

In A.T.S, people grow up knowing what is right and wrong. Rules and regulations are established to govern and regulate people's behavior. Everybody understands the virtues they should uphold such as **friendship, love, honesty, courage, bravery** and b **compassion.** People are also discouraged from developing vices such as **cheating, theft, selfishness, greed** and **dishonesty.** Social norms keep the community from disintegrating and they provide peace to the individual and the society.

6. RITES OF PASSAGE

Rites of passage are important stages in a person's life. Such rights are turning points which make changes from old to new stages in one's life. They include:-

i. **Conception and pregnancy**
ii. **Birth**
iii. **Naming**
iv. **Initiation**
v. **Marriage**
vi. **Death**
vii. **Burial**
viii. **Life after death**

N/B Each individual involved in each stage goes through a number of ceremonies with three main characteristics.

a. **Separation** –being secluded/cut off from the rest of the people around for a period of time
b. **Transition –**this is a period of change brought about by new knowledge given during seclusion period
c. **Incorporation** –This is a return to the ordinary community.

Ritual performed, assumed both social and religious values. It is through these rites that kinship ties are strengthened.

A. <u>Conception and Pregnancy</u>

The unborn child is very valuable to the larger community hence the pregnant mother is greatly taken care of. The expectant mother is not referred to directly as expectant. Terms like:-

- **She is heavy**
- **She is full**
- **She is satisfied**

Direct reference to this stage can easily affect the unborn child. It can lead to miscarriage or other abnormalities.

Special treatment given to the expectant Mother

i. She had to avoid being in the company of people with various disabilities such as the blind and the lame.
ii. She had to keep off from metallic objects
iii. She had to avoid doing heavy work like splitting firewood, carrying heavy luggage
iv. In some communities, the expectant mother had to keep off from the husband.
v. She was supposed to abstain from certain food such as eggs and fatty meat.
vi. She was supposed to wear protective charms
vii. She was not supposed to speak to the husband directly. It had to be through an intermediary

B. **<u>Birth of the Child</u>**

The birth of the child is a community affair as the child belongs to the whole community. It is witnessed by elderly women who act as midwives. Men are not allowed to go near the delivery place.

When the baby arrives, Its sex is announced in various ways such as shouts and ululations. This is because everybody is eager to know the sex of the baby. Some communities like Gikuyu, give five ululations for a baby boy and four ululations for a baby girl.

The placenta is disposed off ceremoniously:-

- In some communities, it is thrown into a running stream or river.
- In others, it is dried up and kept for rituals to be performed later.
- In others, it is carefully buried near the homestead or in uncultivated field or in a shamba with bananas or cereals.
- In some, it is hung in the house to symbolize the continuity of life.

All these ceremonies are observed so that the womb may remain fertile to ensure continuity of life. The umbilical cord is also disposed off ceremoniously.

Where birth took place

- A special house has to be built for that purpose
- In the house of the expectant mother
- In the home of the expectant mothers parents

Rituals and ceremonies conducted during birth

i. The father prepared sugar cane dish-for the mother and the child and for her strength
ii. The child was washed and smeared with oil for cleansing
iii. The father sacrificed a goat- -to purify the homestead
-as a way of giving thanks,
-for protection of the child
-for joining the child with the ancestors
iv. The mother and the child were kept in seclusion
v. The mother and the child were shaved. Shaving of the hair indicated that the mother had lost out pregnancy and growth of new hair was a symbol of new and clean life

Sacrifices offered during birth

- Sacrifice which were of the goat and sheep were intended to bring God and the ancestors to share the occasion of birth of the child with the clan
- They were being appeased to protect the mother and the child
- It was for thanks giving for the giving of the baby

C. Naming of the child

a. Describe ways of naming children in African Traditional Society

i. **Some of the names given reflected the problems that the parents faced**. For example, a special name is given to a child who is born after many years of childless marriage. In some instances, if many children have died before the arrival of another, such is given the name of an animal or ugly name as an indication that they have little hope that this one will survive.
ii. **Some reflected the conditions of weather and seasons of the time of birth**. For example floods, drought and famine. **Others reflected certain activities within the community such as planting, harvesting or hunting.** Names like Wanjala and Nanjala show that these were born during famine. **Some also describe important or strange events that are current among the people such as wars or the invasion of locust**. For example Nasiche for Luhyas' and Ngige for Kikuyu's showing the invasion of locusts
iii. **some names have religious connotations** for example Were for Luhya God.

iv. **other names reflected the different labor the mother went through during delivery**
v. **twins are given special names**
vi. **some names are given to remember the departed relatives.** This is so especially when the new born baby shows features of such a person. Names of the dead relatives show gratitude to the ancestors and retain links between the living and the dead.

