

WEEK ONE

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

A. THE CREATION STORY GEN.1-2:1-3,PSM.19:1

The word sovereignty means having powers that are absolute, supreme and unquestionable. God is a sovereign ruler because he created the world and everything there in. He has supreme power and dominion over the whole universe. He is the Alpha and Omega. He created all things and nobody created him. His position in the whole world is unquestionable and unchallengeable. He created almost all the creation through the power of the spoken words: "let there be" and it was so.

There are two creation stories in the book of Genesis both stories agree that God created the world but they were differently narrated because of the different sources.

THE FIRST CREATION STORY

The first creation stories come from the priestly source, while the second creation story was from Yawestic source. The different stories are out to make us accept God's power over our lives. Before the beginning of God's creative work, there was total darkness it was "without form and void " the only living thing that existed was the spirit of God which moved over the face of the waters.

God's actions are not only outlined but also his authority is asserted for instance God said, "let there be light " and there was light! This is a show of authority and power of God. The story tells us the extremely great (transcendent) nature of God.

On the first day God created the light by saying "let there be light "and there was light God separated the light from the darkness and it was called "day" while the darkness "night"

On the second day, God created the firmament that is the heavens

The third day, God created lands seas and vegetation 4th day, God created the heavenly bodies. These are sun, moon and stars these heavenly bodies mark the different season.

5th day, God created the sea animals (fishes) and birds of the air

6th day, animals and mankind were created cattle, creeping things and man. Alone was created in the image of God, because God gave him high reasoning. God commanded man to be fruitful and multiply. Man was in charge over everything on earth and he named everything that was created. On the seventh day, God rested and that is why the Sabbath day is to be kept holy.

SECOND CREATION STORY

In the second creation story, the world was not void before God created it, because there was the existence of land mass. The land was barren and had no plants or herbs. Here, man was the first thing to be created. When God saw that there was nobody to cultivate the land he created man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into man.

After the creation of man, Garden of Eden and plants were made. God placed man in the Garden of Eden and charged man to take control of all the trees in the

garden and he should not eat from the tree of life and knowledge of Good and Evil that is in the center of the Garden.

After creating the trees, God caused a river to flow out of Eden to water the trees. This main river was divided into four rivers which were Pishon, Gihon, Tigris and Euphrates.

Man's role in the garden, was to till the ground and keep it. Man would only die if he eat from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.

After the creation of the garden, animals were created to be Adam's companions and God gave Adam order to name all the animal after the naming, God found that Adam was lonely, so he caused Adam to sleep and he took one of Adam's rib, with it, he created a woman suitable for Adam whose name was Eve. She became Adam's playmate as well as helpmate. This action proved that God joined man and woman as husband and wife. Adam and Eve were naked but they were not ashamed. Man was given the responsibility of controlling all the creatures both human and material resources. The joining of Adam and Eve, proved that God instituted marriage and they are to continue the work of creation and to control the whole universe. God demonstrated his sovereignty over man by giving man the power to procreate, to bear children and take control over everything.

WEEK TWO

GOD THE CONTROLLER OF THE UNIVERSE

- (a) God's control of the universe. (Gen. 1:26-31, Amos 9:1-6.)
- (b) God controls the affairs of the nation. (Jer. 18:1- 6)
- (c) God controls the affairs of the individual. (Psalm 127 ;1-3, Jer.29;11,Rom.8;28)
- (d) The Apostles' Creed.

God's control of the universe (Gen. 1:26-31, Amos 9:1-6)

The power of God to control the universe is a very significant duty vividly elaborated by the scripture. God, despite his absoluteness and sovereignty, yet delegated some duties to man to be the master of all the creatures in the face of the earth. Out of all the creatures, man has the highest reasoning ability as man was made in the image and likeness of God.

Despite the delegation of duties, God's creative activities put the earth or universe into existence. He controls it by sustaining all His creation. He exercises his sovereignty in the affairs of men and nations.

Prophet Amos described God as "the Lord, God of hosts, He who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn". Amos maintained that Yahweh is usually active in the histories of other nations even though they are not aware that he leads them and judges them. He was not also happy that God delivers many nations from oppression and they attributed their freedom to their military power, they turned away from God's laws and God in turn inflict punishment on them. (Amos 9:5-7).

