S. 5 DIVINITY

THE ORIGINS: THE BOOK OF GENESIS

The book of Genesis records the origin of Man and the world in general, written several years ago before the modern scientific and technological discoveries were made, stories like the creation and fall of man in Genesis were written to teach religious truth.

THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF GOD UIN GENESIS

The first 3 chapters of Genesis are at times referred to as a summary of the Bible. They are an introduction to both the Old Testament and New Testament. This is because the teachings in them are about God's nature.

God is a creator; he created the universe and all that is in it. He is the sole giver of life to man and other creatures. Nobody has power over man's life a part from God.

God is omnipotent/All powerful and Almighty. He is self-sufficient and self-sustained. He is authoritative and this is judged from His, word of creation, let there be ……..” Genesis 1:3

God is omniscient/All knowing and wise one. He created a well-planned, orderly, perfect and artistic world. This is seen in the order of His creation where he created light first, the sky, water, and land before the plants, birds fish animals and then man. Besides,

He created various senses and systems in man and other animals for example, the respiratory digestive, excretory systems e.tc.

God is Transcendent. He has no origin and no end. He existed before He created all other creatures.

He is eternal and unique from other creatures.

He is holy thus completely good and stainless. He has absolute moral purity and expects man whom He created in his image also to be holy. So when man sinned in Gen 3, he sinned against God's holiness.

God is a spirit Gen 1:1-2 tells us that the world was formless and God's spirit moved on its surface. Thus God is spiritual and intangible.

God is omnipresent, meaning that He has no specific place where he stays. He lives and is present everywhere. In Gen2 he was constantly in man's presence in Gen 3, He discovered man and woman out of their hiding place.

God is a provider – He created all and provided food to each. God created in such a way that each creature is food for other creatures. Man was provided a lion share of God's creatures. All creatures lead up to and are for man whom He created in His image.

God is loving and saving, it was for love that man was created in God's image, made him master of all creation, forgave him after his disobedience. That is, he passes judgement to the parties involved in sin.

Throughout the Old Testament, God maintains His nature such as the providence of food, drinks, and land to the Israelites. He saved them from Egyptian bondage, forgave King David who committed adultery with Bathsheba and also killed Uriah.

God is a perfect worker, seen in the creation story, he is pleased with what he created. "And God was pleased with what He saw.

MAN'S NATURE AND CHARACTER IN GEN 1-3

Man is unique from other creatures and is superior to them. He maintains His nature throughout the bible for example Psalm: 8:5, Amos 4:13.

By nature man was created in God's image, likeness and resembles God.

Man is a co-creator with God, meaning he was put in an unfinished world which he has to beautify and improve by using the available resources and God given intelligence.

He is a sinner and a wrong doer/rebellious as seen in Gen: 3; where he disobeyed God's command.

He needs a companion to be peaceful, happy and to become fully man. Man became happy after woman was created, Gen: 2:23

Man and Woman are equal in value rights and dignity by nature- portrayed by both being created in God's image and by woman being part of man's body Gen: 2:21.

Man is responsible for the suffering he goes through in this world. God did not create misery for man but it is through his sin that he become truly miserable, lost and separated from both God and fellow man.

He is not ready and willing to accept responsibility for his evil deeds. Adam blamed Eve, who also pushed the blame to the serpent.

N.B:- This is in contrast with the teaching of Christianity which calls upon us to accept our mistakes.

He is liable to temptations which are human, that Christians should use the power of the Holy Spirit to resist temptations. That if we commit sin, we should accept and repent genuinely, that true repentance leads to forgiveness.

Genesis teaches that man by nature needs leisure time after working Gen: 2:3

The above nature of man keeps recurring throughout the Old Testament, man oppresses and exploits fellow man, ignores the widows, orphans, poor, strangers e.t.c

THE TWO CREATION STORIES GEN 1 AND 2

To a lay man, there is only one creation story but for a scholar, there are two versions of creation written by different, authors/groups of writers (JEPD traditions)

The first creation story was written by priestly writers (P tradition) and is found in Gen: 1:1-31, 2:1 – 4a.