Changing attitude to birth and naming

i. women attend antenatal clinic and eventually give birth in hospitals and health centre. Doctors play the role of midwives
ii. the mother and the child are not secluded from the rest of the family members
iii. the sex of the baby is casually announced by attending doctors and midwives in hospitals. It is not accompanied by ululations
iv. the birth of the new baby is no longer a community affair but rather a family affair.
v. The rituals performed to the mother and the child in the past has been down played. For example participation in shaving of hair and protection rites

As regards naming, many communities have retained their traditions so that the name given reflects the character and personality of the child or the person they are named after.

D. **Initiation Rites**

in most communities in Kenya, the main initiation rite for boys is circumcision and clitodectomy for girls. Others like Luo's have six of their lower front teeth removed.

Initiation rites involved the whole community. Every member of the community is expected to undergo the rite, failure to which the person will be looked as an outcast and as a child no matter how old he/she might be.

Before initiation ceremony is done, the young people are prepared both physically and psychologically. The physical preparation involves being properly fed on a special diet so that they are healthy and strong. The psychological preparation involves them being informed on what to expect and what is expected of them. They are encouraged and challenged to face the ordeal with courage and taught about its significance.

Reasons why initiation rites are important in A.T.S

i. The initiate gains a **new status in life;** he/she moves from childhood to adulthood and is considered a mature and full member of the community.
ii. After initiation, a person **acquires new rights and privileges.** For example he or she qualifies to marry. The man can also own property and has a right to inherit his father's property. A man can now bury his father, defend his family and the community.
iii. Initiates receive **special education** from sponsors during the seclusion period. They're instructed on how to behave as adults, warriors, future husbands and parents
iv. Initiation ceremonies **bring families, relatives and friends together.** They help strengthening kinship ties for example the shading of blood binds the initiates to the land and to the ancestors
v. Initiation ceremonies are looked at as an occasion for **prayers to God** for the well being of the initiates and the property of the whole community
vi. In some communities, initiation rites help in **structuring the community** through age or groups.
vii. In some communities, like among the Maasai and Poket, the initiation rite is a **sign of courage and bravery.** It helps to identify the warriors.
viii. The pain endured during initiation prepares the initiates to **face the difficulties and challenges of adult life.**

Channing attitude towards initiation rites

i. It is no longer possible to gather together all those undergoing rituals such as circumcision and keep them in seclusion for long periods. This is mainly due to demand of formal education
ii. Boys are taken to hospitals individually by their families for the operation for hygienic and safety reasons
iii. The pomp that used to accompany such rituals is slowly dying out due to economic reasons
iv. It is difficult for those circumcised at the same time to know one another and even form age groups or sets
v. Parents organize to circumcise their children when much younger unlike in the past when this was done at puberty.
vi. Circumcision is being practiced by some communities which never practiced it before for example the Luo
vii. Education offered during such rites in the past is now being offered formally through subjects such as Biology, CRE, SEE and Home Science
viii. Many Kenyan communities have abandoned the practice of circumcision of girls

Give reasons why initiates were put in seclusion for some time

i. To give them an opportunity to share experiences
ii. To enable proper feeding for all
iii. In order to undergo some rituals to bond them together
iv. It was easy to guide and counsel them on adulthood responsibilities and customs
v. Seclusion kept them from women and children
vi. They were secluded to cement their brotherhood relation
vii. To help in proper check-up and monitoring of their healing
viii. To learn the community secrets, customs and traditions of the people.