Isaiah called on the Israelites to recognize God as the maker and controller of the universe. He made it clear that the clay does not challenge the skill of its fashioner or maker, neither has a child the right to ask his father "What are you begetting?" Continuing, Isaiah quoted God as saying, "will you question me about my children or command me about the works of my hand? I made the earth and created man upon it, it

was my hands that stretched out the heavens and I commanded all their hosts. (Isaiah 45:9-12)

To also prove that God has control over the affairs of the individual, Psalms 127:1-2 says, “unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over a city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil, for he gives to his beloved sleep”.

Therefore, God is still calling people today to recognize his sovereignty over them and their nation, and so said to the Israelites in Babylon that after seventy years of suffering, he will come fulfill his promise for the plans he has for them are for good and not for evil and that he is there to give them a future and hope” (Jer. 29:11). So indeed God is the controller of our nations, individuals and every affairs of men.

THE APOSTLES CREED

The apostle’s creed is the resolution of the council of Nicaea held (turkey) in AD 325 to refute the heretic teaching peddle by Rev. Fr. Arius. He taught that Christ was not fully equal to or eternal with God the father, but had been created by him. Fr. Arius wanted to safeguard the oneness of God and had a correct intuition that the son proceeds from the father. But to safeguard the oneness and unchangeableness of God, he made Christ in effect an intermediary being between God and the material world, and he conceived of Christ coming forth from the father as his having been created by him. For Arius, Christ was above every creature but nevertheless was himself created by God. This view of Fr. Arius was strongly condemned by the council of Nicaea which affirmed that Jesus Christ is of the same nature or substance or being with God the father. In other word, whatever the father is so is the son. If the father is God, so is the son. This is the Nicene Creed.

THE CREED

I believe in one God, the father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one lord Jesus Christ, the only son of God, eternally begotten of the father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the scriptures, he ascended into heaven and seated at the right hand of the father he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the father and the son, he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and life of the world to come Amen.

SIGNIFICANCE

1. The apostle creed strengthens the Christians believe in the trinity and other fundamentals of Christian religion.

2. It refuted a number of heretic teachings by Arius and other false teachers.
3. The creed is instrumental to the unity of Christianity.
4. It is the symbol of our faith as Christians.

WEEK THREE

LEADERSHIP:

JOSEPH AS A LEADER

- a. HIS EARLY LIFE: Gen 37:1 -28, JOSEPH AS THE GOVERNOR. Gen,41:1-57
- b. JOSEPH RECONCILES WITH HIS BROTHERS. GEN. 45:1-15

LEADERSHIP

Leadership means the ability and capability to guide, protect and motivate a group of people so as to bring the best out of them for the purpose of improving their spiritual, moral and material status. These can only be achieved when the leader possess the following qualities

1. God fearing
2. Faithfulness
3. Loyalty
4. Courage
5. Accountability
6. Dedication of duty
7. Selfless service
8. Self-sacrifice
9. Patriotism
10. Hard work and exemplary living.

Some of the ancient leaders that possess the above qualities were: Joseph, Moses, Joshua and prophetess Deborah. They were role models that help protect us from ignorance, poverty, disease and also spiritual and moral decadence.

JOSEPH AS A LEADER

Joseph was destined to be a leader and this became manifested through his dreams which made his brothers jealous of him and sold him into slavery to the Ishmaelites and the Ishmaelites later sold him to pharaoh in Egypt. Because Joseph was God fearing, he demonstrated leadership qualities of discipline, hard work, responsibility and accountability. The above qualities gained him Governorship in Egypt. He also reconciled with his brothers who sold him when they came to buy food in Egypt.

Joseph was the son of Jacob and Rachel, who had eleven more children. Joseph was loved the more by his father because he was the child of his old age. As a result, Jacob made a beautiful dress for him which made his brothers envious and coupled with his two dreams, the brothers hated him the more.

The first dream was that they were binding sheaves in the field and his own sheave stood upright while his brother's own bowed before his. This dream signifies that in future, his brothers will bow before him.

