



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**COURSE CODE: CRS702**

**COURSE TITLE: COMMON THEMES IN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM**

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**CREDIT UNIT: 3**

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# **COURSE GUIDE**

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to CRS702: Common Themes in Christianity and Islam. The course is a two-hour credit unit course offered in the second semester of the first year to undergraduate students of Christian Theology in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). The Course comprises three modules of sixteen units. The course is designed and developed with the appropriate theological accent suitable for Christian understanding of inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.

This guide is conceived as one of the major resources to help you successfully complete your course in “Common Themes in Christianity and Islam” and ultimately your programme.

The Study Guide, therefore, provides you with basic information about the entire course, such as the aims and objectives, course material and structure, available services to support your learning, information on assignment and examination. You will also be guided on how to plan your time for study; the amount of time you should spend on each study unit and your tutor-marked assignments.

Go through this course study guide carefully before going through the main course content. You are encouraged, at your earliest possible convenience, to make your observations about the course content and presentation known to the Department through your Study Centre Director/Desk Officer.

It is my hope that this study guide will answer most of your questions. I also advise you to contact your study centre if you have further questions. I wish you all the best in your learning experience and successful completion of this course.

## **Course Aims**

This course aims at helping you gain some general knowledge about Christianity and Islam, and some of the common shared values, especially in matters of theology, doctrine and morals. The major stress is on understanding and appreciation of each of the religions, thus encouraging the idea of communication, dialogue and peaceful coexistence. The course therefore equips you with the necessary *theoretical* and *theological* knowledge to critically evaluate, appreciate and defend the religion(s) of the ‘other’ in all ramifications.

The thinking also is that after going through this course, the two religions can no longer be *anything* but *something* precious to you. This course then will serve as a source of motivation thus encouraging you becoming a missionary of peace, shunning any form of hatred, violence and/or persecution. The course, therefore, challenges you to defend and protect all values associated with peaceful coexistence.

## **Course Objectives**

You will find out that each unit in this course has stated objectives that it seeks to achieve. Pay close attention to those objectives for good understanding of the course. However, by the time you are through with the course content, especially when you have studied the material with some devotion, you will be able to:

1. explain the concept of religion and how it affects human operations in the world.
2. discuss creation, the goodness, love and mercy of God, sin and human weakness.
3. evaluate Christian and Islamic concepts of prayers and healing, and their efficacy.
4. explain the role of the Patriarchs in the development of the theology and practices in Christianity and Islam
5. demonstrate the oneness of God manifested in prayers to God, faith in God and the call to obedience to the moral laws of God.

## **Working through this Course**

The 15 units from the 3 modules in this course are designed and presented in strata of a stair-step fashion, erected piece by piece with each unit standing on its own, and with each additional part providing a stabilising effect for the whole. The implication is that you are expected to follow the units step-by-step for effective understanding and appreciation of the issues raised in the course. As a student, you will do yourself a lot of good if you consult the recommended texts and other texts that are relevant for the course. These will help, in no small measure, to broaden your knowledge of the course.

There are self-assessment exercises for each section of the unit, and tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) at the end of each unit.

In designing and writing of the course, I have consciously generated many self-assessment exercises at the end of each section and subsection in order to assist you to test your level of understanding. This is also in agreement with the nature of the course design, which gives you the advantage of approaching the issues of religions and doctrine from many different perspectives. Thus, the self-assessment exercises and the TMAs are to your own benefits. Do not hesitate to test yourself with them as they will help to sharpen your understanding as you progress in the course. They will also to reinforce your understanding of the material. Together with tutor-marked assignments, I strongly believe, these exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course in general.

As occasions demand, you will from time to time, have assignments to write. If I were you, I will equally take the assignments serious, knowing that they may constitute a part of my final performance in the course.

### **Course Materials**

There are four major components of the course, excluding this course guide. These are:

1. Study units
2. Textbooks
3. Assignments' file
4. Presentation schedule

### **The study units**

This course contains three modules of sixteen study units. They are divided and classified as follows:

<b>Module I:</b>	<b>Module 1: Definition of Religion</b>	
	<b>Unit 1</b>	What is Religion?
	<b>Unit 2</b>	The Concept of God
	<b>Unit 3</b>	The Concept of Sin
	<b>Unit 4</b>	God's Eternal Plan of Love for Lost Human Being
	<b>Unit 5</b>	Love
<b>Module II</b>	<b>Prayer</b>	
	<b>Unit 1</b>	What is Prayer?
	<b>Unit 2</b>	Healing in Christianity and Islamic Perspectives
	<b>Unit 3</b>	Christian Moral Value
	<b>Unit 4</b>	The Fear of God
	<b>Unit 5</b>	The Patriarchs
	<b>Unit 6</b>	God Works in Christianity

<b>Module III</b>	<b>Unity and Oneness of God (Allah)</b>	
	<b>Unit 1</b>	The Meaning of Islam
	<b>Unit 2</b>	Prayer in Islam
	<b>Unit 3</b>	Faith in Islam
	<b>Unit 4</b>	Free – will
	<b>Unit 5</b>	Moral Laws

### **References**

At the end of each unit, you will find references and list of books for further reading. It makes easier for you to identify relevant literature relating to each unit. You will gain much if you can read such books and similar ones on the topics treated. Reading the books will help to build your knowledge and thereby enhance your understanding of the course.

### **Assignment File**

Your assessment in this course will come in two forms: the tutor-marked assignments and a written examination. The tutor-marked assignment which will be organised by your tutor carries 30% of the total marks for the course.

### **Tutor-Marked Assignment**

There is a tutor-marked assignment at the end of every unit. You are advised to solve the assignments and submit your solution to your tutor. At the end of the course, the tutor-marked assignments will carry 30% of the total marks of the course.

### **Final Examination and Grading**

Your final examination, which carries 70% of the total marks, comes at the end of the course. This will constitute a two-hour examination, where you will be asked questions on the issues that you have already encountered in the course of your study.

### **Course Marking Scheme**

The total marks accruable to you from this course are broken down as follows:



<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<b>Assignments</b>	Three assignments of 10% each, out of which the best three is selected to make up 30% of the total marks
<b>Final Examination</b>	70% of the total course marks
<b>Total</b>	100% of course marks

### **Course Time Schedule**

This course is designed to cover 15 weeks outside the first week which is dedicated to the studying of this course guide. You are expected to complete the assignment for the unit at the end of every week (beginning from week 2), and submit the same to your tutorial facilitator. See the table below for the study plan. However, your tutorial facilitator may decide on the number of assignments taken from the assignments at the end of each unit.

Each study unit consists of one week's work and should take you about three hours to complete. It included specific objectives, guidance for study, reading materials, self-assessment exercises, and tutor-marked assignments. All these are to assist you achieve the stated learning objectives of the individual study units of the course.

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Title of the Study Unit</b>	<b>Week's Activity</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	
	<b>Course Guide</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Course Guide Form</b>	
<b>Module I:</b>	<b>Module 1: Definition of Religion</b>			
	<b>Unit 1</b>	What is Religion?	2	Assignment
	<b>Unit 2</b>	The Concept of God	3	Assignment
	<b>Unit 3</b>	The Concept of Sin	4	Assignment
	<b>Unit 4</b>	God's Eternal Plan of Love for Lost Human Being	5	Assignment
	<b>Unit 5</b>	Love	6	TMA to be Submitted
<b>Module II</b>	<b>Prayer</b>			
	<b>Unit 1</b>	What is Prayer?	7	Assignment
	<b>Unit 2</b>	Healing in Christianity and Islamic Perspectives	8	Assignment
	<b>Unit</b>	Christian Moral Value	9	Assignment

	<b>3</b>			
	<b>Unit 4</b>	The Fear of God	10	Assignment
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	<b>Unit 6</b>	God Works in Christianity	12	TMA to be Submitted
<b>Module III</b>	<b>Unity and Oneness of God (Allah)</b>			
	<b>Unit 1</b>	The Meaning of Islam	13	Assignment
	<b>Unit 2</b>	Prayer in Islam	14	Assignment
	<b>Unit 3</b>	Faith in Islam	15	Assignment
	<b>Unit 4</b>	Free – will	16	Assignment
	<b>Unit 5</b>	Moral Laws	17	TMA to be Submitted

### **How to Get the Most from this Course**

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lectures. You are therefore expected to read through the course on your own and at your own time. Another aspect of this is that you do not read at the prompting of your tutor. You read when you decide to do so. Since there is no lecturer for you in this course, the study unit tells you what to do at each point. It will benefit you immensely if you obey its instructions.

The units are arranged in a common format. The first item of every unit is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. What follows next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives, as already stated, let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. You are advised to go back to the stated objectives at the end of every unit, to know whether you have achieved them in the course of your learning.

The self-assessment exercises at the end of the units are to help you to assess your understanding of the units. Do not neglect them as the way you answer them provides you with a mirror to gauge your performance in learning the course.

### **Tutors and Tutorials**

Your tutor will provide a human guide for you in the course of this work. However, you are to have only sixteen hours of contact with him

in the course of your study of this course. Pay close attention to your tutor. If you have any question to ask as regards the course it is your tutor that will provide the answer. He will also mark your tutor-marked assignments. You should try as much as possible to attend all the tutorials. Doing so will be of benefit to you.

### **Summary**

It is the thinking of the designer/writer of this course that at the end of the course you should have been equipped with basic theoretical and theological knowledge of some of the shared values of faith between the Christians and Muslims, especially in doctrine, morals and other religious practices. This course helps you to appreciate the significance of other religions

Good luck, and God bless you!



# MAIN COURSE

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## **MODULE 1      DEFINITION OF RELIGION**

Unit 1	What is Religion?
Unit 2	The Concept of God
Unit 3	The Concept of Sin
Unit 4	God's Eternal Plan of Love for Lost Human Being.
Unit 5	Love

### **UNIT 1      WHAT IS RELIGION?**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	What is Religion?
3.2	Origin of Christianity
3.3	Jesus Christ
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor - Marked Assignments
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

Man has different kinds of beliefs. Of paramount importance are his religious and political beliefs. In this study however, we shall restrict ourselves to the religious belief of man.

The belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, who controls the affairs of man is as old as man himself. However, this is expressed by man in different ways and methods, even more so, as man became scattered in different directions over the face of the earth. In this study man's religious beliefs with reference to two dominant religious – Christianity and Islam.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain religious beliefs of man
- List the two major religions in Nigeria

#### **3.0      MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 What is Religion?**

There is no single definition of religion that is commonly acceptable to scholars of religion. However, in this unit, we shall define religion as a cultural institution, which deals with the belief system of man especially the controlling influence of the supernatural on man. Religion is as old as the existence of man on earth. Religionists believe in the Supreme Being (the living God). In traditional Nigerian society the Supreme Being is approached through the pantheons of divinities. Other religions in Nigeria are Christianity and Islam which were introduced to Nigerians by the Missionaries. The adherents of Christianity and Islam believe in the living God. In Nigeria, the three major religions are Traditional religion, Islam and Christianity.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What is religion?

### **3.2 The Origin of Christianity**

Christianity as a religion, has its root in Judaism which is the religion of the Jews. It began with the call of Abraham whom God called to leave Haran and his people for the land which He was going to show and give him. The land which God showed and gave Abraham is called Canaan. God further promised Abraham that he would multiply his generation like the stars of heaven or the sand on the seashore. God promised Abraham that he would give birth to a child. In time, the promised child was born and was named Issac. Isaac gave birth to Jacob whose name God changed to Israel.

Jacob gave birth to twelve sons who were later named and known as the twelve tribes of Israel. In other words, from Jacob a nation known as Israel was formed. (Genesis Chapter 12: 1-7, 17: 1-7, 21: 1-3 and 22-23, .3:3).

### **3.3 Jesus Christ**

God communicated with prophet Isaiah that a saviour who is the founder of Christianity would come from the Jewish race, the house of David (Isaiah 9: 6-9, Mathew 1: 1-16). This Saviour (Jesus Christ) was going to become a king. The Jews knew him as the promised Messiah.

This shows the relationship between Jewish religion and Christianity. Both religions believed in the existence of God who revealed Himself to man in diverse ways and at different times.

Jesus Christ the founder of Christianity is a historical figure. His birth

and ministry was the fulfillment of the Bible prophecy in Isaiah Chapter 9, verses 1-9:

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this (Isaiah 9: 1-7).

Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in the miraculous birth of Jesus by the Virgin Mary. At His birth, the astrologers otherwise known as the three wise men came to Jerusalem to ask for the newly born king of the Jews.

The scripture says, "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem saying, " where is he who has been born king of the Jews?. For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1-2). At the age of twelve years, Jesus went into the temple and there, he argued with the Jewish teachers and lawyers on the scriptures. Furthermore, at the age of thirty years, Jesus began his public ministry of teaching and preaching. He chose twelve disciples who helped him. The twelve disciples whom Jesus chose were later to continue with his ministry, which he embarked upon for only three years on earth.

Jesus chose Mathew, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, James the Son of Alphaus, Simon the patriot, Thomas, Judas son of James and Judas Iscariot the betrayer of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ challenged the wrong teaching and practices of the Jewish leaders. This led to their hating him and later killing him. He however taught his followers to live in harmony with everybody and to love all people including their adversaries.

Jesus also taught against injustice and the exploitation of the poor. He demonstrated his authority through the healing of the sick, raising of the dead and even providing food for those who were in need. He fed four thousand people from seven loaves of bread and a few small fishes. Jesus did all these in order to demonstrate his love and also provide for the physical needs of mankind. (Mathew 15: 32-34). This implies that Christianity teaches love. "The Bible says you should love your neighbours as yourself"

The record of Christ's life, teachings as well as, his death and resurrection



that marked the foundation of Christianity. Before the death of Jesus Christ, he had trained his disciples and equipped them to proceed with his ministerial work, which he had begun. Jesus did promise to send them the Holy Spirit who will help them (twelve disciples) to continue with his ministerial work, which he had begun. The word of God says "...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth". And when He (Jesus Christ) had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight." (Acts 1:7-8). After Jesus had been resurrected from the dead, he told his disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait there for the Holy Spirit who will empower them for the spreading of the gospel to all the earth. When he ascended to heaven, his disciples obeyed his words and gathered at a house in Jerusalem. There, they prayed and worshipped God on the day Pentecost Festival of the Jews, the Holy Spirit descended upon them while they were praying. From that moment onwards the disciples continued preaching the Gospel of God and His kingdom.

The Holy Spirit, which the apostles had received, gave them the courage to preach and to establish the church, whose duty it was to evangelize to the whole world.