E. Marriage Rites

In A.T.S marriage is looked upon as sacred and ordained by God

Importance of marriage in African Traditional Community

i. Through marriage, new social relationships are created between families and relatives. As a result, the web of kinship is expanded
ii. Marriage ceremonies (where there is feasting and rejoicing) brings the whole community together and everybody in the community has a role to play
iii. The new couple is provided with an opportunity to learn new knowledge and skills, for example, how to build a family, how to fulfill sexual needs and how to love and be loved. It is in marriage that a man and a woman find mutual love and companionship
iv. It improves the status of individuals in society. They are more respected and accorded social responsibilities. Their status increase further when they get children. The survival of the community is ensured through the children born within marriage
v. Marriage was a source of wealth for the man and the family as a whole. In polygamous marriage for example, the many wives and their children provided the necessary labor that was required. The more children the couple had, the more prestigious they become in society.
vi. Sons born in marriage inherit their father's property
vii. Children promote the social status of their parents. If a family has many children, the man and his wife will be accorded more respect than in cases where there are few or no children.
viii. Children make the marriage complete and strengthen the bond of unity between husband and wife.
ix. Children take care of their parents in old age and give them a decent burial when they die

x. Children provide security for the home collectively. The young unmarried men were expected to defend the community against any aggressors
xi. Through marriage, the living, the dead and the yet to be born are brought in harmony. Marriage makes it possible for the African to regain the loss immortality through the children born and who are named after dead relatives.

What approaches were used in chasing a marriage partner in African Traditional Society?

i. Parents chose the partners when the boy/girl was young or not yet born
ii. Some young people made their own choices and then informed their parents
iii. It was made by an intermediary
iv. In some communities, the girl was waylaid on her way home
v. Senior wives made a choice of another wife/wives for her husband
vi. In some communities, twin boys married twin girls
vii. In other communities, marriage was done through inheriting the wife of the dead brother.
viii. In some communities, rich men/leaders were given wives as gift
ix. Some debtors would give her daughters as a wife for the creditor

Changing attitude to marriage rites

i. Western culture, such as formal education and Christianity have changed marriage attitude to some extent
ii. It used to be an obligation for all normal persons to get married and have children. This is not happening today because there are many individuals who decided not to get married.
iii. In A.T.S, pre-marital sex was not permitted and offenders were severely punished. They also valued virginity among girls and girls of this kind fetched a lot of bride-price on wedding day. today, the society has become permissive and morality has declined.
iv. The more children a married couple had, the more prestige they gained in society. Today most couples prefer small families because of economic constrains
v. Today, young people get into serious relationships before they have time to know each other's background
vi. Today, divorce cases are on the rise and marriage vows are not taken seriously by people
vii. Marriage in A.T.S was basically for procreation but today a couple can decide to stay together even without children
viii. Bride price has been highly commercialized today to an extent that it has lost meaning

ix. Today, people prefers monogamous marriages as opposed to polygamy
x. In the past, marriages were carried out within tribes but today there are inter-tribal and even interracial marriages which have diluted cultural practices.
xi. Today, young people get married late in life because they have to complete formal education, vocational training and look for employment before they can think about settling down in marriage

F. Death Rites

Death was the final stage in one's life. It was a community affair and was seen as inevitable. Death is a sorrowful event because the dead person is physically and permanently removed from the living members of the family

Causes of death in African Traditional Society

i. Sorcery/witchcraft/evil magic
ii. Curses of the old
iii. Breaking of taboos/oaths
iv. Punishment from God
v. Failure to respect the ancestors
vi. Eating poisoned food
vii. Accidents
viii. Diseases
ix. Natural calamities for example drought or floods
x. Neglecting the ancestors
xi. Lack of reverence to God

State five rituals performed during the funeral rites in African Traditional Society

i. The corpse was washed in some communities using water and herbal medicine in order to preserve it and send it clean to the spirit world
ii. In some communities, the dead are buried with their belongings such as food stuffs, animal, bows and arrows. Such communities believe that the dead will need these things in the next world.
iii. Pregnant women and children are not allowed to touch or come in close contact with the corpse so that misfortunes do not befall them.
iv. The dead are buried in a carefully selected places in the ancestral land so that the spirit continuous to be close to the family
v. The body is also carefully placed in the grave facing the appropriate direction according to the customs of the people

vi. In some communities, the bodies are properly dressed before disposal while in others, like the Luhya, they are buried naked in the belief that they will be reborn in the spirit world
vii. The grave which is a symbol of separation is respected by being protected and made a family shrine in the cases when the dead were the head of the family. People avoid walking over it
viii. Before and during burial, the members of the family and all relatives enter a period of mourning. Normal activities temporarily are halted. In some, people smear their body with white clay, others stop washing their bodies, refrain from sexual intercourse or stop eating
ix. During the same period, there is singing or mourning songs and dancing as a way of expressing sorrow and sending off the departed to the next world
x. In some communities, there is feasting and drinking of bear
xi. After burial, close relatives share their hair as a sign that one of their members has been separated from them and for cleansing impurities. The new hair that grows shows that life continuous after death.