In the second dream Joseph saw the moon, sun and eleven stars bowing before him. His brothers became angry at the second dream as that signifies that in the future all the

members of their family will bow before him. For these dreams the brothers hated him and planned to kill him.

One day, Joseph's brothers went to graze their fathers cattle at Shechem and Jacob sent Joseph who left home as the youngest from Hebron to take food to his brothers. Joseph went and could not meet them there and he was directed to Dothan where he met them. Seeing Joseph coming, the brothers planned to kill him and to tell their father that he was eaten by wild animal. Reuben being the eldest, advised that they should not kill him but rather throw him into an old well from which he hopes to rescue him later. As they were eating, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelite traders on their way to Egypt. Judah suggested that they should sell Joseph to the strangers. They all agreed and Joseph was sold for twenty shekels of silver and was taken to Egypt.

In Egypt Joseph was sold to Potiphar one of the officers of Pharaoh. Joseph worked for his master and was made the chief steward. Joseph refused to sleep with Potiphar's wife and she told lies against him and he was thrown into prison. In prison, Joseph correctly interpreted the dreams of pharaoh's chief butler and baker. The butler was later restored to his former position.

JOSEPH AS THE GOVERNOR (GEN: 41:1-7)

Two years after, while Joseph was still in prison, pharaoh had two different dreams. The first dream was, "seven fat cows were eaten by seven lean cows". In the second dream, "seven thin ears of grain ate up seven plump ears of grains". Pharaoh called all his magicians and wise men but none could interpret the dreams. The butler then remembered Joseph who had helped him in prison. Joseph was brought out from the prison to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. Joseph said, "the seven fat cows and the seven plump grains represented seven years of plenty and the seven lean cows and the seven thin grains represented seven years of famine.

After the interpretation, Joseph recommended that Pharaoh should appoint a wise and discreet person as governor over the land to store enough grains during the seven years of plenty for use during the seven years of famine. He also suggested that overseers should be appointed to assist the governor for the fact that the spirit of God was with Joseph, pharaoh appointed him as the governor. Therefore Joseph was lifted from being a slave to a governor whose responsibility was to prepare the nation against the expected famine.

Joseph was 30 years when he became the governor of Egypt. As soon as he was appointed, he set out to work. He directed the affairs of the nation and visited all the areas helping the farmers to clear the land and to plant grains. Store houses were built in all the cities in Egypt through his supervision. He also supervised that harvesting and storing of surplus food during the seven years of plenty.

When seven years of famine set in, people went to pharaoh for food and he directed them to Joseph who was fully prepared for it. He carefully sold the food to the people so that everyone will have enough and food was equally sold to the countries that were affected by the famine.

JOSEPH RECONCILES WITH HIS BROTHERS (GEN. 45:1-15)

Joseph sold grains to his brothers on their first visit to Egypt but he did not reveal himself to them. Instead he called them spies and threatened to imprison them.

The second time Joseph decided to forgive and reconcile with his brothers. He asked all his officers and workers out of his room leaving him and his brothers alone. Then he wept aloud after weeping he said to his brothers "I am Joseph, is my father still alive?" The

brother became shocked and surprised by the revelation. They felt guilty and speechless as they found out that the person they hated and sold into slavery was present before them as the governor of Egypt. They quickly remembered their past and anticipated punishment for their evil deeds.

Joseph knew what their thought was, drew nearer to them, embraced them and said “I urge you not to be distressed because what you did in was in accordance with God’s plan for preserving their lives”. He told them to return home and bring their father to Egypt since there was still five years of famine. To genuinely prove his reconciliation, he asked his brothers to bring the entire family and their property to Egypt.