Peter, one of the apostle preached the first sermon in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and about three thousand people got converted to Christianity (Act 2: 14-41). Paul also joined the Apostles to spread the Gospel to the Roman Empire that was outside the Jewish land. (Acts 9: 22, 13:13-32, 14: 1-12, -16: 1-12). The church, which Jesus founded, was commissioned to preach and spread the gospel on the earth from the day of Pentecost onwards until Jesus Christ returns to this world again to judge the inhabitants of the world. However, you should know that the word, "Christian" is a nickname that was given to the followers of Christ. The word "Christianity", therefore, means the religion of the followers of Christ at Antioch (Acts 11:26).

The word "Christianity", therefore, means the religion of the followers of Christ.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Religion is as old as man in the universe. There is no definite definition for religion. Religionists believe in the existence of God. Christianity not only propagates but also teaches the existence of God. Christianity has its root in the religion of Judaism and Jesus Christ is the founder of Christianity. The word "Christian" is initially a nickname given to the followers of Jesus Christ.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the subject matter of Religion, its meaning, and the origin of Christianity. Christianity therefore originated from Judaism. “Christians is initially a nickname for the followers of Christ.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Discuss the origin of religion.
2. Explain the origin of Christianity.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

*The Holy Bible* (Revised Standard Version), (1971), New York.  
Macmillan Publishing Company Inc.

Awolalu, J.O. (2005), “God: The Contemporary Discussion” in “The Nigerian Association for the Biblical Studies. Decency of Religions (NASR) 2005,

## **UNIT 2 THE CONCEPT OF GOD**

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 God the Creator
  - 3.2 Creation of Animal and Beasts
  - 3.3 The Concepts of God in Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Christian religion espouses God as the Creator of all creations in the Universe. The religion, through its holy book, explains the beginning of the world and man through the etymological point of view. That is, through the power of God's spoken words rather than a cosmological point (evolutionary) as generally expected and interpreted by man. As All-powerful and All-knowing, God chose that method to create the world and man. It is in this light we shall discuss this unit.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the origin of the world as recorded in the Bible.
- List some of the things which God created.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 God the Creator and Giver of Life**

Christianity is a religion of the book. The Holy Bible is the name given to their scriptures and its opening chapter has the affirmation of God as the creator. Genesis Chapters 1 and 2 explains this. Let us now examine the creation story of the universe by God as it is in the Bible.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The universe was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. God commanded light to appear over the darkness of the void and there was light. God said, "let there be light", and there was light. And God saw that the light

was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God named the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.

As a result of this, evening and morning began. This served as the first work which God executed on the first day of creation. God further said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters" God separated the waters which were under the firmament or sky, from the waters which were above the sky. God named the sky, Heaven. The separation of the waters from the sky by God became the second day of work for God. God further ordered the waters that were under the heavens gathered together into one place, to let the dry land appear. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together, He called seas. He saw that it was good. God therefore ordered the earth to bring out vegetation, plants yielding seeds, and fruits bearing trees each according to its type. This was the third day of God's creative work.

God further ordered lights in the sky of the heavens to separate the day from the night, so that they can serve as signs for seasons, for days and for years. He also ordered that lights should be in the sky of the heavens in order to give light upon the earth. God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.

God made the stars and set them in the sky of the heavens to give light upon the earth; to rule over the day and over the night; and to separate the light from the darkness. This was the fourth day work of God.

In addition, God also ordered "waters to bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens"

God further created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, which swarm the waters, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth" The creation of these water animals was the fifth day work of God.

### **3.2 The Creation of Animal and Beasts**

God further said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." "He made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind".

Moreover, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and

let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth".

The scripture further says"...God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." "..... He added, "Behold, I have giving you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. He further told man that He had given him all things that has the breath of life and every green plant for food. The creation of man by God on the earth served as the sixth day of His work.

On the seventh day, God declared it a resting day, blessed and hallowed it. The scripture says...God rested from all his work, which he had done in creation. For emphasis, we want you to note that it was only man that God created in His own image. It was also man that God gave order to dominate all other creatures in the universe. You should also know that it was man alone that God gave the power of reason which other creatures do not have. Also note that before God creation of man, God created man, he sought and received the co-operation of the other heavenly Co-Beings.

### **3.3 The Concept of God in Islam**

God is the creator: - He brought you into being. The mysteries of life and death are in His hands. When you die on this earth that is not the end you were of him and you must return to Him. The immeasurable depths of space above and around you may stagger you. They are part of His plan. What you have imagined as the seven firmaments bears witness to His design of order and perfection, for His knowledge is all uncomprehending. (Quran 2: 29)

God is the protector of man: - Allah is the protector of those who have faith, from the depths of darkness He leads them forth into light. Of those who reject faith the patrons are the Taught, from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness. They will be companions of the fire, to dwell therein for ever. (Quran 2: 257)

The religion of Islam teaches the adherents that it is Allah that takes the souls of all men at death. And those that die not He takes during their sleep: those on whom He had passed the decree of death, He keeps back from returning to life, but to rest. (Quran 39: 42)

Allah also decides on every matter of mankind. Quran 3:109 says, to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and earth: to Allah do all matters returns.

### **3.4 God Created the Heavens and the Earth**

Allah Created the heavens and the earth on the sixth day. Quran 2: 17 say, “The originator (God) of the heavens and the earth! When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is”.

Quran 23:12 says, “verily we created man from a product of wet earth”. And verse 13 says, “Then placed him as a drop (of seed) in a safe lodging, the fashioned we the drop a clot, then fashioned we the clot a little lump, then fashioned we the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the best of creators! Then lo! After that ye surely die. Then lo! On the Day of resurrection ye are raised (again). Quran 23:14 – 16).

Quran 7:54 says Lo! Your lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then mounted He the throne. He covereth the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and hath made the sun and the moon and the stars subservient by His command.

His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! As for the good land, its vegetation cometh forth by permission of its Lord, while as for that which is bad, only evil cometh forth (form it) thus do we recount the tokens for people who give thanks (Quran 7:58)

God created the Jinn (Angels) and human kind only that they might workshop Him (Quran 51: 56 – 58)

We quote: I created the Jinn (Angels) and human kind only that they might worship me. I seek no livelihood from them nor do I ask that they should feed me. Lo! Allah! He it is that giveth livelihood, the Lord of unbreakable might. (Quran 51: 56 – 58) and spreads in it all kind of animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between the heaven and the earth these are signs for a people who understand (Quran 2: 169) on Earth are signs for men of firm belief, also in your own selves; will ye not then behold them? (Quran 51: 20 – 21). The adherents of Islam believe that there is one Creator and Administrator of the universe (Quran 43;9). Therefore, believers must not forget the Benefactor that grants happiness and whom they address all their supplications in times of distress (Quran 30:8).

#### **Sovereignty of God**

The Quran states there is a definite law of universe – a Universal Divine Power or Will of God governing and supporting the multitudinous objects, forces and creatures in the universe. God is present everywhere.

The adherents of Islam believe that God is present everywhere' Quran 2: 115, says, To Allah belongs the east and the west: wherever you turn, there is Allah's face. For Allah is All-Embracing, All-knowing. In addition to these, Allah sees all that you do, (Quran 3:156)

In a nutshell, Muslims believe that there is only one God. He is the Creator and All powerful God. They also believe that Muslims are protected by Allah through prayer.

Quran 2: 186, says, "when my servant ask thee concerning me, I am indeed close (to them). I listen to prayer of every supplicant. When he calleth on me; listen to my call, and believe in me; that they may walk in the right way".

Quran 6: 103 – 104 says, "such is Allah, your Lord. There is no God save Him, the Creator of all things. Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth all vision. He is the subtitle, be aware that Quran 2: 169 says, of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the ships that sail in the sea with that which profit men, and the water that Allah sends down from the clouds, then gives life with it to the earth after its death.

Everything is according to, a well-conceived universal plan with perfect proportion, harmony and balance in the creation and there is no blind play of forces without consciousness and purpose. God is omnipotent and everything is utterly dependent upon Him. Yet in his infinite mercy He has endowed man with a free personality and created everything for the service of man.

God is intensely real and approachable and not a vague, distant or amorphous being or logical abstraction. Allah is closer to man than his jugular vein (Quran 50:15); three persons speak not privately together but He is neither their fourth, nor fifth but He is their sixth, nor fewer, nor more but wherever they be He is with them (Quran 58:8). The humble amongst his servants can approach Him for fulfillment of his wishes, and aspiration, for contentment of his mind, for his protection and safety and for God's grace, mercy, bounty and forgiveness and guidance without the aid of any intercessor. The following statement makes this clear to Muhammad: When my servants ask thee about me, say: "I am indeed near at hand. I respond to the prayer of every suppliant when he invokes my help. Let them also reciprocate to my call, and believe in me, that they become righteous" (Athar Hussain 1978 pp. 20 – 22)

In summary, the adherents of Islam believe that God (Allah) is the creator. He created human being, planets, birds, animals, angels, heavens and earth, on the sixth day, Allah complete His work of creation.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The religion of the Christians indicates that God is the Creator and Giver of life. He created heavens and the earth. It was only man that God created in His own image. He was the only being that God breathed His breath into. This is the reason man can reason while other animals cannot.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discovered that God created heavens and the earth. He made man dominate all other creatures in the universe and God rested on the seventh day.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List out each day work of God in the creation processes.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Account for the origin of the Universe.
2. What makes man to be different from the other creatures that were created by God?

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## **UNIT 3 THE CONCEPT OF SIN**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Misuse of Free-Will by Adam
  - 3.2 The Consequences of Sin
  - 3.3 The Consequences of the misuse of Free-Will by Adam and Eve
  - 3.4 The Concept of Sin in Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Devil is God's enemy who was envious of the happiness of Adam and Eve. He made use of the serpent to seduce them. The serpent was a cunning reptile among the animals that God created. It was the serpent that led Adam and Eve to sin against God. This is what we shall examine in this unit..

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the origin of sin;
- Name the type of sin committed by Adam and Eve;
- Name the punishment God give Adam and Eve and the serpent as a result of the misuse of the Free-Will.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Misuse of Free-Will and the Origin of Sin**

After God had created Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden, he was instructed not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God warned him that the day he eats the fruit, he would die. However, Eve who was a help mate of Adam was curious to eat the desired fruit of the forbidden tree, for she desired to have knowledge of good and evil. Eve saw a serpent near the forbidden tree and the serpent asked Eve, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?"' Eve replied, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you

die” (Genesis 3:1-3).

The serpent assured Eve that she would not die if she ate the fruit. The serpent further said to her that God knows that when she eats the fruit, her eyes would be opened, and she would be like God, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:3-5)

Hearing that she would be like God after eating the fruit, Eve looked at the fruit and saw that it was pleasant to behold and good to eat. She exercised her free-will, as she took and ate of the fruit and also gave to her husband Adam who also ate it. By this action the first sin was committed on earth. This type of sin is known as the original sin in Theology. It was the sin of disobedience. Adam and Eve committed the sin of disobedience because they had free will in the garden.

### **3.2 Consequences of the Misused Free-will by Adam and Eve**

Soon after the couple ate the forbidden fruit, they heard the voice of God calling them and they hid themselves amongst the trees in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:8) God said to Adam, "Where are you?"

He replied, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" Adam said "The woman you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.") Genesis 3:8-11).

The above quotation indicates that Adam blamed his disobedience on Eve who in turn, blamed her own act on the serpent. God punished Adam, Eve and the serpent. This is because they misused the free - will which God gave them in the garden

### **3.3 The Consequences of Sin**

Adam was to work hard and till the ground for food. The ground was cursed because of Adam and it was to produce thorns and thistles as food for him. He now had to work and sweat for his food.

- Eve had to bear children in sorrow and pain. She was to be under her husband and he (Adam) was to have dominion over her.
- The serpent was cursed too. The word of God says, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your

head, and you shall bruise his heel". (Genesis 3:14-15)

In other words, the serpent had to crawl on its belly and eat the dust on the ground. While Adam and Eve were to die. They lost their close relationship with God. He drove them out of the Garden of Eden (paradise). This is because both misused the free-will given to them by God in the Garden of Eden. God hates sin, for this reason, He pronounced terrible curses on the first creatures that sinned despite that He had earlier blessed them on the earth.

### **3.4 The Concept of Sin in Islam**

According to Islam, those who caused others to sin will be punished by Allah (Quran 3:188) people who disobeyed God will be punished for their disobedience at the judgment day (Quran 6: 15 – 16).

The unbelievers will bring doom upon themselves. This is because Prophet Mohammed has warned them against sin. At the final judgment when the matter will be judged in perfect equity, the Prophet will bear witness against wrongdoers before Allah (Quran 10: 50 – 53).

According to the Quran 11: 101 – 104, sinners wrong their own souls by serving deities other than Allah. Communities that serve deities instead of worshipping Allah, would be punished for doing so. They would be punished by Allah on the judgment day when everyone would gather together before Him.

Whoever equates another to Allah has committed sin against Him. And the penalty for such a person is punishment in this world and hereafter. The penalty which is meant for such a person in this world is pain and suffering, instead of perpetual delight. And there is no protection for him or her against his/her suffering. (Quran 13:34).

Quran 16:88, says, those who reject Allah and hinder (men) from the path of Allah, would be chastised for that amounts to mischief. In other words, people would witness against those who rejected Allah and hindered others from worshipping Him on the judgment day.

Among the people who will witness against them are men from among the people themselves, men of their own kith and kin, who understood them and explained Allah's message to them in their own language.

In addition, the Prophet Muhammad will be a witness against all those who rejected the message he brought. But for those who believed in him of (all races and peoples), the Book which he brought will be an explanation, a guide, a mercy and a Gospel. (A. Yusuf Ali 1998).

Quran 46: 20 says, “And on the Day that the unbelievers will be placed before the fire, (it will be said to them): ‘You squandered your good things in the world, and you took your pleasure out of them but today shall you be recompensed with a chastisement of humiliation: for that you were arrogant on earth without just cause; and that you (ever) transgressed.’”

Those who out of greed, seek the fleeting pleasures of life rather than the more serious things of life thereby sacrificing the spiritual for their materials would be told that they had taken their choice, they must therefore pay the price. This is because, they did wrong in rebellious spirit, and prided themselves in their wrong-doings, not seldomly, but frequently. As a result of their deeds, they would be humbled in the dust that serves as fitting punishment for them on the judgment day.

In Quran 70: 1 - 3, it is stated that if any one asks question on when judgment will come. It implies that such a question implies doubt on the part of the human being. However, the answer to such a question is that the knowledge of the judgment day is beyond man’s comprehension. However, Quran 70:1 assures us that judgment is sure to come, and none can ward it off.