Describe ways of expressing solidarity during funeral rites in African Traditional Community

i. Everyone took part in ceremonies performed by the bereaved family for example eating and dancing
ii. They helped to prepare home duties for example cleaning and cooking
iii. They brought the food to be eaten during the mourning period
iv. They came to mourn with the family of the dead to give them moral support
v. They came to prepare the grave/digging is done by young men
vi. Members of the bereaved family in form the friends and relatives in the event of death
vii. They attend the funeral to bid farewell to the dead
viii. They sing/dance and sacrifice to the ancestors to express their solidarity
ix. They give the Eulogy to praise the diseased and his/her contribution to the community

Describe ways in which African Traditional Society demonstrated their belief in life after death

i. Burying the dead with their belongings to enable them to continue with life in the spiritual world
ii. The dead is buried in his best estate as a sign that he's with the family

iii. Continued care for the dead through attending of grave
iv. Offerings of sacrifice/libations to the dead are offered to appease them
v. Preparing the corpse through washing in water and herbal medicine to send it clean to the spiritual world
vi. Purification ceremonies after burial were performed as a sign that no misfortune has been left
vii. Burying the dead without cloths to ensure quick re-birth in the spiritual world
viii. Singing and dancing to send away the departed peacefully to the next world
ix. Children are named after the ancestors/dead
x. The ancestors were the intermediaries between men and God. they were consulted to give solutions

Changing attitudes to death and funeral rites

- Funeral rites are still taken seriously by all Africans Communities.
- Most of the dead are still being taken to ancestral land for burial. Others are buried in cemeteries in urban centers or wherever they've purchased land
- The major method of disposing bodies is still by burying although some communities prefer cremation
- Among Christians, although death is sorrowful and painful, it is also looked at as a gateway to joining the savior in heaven for the righteous. Sinners go to hell where there is eternal suffering
- However, in Traditional African Religion, there is no concept of heaven or hell. Those who die join the world of spirits
- Christians believe in the resurrection of the body but Africans do not have these beliefs

THE ROLE OF SPECIALISTS IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETY

Specialists are people who have undergone training and have acquired great knowledge and skills in a certain occupation or study.

In African Traditional Society, specialists are people who have special knowledge and skills on different subjects in the community. The specialists included:-

- **The rain makers**
- **The elders**
- **The diviners**
- **Prophets**
- **Priests**
- **Healers**

THE RAINMAKERS

They were normally responsible for bringing rain. Rainmakers normally pray for rain. They plead with God for rain and they tell the people when the rain will fall.

Identify five duties of rainmakers in African Traditional Community

i. They prayed for long hours for rain
ii. They performed rituals when asking for rain or stopping the rain
iii. They advised people about the time to expect the rain
iv. They acted as mediators between God and the people. They offered sacrifices/prayers/offerings to God. this was done with the help of priests
v. They acted as diviners and prophets

Outline the methods used to acquire the rain-making skills in African Traditional Society

i. By consulting other rain-makers
ii. Through studying the skies
iii. By studying the habits of trees and plants
iv. They studied the habits of birds for example sparrows, animals or insects
v. By studying the heavenly bodies for example the moon, the sun, the clouds and stars
vi. Use of common sense
vii. There are those who were called by the ancestors

THE ELDERS

State the duties of elders in African Traditional Society

i. They act as a government in the community and are called upon to perform important functions such as settling family and land disputes
ii. They make major decisions affecting families and the community
iii. They stipulate rules and regulations to be followed for the purposes of maintaining law and order
iv. They ensure that traditional values and cultural practices are observed and maintained by all through the education given to the youth and members of the community
v. They play a leading role during important functions in the community; for example, during the rites of passage
vi. They assist priests in preparing and performing rituals of sex and marriage
vii. They lead the members of their families in religious functions such as sacrifices or pouring of libation

THE HEALERS

These were also referred to as **medicine men.** They inherited the profession from their parents