Joseph settled his family members in Goshen, one of the fertile areas in Nile delta. To seal the reconciliation, he wept over his immediate younger brother Benjamin, then kissed his brothers one by one and wept. After this, the brothers felt forgiven.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

1. The two dreams of Joseph showed that he was destined to be a great man. He was not Boastful about it, he only informed his family. We must learn to be as humble as Joseph.
2. Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery due to jealousy. We should not be envious or jealous of others.
3. As a young boy, Joseph was God fearing and law abiding. He refused to commit fornication with Potiphar’s wife.
4. Joseph as the governor of Egypt displayed sterling qualities of leadership worthy of emulation by national leaders. He led by example e.g. he went to the field to supervise the planting, harvesting and the building of storage facilities.
5. Joseph was God fearing. This quality enabled him to place the interest of Egypt far above his own.
6. Our leaders should learn to discover their failings and resolve to amend their individual ways of dealing with their subject.

WEEK FOUR

MOSES AS A LEADER

- HIS REAL LIFE AND CALL (EXO1-3)
- MOSES DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT (EXO, 14:1-31, NUM, 13:1-33, 14:1-19)

Moses was one of the great leaders of Israel. He demonstrated good leadership quality when he was called at the crossing of the red sea, during the golden calf incident, during the surveying of the land of Canaan and the events that followed. He was patriotic and a champion who fought for the oppressed. He had strong faith in God, he was reconciliatory and had foresight.

Many years after the first generation of the Hebrews who had arrived Egypt with Jacob and his sons had died, and Joseph too was no more, a new pharaoh who knew nothing about Joseph began to reign in Egypt.

The pharaoh was hostile to all foreigners in Egypt. Pharaoh feared that the Israelites would support their enemies against them in case of external aggression and seize the opportunity to escape from Egypt; their presence was a threat to the security of Egypt. The new pharaoh reduced the Israelites to nothing. They were enslaved and oppressed bitterly under the task masters. The first oppression was that they were driven to make bricks and supply forced unpaid labour for the erection of pharaoh’s store cities in Pithom and Ramses. Straus was given to them. They were punished when they don’t make required bricks for the day. The more they were physically oppressed, the stronger they became and multiplied greatly which created fear in the Egyptians.

The second oppression was that, Pharaoh asked the Hebrew mid wives, Shiprah and Puah, to kill all the male children born by the Hebrew women at birth. The mid wives feared God and refused to cooperate, when the king asked why they spared their male children, they replied that the Hebrew women were not like Egyptian women, because, they were more vigorous and delivered their babies before the arrival of the mid wife. Because they refused to commit murder, God dealt very well with the mid wives and also gave them families of their own. Then pharaoh commanded that every male child born by the Hebrews should be thrown into the River Nile by them, but their daughters should be spared. It was at this time that Moses was born.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES (Exodus 2:1-10)

Amram, a Levite was the father of Moses and Jochebed the daughter of a Levite was his mother. After his birth, they hid him for three months. When they could not hide him any longer, they made a basket of bulrushes and doubled it with soft substance, bitumen and pitch and put the child into it and kept it by the bank of the River.

When Pharaoh's daughter and her maidens came by and they saw the baby crying knowing that it might be one of the Hebrews children, they picked it up. Miriam the sister of Moses who hid inside a bush came out and asked to be allowed to find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for her. As soon as she was allowed, she fetched the mother of Moses and the mother nursed him for a price and Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses, meaning a child drawn out of water.

Moses mother must have told him that he was a Hebrew but that those who will eventually adopt him were their oppressors.

JOSHUA AS LEADER

JOSHUA AS A LEADER (NUM. 13:16-14:10, 27:15-23, JOSH. 1:1-9)

When Moses realized that he was nearing the end of his life, he asked God to appoint a successor for his people the Israelites. God instructed Moses to choose Joshua the son of Nun . Joshua was chosen and equipped for service. Moses laid hands on Joshua and committed him to God's hands. Joshua was among the twelve spies that spied the land of Canaan. Joshua and Caleb brought encouraging report. They tore their clothes when the Israelites accepted the discouraging report submitted by the majority, the two were nearly stoned to death but they were saved by the appearance of the glory of the lord at the tent of meeting.