The 2nd creation story is in Gen 2:4b - 25 written by the Yahwist writers. The message in both is essentially the same but the stories are different in the presentation of this divine message.

DIFFERENCES

The 1st creation story presents God's as authoritative and distant from His creatures. ;ie He lives far from them and creates using a powerful word- "let there be" on the other hand, the 2nd story presents God as fatherly and near His creatures- Gen2:5-25. He creates by action (touching, moulding and breathing) life giving breath in these creatures.

The first story presents human being created in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27) while the 2nd story shows man being created out of soil and woman out man's rib.

The 2nd translates God's name as Jehovah/ Yahweh/ Lord in the Hebrew language and refers to God as "the Lord God"; in the first account, He is simply referred to as God.

The order of creation differs in that the 1st account presents God creating light first then other things and at last man. The 2nd shows man as the first thing created before other creatures and woman was the last to be created.

In the first story man and woman were created simultaneously. The intention was to show the quality of both in dignity and value while the 2nd story shows human beings created at different times . in Gen2:4b-25 man was created first, then other creatures and woman last. This probably was intended to show the origin of women's inferiority to men.

In the first, man does not name the creatures, while in the 2nd story man names the creatures made by God and even his companion Gen2:23.

In the first story, God rested after his work of creation while in the 2nd, no mention is made of God's resting.

In the 2nd story man and woman are portrayed as naked and innocent Gen 2:25 while in the first story, nothing like that is mentioned about them.

In the 2nd account man was given a limit on the food to eat i.e he was prohibited from eating the fruits of the tree in the middle of the garden and was threatened with death if he did contrary to God's orders, in the first account man was given a right to subdue the earth and make use of all creatures for his own happiness. There was no prohibition of food and no threat of death.

The purpose of creating the 2 sexes, in the first story was for procreation Gen. 1:28 while in the 2nd story the purpose is for companionship.

God is presented as spiritual and invisible in the 1st while the 2nd account presents God with a physical make up. He touches, moulds and breathes into man.

God has associates in creating in the 1st story (the Trinity) "let us create human beings…." This contrasts with the 2nd story in which God was singular Gen:2:18.

In the 1st, the original waters were raging hostile and dark Gen:12, while in the 2nd story, the original waters are featured as good Gen2:6

The 1st, is the general creation story in which God is equally concerned about all His creatures while the 2nd, is a specific account in which God is mainly concerned about the man He has created and the garden of Eden.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE FIRST AND 2ND CREATION STORIES

In both, humans were highly blessed e.g man was endowed with God's image in the 1st and in the 2nd he was given the garden of Eden.

Both show man's equality with woman and takes her to be part of his body/equal Gen 1:26-27 and Gen 2: 18-25.

Monogamy is emphasized in both God created one woman for a man.

Human beings are the most important creatures in both stories for example in the first story, man was created last to show the climax of the creation of God in the 2nd man was created first before other creatures to show that he was God's priority and other creatures were made for him.

In both, God is the creator and source of life, He created with wisdom, order and harmony.

Man is the master of God's creatures in both i.e in the first story, man masters other creatures and in the 2nd he names other creatures.

Account for the differences in the creation stories

The priestly writers intended to convey their deep conviction of the total equality of all persons regardless of status, sex, by showing that man and woman were created at the same time on the other hand, the Yahwist writers intended at the same time on the other hand, the Yahwist writers intended to trace the origin of women's inferiority to men i.e man was created first to be the head then woman was given to him as a helper.

The priestly writers were responding to questions which the young generations asked e.g where does God live? How did He create? In response they were informed that God is spiritual, cannot be seen, proved/disapproved.

The writers of the two stories lived at different periods of time and wrote earlier during King Solomon's reign while the priestly writers wrote 400 yrs later 550-450 BC, during the exile period. Given the different locations, date ideas and problems in the different settings, they had to present the same story, differently.