Roles of healers/medicine men

i. They were responsible for the combating(preventing) sickness and misfortunes
ii. Advising people on prevention methods by pointing out the possible causes of death such as witchcraft, curses, sorcery and magic, bad omen
iii. Aid in increasing productivity and love among spouses
iv. Removing curses
v. Controlling spirits/ancestral powers which could harm the living.
vi. They gave protection and security from evil forces
vii. Guaranteeing prosperity and good fortunes
viii. They were responsible for cleansing harm and impurity

DIVINERS

The main role of the diviners is to find out the hidden secrets or knowledge and then convey the same to other people. They also work as medicine men

The diviners communicate with the spirit world directly or through mediums. The median help diviners to find out the following:-

i. Which spirit of the living dead needs to be appeased
ii. Those who bewitch others
iii. Types of rituals and medicine

The practice of diviners has been seriously affected by the adoption of Christian and Western values

PROPHETS

In African Traditional Society, prophets are also called seers. They possess special powers and can predict what is going to happen in the future. Some of them receive revelations about the future through visions and dreams

Sometime, they use their intuition and foresight and are able to advice the community on issues that concern them. For example they advise and warn the people when to expect problems like drought, war or raids.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE OF SOME ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE

These deals with the continuity and change of some aspects of traditional African understanding of:-

i. **Community land**
ii. **Property**
iii. **Worship**
iv. **Medicine**
v. **Old age**
vi. **Dressing**

Changes in African lifestyles have been brought by:-

- **Modern education**
- **Urbanization**
- **Individualism**

COMMUNITY LAND

- In most communities, land was a gift from God and it was communally owned and inherited from ancestors
- Land would not be transferred from one family to another
- Land provided food, building materials, firewood, herbs
- Family land fixed boundaries and nobody could interfere with it.

Changes

- Today, land is still believed as God given, it is a source of livelihood. However, land is like any other property
- It is a source of wealth which can be sold when need arises
- Land is individually owned and title deeds are evidence of individual ownership
- It is subdivided among individuals in different families
- Greed has resorted in land grabbing or conflicts

PROPERTY

In the African Traditional Society property was acquired through:-

i. Inheritance
ii. Gifts-cattle
iii. Winning in wars/raiding
iv. Payment of dowry
v. Individual effort

Wealth was seen in terms of land, cattle, wives, and children. Property was a source of security and social prestige. Property was commonly owned. The share holders were;-

- The family
- The clan
- The tribe and
- The living dead

Changes

- Property is individually owned
- There is competition for property even among family members
- The poor are neglected
- Wealth takes different forms:- money, houses, land etc
- Daughters are no longer seen as a source of wealth because many do not get married
- Wealth can be acquired unethically through stealing, land grabbing

WORSHIP

The African had a clear concept of the God they worshipped and they called upon Him at all times to help them. God would be worshipped at individual, family or community level

The purpose of worship was to petition God, thank Him and appease ancestral spirits. God was worshipped through sacrifices, offerings, prayers, singing and dancing

Places of worship such as forests, hill tops and caves were regarded as sacred and set aside

Changes

Today many Africans follow the Christian faith and other foreign religions. They have integrated certain aspects of traditional religion with the Christian faith, for example:-

i. Prayers at individual, family and community level
ii. Congregational or communal worship is regularized at least once a week where people meet in the house of God for worship
iii. Although God can be worshipped everywhere, there are certain places (buildings) set aside for worship
iv. Offerings in form of money and material gods
v. Singing and dancing
vi. Invocations

African Christians no longer sacrifice animals to God as the case was in the past

AFRICAN CONCEPT OF GOD, SPIRITS AND ANCESTORS

A. GOD

The traditional idea of God is that He is a Supreme Being/Deity. He was a perfect human being. The supreme God is that who excels in all good qualities of man. This Being does not have material body but exists as a spiritual being.