Moses commissioned Joshua as his successor before his death. Joshua stood before Eleazar the priest who inquired of him through Moses being an outstanding leader handed over the leadership of Israel to Joshua and he became the representative of Israel. God then spoke directly to Joshua to assume command of the Israelites and gave him four specific orders

1. Go over Jordan
2. Be strong and of good courage
3. You shall cause this people to inherit the land
4. Do according to all the law and that the book of the law shall not depart from your mouth the invasion which Joshua was about to lead was unmistakably ordered by God

JOSHUA AND THE FALL OF JERICHO (Joshua 6)

The defender of Jericho shut the gate because of the invading Israelites .God told Joshua that He had given Jericho with its king and mighty men of valor to the Israelites. All the men of war were to go round the city once for six days with seven priest bearing seven trumpets of rams, horns before the ark. On the seventh day, the march around

the city was made seven times with the priest blowing their trumpets at the seventh time, the priest made a loud blast and all the people shouted loudly and the city wall fell. The people of Israel went into the city of Jericho and destroyed everything except Rahab and her family because of her kindness to the two spies that spied on the land earlier. There was no looting of property. All the precious thing like gold, silver, vessels of bronze and iron were set aside for the lord's treasury (house) this type of war is called holy war.

Joshua finally laid a curse that whoever would rise up to rebuild the city of Jericho would lay the foundation at the cost of the first son, and would setup the gates at the cost of his youngest son. God was with Joshua whom he made favour.

JOSHUA'S PROBLEM

1. He suffered the task of conquering war like-people with a complaining and difficult group.
2. The problem of leading people who mixed the worship of Yahweh with idol worship (worship of other gods)

JOSHUA'S SUCCESS AS A LEADER

He acquired some of the qualities that contributed to his success as a leader in the following ways:

1. He was an obedient follower of Moses.
2. When he was selected by Moses as one of the twelve spies sent to spy out the land of Canaan, he returned full of courage that victory will be theirs.
3. Joshua was a faithful servant of God who obeyed God's instructions and should reverence to God.
4. He was a man of courage who took wise decision.

DEBORAH AS A LEADER (JUDGES 4:1-24)

During the life time of Ehud, Israel remained faithful to the lord, a fresh outbreak of Idolatry brought about another period of oppression in the hands of Jabin, King of Canaan, for twenty years. It was during this period of oppression that Deborah, a prophetess and wife of Lappidoth judged Israel. Then, Jabin had 900 iron chariots. The Israelites lamented and cried to God to save them. God spoke to Deborah the prophetess to free Israel from bondage. Deborah summoned Barak the commander of Israel's army and gave him the oracle of God. She asked him to raise ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulum at mount Tabor. That at River Kishon he would engage Jabin's forces. She gave him the assurance that God would give Jabin's army into his hands. Barak Said to her, "if you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go". This is because he believed that Deborah's presence would assure him of God's presence and Deborah told him that the Lord will give Sisera into the hands of Barak though the glory of the battle will be ascribed to a woman if she should go with him. Deborah and Barak with their troops went to the battle field at kadesh. From there they marched out to mount Tabor. When Sisera got wind of this, he quickly took his 900 chariots and foot soldiers to the river kishon to meet Barak. When Deborah saw the Canaanites, she inspired Barak to victory by saying: "up for this is the day the lord has given Sisera into your hands does not the lord go out before you Barak?" When attacked, Sisera and his army and the Canaanite were defeated. Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled on foot. Barak pursued the enemy troops. Sisera took refuge in the

house of Jael, the wife of Heber the kenite. She provided him with security and gave him milk instead of water. Sisera asked her to stay at the door of the tent and whosoever may ask whether any body was taken refuge there, she was to reply negatively. She covered him with rug and Sisera slept off because of tiredness. As he was sleeping, Jael took a tent peg and hammered the peg firmly into Sisera's temple so it went into the ground as he lay asleep with great weakness so Sisera died. Later Barak came into hot pursuit of Sisera, Jael showed him Sisera stone dead with a tent peg in his temple. God subdued Jabin before his people.

DEBORAH'S SUCCESS

Deborah was a chosen leader because she was a prophetess and a judge of that time. She was good in the settlement of dispute. As a prophetess and a judge, it was through her that the wishes and decision of Yahweh were made known to the people. She was therefore, at that time God's chosen ruler for the people.