The judgment day or time will be a penalty from Allah, the Lord of both justice and mercy; it will not be merely a blind calamity of fate for any one. Allah is Lord of the ways of Ascent. This mean that Allah sits high on His Throne of Glory, yet He is always accessible to mankind.

In a nutshell, there is penalty for every sin that is committed by every body in the world. Allah will judge individuals in the presence of Prophet Muhammad on the judgment day. On the other hand, sinners on this earth will begin their punishment through pain and suffering even before they die.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. As a result, they were punished by God. Adam was to till the ground for food. The ground was cursed for Adam. It shall bring thorns and thistles for Adam. While Eve had to bear children in sorrow and pain. The serpent had to crawl on its belly and eat the dust on the ground.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed how Adam and Eve misused the free-will given to them by God. They disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. God punished them and the serpent for the sin which

they committed.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Account for the result of Adam's sin.

### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Discuss the original sin of man.
2. What punishment did God give to Adam, Eve and the Serpent?

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4      GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN OF LOVE FOR THE LOST HUMAN RACE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 God Promised a Saviour for Human being through the Womenfolk.
  - 3.2 God Promised Blessings for Mankind
  - 3.3 God's Promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
  - 3.4 Eternal Plan of Love for Mankind in Islam
  - 3.5 Quaranic Passages on God's Eternal Plan of Love for Mankind
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall examine God's eternal plan of love for the lost mankind. Despite the disobedience of man, God still loves him. He made plans for his salvation immediately after his fall because He loves him.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Identify the means by which God reveals His will and plan concerning the promised Saviour of the human race.
- State the immediate and long-term solution for our sins in the plan of God. He is interested in man. He provided both immediate and long-term solutions to our sinful situation through Jesus Christ.

### **3.1 God's Promise of a Saviour for the Human Race**

Adam, which means man, fell from God's favour through disobedience to God's revealed will and order. Eve, which means woman, first disobeyed God and she thereafter drew Adam to commit the same action. Hence, sin began with the woman (Eve), just as God promised deliverance from sin and its punishments through the offspring of the woman.

The promise of the Saviour's became fulfilled through a young Jewish virgin called Mary, who was already betrothed to a man called Joseph, a carpenter in a little town called Nazareth, in the district of Galilee, when an angel of God appeared to her to deliver God's message.

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary....he came to her and said, "Hail, O favoured one, the Lord is with you!" "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (Luke 1:26-31).

### **3.2 God's Promises of Blessings for Mankind**

God promised to bless mankind through Abraham. God's love for man is wonderful. Mankind continually rebelled and displeased God. Still, God always sought the best for man. Beginning from the earliest periods, God dealt with mankind graciously. However, man failed God several times. God therefore, chose Abraham and his family to be the focal point of His dealings in blessing mankind. The word of God says, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by him". (Genesis 18 17-19).

### **3.3 God's Promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ**

God gradually revealed His will and plan about the promised saviour for man. He gave the name of the coming saviour as Jesus Christ. God chose the Virgin Mary to bear and to bring the saviour into the universe as a baby. (Mathew 1: 18, 21).

### **3.4 God's Eternal Plan of Love for Mankind in Islam**

According to all the traditional schools of jurisprudence, faith (Iman) ensures salvation. There are however differing views concerning the formal constituents of the act of faith. "For the Asharis it is centred on internal judgement of veracity, for the Matundi-Hanatis on the expressed profession of faith and the adherence of the heart, for the Muotazlis, on the performance of the prescribed duties; for the Hanbalis and the Wahabbis on the profession of faith and the performance of the basic duties. The common denominator of these various opinions is summed up in bearing witness that God is the Lord. L. Gardet states:

There are traditions in which Muhammad stated that "*No one*

*shall enter hell who has an atom of faith*” however these passages are interpreted in different ways. Those who consider performance as an integral path of faith such as Khavidjis, consider anyone who commits a grave sin to be out of faith, while the majority of Sunnis who view work as merely perfecting the faith, hold that a believing sinner will be punished with a temporary stay in hell. Still there are disagreements over the possibility of believing sinners would be forgiven immediately and in full rather than undergoing temporary punishment.

Some, but not all, Muslims believe that those who have heard the message of a prophet of God (Moses, Jesus or Muhammad) but chose not to follow, will receive eternal damnation in hell.

### **3.5 Quaranic Passages on God’s External Plan of Love to Mankind are excerpts below**

Allah guides adherents of Islam towards the paths of those who were on the earth previously and walk in His ways. Quran 4:26, says, “Allah does wish to make clear to you and to guide you into the ways of those before you; and (He does wish to) turn to you (in mercy): and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise. Quran 4:27 says, Allah does wish to turn to you, but the wish of those who follow their instinct is that you should turn away (from Him) far, far-away”.

But, whoever worships Allah, He guides and whoever turns away from Him, is not fit to go near Allah. However, if he repents and turns to Allah and seeks His forgiveness, Allah will forgive him of his wrongdoings.

Quran 5:74 says, why turn them not to Allah and seek His forgiveness? For Allah is often-forgiving, most merciful.

Quran 15:49, also shows God’s love for mankind on the earth. It states, tell my servants (believers) that I am (Allah) indeed the oft-forgiving, most merciful.

Allah does forgive those who did wrong in ignorance. This shows Allah’s love for mankind in this world. Quran 16:119, says, but verily you’re Lord, to those who do wrong in ignorance, but who thereafter repent and make amends, your Lord after all this, is oft-forgiving, most merciful.

Also, Allah forgives those who have transgressed against their souls. Quran 39:53 says; “O my servants who have transgressed against their souls despair not of the mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins, for He



is oft-forgiving.

Quran 39: 54, urges the sinner to turn to God in repentance and submit to Him. “Turn to your Lord (in repentance) and submit to Him, before the chastisement comes on you: after that you shall not be helped”.

The Holy Quran also tells the adherents of Islam that God loves mankind. Quran 85: 14 says, And He (Allah) is the oft-forgiving, full of loving-kindness. He is Lord of the throne, full of all glory, Doer (without let) of all that He intends. If you have repented of your sins, and turned to Allah, He is willing to forgive you all your wrongs. This is because Allah’s will is itself the Word and the Deed. He does not change His mind to forgive, provided you, turned to Him.

Allah has no favourites nor sons, or parasites, such as we associate with human beings. Every creature of Allah gets His love, and His care. Every human being is marked before his throne of justice and mercy. God is not partial, He forgives sinners who repent and turn to Him.

Allah plans to give a new world to mankind hereafter. And he (believer) will be in a life of bliss, in a garden on high, the fruits whereof (will hand in bunches) low and near. “Eat and drink with full satisfaction; because of the (good) that you sent before you, in the days that are gone. (Quran 69:24)

Yusuf Ali comments on this verse of the Holy Quran thus:

Whatever good deeds you do, you will find it with Allah, for Allah sees well all that you do. The new world which Allah will give to mankind will be a holy world, a new earth and a new heaven, when the blessed might well think with calm relief of “the days that are gone.

In summary, Allah loves mankind; that He has eternal plan for him to inherit hereafter. But, before man can inherit the eternal life, he has to worship Allah and repent of his sins and turn into new ways of Allah.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

God promised to bless mankind through Abraham. God loves man despite his disobedience to Him. He sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to redeem man from sin.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Since the beginning of creation of man by God man continually sins against Him. But, God has made salvation for him through Jesus Christ.

6.0 **TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Discuss Adam and Eve and their transgression against God.

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*(Excerpts internet: God eternal plan for mankind on 1/6/2007)*

## **UNIT 5 LOVE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Eros
  - 3.2 Philia
  - 3.3 Agape
  - 3.4 Love in Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall examine the concept of love. The word love is used for three biblical Greek words. These are “eros”, “philia” and “agape”. You will be taught of the best love that should be practiced by Christians not only in Nigeria, but in the world at large.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain what *philia* is
- Identify *eros*
- Identify *philia*
- Identify *agape*
- Identify the best type of love that should be practised by Christians

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Eros**

Eros is a Greek word used for a kind of love among people. Eros is a totally human love. It usually refers to sexual love, as the English word “erotic” implies (Richard Strauss). The aim of this kind of love is getting something for yourself. Your feeling in eros love is for you to get what you need from the person whom you have this type of love for. You will

only please him in order to obtain what you want from him. Eros poses as love which you have for someone but in actual fact it is the love which you have for yourself. Eros says. "I love you because you make me happy".

Strauss says, "the foundation of such love could be seen in certain characteristics, such as beauty, charm, warmth, kindness or talent." When such characteristics are taken away, such love dies. In this type of love, you give a little but expect to get something in return for what you have given to someone. If eros love fails to get you what you want from someone, it may result in resentment, bitterness or hatred. Today, many boys and girls choose their life partners on the basis of eros. The couples, who know little about each other but believe that their physical love will guarantee them a happy married life usually, may be in for a shock. This is because eros love is never true love. The romantic bubble will burst when the "ideal" partner turns out to be not-so-ideal. He or she may turn out to be a rude, unromantic, inattentive and selfish partner. It can be seen therefore that this type of love cannot in itself sustain a long-lasting relationship.

### **3.2 Philia**

This type of love relates to your soul rather than to your body. It touches your personality, such as intellect, emotions, and will. It involves mutual sharing with your partner.

In the New Testament, the phrase, "to love" or "to like" and the adjective, "loving" are used several times. For instance, Peter professed this type of affection for Jesus Christ, when he was asked, "Peter do you love me? Peter replied, "You know that I love you".

We choose friends because of the pleasure we enjoy from being with them. We appreciate their presence and share in their interests. In addition to these, we also obtain something that is good and beneficial from the relationship which we share with them. On the other hand, they also benefit from us. In philia "love, our happiness is involved rather than just "my" happiness. In other words, both partners do things in common and share things together.

In Nigeria, many Christian couples build their relationship or marriage on Philia love does not think of self alone, does not seek to please self rather, it seeks the good and happiness of the partner.

However, Philia love can also fail, if you as a partner neglect your duty in contributing your share to your marital life. Being mindful of this, you will do well to give attention to the needs of your partner always.

### **3.3 Agape**

Agape love does not look for pleasure for itself, but delights in giving of self. This is because it is God-centered. Agape love keeps on loving even when its objects are unresponsive, unkind, unlovable, or completely unworthy as supported by Strauss.

Agape love seeks only the good of the one loved. It seeks to make the partner happy. In agape, you overlook whatever sacrifice it will cost you to love your partner. Happiness is all that matters. You understand and tolerate weaknesses of your partner. In this type of love, you give all you have totally to your partner. In other words, it is called genuine love. This type of love originates from God. God Himself is agape. The Holy Bible contains many verses that express God and love, sacrificing and provisions for sinners. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8,1 John 3:16). When you receive Jesus Christ, as your saviour, God pours his (agape) love into your inner being. You feel the agape love within you because God has given you His spirit to fill your heart with his love. (Roman's 5:5) To fully understand the depth agape love, you are encouraged to read 1 Cor. 13.

### **3.4 Love in Islam**

Love in Islam is only limited to marriage in this unit. The religion of Islam teaches that God is our Creator and that He is a Being of love. Muslims are urged not to marry unbeliever. They can only marry believers like themselves. The Quran strongly tells the Muslim men: Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe; a slave woman who believes is better than an unbelieving (pagan) free woman.

Yusuf commented on marriage thus:: marriage is a most intimate communion, and the mystery of sex finds its highest fulfillment when intimate spiritual harmony is combined with the physical link.

As religion is a great influence on the life to both parties or either party, differences of religion, must affect the lives of both more profoundly than differences of birth, race, language, or position in life. It is therefore only right that the parties to be married should have the same spiritual outlook.

If two persons love each other, their outlook on must be the same. The couple must share the same faith and generally see things the same way. This will help them to live. Peacefully and happily together.

It is stated in the Quran that an adherent of Islam may marry women of his choice. He may marry up to four women if he can love them equally. But if he cannot, he should limit himself to one woman.

This privilege to marry up to four women was given as a result of the effects of the many wars that Mohammed fought in the course of spreading Islam. The wars made many women widows, so to care for these defenceless women, Mohammed allowed the men to marry up to four women provided the man shares his love equally among them.

The unrestricted number of wives in the “times of ignorance” was now strictly limited to a maximum of four, provided you share your love equally among them.

When husband and wife quarrel, they are to make peace with each other. (Quran 4: 128). Two arbiters must be involved in their peace making process.

One peace maker must come from the husband’s family. And the second man from the wife’s family to make peace between the couple (Quran 4:35)

An adherent of Islam must wed free believing women. But if he cannot wed them, he can wed believing girls from among the daughters of his people.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

God loves you. You need to love others as yourself. If you are married, love your partner. On the other hand, if you are single, ask God for a sincere love partner. The Bible is the source of love which you must emulate. We love God because He first loved us.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

There are three types of love being practised by human beings. They are Eros, Philia, and Agape. The best suitable love for man to emulate is agape. In it, you give all you have to other people without counting on what you will gain in return. Agape is God’s love. It is sacrificial love. God sent Jesus Christ to die on the Cross for us in order to be saved. Christ has made Himself an anointment for our sins. God will use agape to transform your marriage into a beautiful relationship.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

God is love. Do you agree? Discuss.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Discuss three types of love that you know. Which one do you prefer and why?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **MODULE 2      PRAYER**

Unit 1	What is Prayer?
Unit 2	Healing in Christianity and Islamic Perspectives
Unit 3	Christian Moral Values
Unit 4	Fear of God
Unit 5	The Patriarchs
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### **UNIT 1      WHAT IS PRAYER?**

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3.1	What is prayer?
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3.3	Hannah's prayer of Thanksgiving
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5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor Marked Assignments
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Prayer is a medium of communication between man and God. Through prayer, man communicates his feelings which could be an expression of gratitude or thanksgiving; a desire for provision of material things or a cry for healing.

More importantly, prayers could be an expression of regret for a wrong done, a cry for forgiveness of sins committed against God or even fellow man. In prayer, our dependency on God is simply dramatized. In this unit, we shall study prayer with references to Biblical examples and examine its relevance in the lives of the people.

#### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

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



- Explain why we pray.
- State the benefits of prayer to mankind.
- State the role of prayer in the life of Jesus Christ.
- State the significance of Paul and Silas prayers to mankind.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 What Is Prayer?**

The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2000) defines prayer as "words which you say to God giving thanks or asking for help". Christianity and Islam teach us how to pray to God. In this study, we shall examine the power of prayers and the functions of prayers in the lives of some people that were mentioned in the Holy Bible.