The Yahwists writers wrote when Israel was peaceful, king Solomon had worked hard and people became prosperous. This is why they pictured God as a greater worker. on the other hand, the priestly writers who wrote 400 yrs later had seen how Israelites devoted all their work to the satisfaction of their masters and had forgotten to worship God. So the priestly writers showed that God worked for Six days and rested on the 7^{th} day. Thus, they wanted to highlight the value of the Sabbath day.

THE MEANING OF CREATING MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE GEN 1:26-27

This means that man looks like God physically and shares some of the qualities with God as compared to other creatures, thus, man is distinct from other creatures.

It means that though man has God's image in him, he can never become God and when he tries to he only brings disaster upon himself as Adam and Eve did in Gen 3. However, God can become man in the mystery of incarnation.

It means that man is in this world to play a central role i.e He is God's representative to the rest of creation and has to do so responsibly.

He masters and has authority over other creatures. It means that man has been given a privileged position. Human beings are the only creatures that have a share of God's intelligence. Thus, they have the power to reason, make decisions and judgement.

Man should worship God a lone, he is capable of sharing a special relationship with God. He has the capability of carrying out the fellowship and sharing with God a perfect relationship.

Human beings have a free will to either respond to God in love or otherwise. They are free to obey or disobey, to find true happiness, purpose and fulfillment in God.

He has been given the power to pro-create and co- create and ensure the continuity of life. He has the responsibility to subdue the world using the resources created by God, the power to create new human beings using the gift of sex.

It implies the equality of man and woman both share God's image and so man should not subject a woman to insubordination/ torture.

Man shares in the wisdom of God which enable him to be creative, think innovate and improve on his surroundings. He does so in order to make the world a better place to live in.

Man has value which can enable him fight for peace and justice in the world. He should deal justly with fellow men. In the same way as God is full of justice and fairness to mankind.

Man who shares God's image must be holy just as God is holy. Thus, man is called to be moral and use the knowledge of good and bad to fight all sorts of immorality in the world.

Man shares in God's immortality. He was created to live forever though death came as a result of his sin. In Gen: 3. As Christians, we know that even after death there is unending life.

Man has to depend on God in the way he carries out his life-covering all aspects of life.

HAS MAN LIVED UP TO GOD'S IMAGE?

To a great extent man has lived up to God's image and to a small extent he has failed to. This is seen in the following ways:

Some people worship only one God (monotheism). In the Old Testament times, God's prophets like Samuel, Amos and some kings like Josiah remained true monotheists. Today many Christians worship only Jesus Christ.

Man has extended charitable services to the destitutes that is, children and disadvantaged people. By so doing some people today have activated God's image in them.

Some have remained as true monogamists .for example, in the Old Testament, prophet Isaiah had only one wife whom he did not divorce. In the same way some Christians today are monogamists.

Mankind has maintained holiness in himself. Thus, he has tried to be moral and used his wisdom to guard against immorality in the world.

Through procreation and taking care of the children produced, man has kept God's image.

Man has maintained the equality between man and woman. That is, sees God's image in her and therefore takes her as a companion.

Man has made use of the natural resources to produce a number of commodities for his benefit.

Man is still enjoying, the privileged position that God gave him at the time of creation. He has a share of God's intelligence which he uses to reason, make decisions and judgements accordingly.

Scientists have made research and exciting discoveries, for example, medicine, technologists have improved the face of the world by making transport easy, thereby living up to God's image of co- creation.

Mankind has used his free will to respond to God in love which has made him find true happiness, purpose and fulfilment in God.

Man has continued to play a central role in the world by representing God responsibly to the rest of creation.

Man fights for peace and justice in the world and reflects God's image.

However, to a small extent, he has shown acts of disobedience to God thereby making him fall short of living up to God's image, as follows:-

Today, people who oppress, exploit and torture women abuse God's image in them For example, they carry out things like battering women, sexual harassment and so on.

Speaking obscene words and other ways of misuse of the tongue reflect failure by man to live up to God's image.

Sexual immorality which is rampant today reflects the abuse of God's image in man.for example, prostitution, homosexuality.

Today some people are selfish and show lack of care for the underprivileged classes and portray abuse of God's image in them.