Deborah was a prophetess and a courageous woman. God inspired her to lead Israelite to victory and she courageously embarked on the following ventures:

1. She summoned Barak to deliver Israel.
2. She is from the hand of king Jabin of Canaanite agreed to accompany him to battle.
3. She inspired him to action and ensured victory at mount Tabor.
4. She sang a song of victory.
5. She rebuked the different tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun.
6. The war men were from the tribe.
7. Sisera and his men were defeated.
8. The victory of the battle was in the hands of Jael wife of Herben

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE

1. Jealousy can never change God's plan people should therefore avoid jealousy
2. God fulfils his plans through human agent
3. We should discover our talent and use it to the good of all
4. We must always our enemies
5. God punished all who stand against his plan
6. We should reciprocate God's kindness to us through faithful service and obedience

WEEK SIX

GOD CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE

- a. Guidance: God guide the people of Israel (Exo. 13:17-22, Josh, 8:1-22)
- b. God guide his people today through the teaching of Jesus Christ in the Bible (HEB, 1:1. Matthew 11:27-30)

GUIDANCE

During the Israelite struggle in the wilderness, many things happened which Moses interpreted as signs of divine guidance, yet the people found it Yahweh because, they have moved from relative security of life

in Egypt to the awesome uncertainty of life in the wilderness. God in his mercy, in keeping with his covenant, guided the Israelites throughout the hardship when they left Egypt. There was great uncertainty of life in their mind about their survival, yet God's

divine guidance led them through the uncertainties that were in their mind. At the red sea the Israelites murmured against God but Moses said ``fear not stand firm and see the salvation of God” The Lord fought the battle for the Israelites and Pharaoh and his men were routed. With his rod Moses separated the red sea God threw Pharaoh and his men into confusion. He clogged the wheels of their chariot and impeded their movement. Moses again caused the waters of the red sea to return and the Egyptian army all perished. Also, the philistines were conquered. God guided them through the wilderness lest they repent when they see mar and return to Egypt as the Hebrew step out from Succoth to encamp at Etham, the lord went before them by day in the pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light ``these enable them to travel by both day and night so that the warring enemies would not see them and attack them from behind.

In conclusion, Moses led the Israelite and they encamped at Pihahiroth near the red sea which moved the Egyptians to pursue the Israelites, Moses encouraged them and they saw the salvation of the lord Moses stretched his rod to the red sea, and the sea got divided foaming walls on both side the Egyptians soldier horse men, there hoses and chariot got clogged to the marsh. Ehen Moses stretch his hand over to the sea, as directed by God, the water came back to it wonted flow and the Egyptians were drown.

SIGNIFICANCE

God loves and protects His people. He fights for the weak. God wants us trust Him. He is omnipotent and Almighty. Nothing is impossible with Him. Political leaders have leads according to God’s direction, and believe in him. The people glorified the God of Israel who rescued them from bondage in Egypt.

GOD GUIDES HIS PEOPLE TODAY THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS (HEB. 1:1, MATT. 11:27-30)

In the past, God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophet but in these last days, he has and is still speaking to us through the teaching of his son Jesus. Jesus said all things are delivered unto me of my father and no man knows any man with the father , save the son and he whom so ever the son reveal him” Jesus continues in verse 28 to 30 of Mathew 11 and said ,”come unto me , all yea that labour and are heavy laden and I will give u rest take my Yoke upon me and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and yea shall find rest unto your souls ``he further said, ”for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

WEEK SEVEN

GOD CARES FOR HIS PEOPLE (PROVISION) EXO. 16:1-21, 17:1-7

GOD FEEDS HIS PEOPLE (EXO 16:1-21)

When the Israelite from Egypt crossed the red sea, they came to the wilderness of shur at Marah which means bitter they murmured for no drinking water and sweetening the bitter water and they drink it. (Exo. 15:22-27) from Ziph they got to the wilderness of sin or zin which was between alin and Sinai on the 15day of the second month of their departure from Egypt they became hungry and murmured against Moses and Aaron but God assured Moses that he would rain bread from heaven for them and that the people should gather enough quantity for the day with the exception of the 6day that they will gather double share against Sabbath day since the murmuring was against God and not Moses God told the Israelite who were gather by Aaron that they will eat flesh in the evening and bread in the morning as God, promised , quail covered the camp by evening and manna in the morning the Israelite did not know what it was until Moses

told them having being told to just take enough for a day, some Israelite disobeyed Moses by collecting more than pound or a kilogram measure. There for the left over bread bred worms and became foul (smells badly) Moses was angry with defaulters. They hakes was also collected before the sun get hot in the morning less it get melted