#### **3.2 The Prayers of Hannah**

Hannah, one of the wives of Elkanah, a native of Ramathaim-zophim or Ramah was barren. Also, Elka'nah's second wife, Penin'nah, who had children usually taunt Hannah for her barrenness. She opened up her mind to God in prayers and God answered her prayer. Elkanah used to go to Shiloh for the annual sacrifice to the Lord of hosts. He attends the annual worship with the whole family. At the communion meals, he would give portions to Peninnah and her children. While Hannah would be given only one portion due to her barrenness.

For this reason, Peninah used to provoke Hannah at the annual sacrifice at Shiloh. This caused Hannah sadness to the extent that she would not eat but weep, while Peninah and her children would eat the communion meals with Elkanah. After the merriment in Shiloh, one day, Hannah rose up, prayed and wept before the Lord asking Him to remove her barrenness. She vowed to God and said, "O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your maidservant, and remember me, and not forget your maidservant, but will give to your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head." Hannah vowed to the Lord that the son which she requested for would be dedicated to God to serve Him all the days of his life. Then Eli the priest blessed and assured her of God's intervention.

Later, Elkannah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her; and in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, " I have asked him of the Lord." (I Samuel 1:

19-20).

At the next annual sacrifice at Shiloh, Hannah took Samuel her son along with her. She gave him to Eli and said, "Oh my Lord, As you live, my Lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed and the Lord has granted me my petition, which I made to him. Therefore, I have lent him to the Lord as long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord" (1 Samuel 1: 24-28).

The above passage show how Hannah made a request for a son from God and how her wish was granted.

### **3.3 Hannah Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Hannah worshipped the Lord and thanked Him for giving her a son named Samuel. She says:

"My heart exalts in the Lord; my strength is exalted in the LORD  
My mouth divides my enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation.  
"There is none holy like the LORD, there is none besides thee;  
There is no rock like our God,  
Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird on strength.  
Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger.  
The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich, he brings low, he also exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit as seat of honour.  
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's and on them he has set the world.  
"He will guard the feet of his faithful ones; but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed. (1 Samuel 2: 1-10).

When Samuel grew up to boyhood, Hannah handed him to Eli to serve the LORD. In Hannah's Prayers, we have learnt how to make requests

and thank God for granting them. Also, we learnt to fulfill our vows that we have made to God in time of needs.

### **3.4 Elijah's Prayer**

The power of prayer was dramatized on the mountain of Carmel by Elijah. After three years of drought in Israel, God ordered Elijah to appear before Ahab in order to reveal Himself to Elijah as the Almighty God who would send down rain to Israel. Elijah went to Ahab and told him to assemble all the Baal prophets at Mount Carmel and that all the people of Israel were to be there also. Ahab assembled four hundred and fifty (Baal) prophets of Asherah before the Israelites. The Baal prophets were given a bull to sacrifice to Asherah in order to bring down rain for the land of Israel.

The Baal Prophets prepared an altar, cut the bull into pieces laid them on it, and they called the name of their god to answer them by fire but to no avail. The word of God says that the Baal prophets called on their gods saying "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. (1 Kings 18:26).

Prophet Elijah mocked the Baal prophets saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god, either he is musing, or he has gone aside, or he is on a journey or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened".

The Baal prophets cried aloud cut themselves as usual with swords and lances until they were drenched in blood, yet Baal did not answer them.

Elijah summoned all the people of Israel to come to him, and they all came. He repaired the altar of the LORD that had been thrown down. Elijah selected twelve stones, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. Each stone representing a tribe. With the twelve stones, Prophet Elijah built an altar in the name of the LORD. He also arranged the wood in order and cut a bull in pieces, laid them on the wood and told the people to fill four jars with water and empty them on the wood. He told them to do it for three times. The water ran round about the altar, and drenched it.

Elijah then called upon the Lord God saying:

"O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things according to your word. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD are God, and that you have turned their hearts back". (1 Kings 18: 36-37).

Immediately, the fire of the Lord fell, consumed the burnt offering, wood, stones, dust, and licked up the water. (1 Kings 18:38). All the people of Israel saw the event then fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God "(1 Kings 18:39).

Elijah ordered the people to seize the Baal prophets, he took them to the brook of kishon, and killed them there. He then asked Ahab to go home and eat and also to wait for the rain.

Elijah thereafter went to the top of Mount Carmel, bowed down upon the earth and prayed to God. He called on his servant to go up and look towards the sea to watch the formation of the cloud.

The servant went and came back to inform him that he saw nothing. Elijah sent him back to observe the sky seven times. On the seventh time, he went back to Ahab and reported that he saw a little cloud like a man's hand rising out of the sea. Elijah had faith in God, he stood up, called his servant and headed home.

After Elijah's message was delivered to Ahab by his servant, the heavens grew black with clouds and wind and it rained in the land of Israel. (1 Kings 18: 45). In the above passages, you have learnt that God answers prayers to save people from problems.

### **3.5 Jesus Taught His Disciples How to Pray**

In the Scriptures, Jesus taught his disciples not to be anxious about their lives, food and clothing. But that they should trust in the Lord and seek His kingdom and all other things would be given to them (Luke 12:22-30).

Jesus taught them how to pray. He instructed them to enter into their rooms and pray to the Lord. He told his disciples that God would reward them for He sees even in secret. He further warned them not to use long-winding in prayers like the Gentiles. But they should ask God whatever they need in simple words. This is because God knows their needs before they ask.

Jesus taught them the following prayer:

Our Father who is in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
May your Kingdom come,  
May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our debts  
As we also have forgiven our debtors;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil (Mathew 6:9-13).

In the above prayer, Jesus taught his disciples to ask for their daily needs and also forgive those who offend them. Jesus did assure his disciples that God hears their prayers.

### **3.6 Jesus' Prayer Raised Lazarus from Death**

Mary and Martha were sisters of Lazarus of Bethany. Lazarus fell sick and they sent for Jesus Christ to come and heal him but Jesus delayed for two days after he had received the message. He did that in order to demonstrate the power of God. When he learnt that Lazarus was dead, Jesus said to his disciples.

"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). The word of God further says, the disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep he will recover."

Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. He plainly informed them that "Lazarus is dead, and for their sake, he was glad that he was not there, so that they might believe. Jesus told them they should accompany him to see Lazarus. (John 11" 12-16).

When they got to Bethany, Lazarus was already in the tomb for four days. Martha therefore, said to Jesus Christ "Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died... ..Even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you" (John 11:22).

Jesus said to Martha that her brother, Lazarus, will rise again. Furthermore, the Scripture says, Jesus saw Mary and the Jews who accompanied her, weeping and he was deeply moved in the spirit, and he said, "where have you laid him?" They said to him" Lord come and see" (John 11:35). The word of God says, "Jesus wept". (John 11:35). He ordered them to remove the stone that was laid upon the tomb of Lazarus. After the stone was removed, Jesus lifted up his eyes and said.

Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I know that you hear me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by that they may believe that you are the one who sent me.

He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go".

Jesus prayed to God and God answered Him instantly and Lazarus was raised up. The raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days shows that God grants genuine requests. For it is believed that after two days, no dead body could resurrect according to human belief.

### **3.7 Prayers of Paul and Silas**

At Thyati'ra Paul and Silas were walking along the street when a slave girl who had a spirit of divination met them and followed Paul. She identified Paul and Silas as men of the Most High God who proclaimed the way of salvation to mankind. The slave girl accompanied Paul and Silas as they move about spreading the goodnews in Thyatira for several days. Sensing that the girl following them had a familiar spirit, Paul turned and commanded thus:

I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. The spirit came out of the slave girl who kept on shouting and revealing Paul and Silas as men of God to the people.

However, her owners got angry for she could no longer make money for them. They arrested Paul and Silas whom they dragged before the rulers. The rulers took them to the magistrates and accused them of disturbing their city. Besides, they were seen as Jews who were foreigners who had no right to disturb the peace of the city. Paul and Silas were accused spreading strange and unacceptable doctrines. The crowd attacked Paul and Silas. They were mobbed, beaten with rods, had their clothes torn off and they were thrown into prison.

The magistrates charged the jailer to keep Paul and Silas safe in the prison. The jailer kept them in the inner prison and fastened their feet to the stocks. At midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God while the rest of the prisoners listened to them. Suddenly a great earthquake took place and it shook the prison.

As a result of this, all the doors of the prison were opened and every prisoner's fetters were loosened. In other words, they were unchained by God as a result of Paul and Silas prayers and praises. As the jailer woke up and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and attempted to kill himself for he thought that all the prisoners had escaped from the prison. However, Paul cried out with a loud voice saying:

Do not harm yourself, for we are all here” (Acts 16:28). The jailer called for lights, rushed into the inner place where Paul and Silas were kept in fear. He saw them and fell down before Paul and Silas, then brought them out of the inner place of the prison. The jailer asked from them

what he could do to be saved. Paul and Silas said to him "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.

They also preached the word of God to him and others who were in his house. The jailer treated the wounds of Paul and Silas. He took them into his house and gave them food to eat. After listening to the preaching of Paul and Silas, the jailer together with his family accepted Jesus into their lives and they were baptized. At day break, the magistrates sent the police to the jailer to release Paul and Silas from the prison. However, when the message was delivered to them, Paul made it known to the jailer that they were citizens of Rome who has been beaten and jailed, without trail.

Therefore they were not to be released privately but publicly. When the magistrates heard the message of Paul, they went to apologize to him and Silas and released them. For the power of prayer which Paul and Silas demonstrated they were released. They then went to the house of Lydia an established Christian lady in the city, where they were welcomed.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We talk to God through prayer. We overcome problems through prayer. We receive the forgiveness of sins through prayer. Also, we thank God for his graciousness in prayer. Peninnah ridiculed Hannah for her barrenness. Hannah prayed to God for a child and she was given. She gave Samuel to Eli in order for him to serve God as she had promised.

Prophet Elijah revealed God as the living Lord who supplied rain for the people of Israel. Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God for their daily needs. He demonstrated the result of prayer when he raised up Lazarus from the dead.

Paul and Silas prayed to God when they were imprisoned at Thyati'ra and they were released. They used prayer and worship to convert souls for God

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed how one's problems could be solved by God through prayer. Hannah's barrenness was solved through prayer. She gave birth to Samuel. Elijah proved to the people of Israel that God is a living Lord through prayer. He prayed for rain and God sent down rain for the people of Israel.

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray. He also demonstrated the role of

prayer at Bethany when he prayed and raised up Lazarus from death. Paul and Silas prayed while in the prison at Thyati'ra, they were released by God. They converted the jailer, his household and other prisoners to God.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Account for the power of prayer in the life of Hannah.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. Define prayer
2. Account for the benefits of prayer in the lives of Hannah, Lazarus, Paul and Silas.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

A.S Hornsby, (2000). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The Holy Bible (Revised Standard Version) (1971). Collins

## **UNIT 2 HEALING IN CHRISTAINITY AND ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES**



## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Healing
  - 3.2 Healing in Islamic Way
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss healing as corporate matter among Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. Healing is a common theme that Islam and Christianity focus attention to provide salvation for mankind.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the meaning of health.
- Why Nigerians depend on faith for total healing of various illnesses or diseases.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Healing**

Healing in Nigerian culture is a corporate matter. This is because it involves the whole person, the family and the society. Good health in the religious concept has different meaning from the Western one. This we shall discuss in this unit.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines good health as the absence of disease or infirmity from any human being. Religious concept of good health deals with the state of total physical, mental, social-well being as a result of maintenance of a good relationship and harmony with nature, divinities, spirits and fellow human beings. (Adamo: 2005:50)

Adamo says that health involves the physical, psychological, spiritual and environmental components of man. These are the physical, the

supernatural and the mystical. The physical is the injury caused to the physical body. This kind of disease normally responds to medical cure. The supernatural and mystical diseases are caused by wizards and witches. Also, it can be as a result of violation of taboos or neglect of duties to ancestors. Besides, if the affected person has no good human relations with his fellow human beings, he is bound to be sick. These diseases are difficult to treat by the orthodox healers. For this reason, faith comes in as a means of healing the affected person.

Another method of healing diseases among the Christians is the use of the book of Psalms and other Bible verses. Among Nigerian Christians, faith in the word of God and in God along with prayer, fasting and the use of the name of God does heal or cure various diseases from people. In addition to these, the uses of the Bible with the combination of Nigerian herbal materials do cure many illnesses.

Let us examine some of the ailments that the Bible in combination with Nigerian herbal materials has been used to cure:

Adeayejo, T.N is quoted by Professor Adamo (2005) that Psalms 1, 2 and 3 have been used to cure stomach troubles. For these psalms to be effective, the sick person must read them into water and pronounce the holy name of God forty eight times. These would then be mixed together with some African materials and is taken orally little by little.

Psalm 20 and 40 are used for curing swollen stomach. Bible passages are used to cure bareness and infant mortality. For barren women to have children, professor Adamo states that psalms 51, Genesis 15:1-5, 21: 1-8, and 1 Samuel 1:9-20 are read into water and given to the barren woman to drink.

Another method of healing among the Christians is the laying of hands by the elders and anointing the sick person with oil accompanied with prayers.

The word of God says:

Is any one among you suffering?

Let him pray. Is any cheerful?

Let him sing praise.

Is any among you sick?

Let him call for the elders of the church,

And let them pray over him, anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven" (James 5:13-15).

The above method by which elders lay their hands, anoint and pray for the sick person is the approved method used for curing various ailments in most churches in Nigeria. The elders tell the sick person to confess his/her sins in order to get healed. However, if the sickness would lead to death, hence he/she has confessed his/her sins, and accepts Jesus Christ as his/her Saviour. It is believed that such a person would receive God's forgiveness and he/she would be accepted into the kingdom of God as he or she passes away from this earth to eternity.

### **3.2 Healing in Islamic Way**

The Mallam or spiritual healers use spiritual means to cure human beings physical and spiritual maladies.

The spiritual leaders or healers use two major means to heal sick people. The first method is the use of prayer. They pray for the sick person to get healed. The second method that to write some passages of the Qur'an, on paper and make talismans with them to be used by the sick person.