Industrial and technological progress which pollutes the environment is a way of failing to live up to God's image.

Actions like tribalism nepotism, racial segregation, religious and political bias are all indicators of man's failure to live up to God's image.

Wars in countries and between countries that have led to loss of lives, starvation, destruction of property etc. are a sign of failure to live up to God's image.

Witchcraft, polytheism are ways of abuse of God's image in mankind.

Divorce, abortion and many other evils are ways of abuse of God's image.

In the Old Testament, Adam and Eve abused God's image in them by disobeying God and eating the forbidden fruit.

King David in the Old Testament abused God's image in him by killing Uriah and then took over Uriah's wife ,over taxed the Israelites, were forced to work hard, their property confiscated, were sacrificed to the foreign gods.

THE TEACHING OF GENESIS ABOUT MARRIAGE

Marriage is the union between man and woman in a lifelong relationship which is divine. The book of Genesis teaches the following about marriage.

Normal marriage must be between two people of the opposite sex. Any union between members of the same sex is unGodly and wrong.

The major purpose of marriage is for procreation. The married have to produce children and bring them up well.

Marriage should be monogamous. In Gen 1 and 2 God created man for woman not men for woman or women for man.

Marriage is meant for companionship and love of each other. This seen when woman was created for man to provide him company.

Sex in marriage is right and a right. It is God given and sanctified. Sex outside marriage is wrong.

Marriage is a lifelong commitment and permanent union thus divorce is against God's intention for marriage.

Both man and woman are equal in marriage as they all pay a role in co- creation. However, this doesn't mean that they should play a similar role. Each has roles to play which the other is unable to do.

In marriage there should be total unity of the body, soul and heart. That is the meaning of the two people becoming one.

Man should love his partner more than his or her parents. This is implied by the statement "a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife."

Woman was created out of man's rib and this points out some ideas like:- she was not created out o the bone of the leg for man to trample on her or from the head to torture her.

From the rib means they are equal in dignity and value; they come out of the same material.

This makes man happy and fulfilled seen from Adams's explanation. This is one of my own, bone from my bones, a body from my body -she was taken out of man"

STUDY QNS.

1. (a) Examine God's plan for mankind in Gen 1 and 2
   (b) To what extent has man fulfilled this plan?
2. (a) Define the term Pentateuch
   (b) Examine the views for and against Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch.
3. Then God said "let us make man in our own image and likeness" RSV Gen 1:26

(a) Explain the meaning of creating man in God's image

(b) Discuss the ways in which man has failed to live according to God's image.

4. (a) What insights do the creation stories give about the creation of man?

(b) How does this state of creation change in Gen:3 ?

RELEVANCE OF THE CREATION STORIES

They tell mankind about the origin of mankind the universe and everything in it.

We learn of the nature of God ,that is,His pre- existence meaning, he existed before the world was created. Thus God is the source of everything Gen1:1.

The importance of leisure is emphasized in two ways: (i) The day was divided into day and night time for rest`

(ii) God worked for six days and rested on the 7^{th} day blessed it and made it holy. Because man was made in the image and likeness of God, he should follow God's example by creating time to rest after work.

God is powerful; His omnipotence is seen through His word being able to bring something into existence.

God's, omniscience is clearly seen in the order of creation. He began by creating the sun, other heavenly bodies, made the sky separate from the earth, then plants, animals and then man. If He had made man before the rest, he would have nothing to eat, besides, His creatures needed a master.

God is a perfect worker (Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 25, 31). Whenever God finished a piece of work, He was pleased with what He had done, because it was perfectly good.

God loves man and His love for mankind is shown in the following ways:-

- Plants and animals were created for man to enjoy, he was made in association with others, using his hands God moulded man:- man is the summit of creation.
- God made a suitable partner for Adam.
- Gave him the beautiful Garden of Eden.
- Man was given the privilege of having the image and likeness of God, of all His creation.
- Man's procreative activity is manifested in these stories. God gave man the ability to produce his own kind Gen1:28.

God is the planner, creator, organizer of the universe who carefully designed the earth. God is a personal God.