WATER FROM THE ROCK (EXO.17:1-7)

While they were at Raphidim, they were testy because there was no drinking water the Israelite again murmured against Moses for water to drink Moses became annoyed for putting God to test yet he prayed to God to tell him what to do, for the Israelite were ready to stone him God tell him to take some elders of Israel and the rod with which he struck the river Nile and go to Horeb , he will strike the rock with the rod for water to come out Moses did as God commanded him and water came out the people drank there fill . Moses name the place ``Massah and Meribah ``because the Israelite put God to test by asking,`` is the lord among us or not?

GOD PROVED LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT JOUNNY [EXO,13:20-22]

When the Israelite moved from Succoth and encamped at ethm on the edge of the wilderness the lord went before them in the day by pillar of cloud and by the night in a pillar of fire God did not depart from them and there was shade for sunny day journey.

WHAT PROVIDED SUSTAINANCE FOR ELIJAH AND ZAREPHATH WIDOW DURING DRAUGHT (1KING, 17:1-16)

God is God that never fails provided we obey his commandment and his laws. He adequately punish does who disobey him. Like in the case of Elijah, a single instruction of change is worth mentioning here. By substituting Baal washing for the worship for the worship of Jehovah in Israel, Jezebel the wife of Ahab challenge the existence of the living GOD and god answer to Baal worship was his mighty prophet Elijah, the Tishbite. The Baal in this case was Baal-melkart the official protective deity of Tyre, Canaanite nature religion the coming of Elijah during spiritual darkness once again revived the process of direct revelation of the true God, Elijah announced that punishment was about to fall upon Ahab and jezebel in particular and upon the land of Israel in general. The punishment was to be in a form of drought of three years in 6mount duration.

The intermediary between God and Israel, Elijah enjoyed God provision. God told Elijah to proceed to the Brook Cherith which afforded Elijah sustenance during the famine, as he was to drink of the brook and be fed twice daily by Ravens. When the water of the brook got dried up, God commanded Elijah to proceed to the city of Zarephath, were a widow had been commanded by God to sustain him. This was a divine plan that reveals Gods care for his people. Elijah asked of water and cake, the widow despite the little flour left with her she obeyed by the conviction of God and prepared the bread for Elijah because Elijah said to her ``fear not`` Elijah asked her to make for him before for herself and her son he further said, thou says the lord God of Israel, the jar of milk shall not be spent and the cruse of oil shall not fail, until the day the lord send rain upon the earth. Having done as GOD commanded, herself, her son and Elijah eat for many days for the jar of oil and milk never ceased.

Today, God continues to provide for people in different ways. God provides us sunshine, rain, air, knowledge with which we solved our problems, help through other people source of income and other necessity of life.

Therefore as Christians if we want to continue to enjoy the provision of God we should be obedient as Abraham, Elijah, and the widow of Zarephath.

WEEK EIGHT

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE (PROTECTION) DAN. 6:16-23. EXO 14:10-30.

Just as God cared for the Israelite by using Moses to use rod to divide the red sea and the Israelite walked through a dry ground, so did it happen with Daniel. The president of the kingdom of Babylon, the Governors and the princess, the counselors and the captain consulted together to destroy Daniel and God delivered Daniel in the lion's Den

Daniel was filled with the spirit of God and because of this; he became more popular in the kingdom than other satraps and presidents. They became jealous of him and tried to formulate false charges against him but they could not succeed. As they could not find him guilty, they used his religion to plot against him before the king. They established a royal status and made a decree that everybody must bow before him else one will be thrown in to the lion's Den.

So when Daniel a faithful servant of God found out that the document of the decree had been signed to make it authentic, he went to his upper chamber towards Jerusalem and knelt down to pray to his God. He prayed to God 3 times every day and glorified his name.