Besides, important passages of the Quran are written on black wooden slates, washed with clean water and drank by the sick for the solution of a particular problem. (Oseni, 1988:8). The healer is usually a teacher of the Quran. He must have faith in Allah, observes the canonical daily prayers, give alms to poor people, fast in the month of Ramadan and perform the Holy Pilgrimage in his life time. The Quran is used as a means of healing all ailments. In the Hadith it is said that "God has not created any malady without creating its remedy. Let us examine some major problems which the Mallams or teachers of the Quran solve:

1. Protection against witches, evil eyes, sorcerers, evil spirits, and dangers of all kinds.
2. Memory jog for children who perform poorly at school. In addition a bright pupil may need protection against the envious ones sorcerers who may want to harm him. The Mallam has the solution to that problem too.
3. Women's ailments are also given attention by the Mallams. The ailments range from sanity to other gynecological problems. Constant illness during pregnancy is also given attention for it is believed that sometimes such a situation is caused by means that cannot be explained naturally.
4. Prayers or charms are also sought as protection against gun shots, spears, arrows and dagger cuts. Certain Mallams are believed to

have certain Quranic and other inscriptions with which they make charms for protection against the above.

5. All-purpose prayers can be used in solving different problems. From the Islamic point of view, there is no illness without a remedy.

Mallams use the whole Quran to solve serious problems of a given society. Some prominent Mallams are summoned to read the entire Quran for solutions to the problems of the society. Mallams use Quran 36 in prayers on drinkable solutions to seek Allah's protection against witches, sorcerers, evil spirit and oppressors.

One of the verses from the Quran used by Mallams to solve various problems including sickness is given below.

There is no deity but the (God), the living, the Eternal. Slumber neither overtakes him; to Him belongs what is in the Heavens and on earth. Who is it that will be saved but by His (Allah) will. He knows what is before them and what is after them and they do not grasp any knowledge about Him (Allah) except by His will. His throne is wider than the Heavens and the earth; and He is never weary of preserving them both. He is the most High, the glorious.

Special attributes of Allah found in the Quran are used by Mallams to solve many problems of mankind. Allah has ninety-nine (99) attributive names that are used for Him by Muslims.

In addition to the above the use of herbs with prayers is also common among the Muslims.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Muslims and Christians used prayers, Quran, the Holy Bible and herbs in healing ailments and solving various problems of mankind. Religious leaders are very useful in this area.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Health is a serious matter which involves all human beings. Total health is absence of diseases from human beings. Religionist's concept of good health deals with the state of total physical mental and spiritual relationship with man and God. Prayers, Bible, Quran, fasting and worship are used as objects to heal human beings physically and spiritually in Nigeria.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Discuss the healing methods used in both the Bible and the Quran.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 3 CHRISTIAN MORAL VALUES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Values
  - 3.2 The Importance of Moral Values
  - 3.3 Christ as Model of Christian Morality
  - 3.4 Why Jesus Christ is a Permanent Model of Christian Morality
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- 5.0 Summary
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Christianity as a religion has always insisted on absolute values since it began. This is because Christians need Christian moral values to improve their moral standards in society. In this unit we shall discuss some Christian moral values which you need to study and apply into your life style.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Identify Christianity as the moral source of mankind
- Explain the nature of Christian moral values

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Values**

Akanmidu (1993) says one effective way of explaining what Christian moral values are is to start with the word 'values'. In the long history of explaining the ethnics of certain actions or behaviour, the concept of values has remained the constant index through which what is moral is determined from what is otherwise. More often, values which either expressed actions or the assessment of entities, are regarded as good.

The emphasis on moral concepts is reconcilable with what has values. The philosophical understanding of values connotes the following two meanings:

The first sense relates to the attitude of appraising and estimating the quality, that is, and the worth, merit, relevance of a thing or behaviour in relation to persons. In essence, all phenomena have worth, merits, and relevance and such estimations reside in the attitudes, choice and tastes of people.

The second sense is with reference to a set of principles which are beliefs which become standards for behaviour and basis for cultural appreciation of persons or social groups. These two philosophical approaches find fairly close parallel in the estimation of values by Christians.

The impression clearly given of values, is that 'Christian moral values' refer to first, the attitude of appraising behaviour considering the worth, merit and relevance of such in the light of Christian ideals. Second, that some underlying beliefs remain basic to Christianity which turn to become values.

As far as the conception of moral values are concerned in Christianity, the worth, merit and relevance of any moral judgement of the Christian often finds justification in the underlying beliefs of Christianity.

### **3.2 The Importance of Moral Values**

The conservative moral mood of our day more and more makes the underlying concept of Christian moral values relevant. This underlying concept has some pictorial formation in the mind and this formation brings to understanding that what is of moral value in Christianity does not altogether reckon with human estimation of morality.

From two sides, the Christian is obligated to practise morality toward others in order to satisfy them and satisfy God. The pictorial formation is that in every case in which Christians have cause to interact with others, the aspect of interaction in tune with God's pleasure cannot be experienced. In essence, Christian moral values exist only because Christianity exists for them. The view, that Christianity has its own moral values should not be taken to mean that it has been reduced to ethics.

Christian values have imparted greatly on the human character. It is one central way in which Christianity is less abstract to people. At this point, it is reasonable that we attempt to define Christian moral values.

### **3.3 What are Christian Moral Values?**

Christian moral values are values which take source from the doctrines of Christianity and have standards in the moral authority of God. From this definition, Christian moral values can be estimated in terms of the content of Christianity, what Christianity means to people as a religion, and form the basis upon which its impact on people is known.

The religion that has no moral values to people is one that puts its adherents in contempt and has no articulated pattern upon which its adherents can attach meaning to their lives and other people's lives.

Morality in Christianity is a system of conduct that conforms to standard of right conduct or behaviour sanctioned by or resulting from Christian teachings. The connection between moral rectitude and Christian moral teaching jointly constitute the basis upon which Christian moral values are acknowledged.

### **3.4 Christ as Model of Christian Morality**

If Christians dispense with all moral rules and principles, Christ's remain in the absence of all others for them. It is accepted that Christ's life, his interactions with others and his teachings all sum up to constitute a biography of perfection. As Adam puts it, "In Christ the kingdom itself appeared on earth, in that the perfect human life, the moral ideal for man, was perfectly realized", (Adam, 1952).

As it has widely been accepted without any contradiction, Christ lived the only perfectly unselfish life ever seen on earth. Christ's moral perfection has become a moral pattern for others (especially the adherents of Christianity) to emulate. It is in this very sense that Christ has become a model of Christian morality.

### **3.5 Jesus Christ is a Permanent Model of Christian Morality**

There are two main reasons among possible other reasons why Jesus Christ remains a permanent model of Christian morality.

These are: first, the permanently high moral standard that Christ has set; second, Christ's moral teachings which were reproduced in practice. Christians believe that Christ was fully man like any human in all things except sin. This important exception makes the morality of Christ remain a permanent pace-setting phenomenon in the world. By this, Christ's life and message have become the measuring rod for all situations.



Take for example the teachings of Jesus Christ on love, Christ's own estimation of love is in the first instance related to love of self and then extends to the love of others. This reflects in the celebrated "golden rule" which stipulates that "Love others as yourself" (Matthew 19:19).

Underlying the golden rule doctrine is an affirmation of love for self from which one can love others. Paul Tillich interprets the golden rule, to mean that Christ "presupposes, without saying it directly, that there is a natural self-affirmation in a person which should not prevent the affirmation of others. This is the sense we have taken love to begin with self before it radiates to others through us. What sometimes escapes the views of some people on the golden rule is the odd feeling that situations may warrant some persons not to love themselves. The question for such is how can they love others as themselves?

The essential point which can form the basis upon which this question can be answered is that the inability to love oneself is a process outside personal choice imposed on one by unsolicited circumstances. Therefore, the responsibility inherent in the 'golden rule' assumes without prejudice absence of unsolicited circumstances which in turn put man in the situation of loving others as himself.

The second point on Christ's teaching on love is loving not only one's neighbours but one's enemies (Matthew 5:44). Indeed Christ does not see any good in someone loving only his/her neighbours. Christ asserts that to do this is not a reflection of sound morality because persons of evil inclinations are bound to love persons of like manners. The point therefore, is that the obligation to love will serve positive roles only among persons of like manners. On this count, love will become a fraternal issue.

This point in itself demonstrates high morality. Although this is true the extension added to this with the teaching that enemies should be loved looks morally supererogatory even to the Christian.

The morality in this form of love does not predicate on the anticipation for gain but on the struggle to be of high moral rectitude.

The temptation to live a moral life well below this teaching is most likely. Indeed, the intrinsic worth of loving one's enemies has much to do with helping the enemies themselves to understand the attraction or beauty inherent in loving. The one who is loved when he/she knows to be an enemy is best placed in a position to contrast between what it means to be loved from what it means to be hated. Here then we see unfolding the basic ground upon which the teaching of loving one's enemies is built.

Undoubtedly, the strain and endurance of living this kind of moral life both makes vulnerability most likely plausible. This point makes Christ moral standards retain its high class.

### **3.6 The Interconnection between Christ's Teachings and his Practical Life**

The ideal conduct is set by Christ for Christians and the reality of this is best explained when Christ's teachings have some meeting points with His own practical living. The important point inherent in the mutual co-existence of moral teachings and practical living is the factor of sacrifice. Geikie carefully enumerates these areas of sacrifice in the case of Christ, thus:

He was patient in every form of suffering: a homeless life, hunger and thirst, craft and violence, meanness and pride, the taunts of enemies and betrayals of friends, ending in an ignominious death. Nothing of all this for a moment turned Him from His chosen path of love and pity. His last words, like His whole, life, were a prayer for those who returned Him evil for good (Geikie, 1980).

Geikie's points here drive home the fashions in which Christ lived what He taught. It is the combination of the uniqueness of Christ's teachings which outshines all forms of moral standards and the existing coherence between what Christ taught and lived that made Him a moral model to Christian morality.

The Christian delights in the fact that Christ is the moral standard of Christianity because the standard gives the Christian inner sense of duty. Coupled with this is the conviction that the sacrifices in pursuing the mark of the standard have the promise of future reward. The Lordship of Christ does not work itself out into some forms of vague religious feeling, rather, it expresses itself both in thought and practice.

Christ is the basis of Christianity without whom there will be no Christianity. He gives it (Christianity) its unique identity and guarantees its perpetuity.

### **3.7 The Content of Christian Moral Values**

Having identified the nature of Christian moral values, attempts will now be made to examine what these values contain. In doing this, we shall make reference to some claims that are inherent in Christianity. These claims were made by Christ whom without having to conflict with Christian beliefs, we have identified as the model of morality in Christianity.

These claims which collectively form an important part of Christian beliefs are such that identify Christ as of the same personality as God. Christ says that, "I and the father are one" (John 10:30). From this, Christ makes it abundantly clear that to see Him was to see God (John 12: 450; (John 14:9). To believe in him was to believe in God (John 12: 44). To receive Him was to receive God (Mark 9: 37). To hate Him was to hate God (John 15: 23), and to honour Him was to honour God (John 5: 23).

The relevance of these claims to the idea of content is that in Christianity. Christ in God remains the source of Christian moral values. It follows from this that the source of Christian moral values is purity since all takes source from God who is holy and cannot be wrong.

This observation accounts for one important aspect of Christian moral values, this is holiness. Moral values consist of pure character and good principles. This point which emanates from the claims of Christ to the purity of Christian moral values cannot be faulted without granting that God's purity is in doubt.

Further to this, the point can only be doubted when it is argued that Christ and God are not one and the same. This kind of doubt again requires that it is established that Christ was not saying the truth about His claims to be one and the same with God. If Christ had said the truth, the doubt is apparently overruled, and if he had told lies in His claims, then it, remains to show with evidences that he had told lies about His claims

### **3.8The Principles of Christian Moral Value**

It has become a tradition in Christianity that Christian morality is a revealed morality. This tradition distinguishes Christian morality from Islam morality. Henry says, the Christian morality is a special revealed morality – not merely a religious ethics (morality). It gains its reality in and through supernatural disclosure, (Henry, 1971).

Taking this point into consideration, Christian moral values are of impeccable value. Since these values are at the instance of a transcendent being, man requires the assistance of this same transcendental Being to be able to live up to the challenges of the standards. This view is quite central to Christian principle that the Christian conduct is rooted in faith in God and sustained by divine grace. Therefore, Christian moral values are 'not borrowed from the world, but a proclaimed 'non-conformist' morality over against the

‘ethics’ of the world.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

‘Christian moral values’ refer to first, the attitude of appraising behaviour considering the worth, merit and importance of such in the light of Christian ideals. Jesus Christ is the model of Christian morality. Christ lived, the only perfectly unselfish life ever seen on earth. He was fully man like any human in all things except sin. The ideal of conduct is set by Christ for Christians. He lived what he taught on the earth. Jesus Christ rendered selfless services that lack practical rewards on this world. In other words, the life of Christ remains a great sacrifice: the sacrifice of giving up life that others may live.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed moral values, the Christian moral values and Christ as model of Christian morality. We can also conclude that moral values originated from God.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

Discuss Christian moral values.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4 THE FEAR OF GOD**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Fear of God
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss the fear of God in Islam and Christianity.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain what the fear of God is.
- Identify how the believer can show his fear of God.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Fear of God**

In Islam and Christianity, the Prophet of God brought messages of salvation to mankind. They used their lives to serve. God used to reveal His plans and messages through the prophets to mankind in both Christianity and Islam. Both religions teach their adherents the fear of God, they however differ in presenting God as the Saviour of humanity. While Christianity presented Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind. Islam however presented Allah as the Saviour.

Jesus Christ commanded Israel to love God. The word of God says;

"(Jesus said) Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength". (Mark 12: 29).

Jesus the Saviour of mankind urged his hearers (Israel) to know that God is one; They must love Him whole heartedly. For it is the first

commandment of God to man. As our Saviour, He made us to know that we must love God. After loving God, we must love our neighbours too as Christ the Saviour taught mankind. For this reason, man must love God and his fellow beings. The word of God says.

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself. "There is no other commandment greater than these"

The book of Isaiah chapter 43:11 says,

"I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour"

The above quotations indicate that God is the Saviour of mankind. Therefore, man must love Him.

The Qur'an also taught Muslims to love or fear (Allah) God.

Let us examine the Quotations and passages that deal with the fear of Allah below.

Qur'an 3:76 says,

"Nay, but (the chosen of Allah is, he who fulfilleth his pledge and wardeth off (evil) for lo! Allah loveth those who ward off. (Evil)."

The above quotation shows that God hates evildoers, but He loves those who do good things. In other words, Allah loves righteousness, therefore, He wants His followers to be righteous in this earth. If you love God, fear Him.

Qur'an 3:31 says,

"Say (O Muhammad to mankind):  
If ye love Allah, follow me;  
Allah will love you and forgive you your sins Allah is forgiving,  
merciful".

In the above quotation, Allah spoke to Prophet Muhammad to address mankind who loves Him to follow Him. Any man who follows Allah will be forgiven his sins by Allah.