Man should work, God is a worker and since man was made in God's image and likeness, he should follow God's example. one of the reasons why man was commanded to produce to the world was, so that he brings it under control. Adam was created so that he could till the land of Eden.

Marriage was instituted by God. That is why a man shall leave his mother and father, unite with his wife and become one body Gen2:24.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE CREATION OF MANKIND.

We learn about God as the source of man's life the giver of life man did not come to existence as the theory of evolution puts it.

Human beings are created in God's image. Therefore, whenever we are dealing with our fellow human beings we should see the reflection of God in them.

God instituted marriage as monogamous by creating them male and female.

Male and female are complementary. They are to work as partners to bring the world under control.

It is only through marriage that children should be produced. It is wrong to produce children out of the wedlock.

Man is a co- creator ,originally there was no unhappiness and disharmony. Thus, God intends man to live a happy life. It therefore follows that the duty of every man is to foster goodness and harmony on earth.

Work was one of the blessings which God gave to mankind. Man was to subdue the earth, to till the land of Eden. This shows that we should look at work as a blessing not a curse.

Man should work and have time to rest. He has to balance work with leisure than working endlessly.

REBELLION AND SIN (THE FALL OF MAN) GEN 3:1-18ff)

The beauty and order in Gen 1 and 2 is shattered as we move to Gen3. Here, human beings make a choice that they want to be like God and know what is good and what is bad.

Their decision is made to try to usurp the divine power. Vss 1-7 describe how they take action to obtain the knowledge which will over whelm and destroy them.

Their relationship to each other was destroyed immediately they disobeyed God. They also felt ashamed and guilty.

The nature of the tempter is seen in that it can present evil in a way that makes it seem good. Gen 3:1-7 show in a brilliant and concise way the nature of sin which is essentially rebellion against God, arising from the denial of love and trust in God.

Man has been trusted by God to control the earth but he is master of the world only when he realizes his dependence on God, his creator and the one who gave him life.

SYMBOLISM IN THE STORY OF THE FALL OF MAN

The story of Man's fall need not be taken literally; scholars should not aim at knowing the exact fruit eaten by Adam and eve. Rather, they should aim at the message that the writer intends to put across. The following are symbols in the story.

The Garden of Eden symbolizes the good and happy life which God had intended for mankind i.e. paradise on earth and a peaceful life without conflicts and enemies.

The tree of life and knowledge stands for God's commands which should be obeyed, it also stands for God's justice, authority love and wisdom.

The tree of life further symbolizes unending life or immortality. When man trusts God, he carries eternal life (the tree of life) with him.

It stands for God Himself who is the true source of wisdom, thus obedience to God enables man to have a true knowledge of what is good and evil.

The fruit of the tree symbolizes the attractive nature of sin.

The serpent symbolizes Satan's presence; it means that the man is at war with the evil spirits.

Since the snake symbolized fertility in the Canaanite religion, the writer was warning the Israelites against the worship of other gods.

Woman symbolizes man who is confidently faced with ethical tests to choose, what is right and leave what is wrong. She began by resisting the serpent's suggestions but finally gave in as most people do today.

Nakedness symbolizes guilty conscience, loss of the glory and innocence that man originally had.

Clothing (animals skins) symbolize God's covering of man's nakedness and God's undying love for mankind.

Man's offspring crushing the serpent's head was a prediction about the future coming of Jesus Christ who would overcome evil and lead man into salvation.

Consequences of sin in Gen 3

Gen; 3 :7-24 spells out the consequences of the first sinful act as seen below:-

The original equality between man and woman faded and as a replacement, there came man's superiority over woman.

Work that had been given to man as a blessing became a painful exercise i.e. man was to toil throughout his life and yet die unsatisfied. The original harmony between man and creatures was lost, thus the snake became an enemy of human beings since then.

Man's friendship with God and the blessing that he had enjoyed with God turned to fear of God- Gen 3:8

What had been innocent and good became shameful Gen3:10- i.e. nakedness.

The relationship between man and woman is spoilt, the original peace between them was lost hence, man blamed woman for the sin Gen 3:12, the story of Cain and Abel.