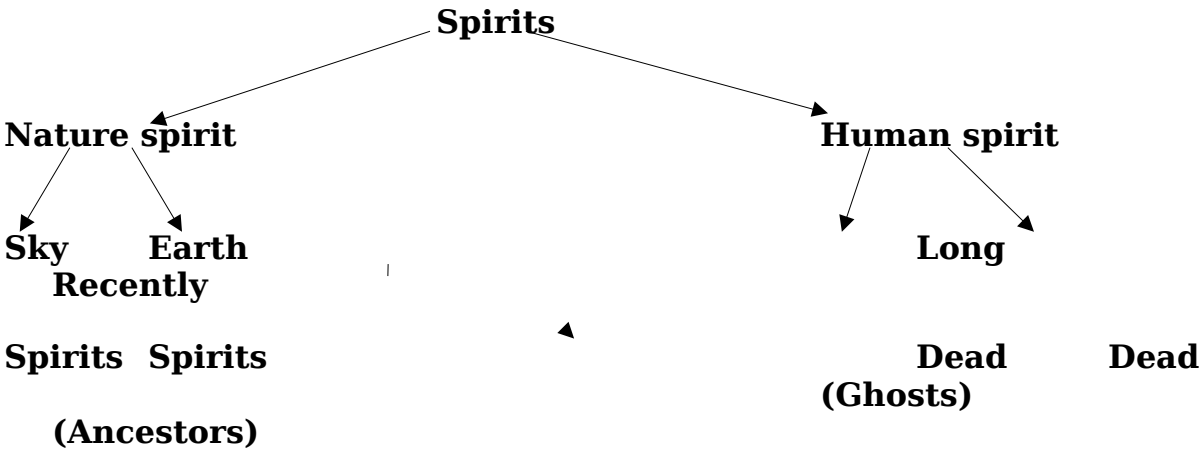
Attributes of God

- **God is good-**He's the giver of life and sustainer
- **God is merciful-** Proven in times of danger, anxiety etc
- **God is all knowing –(**Omniscient) nothing is/can be hidden for Him

- **God is holy** hence those offering sacrifice ought to be pure
- **God is all powerful** (Omnipotent) supersede everything in power and strength
- **God is all understanding** hence forgiving
- **God is all present** (Omnipresent) simultaneously worldwide
- **God is limitless** not limited by time or space
- **God is self existent** God originated on His own
- **God is spirit** He is invisible and everlasting
- **God is ever lasting** (Eternal) lives beyond lifetime of a person, an animal or a plant.
- **God is the creator** all was created by Him

B. <u>SPIRITS</u>

Spirits are believed to be existing between God and human beings in the universe. There are many types of spirits and all of them are believed to have been created by God. however, it is also believed that some spirits were once human beings who died many years back and the living people can no longer identify them.



i. <u>Nature spirits</u>

a. Nature spirits of the sky

These are the spirits which are associated with objects and forces of the sky like the sun, the moon, the stars, rain, thunder and lightning. The belief in these spirits help people to explain the mysteries of the forces of nature connected with the sky.

b. Nature spirits of earth

These spirits are connected with forces of the earth such as hills, mountains, rocks and trees etc

ii. Human Spirits

They are in two categories, namely: **the ghost's spirits** belonging to those who died long ago and **the ancestral spirits** (the living dead), whose identity is still alive in the memories of people. These spirits are believed to appear to the living in visions, dreams or even in the open. In general, people fear ghosts more than the ancestral spirits.

iii. Divinities

Some African communities in West Africa like the Ashanti of Ghana, Yoruba of Nigeria and Mande of Sieraleon believe in category of spirits between God and the spirits described above i.e. divinities

These divinities are believed to have been created by God and they represent His activities on earth.

The role of the spirits

i. Some spirits (the good ones) appear in people's dreams especially the diviners, priests, medicine men and rainmakers to relay information. This information is then used as given to avoid any punishment from the spirits.
ii. The naughty spirits may call someone by name but on turning round to see who called the person, there would be nobody.
iii. The religious specialists may also consult the spirits as part of their normal training and practice
iv. The belief in the existence of spirits provides people with the explanation of many mysteries which they find in the universe
v. Spirits relay God's response to human beings
vi. Bad spirits sometimes possess a person. This could cause the person to leave home and go to the forests, jump into the fire and get burnt etc

C. ANCESTORS

These are the fore-fathers or founders of the African clans or tribes. They are people who died and whose names and identity are still remembered by the family or clan members

Role of Ancestors

Like spirits, ancestors are believed to appear to the living in various forms such as dreams and visions. Reasons for appearance are:-

i. To enquire about the family affairs as they are still part of the family
ii. To give instructions to the family as to what should be done in certain areas affecting it.
iii. To rebuke and worn of the impending punishment to those who failed to carry out certain instructions

iv. To request for something like an animal to be slaughtered for them if need be
v. To act as mediators between the living and God
vi. They punish those who commit crime