Qur'an 76: 8 says.

"And free with food the needy the wretch, the orphan and the prisoner, for love of Him"

The quotation above, implies that the believer must be generous or kind to

the needy poor, orphan and the prisoner. If he loves these people, then he loves Allah.

This quotation shows that a believer must love his neighbour.

Qur'an 2:177 says

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the last day and the angels and the scripture and the prophets, and giveth his wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the way farer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth, proper worship and payeth the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the God-fearing.

The above quotation indicate that believers must believe in God (Allah) Angels and the Last Day i.e. Judgment day in which every believer will account to Allah all his deeds in this universe. This shows that after death, there is judgment awaiting every believer in Allah (God). This quotation encourages believer to share their belongings or wealth with others such as orphans, poor or needy people. It also encourages believers to be patient in hardship, persecution, or illness. This Quranic passage encourages believers to share with their wealth enemies too. If they do it, they are true worshipers of Allah. However, if they do not, it means that they are not yet true believers of Islam. Believers must be God-conscious at all times in their lives. Muslims must fear God and love Him. They must not be involved in things which Allah hates. Quran 35:28 says.... The erudite, among His bondsmen fear Allah alone".

The Quran urges Muslims to fear Allah alone. They must not fear something else besides Allah.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Muslims and Christians must have the fear of God. They should fear, respect and obey God. Jesus Christ revealed the nature of God to mankind during his life on earth.

Believers are commanded by God (Allah) to love Him and also their neighbours. God also instructed believers to share their wealth with those who are in needs. They must also be patient during hardship. Believers should be aware that there is God, angels and judgment day awaiting every believer hereafter.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The prophets of God brought messages of salvation to mankind in both



Christianity and Islamic religion. Jesus Christ taught Christians to love God and their fellow beings.

Prophet Muhammad taught Muslims to love and fear Allah and also to love their neighbours. Believers must give gifts to those who are in needs. They must forgive people who offend them. Believers must remember the judgment day. For these reasons, they must serve and worship God and love other people. Christianity and Islamic religions aim at bringing peace, unity, love and harmony to people. Nigerians must unite, love and live in harmony with one another.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Write short notes on the following:

The love of God, charity and the last day.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 5 THE PATRIARCHS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Who is a Patriarch?
  - 3.2 Jesus Christ and His Mission on this Earth
  - 3.3 Qualities of those who will make heaven in Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss the patriarchs.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Identify the patriarchs that are also mentioned in the Quran.
- Explain some of the roles played by the patriarchs

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Who is a Patriarch?**

A Patriarch is the father and head of a family or tribe. He is responsible for the ruling of his family. Moreover, a patriarch has to see that everything such as economic, social and religious needs of his family members are met.

In the ancient times, the patriarch's duty is to search for a pasture for the flocks and herds of his family. Also, he has to ensure that there was enough water for the animals to drink. The patriarch organizes his family to the best of his knowledge. He protects his members from possible ill-treatment by other families. The patriarch acts as the family priest before the family gods. For this reason, Abraham was seen as the head of his family as well as the priest in the Quran to whom God revealed His purpose for mankind. This is why Muslims believe in what Allah has revealed to Abraham.

Quran 2:136 says,

“We believe in Allah (God) and what is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham.

The above quotation implies that Abraham worshipped and served God (Allah). Likewise, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus Christ did worship and served God in their lives time as indicated in the Quran Chapter 2: 136 as earlier quoted in Unit 12:

The Holy Bible says,

God said to Moses, I am the LORD.

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, ... I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they dwelt as sojourners. Exodus 6:2-4.

When Abraham arrived Bethel, he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of God. (Genesis 12:8). There at Bethel, Abraham worshipped the LORD Almighty who appeared to him, promised him that He would be with him only if he worshipped Him and lives a righteous life.

According to the Bible, Abraham's ancestors were associated with the cities of Ur and Haran. Each of these cities had its own god which its inhabitants worshipped. The inhabitants of both cities worshipped the moon god known as "Sin". However, as for Abraham and his family, they worshipped “the Sufficient One”, the Almighty. The God that Abraham and his nomadic family worshipped is also known as El Shaddai that is God Almighty. It is because of this that Muslims also believe God who had revealed Himself to the above named Patriarchs.

The Holy Bible made it known that God frequently renewed His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 12: 1-3) Gen 15: 1-6, 15: 12-21) (Gen 26: 23-25) and Gen 28 : 13-15)

As for Moses, one day as he was tending the flock of his father-in-law (Jethro) the Lord appeared to him in a burning bush and charged him to go back to Egypt and deliver his people Israel. Moses flight from Egypt to Midian prepared him for the leadership role, which he later assumed among the Israelites. At Midian, Moses came into contact with the religion that inspired him and aided him spiritually to lead the people of Israel as a leader and spiritual father. As a result, Muslims look up to him as a religious and political leader of the Jews. Consequently, his spiritual and leadership characters were worthy to emulate by Muslims. He is therefore seen as someone whom Allah has revealed Himself and purpose to in the world.

When Moses left Egypt for Midian, God appeared to him in the burning bush and gave him a great commission to lead the people of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. At Mount Sinai or Horeb the law of God was given to Moses from the top of the mountain while the rest of Israelites were waiting below for him to return. At Mount Sinai, God (Allah) handed over to Moses the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone and leadership role to lead the people of Israel (Exodus chapters 19 and 20).

From that day Yahweh (Allah) appointed Moses to lead the Israelites, God entered into a covenant or agreement with Israel. The Lord became their God while Israel was God's people. God promised the people of Israel blessing and protection in return for their obedience.

During Israelites wanderings, several other laws were proclaimed to them by Moses in order to guide their moralities. When Moses knew he was about to die, he named Joshua as his successor and charged him to carry on the work of leadership and worship among the people of Israel. Moses then went to the top of the mountain (Nebo) and dies there He was 120 years old when he died. Moses died in the land of Moab.

The Holy Bible says,

So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord, and God buried him in the valley in the land of Moab apposite Beth-pe-or; but no man knows the place of his burial to this day. (Deut 34:5-7)

### **3.2 Jesus Christ and His Mission on the Earth**

In this section, we shall examine the teaching of Jesus Christ as related in the Quran and the Bible.

Quran 31, 45 - 46 says:

O Mary! Lo! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the hereafter, and one of those brought near (unto Allah). He will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous.

The above quotation shows that Jesus will teach mankind in the world. Let us now examine the method Jesus used to speak to mankind. He entrusted all His sayings to the memories of His disciples and hearers. Besides, Jesus sowed the seeds of His teaching concerning the eternal truths in the hearts of his disciples and hearers.

For examples, the teaching of Jesus Christ about doing good on the Sabbath arose from His meeting a man with the withered hand in the synagogues

whom he had healed. The Bible records it thus:

.. .He (Jesus) went on from there, and entered their synagogue and behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

.. .He said to them, "What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?"

Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath".

He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand". And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other. (Matthew 12:9-13).

The teaching of Jesus Christ on the Kingdom of God arose from the question the rich man asked him what he would do to enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Bible records,

...Behold, one (man) came up to him (Jesus) saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?".. .(Jesus) he said to him, "why do you ask me about what is good? If you would enter life, keep the commandments".

.. .Jesus said, "You shall not kill,  
You shall not commit adultery  
You shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness,  
Honour your father and mother, and  
You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

The young rich man replied Jesus that he had observed all the named commandments. However, Jesus told him that if he would be perfect, he should go sell his possess and give to the poor, and he would have treasure in heaven. Jesus also invited him.

However, he went away sorrowful from Jesus Christ for he found it difficult to sell his goods and share the money to the poor. The young rich man could not do it but went away from Jesus Christ.

His action shows that no good works of man or obeying the Torah can save mankind. But obedience to the word of God

The teaching of Jesus Christ was often adapted to suit His hearers and the event. He used natural surroundings or environments and everyday things and occurrences to drive home his messages. Jesus always began where his hearers were and led them gently and patiently forward

spiritually.

For instance, He would start teaching them from the law of Moses which his hearers knew and respected as the law of God. He would also lead them from the temporal kingdom of Israel to the eternal kingdom of God. Jesus never rushed his hearers. He accepted the faith they could render and from that led them on to greater things. Jesus once told His disciples, "I have yet many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now" (John 16:12) Jesus language was simple and gripped all hearers of his teachings.

### **3.3 Qualities of those who will make Heaven in Islam**

Quran 23 says, that believers who humbly pray, avoid vain talk or speech, give alms to the poor, guard their chastity, captivate, preserve their trusts, respect their covenants and pay heed to their prayers, will inherit paradise for their eternal life.

S. Athan Hussain (1978), says,

The people of Noah had laid the charge of imposture against him but God helped him and drowned the transgressors. After them God raised another generation and sent an apostle to them but he was equally discredited. He further said that generations after generations were raised after them and to each was sent an apostle but as often as their apostle appeared, the people treated him as an imposter. They followed one another to disaster till they became fables of by gone days. So away with a people who do not believe (Quran 23).

The above quotations implied that many apostles or prophets were sent by God to mankind but they were usually rejected. Just like the man who went to Jesus Christ to ask him how he could enter the paradise and was told the step to take, but sadly went away.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

A patriarch is the father and head of the family or tribe in Israel. He cared physically and spiritually for his people. Patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac and Noah were spiritual fathers of their days. They led their people to God.

Jesus Christ is known as the Messiah in both the Quran and the Bible. Both the Quran and the Bible testified that Jesus Christ healed, and taught people.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Patriarchs cared for their people spiritually and materially. God cared for mankind by sending his messengers to lead mankind alright. Both the Quran and the Bible indicate that there is paradise for true believers to inherit after this life.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Account for the roles of patriarchs in the Quran and the Bible.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

Narrate the birth story and the deeds of Jesus Christ in the Quran.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 6 CARING FOR THE POOR IN CHRISTIANITY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Who Are the Poor?
  - 3.2 The Situation of the Poor in Nigeria.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

God instructed Moses to teach the people of Israel to care for the poor among them. This is because man's life on the earth is very important to God. For this reason, the Mosaic law made adequate provisions for the care and relief of the poor Israelites and strangers in Canaan. The relief of the poor in Judaism is brought into Christianity.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the importance of hospitality to mankind.
- Identify the poor and their needs.
- Give reasons for the transfer of hospitality from Judaism to Christianity.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Who Are the Poor?**

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000) defined poor as “having very little money or not having enough money for basic needs”.

The biblical term, ‘poor’ is viewed from two perspectives, religious and social. On the social point, the poor is seen as one oppressed by misery and distress in life. From the religious point of view he is one who humbles himself before God. In the Bible the Mosaic law made adequate provisions for the care and relief of the poor in the land of Canaan.



The Law states:

If there is among you a poor man, one of your brethren, in any of your towns within your land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be (Deuteronomy 15: 7-8).

Jesus Christ also considered the poor in his ministerial work on the earth. He says:

"Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied." (Luke 6: 20-21).

Jesus Christ considered the poor to be the needy or the have not. He assured them that they would inherit the kingdom and be satisfied. Also, Jesus saw the crowds who were spiritually thirsty and he addressed them that the kingdom of God is theirs. This is because the poor has concerned for spiritual matters instead of the earthly things.

Whoever takes care of the poor will be called righteous, and whoever negates caring for the poor is accursed. In the Magnificent, Mary expressed God's concern for the poor. She said that God had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away Luke 1:53).

John the Baptist encourages his hearers to share things with the needy. He says; "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise" (Luke 3:11).

Jesus Christ did identified himself with the poor as he made it known to his hearers that God has sent him to this world to preach the gospel to the poor. He says, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. (Luke 4:18) The above statement shows that Jesus Christ cares for the poor as shown in his messages. He was always on the side of the poor.

Jesus told a rich man who wanted to have eternal life to sell his possessions and give to the poor before he could have it. He said this to the rich man probably because he has observed that the rich were not giving enough to the poor during his life or that they totally neglected the poor.

The ministry of Jesus Christ is concerned mostly with the poor, who are crushed by their needs and by oppression. At the time of Jesus Christ, the poor people constituted majority of the population of the Hellenistic

world.

Jesus Christ considered the presence of the poor and destitute a scandal in the world. For this reason, he taught us to look on the poor and to take care of them. The word of God says:

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me". (Matthew 25: 34-35).

The above statements were used by Jesus Christ to teach us to care for the poor in our midst.

Also Jesus Christ taught us that the last judgment would be based on man's relation with his fellow man. The man who cared for the poor would be welcomed in the kingdom of God. He says, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me". (Matthew 25:40) Jesus encourages us to take care of the poor in our midst.

The Scripture record:

"One (rich man) came up to him, saying, 'Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life? And he said to him, .... 'If you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come follow me'. (Matthew 19:16-21)... I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:24).

In the Scriptures, Jesus sympathized with the poor. He decried maltreating the poor by the rich in his days. James says, "Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you ... (James 2:5-7)

Christianity teaches you to care for the poor in your society. If you are rich, use it to bless the poor people.

### **3.2 The Situation of the Poor in Nigeria**

The poor in Nigeria are experiencing intensive poverty as a result of the

social orientation where the rich continues to be rich and the poor continues to be poor. Since 1842 when the missionaries introduced Christianity at Badagry in Lagos, a lot of changes have taken place in the lives of Christians in Nigeria.

In line with Jesus attitude to the poor, Christians have been seeking ways to alleviate the condition of the poor in the country. Christians give alms, clothing, food and accommodation to the poor. They also take care of the sick people. Some missionary schools provide food for their pupils. Christians also give scholarships to students in addition to other sundry assistance. In like manner, other religions have come to emulate this noble virtue.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

God instructed Moses to teach the people of Israel to give alms to the poor. He gave Jesus Christ to mankind as a special gift for salvation. Jesus' ministry on earth centered on the poor, physically and spiritually. In the book of James in the Bible, people are encouraged to care for the poor.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the importance of alms giving to the poor in Judaism and Christianity. In this unit, we have learnt how alms-giving was transferred from Judaism to Christianity.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Trace the history of alms giving from Judaism to Christianity.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Who are the poor?
2. How are we to treat the poor in society?
3. What has encouraged the growth of Christianity in Nigeria since 1842 to date?

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **MODULE 3      UNITY    AND    ONENESS    OF    GOD (ALLAH)**

Unit 1	The meaning of Islam
Unit 2	Prayer in Islam
Unit 3	Faith in Islam
Unit 4	Free – will
Unit 5	Moral Laws

### **UNIT 1                    THE MEANING OF ISLAM**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Islam Means Submission to the Will of God.
3.2	The Golden Rule 4.0
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor Marked Assignments
7.0	References/Further Readings.

#### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss the beginning of Islam the meaning of Islam and the Muslims concept of Allah.

#### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

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

- State the basic objectives of Islamic Theology.
- Explain the beginning of Islam, golden rule, and the official language of Islam.
- State the roles of the Golden Rule to mankind.

#### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

##### **3.1    The Meaning of Islam**

Islam means submission to the will of God; while the name of a believer

of the religion is known as a Muslim. Most religious historians claimed that prophet Muhammad was the founder of Islam. But, Muslims generally regard Islam as dating back to the time of creation. The basic objective of Islamic Theology is to establish the Omniscience and Omnipresence of Allah

The Qur'an emphasizes that it was Allah who created the universe for a purpose. The Qur'an 21: 16 says,

"We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them in play". Allah created human beings and angels in the earth and heavens to worship Him. (Qur'an 21: 19).

According to Yahaya, Allah created the universe as the arena for mankind to worship Him on the earth while He created angels to worship Him in heaven. (Yahaya, 2003). In African culture, modern Science, it is postulated that "Allah endowed man with the intelligence to use and adapt all things around him to serve himself and make his life on earth as comfortable as he can. God created man, moulded and configured him to eat, drink, move about, seek shelter, sleep and fulfill other physical desires. Allah allows man to have freedom as he uses his endowment for creativity and initiative on the earth". Al-Qur'an says:

Allah has also instructed man to care for his parents on earth.  
"Thy Lord hath, decreed (that ye show) kindness to parents  
(Qua'an 17:23)

### **3.2 The Golden Rule**

The Golden Rule means doing to others what you want them to do to you and wishing others the good things you want for yourself. The religion of Islam encourages this rule. H. Abdalati (2003) stated the basic beliefs and principles of Islamic morality that entails the golden rule thus:

- God is the Creator and Source of all goodness, truth and beauty.
- Man is a responsible, dignified and honourable agent of his Creator.
- God has put everything in the heavens and the earth in the services of mankind.
- By his mercy and wisdom, God does not expect the impossible from man or hold him accountable for anything beyond his power, nor does God forbid man to enjoy the good things of

life.

- Moderation, practicality and balance are guarantees of high integrity and sound morality.
- All things are permissible except what is singled out as obligation, which must be observed, and what is singled out as forbidden, which must be avoided.

Man's ultimate responsibility is to God and his highest goal is the pleasure of his Creator.

In this unit, we shall introduce you to some of the Quranic Surah that dealt with some of the Golden Rule.

Qur'an 4:36 states:

".....Serve Allah. Ascribe nothing as partner unto Him; show kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbour who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbour who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveler and the wayfarer and the (slaves) whom your right hand possess. Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful.

The above quoted from the Al-Quran, teach you to be kind to every human being whom you meet in your life.

Quran 16:90 states:

Lo! Allah enjoineeth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbideth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you in order that ye may take heed.

This quotation teaches you to have fair justice and be kind to people. It also teaches you to avoid forbidden things and wickedness in this life.

Quran 41: 33-34 says:

.....Who is better in speech than him who prayeth unto his Lord and doeth right and said? Lo! I am of those who surrender (unto Him). The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better.

This quotation implies that you should do well to other people. And it teaches you not to do evil or pay evil for evil in your life.

Quran 5:9 Says:

“Allah hath promised those who believe and do good works. Theirs will be forgiveness and immense reward.

In this quotation, you are assured that you will receive forgiveness of sins in as much as you worship Allah. For whoever worships Him is expected to be upright with Him in this universe.

Quran 4: 135 States:

O ye who believe! Be ye staunch in justice, witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or (your) parents or your kindred, whether (the case be of) a rich man or a poor man, for Allah is nearer unto both (them ye are). So follow not passion lest ye lapse (from truth) and if ye lapse or fall away, then Allah is ever informed of what ye do.

This Quranic passage teaches you to witness for Allah without being partial. In any case which you might bear witness; it is expected of you to be truthful without favouring any of the party that is involved in a case of either rich or poor.

Quran 18: 47 Says:

Wealth and children are an ornament of life, the sight for reward, and better in respect of hope.

In this passage, you are taught that Allah gives wealth and children to the adherents of Islam. Muslims need to have hope in Allah in order for Him to reward them (the worshipers).

Quran 2: 279 Says:

And if ye do not, then he warned of war (against you) from Allah and His messenger. And if ye repent, then ye have your principal (without interest). Wrong not, and ye shall not be wronged.

This quotation urges you not to deal with other people unjustly but to treat them justly.

Quran 55: 60 Says:

Is the reward of goodness aught save goodness?

In the above Quranic quotations, you have learnt to confess your wrong doings to Allah. He will forgive your sins. The saying and practice of

prophet Muhammad otherwise known as the Hadith also teaches Islamic morality which focuses on God and the Golden Rule.

We quote some of His sayings thus: “By God in whose hand is my soul, none shall enter paradise except the morally virtuous ones”. The quotation in question emphasizes that only those who behave well will enter paradise. Also, it teaches you that your soul is in the hand of (God) Allah.

Another saying of the prophet is that the most perfect of the believers in faith is the best in morality. The saying implies that adherents of Islam must behave morally. The Hadith further says; “none of you shall be regarded as faithful until his loves for his brother is what his love for himself”. The saying of the prophet encourages you to love other people as you wish them to love you.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Islam stressed teachings of the Golden Rule to mankind. Man must not be selfish; He must be truthful in all activities, confess all his offences in law courts of justice and allow the law to take its full course. Adherents of Islam must do good in this world. They must consider others in all/others things.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the importance of prayer in this unit. A Muslim must be kind to people. Also we learnt that a Muslim must not involve himself in shameful acts, such as drunkenness and adultery. A Muslim must observe five times of praying daily.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

State three things which you have learnt to practise in this unit.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Discuss the duties of a Muslim to Allah and his fellow human beings.
2. Give reasons why a Muslim must get married.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Doi, Rahman (1981) *Introduction to the Quran*, Ibadan: Nigeria Publishers Services Ltd., 1981.

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## **UNIT 2 PRAYER IN ISLAM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Prayer
  - 3.2 Prayers Restrain You from Shameful and Unjust Deeds
  - 3.3 Salaat
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss how human being can get in contact with Allah through prayer.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain Islam as a complete way of life of mankind.
- State the role of prayers

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Prayer**

Human beings are created by Allah in order to worship him. This we can deduce from the Al-Quran in which God has shown humanity the way to get in contact with him through meditation. The Quran 2: 186 says:

..... When my servant question thee concerning me, then surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he crieth unto me. So let them hear my call and let them trust in me, in order that they may be led aright.

The Qur'an also teaches that the Jinn (Angel) and man are created to worship Allah.

The Quran says:

I created the Jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me.

(Quran51:56).

In the above quoted passages of the Holy Quran, we have learnt that (God) Allah has created us purposely to worship Him. For this reason, He (Allah) always answers our supplication whenever we call upon Him. Humble people do worship Allah. The Quran says:

Thou wilt find the most vehement of mankind in hospitality to those who believed (to be) the Jews and the idolaters. And thou wilt find the nearest of them in affection to those who believed (to be) those who say: Lo! We are Christians. That is because there are among them priests and monks, and because they are not proud (Quran 5:82)

Whoever worships Allah does submit his will to Allah. As a Muslim, you must submit yourself to Allah. When you have submitted to Allah, then helping of your neighbours will be easy for you to practise.

Al-Qur'an 107: 1-7 Says:

Hast thou observed him who believeth religion? That is he who repellent the orphan, and urgeth not the feeding of the needy, Ah, woe unto worshippers who are heedless of their prayer; who would be seen (at worship); yet refuse small kindness!

From the above quotation, we have learnt that Muslims must help the orphan and help feed the needy or whoever is in need.

Al-Quran also reveals that whoever worships Allah must also abstain from adultery. Al-Quran 17: 32 says

".....Come not near unto adultery. Lo! It is an abomination and evil way".

A prayerful Muslim must not involve himself in committing adultery for it is forbidden in Islam. For this reason, the Al-Quran permits you to marry two or three or four wives. However, you must love and treat them equally.

It adds that:

"... .If ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many wives)then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hand possess. Thus, it is more likely that ye will not do injustice." (Al-Quran 4:3).

The similarity between Christianity and Islam in this quotation is the injunction to avoid committing adultery. For the Muslim, the only way

of avoiding adultery is to marry more than one wife but you are also limited to four wives whom you could equally care for. The Al-Quran also made it known to a true Muslim that if he cannot do justice to his wives or love all his wives equally, it is better for him to get married to (only) one wife. We quote: "...if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many wives) then one only (Al-Quran 4:3).

To deduce from Al-Quran 4:3 it indicates that Allah supports monogamy. This is because, probably there is no one who can love two or three or four wives equally. Islam supports marriage for all believers in Allah.

### **3.2 Prayers Restrain You from Shameful and Unjust Deeds**

Al-Quran 29:45 Says,

..Recite that which hath been inspired in thee of the Scripture, and establish worship. Lo! Worship preserveth from lewdness and iniquity, but very remembrance of Allah is more important. And Allah knoweth what ye do.

It is through prayer that you avoid having sex in a rude and offensive way with women. You must humble your mind and body while praying (Al-Quran 3:43), Says;

"O man! Be obedient to thy Lord, prostrate thyself and bow with those who bow in worship.

Likewise, Al-Quran 22:77 urges every worshiper of Allah to prostrate in prayer.

We quote:

"O ye who believe! Bow down and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord, and do good, that you may prosper. This passage also teaches you that as you worship Allah, you will be blessed. Hence, everything belongs to Allah, He gives riches to those who worship Him.

### **3.3 Salaat**

Salaat are not just prayers but programming (Al-Quran 5: 90), says:

".. .O ye who believe! Strong drink and games of chance and idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave it aside in order that ye may succeed.

If you want to succeed in life, while praying, you need to avoid taking

strong drink, games of chance and serving other gods beside Allah.

Salaat has timings for good health. Muslims are to pray five times daily.

The Al-Quran 20: 130 says,

Therefore, (O Muhammad), bear with what they say, and celebrate the praises of thy Lord ere the rising of the sun and ere the going down thereof. And glorify Him some hours of the night and at the two ends of the day that thou mayst find acceptance.

Another Quranic passage says,

Establish worship at the going down of the sun until the dark of night, and (the recital of) the Quran at dawn. Lo! (the recital of) the Quran at dawn is ever witnessed. (Al-Quran 17:78).

Prayer encourages personal hygiene among Muslims. We could deduce from Al-Quran how a prayerful Muslim could purify himself before approaching Allah in prayer.

Al-Quaran 5:6 says, O ye who believe! When ye rise up for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbow, and lightly rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. And if ye are unclean, purify yourself.

If you are sick or on a journey , or one of you cometh from the closet, or ye have had contact with women , and ye find not water, then go to clean, high ground and rub your face and your hands with some of it. Allah would not place a burden on you, but He would purify you and would perfect His grace upon you, that ye may give thanks.

In prayer, we remember the grace of Allah upon us. In it, we thank God for His goodness.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Human beings are created by Allah in order to worship Him. A Muslim must submit himself to Allah. He must abstain from adultery. A Muslim must get married. He must thank God for answering his prayers. A Muslim must not be involved in any shameful act, such as drunkenness. A Muslim must perform absolution before praying.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the “golden rule” of Islam, such as doing good to your parents, relations, orphans, the poor, neighbours and strangers.

Also, Allah has commanded you to do justice, good deeds, and be kind to other people. It emphasizes on carrying out righteous deeds while you are in this world. You have learnt that your soul is in the hand of Allah (God) your maker and controller of the universe.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. State two “Golden Rules” of the Quran
2. Mention two Golden Rules in the Hadith
3. Wealth and children are blessing in this world. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

A Rahman, I Doi, *Introduction to the Quran*, Ilorin: Nigeria Publishers Services Ltd. 1986, Ibadan, Nigeria.

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## **UNIT 3 FAITH IN ISLAM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Faith
  - 3.2 Obedience to Allah Extends to All Affairs of Mankind.
  - 3.3 Islam As a Means of Man's Balanced Life
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The religion of Islam teaches a way of life that is based on faith (Iman) and good deeds (Salihat). In this unit, we shall discuss man's faith, duties or obligations to Allah and his fellow human beings.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain your obligations to Allah and your fellow human beings.
- State that everybody is born with pure faith.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Faith**

Faith is a proclamation of belief in the existence of Allah and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on Him). Also, it involves the adherents of Islam putting their beliefs into practice by fulfilling their obligations or duties both to Allah and to mankind. Quran chapter 103: 1-3, Says.

..By the declining day,  
Lo! Man is in a state of loss,  
Save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one  
another to truth and exhort one another to endurance.

The above quotation shows that man's obligations or duties to Allah (God) super cede all other duties to mankind. Quran 9: 24 States:

Say: If you're fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your wives, and your tribes, and the wealth ye have acquired, and merchandise for which ye fear that there will be no sale and dwellings ye desire are dearer to you than Allah and His messenger and striving. In His way: then wait till Allah bringeth His command to pass. Allah guideth not wrong doing folk.

An adherent of Islam has faith and trust in Allah. These are expressed in his/her intentions, attitudes, words and deeds. He/She proclaims his/her beliefs, remembers Allah often with an attitude of thankfulness, humility, and love, purifies his/her intentions and practises the commandments of Allah and the tradition (Sunnah) of Prophet Muhammad. He/she must teach them to other people.

Quran 8: 1 Says:

They ask thee (O Muhammad) of the spoils of war. Say: The spoils of war belong to Allah and the messenger, so keep your duty to Allah, and adjust the matter of your difference, and obey Allah and His messenger, if ye are (true) believers.

### **3.2 Obedience to Allah Extends to all Affairs of Mankind**

Quran 8:20 Says: O ye who believe! Obey Allah and His messenger, and turn not away from him when ye hear (him speak). M. Moinuddin Saddigni (1992) states: "Obedience to God is not confined to personal piety, but extends to all spheres of personal, social, economic and international affairs.

His above statement implies that every believer, have the duty to strive for the maintenance of the moral laws of Allah on the universe.

Quran 18: 47 Stresses that the present life is a testing ground for mankind. But the life hereafter (Eternal) is the ultimate goal for every believer which he or she must strive to gain. It states:

"Wealth and children are an ornament of life of the world. But the good deeds which endure are better in thy Lord's sight for reward and better in respect of hope".