Pain would be part of human experience i.e., Gen 3:16 especially during child labour. Despite the above, the woman will still desire her husband.

In order to meet his needs man will toil and struggle then death will be his end- Gen3:18 to produce weeds and thorns.

Man lost the original image of God i.e. the perfect and the holy nature he originally had with God was removed and man remained with a duplicate, up to date he has failed to live up to God's image.

In this dark situation, God alone brings hope. God looks for man even while man rebels against Him. He called man out of his hiding; God does the same to human beings because He wants man to enjoy and share the care and love, therefore God takes the initiative to show man the way back to Him.

Man must bear the consequences of his sin too but he is not beyond the reach of God's love.

In Gen 3: 23-24, man begins a different kind of life but God still reaches out to them i.e. He provides clothing for them as seen in verse 21.

Besides, God provides means by which they can find food Gen; 3:23. Through the continuing care of his sinful creatures, it shows the beginning of the biblical belief of salvation thru God's grace/ the free offering of His love for man.

THE MEANING OF THE CLOTHING OF MAN BY GOD GEN3:21

When man sinned against God in the Garden of Eden, God made clothes out of animal skins and clothed Adam and his wife. This act of God had implications as seen below:-

It meant that God still loved mankind in spite of their disobedience.

God had mercy upon His people- He forgave them despite their sinful act. God is ever merciful to sinners.

This act showed God's concern about His people despite their wickedness. They were still His people.

It showed that God desires to be with His people. He makes an effort to bring them back to Him

It showed God's ever willingness to help those who sin i.e. He wants the relationship He has with mankind to be restored.

It showed the unique relationship that mankind had with God, despite their sin- (made in God's image).

The act showed God as a parent whoever wants to be with His people.

God's salvation plan for mankind is shown, thus, God wanted to bring man closer to Himself through the messiah.

To show God's reconciliatory act with mankind so that man once more, draws closer to him.

To cover man's nakedness as he felt ashamed on realizing that they were naked.

It meant that God was willing to help sinners get out of their sins.

It was the beginning of the attempt by God to look for the sinful man.

It showed God as a provider- provided clothes to the sinful man who was in need of covering his body.

It showed God's powerfulness- making clothes out of animals' skins.

It showed God as a creator, who created clothing for mankind.

It showed God's generous nature and a kind being, extending help to the needy.

Man is subordinate to God and dependent to him for all his needs

God gave man a 2nd chance to repent and get back to him.

It demonstrated that man was still a representative of God on earth despite his sin.

THE RELEVANCE OF THIS ACTION TO CHRISTIANS TODAY

God's action of clothing mankind is relevant to Christians today as follows:-

Christians today should show love and care for others in need as God extended His loving arm towards the sinful man.

Modern Christians should try to bring sinners to God, seen by God's act of drawing man closer to Himself through clothing.

They should forgive those who sin against them. God forgave mankind that is why He went to the extent of providing clothing for them.

They should accept. The gift of salvation which God gives because God still wants them to turn to him.

Christians should show mercy to those who wrong them by providing for their necessities, God provided for mankind.

Christians should desist from shameful acts as shame belittles human beings.

It shows that Christians should hide their nakedness without exposing it to the public.

They should accept the gift of salvation which God gives because God still wants them to turn to him.

They should be ready to get out of their sins i.e. there is need for Christians to rely on God who is ready to cloth them.

Christians today should identify the unique relationship they have with God and so try to maintain it.

They should accept the love of God as Adam and Eve accepted His clothing.

They are called upon to repent off their sins so as to come back to a closer relationship with God.

They need to help those who have strayed and bring them back to God as mankind was brought back to God.

They are advised to rely on God for everything as Adam and Eve relied on God for clothing.

They are challenged to show love and care to those who have sinned as God showed love to Adam and Eve despite their sinfulness.

It shows God's omniscience in their needs, He knew they needed clothing by then

The Christians should interpret God's nature of omniscience. He knew that Adam and Eve needed clothing hence provided for them.