As he was praying, his enemies came and saw him in the act, and then they reported him to the king. They reminded him of the punishment against such offence and persuaded him to apply the law accordingly even though the king had the right to set Daniel free. When the pressure was much on the king to act on the law, the king then ordered that Daniel be thrown. However, the king prayed that the God, whom Daniel served, should deliver him. After this, the king went home soberly and he fasted throughout the night.

Early the next day, the king went the next day to check on Daniel's welfare and the king was astonished to find Daniel unharmed. He was very happy because he loved Daniel as a result of his loyalty and worthiness. Immediately, the king ordered that Daniel be brought out Of the lion's den and all his accusers be thrown in to the den and their family members.

The king equally decreed that all subjects must obey and fear the God of Daniel because He is the living God.

Therefore, as Christians, there is need for us to understand that God's protection is available for his people at all times as written in psalms 91; 1-16. [He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty].

The Lord shall deliver his people from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome (extremely unpleasant or offensive sight). No pestilent that walks in the dark shall destroy us so long as we don't compromise our faith in God to the worship of any status, money or clothes.

WEEK NINE

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- a. The irresponsible behavior of the sons of Eli and Samuel. (1samuel 2;12-25, 8;1-9)
- b. God's pronouncement of judgment on Eli and his sons. (1samuel 2;27-38, 3;1-18)
- c. The fulfillment of God's judgment on Eli and his family. (1samuel 4;10-22)

Here two different families are going to be discussed. One is the evil conducts of the sons of Eli, the priest Shiloh and the loving family from which Samuel grew and was brought up responsibly. The two families were to produce leadership of a religious type, and their end led to disaster. (1 samuel2:30)

THE SONS OF ELI (1sam.2:1-36)

The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, assisted their father at their early age. However, they were presented to us as worthless men who had no regard for the Lord. Eli's sons' worthlessness distilled or turned into greed and sexual immorality. Their evil originated from selfishness. Their arrogance and assertiveness resulted in contempt for God's offering. This led to life not oriented towards God's kingdom and true human value in the society.

When Eli heard the immoral acts of his sons, he orally protested and warned against misconduct, but they did not listen to their father. Eli had a share in his sons' sins. The sins of Eli's sons disrupted the sanctuary and people avoided them.

Eli's failure in his parental responsibility was the cause of the collapse of his priestly image. What happened in Eli's family shows that God hates hypocrisy especially among leaders. Samuel confirmed to priest Eli of what will befall them, but Eli was too old to make amend. Rather he said, "Let the Lord do what seems good to him."

God used the aggressive Philistine nation to accomplish his word.

At the battle of Aphek, the ark of the covenant was captured, the scoundrels or wicked men died. These two incidents opened the door of disaster. The news of the capture of the ark and the death of his sons drained Eli's strength and he slipped off his seat and died. The news of Eli's and his sons' death, induced forced labour on Phinehas' wife and she bore a premature baby whom she named Ichabod, meaning the glory of God had departed, which after a while she died. These events, actually fulfilled the words of 1 Samuel 3:11 [The two ears of anyone who hears will tingle]

THE SONS SAMUEL (1 Samuel 3:2-18)

Samuel had two sons, Joel and Abijah who succeeded him as judges. In spite of their father's good and past records, his children became corrupt judges and they perverted justice. Since Joel and Abijah reverted the whole system, they became more interested in their gain and material things. As corrupt judges, the people themselves took decision by rejecting them and then went to Samuel and asked for a king like other nations. They no longer rely on the service of judges as appropriate for the social and political changes that were on by his sons.

When the elders spoke out their grievances, Samuel consulted the Lord and he approved the entrance of monarchy in to Israel, while the sons were removed for their crimes.

MORAL LESSONS

1. As Christians parents, we should understand that when we fail to discharge our duties as moral trainers of our children, that will result to the down fall and shame of the family.
2. Christian parents should train their children in the way of the lord.
3. When children fail to take parental instruction, self-destruction may be their result.
4. Every worker should make his family a higher priority to his work.
5. What happened in Eli's family shows that God hates hypocrisy.