The above quotations, remind a true believer that he would return to Allah, the merciful and just God to give an account of all things which he did in this universe on the judgment day. The love of Allah, joy, pleasure and mercy which a Muslim receives from Him makes him/her to have hope for the future life hereafter.



Quran 89: 28-30) says: Return unto thy Lord, content in His good pleasure! Enter thou among my brethren! (Servants) Enter thou my garden! (Paradise).

The above quotations refer to the soul of a believer which belongs to God (Allah) to return to Him after death. This indicates that whosoever believes in Allah and obey His commandment will inherit paradise after passing beyond this world. But to those who do not believe in the paradise or after life who consider their successes and pleasures of this universe as the ultimate goal, such people have no share or portion in the eternal life or life hereafter but hell.

Quran (10:7-9) Says:

"Lo! in the difference of day and night and all that Allah hath created in the heavens and the earth are portents, verily for folk who ward off (evil).

Lo! Those who expect not the meeting with us, but desire the life of the world and feel secure therein and those who are neglectful of our revelations. Their home will be the fire because of what they used to earn".

On the other hands, as for the true believers who do good deeds, Allah will pay them in full their wages or rewards?

Quran 4: 173 Says:

Then, as for those who believed and did good works, unto them will He pay their wages in full, adding unto them of His bounty; and as for those who were scornful and proud , them will He punish with a painful doom.

The above quotation implies that Allah will punish proud people for their pride after acquiring wealth and forget to worship Allah and thank Him for their wealth.

For this reason, Quran 11:9-11 says:

And if we cause man to taste some mercy from us and afterward withdraw it from him, Lo! He is despairing, thankless.

And if we cause him to taste grace after some misfortune that had befallen him, he saith: The ills have gone from me. Lo!

He is exultant, boastful;

Save those who persevere and do good works.

Theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward.

A true Muslim must be thankful to Allah for the wealth which he has acquired. He must be graceful to Allah when he has overcome some misfortune that had befallen him. A believer must do good works in order to receive forgiveness from Allah. His doing good would also earn him/her a great reward of entering into paradise.

### **3.3 Islam Means a Complete Way of Life**

The teaching of Islam considers man's physical needs and spiritual aspirations. In other words, Islam does not separate the worship of Allah from secular activities. As an adherent of Islam, you can combine secular activities with religious functions in this world. For instance, you can engage in business transactions, trade, and administration of justice and civil service functions while you serve Allah. You can engage in praying, fasting, reading the Quran, pilgrimage and other devotional acts with other basic important aspects of life.

Quran 3:104 says:

"And there may spring from you a nation who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful.

A Muslim must learn what Allah has enjoined and forbidden, he or she must teach it to other people and strive to establish Allah's laws in the world.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Quran teaches that every man is born with faith in Allah. Every Muslim who does good deeds will receive reward from Allah. Muslims must put their faith into practice by fulfilling their obligations to Allah and mankind.

Muslims must maintain moral laws of Allah in their lives. Believers in Allah are aware that the present life is a temporary abode. They must strive to achieve eternal life.

Muslims should be aware that Allah will punish those who have wealth and are proud because of it. True believers know that their good works will earn them the forgiveness of wrongs by Allah. As a result of this, they will enter into the paradise after judgment.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Every Muslim is born with faith in Allah. He or she does good deeds and

receives reward from Allah. Muslims must fear Allah and do his bidding. Allah will reward the faithful in paradise. After death, one will face the judgment of Allah. If his deeds are bad, then he will go to hell. But if his deeds are good, then he will go to paradise.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What does Islam teach?

### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Obedience to Allah extends to all affairs of mankind. Discuss.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Saddiqui, M. M. (1992) *Moral Teachings of Islam*, Minna: Islam Education Trust Publication.

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Paramole, K.O.(2000) *Ethics in Islam: An Analytical Study*, Lagos: Islamic Studies Circle.

## **UNIT 4      FREEWILL**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Free Will
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 3.0 Summary
- 4.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 5.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall discuss the free-will of mankind.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

Identify the moral choice which Allah has given to mankind

Differentiate between destiny and choice.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Free-Will**

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines free-will as “the power to make your own decision without being controlled by God or fate”. Allah created Adam and gave him a free-will to choose whatever he wants in the world. Quran 91:7-10, says,

"And a soul and Him who perfected it and inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is right for it). He is indeed successfully who causeth it to grow, and he is indeed a failure who stunteth it".

Allah created man and gave him an opportunity to choose between good and evil in the world. However, man must strive for what is good and right in the world. This is because man must be put to test in this world. For the life of a true Muslim is full of exertion and purpose.

Quran 29 states:

"Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) alone on their merely saying, we believe and they will not be tested with affliction?"

It talked about some people who once lived in the world but were tested or tried by God.

A true Muslim has free-will to choose evil or good, but he will be rewarded for his good intention. However, he cannot control the result of events that happened in his life which God (Allah) had approved for him. For instance, a man may decide to do a kind deed but he may be prevented by Allah from carrying it out. This is a limitation to his freedom of doing things in the world.

God sent Noah to his people. He lived among them for nine hundred and fifty years during which he revealed the plan of Allah to mankind at the time. However, it was reported that only a few people followed Noah and heeded to the word of Allah.

Those few people were saved by Allah. While the majority of the people chose to disobey Noah. The disobedient people were drowned by flood.

Abraham proclaimed the word of Allah to his people and urged them to serve or worship Allah and be mindful of Him but they decided to have Abraham killed or burn to death, but for the intervention of Allah, he was saved. Isaac and Jacob worshipped Allah and they were chosen by Him to be prophets for their people.

The people of Lot, Shuaib, and Thamud, Korah, Pharaoh and Haman chose to do evil but Allah destroyed all of them. Al-Quran says that some of them were sunk into the ground through the earthquakes and some of them were drowned.

The above named people were destroyed because of the evils or wrongs which they had chosen and acted upon in the world. On the other hand, those who chose to hear the word of Allah preached by Abraham, Noah, Isaac and Jacob were rewarded by Allah who saved them from destruction.

Quran 29: 6 says: hence whoever strives hard (in God's cause, does so only for his own good, for lo! Allah is altogether independent of (His) creature".

The above quote and the named prophets of Allah who strived in worshipping Allah, gained eternity for themselves. While those who had chosen not to worship Allah gained destruction. The actions of the

righteous and the unrighteous people mentioned in Quran 29 indicate that man can have nothing but what he strives for:

"And that man hath only that for which he maketh effort, and that his effort will be seen". (Quran 53: 39 - 40)

On the other hand, no man can change the plan of Allah for him. Quran says;

"Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts, and if Allah willeth misfortune for a folk there is none that can repel it, nor have they a defender beside Him.

The above quotation shows that Allah has the final control over the result of events or destiny of man. For this reason, the choice of man either good or bad seems not have worked for him in this world.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Freewill is the power to make your own decisions without being controlled by God or fate. Allah created mankind and gave him freedom of choice, either good or bad. He gave man freedom to choose either paradise or hell. If man decides to worship Him, he will gain paradise. But if man decides to reject Allah he will choose hell for himself. God controls the destiny of man. He has the final say on mankind and his deeds on this earth.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

God (Allah) created man and allows him to make a choice either good or bad. He also allows man to choose either hell or paradise. God sent his prophets, namely Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah and other prophets to lead mankind alright. Those who obeyed them were saved while those who rejected them perished.

In conclusion, Allah has the final say on mankind in the world.

#### **SELF ASSIGNMENT EXERCISE**

What is free-will?

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. Account for the outcome of the actions of those who decided to disobey Noah and Abraham in the Quran?

## **7.0 REFERECNES/FURTHER READINGS**

Islamic Education Trust, (1992), *Misconceptions about Islam* Minna: Islamic Education Trust Publication.

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## **UNIT 5 MORAL LAWS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Moral Law
  - 3.2 Charity
  - 3.3 Belief in the Prophets
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The primary source of moral laws is the Holy Quran (which is believed to have come directly from Allah) and the Hadith. The moral laws are included in the Sharia Laws in Nigeria for the states that practise it. What is Sharia? Sharia is an Arabic word that means "the path to be followed". Its literal meaning is "the way to a watering place".

This "path" or "way" is approved by Allah. Sharia is the way or road Islam which Allah has established for the guidance of his people both for the worship of Allah and for the duties of life". Sharia is a set of codified laws governing the outward conducts of Muslims. Also, it is a life principle that gives the Muslims a world view, a moral value and a conscience.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the roles of moral laws in your life.
- Explain the birth of Jesus Christ and His roles to mankind in the world.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Moral Laws**

Moral laws form part of the Sharia laws that is divided into five sections for easy references. However, in this unit, we are concerned with the last section that deals with apostasy, adultery, theft, fornication and murder.



Quran 2: 266-267 says:

"Those who forswear their wives must wait four months, then if they change their mind, Lo! Allah is forgiving, Merciful. And if they decide upon divorce (let them remember that) Allah is Hearer, Knower."

The above quoted implies that a Muslim must not divorce his wife and if he needs to do so, he must think twice while waiting for four months to do so. However, if he thinks that it is right for him to divorce her, he should know that Allah hears and knows about his intention.

On the other hand, a married man whose wife has offended him should have the spirit of forgiveness and change his mind of divorcing his wife. This is because Allah does have mercy upon us by forgiving us our wrongdoings. Therefore, the husband must bear and forgive his wife when she has offended him.

In addition to the above reasons, the husband must forgive his wife for both have equal opportunity before Allah. Quran indicates that women and men are created from the same spirit. It speaks that Allah created human beings and breathed into them a part of His spirit regardless of whether they are male or female. Surah at A'raf says that both Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the forbidden tree and both regretted, repented and were forgiven by Allah. The Quran also urges the husband to love his wife. In other words, the father must adore, respect and love the mother.

Quran 49:13 Says:

O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is knower, Aware.

Also, Quran urges us not to ill-treat anybody. Quran 40: 40 says:

Whosoever doeth an ill-deed, he will be repaid the like thereof, while whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, all such will enter the garden (paradise) where they will be nourished without stint.

Muslims are encouraged not to ill treat their fellow beings in the above quoted Qur'anic passage. Whenever there is a family dispute, the Quran appeals to the husband to consider the goodness in his wife rather than always look at her weakness or faults.

Quran 4:19 Says:

O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the woman (of your deceased kinsman), nor (that) ye should put constraint upon them that ye may take away a part of that which ye have given them.

Unless they be guilty of flagrant lawless, but consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may wherein Allah happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good".

However, in the case of unreasonableness and absolute rebelliousness on the part of your wife, there is an appeal first of all to exhortation as a first step; then if your wife does not respond to that, there is another step to take as the husband. This step is that you must not sleep with her (but she is to stay in your house and not to leave it) this may make your wife realize that she is doing something that is threatening the love and affection of you (the husband).

During the period which you have set your wife aside, you must support her materially. In case she is pregnant at the period in question, you must support her financially. She is entitled to be paid for letting your child suck her breast.

On the other hand, if you finally divorce her, you must support her for caring for your child that is with her. Marriage is relationship of love and compassion in Islam. Quran 30: 21 describes it thus:

"And of His signs is this: He created for you help mates (wives) from yourselves (husbands) that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy.

### **3.2 Islam Encourages Charity (Zakah)**

Islam is sensitive to the needs of the poor and destitute. The giving of *Zakah* or alms or charity is a religious duty on the able Muslim. Prophet Muhammad said, "He is not a Muslim who eats his fill while his neighbour goes hungry". He discouraged begging and expressed his disapproval of someone begging who was physically sound and not destitute. Prophet Muhammad further said, "Who opens unto himself the door of begging, Allah will open him the door of poverty". It is very wrong for anyone who is physically sound to beg for living.

This prophet Muhammad once supported by telling a story of a man who went to him to beg. He told the man to bring whatever property he possessed. The man took his property to him and it was sold. He used the amount which the property of the man was sold to purchase an axe-

head. Prophet Muhammad fixed a handle on the axe-head, gave it to the beggerman and told him to go and cut wood for his livelihood. After some periods, the man returned and sold the firewood. Hence forth, the man used the income he derived from the sale of the wood to support his family.

Muslims who are able-bodied should stop begging but work for their livings. The practice of some people in Nigeria sending their disabled members into the street to beg is unislamic.

Likewise, Islam forbids stealing.

Quran 5: 38 Says:

As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds, an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is mighty, wise.

In 2001 in Kebbi, Kebbi State, Nigeria, one Muhammad was accused of theft. His case was taken to a magistrate court where he pleaded not guilty and was sent on remand for two weeks later, the Sharia judge who owns the stolen items reportedly requested that the case be transferred to a sharia Court. Muhammad's case was transferred to a Sharia court where he was sentenced to amputation by a Shaira court.

### **3.3 Belief in the Prophets**

Muslims believe in the prophets of God

Quran 2: 136 Says:

Say O Muslims: We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.

The above quotations indicate that the religion of Islam recognizes the patriarchs and Jesus Christ as recorded in the Bible. The Quran relates the birth of Jesus Christ by a the Virgin Mary and his Messiah role for mankind.

Quran 3: 45-50 Says:

"(And remember) when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, Son

of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter (Eternity).

And one of those brought near (unto Allah). He (Jesus the messiah) will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous. She said: My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal hath touched me? He said: So (it will be). Allah createth what He will if He decreeth a thing. He saith unto it only: Be! and it is. And He will teach him the scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel.

And will make him a messenger unto the children of Israel (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave.

... I come confirming that which was before me of the Torah (Law) and to make lawful some of that which was forbidden unto you. I come unto you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allah and obey me.

The Quran actually confirmed the birth of Jesus Christ who is the Messiah of human race. Also, it makes him known as the Healer of diseases; Righteous and the Messiah who came to the world to fulfill all things that were written in the law or Old Testament.

The Quran further reveals the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to life. Also, it confirms that everybody must obey him by accepting him as the only saviour of mankind. This settles the argument of Jesus being the mediator of mankind before God.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Holy Quran contains some moral laws that guide mankind in the world. Among these moral laws are charity, hard work, honesty and obedience. The Quran tells you that Jesus Christ was born by a virgin, called Mary. Also, it tells us that Jesus Christ healed the sick on this earth.

Furthermore, the Quran says that Jesus Christ is the Messiah; he came into the world, died, buried and resurrected.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed that Quran is the primary source of moral laws. And

that these moral laws are in the Sharia laws.

In this unit, you have learnt that it was the Virgin Mary who gave birth to Jesus Christ. You learnt that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Further more, you learnt to obey Jesus Christ for he commands you to do so.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Mention three moral laws in the Quran.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

Account for the birth of Jesus Christ and his roles to mankind in Islam.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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