THE AFRICAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HIERARCHY OF BEINGS

The African understanding of the universe is that it consists of two parts:-

- **The visible** (the Earth) and
- **The invisible (**sky) which is regarded as the home of God.

a. **HIERARCHY OF BEINGS**

This universe has a specific order of created beings with God, the Creator, occupying the highest rank. This ordering is what is referred to as the **hierarchy of beings.** It can be divided into seven categories:-

i. **God, the Supreme being** is at the top. He is believed to be responsible for the existence and sustenance of human beings and all other beings
ii. **2nd are the Divinities**
iii. **3rd are the Spirits**
iv. **4th are the Living Dead**, (ancestors). This forms an intermediate stage between the human beings who are alive and the spirit world
v. **5th position is Human Beings.** They include those who are physically alive and those who are yet to be born
vi. **6th are the Living Things** like animals and plants
vii. **Lastly are the Natural and Artificial Things** without biological life such as rain, rivers, mountains, rocks and all other lifeless objects.



None Living Things

b. THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF ALL THINGS, LIVING AND NONE-LIVING

According to the African view of the universe, all created beings depend on each other and on God

a. Human Beings and God

i. Human beings, depend on God for most essential requirements of life for example rain, air and sunshine
ii. They are less powerful than God
iii. They are under all obligations to obey the laws and commandments given by God
iv. Failure to obey these regulations may lead to punishment
v. They must offer sacrifices to God to maintain good relation with him
vi. Natural calamities like draught, floods and earthquakes are believed to be controlled by God and are beyond people's power.

b. Human beings and animals

God gave animals to people for their use and they should be handled responsibly

Importance of animals to man

- Domestic animals like cattle, sheep and goats are used as food and for payment of dowry
- Possession of these animals is also seen as a sign of prestige and wealth
- The skins of these animals can be used as clothes
- Some are used as sacrifices to God and as payment for a fine by an offender to the offended person

c. **Human Beings and Plants**

Ways through which human beings depend on plants are:-

- Certain plants like vegetables are used for food
- Pastoralists and those rear animals depend on grass and foliage for their livestock
- Trees are used for fuel and for building purposes
- Plants are also used for conservation of wildlife for example trees

d. Human Beings and Non-living things

None-Living things like rain, rocks and rivers are given a religious significance. For example, rain is seen as great blessings from God because it brings pasture for pastoralists and good harvest of crops for

agriculturalists. Natural phenomena like thunder are seen as God's movement or God's voice. They are therefore seen as signs of warning from God.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LIVING TOWARDS GOD, SPIRIT AND ANCESTORS

a) Traditional African worship of God

Worship is people's attempt to meet and communicate with the spiritual world especially with God

- **Sacrifices and offerings** were made to God, spirits and ancestors for the following reasons:-
  i. In recognition of God's absolute ownership of life and property
  ii. To invoke God for special blessings to the clan at large
  iii. To thank God for various reasons such as success in war or plentiful harvest by the community or individual
  iv. To express a person's fellowship or communion with God
  v. To avert evil
- Prayers always accompanied offerings and sacrifices so that the purpose of the occasion is declared.
- Singing and dancing was also done as a way of worship
- Prayers, invocation and blessings also formed part of African way of worship

b) Veneration of Ancestors

Every effort made to ensure that good relationships are maintained and that these spirits and ancestors are not offended

Ways of maintaining good relationship with the ancestors:-

i. Pouring libation of beer, milk and water to the spirits
ii. They are consulted through a diviner or a medicine man when a major family undertaking or decision is about to be made
iii. They are remembered by naming the children after them
iv. They are remembered through rituals

c) Communication with the spirits

People came to know what the spirits want through the use of specialists especially the diviners and mediums. The medium who normally works with a diviner gets "spirit possession" through various means. For example by;

i. Sitting quietly in a place
ii. Singing
iii. Dancing
iv. Clapping of hands

The medium then loses his/her senses and become an instrument of the spirit. The spirit begins to speak, giving requests sort and can also make demands on the living

Quiz

i. **Identify ways which the Africans sort reconciliation with God**
ii. **Explain the means through which Africans communicated with God**
iii. **Identify occasions when prayers were offered in Traditional African Communities**