UNIT 2: THE KING JAMES BIBLE: THE STORY OF CREATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

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2.3 The Story of Creation

2.4 Major Themes

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2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- list the two major divisions of the Bible
- share your understanding of the 'story of creation'
- point out the major themes from the 'story of creation'
- explain the style of King James' Bible

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the Holy Book of Christianity. The word "Bible" is derived from Greek Word "Biblia", which means "Books". The Bible consists of two parts—'The Old Testament' and the 'The New Testament'. The Old Testament contains the Holy Scriptures of the Hebrews or the Jews written by anonymous Hebrew authors incorporating the Traditions and Teachings of The Jewish Prophets before the Birth of Jesus Christ. The New Testament solely concerns the Life and Teachings of Christ and His Apostle. Let us discuss the story of Man's Creation as represented in the Bible.

2.3 THE STORY OF CREATION

The Old Testament, originally in Hebrew, begins with Torah or Law—the five Books of Moses, namely Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It is known as Pentateuch in the New Revised Standard Version, now used by the Roman Catholics. The next Twelve Books in (sixteen books in NRSV) starting from Joshua to Esther deals with the History of the Jewish People. The next Five Books of KJV (seven Books in NRSV) namely Job, Psalms, Proverbs, The Ecclesiastes and The Song of Solomon (also Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach in NRSV) can be classified as Wisdom and Poetry and the rest Seventeen Books (Eighteen Books in NRSV) are Prophesies, starting with Prophet Isaiah to Prophet Malachi. There are total 39 Books in King James Version (43 Books in NRSV).

The New Testament consists of Four Gospels namely Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. Gospel is derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'godspell' meaning good news. So Gospel means Good News preached by Jesus Christ. Other than the Gospel there are The Acts of the Apostles (History), Fourteen Pauline Letters (Letter Written by St. Paul) and Seven Catholic Letters and the Apocalypse or the Revelation. Thus The New Testament consists of 27 Books. King James Holy Bible consists of 66 collected Books. However, the Catholic edition of New Revised Standard Version of the Bible consists of 73 Books.

The Bible basically deals with the theme of God, His Works of Creation, Provisions, Judgement, Deliverance, His Covenant, and His Promises. The Bible sees what happens to humankind in the light of God's Nature, Righteousness, Faithfulness, Mercy and Love. The Book of Genesis is one of the best examples where Divine and human relationship is best explained. God's Creation, man's estrangement from God's Mercy and the promise of redemption is shown in this book.

The Bible is a salvation history. It deals with Creation of mankind, man's failure and Committing Sin, Punishment, Reconciliation and Covenant Mankind. In the Bible, everything was created in Fiat. Among the Creation humans were the supreme (Gen: 1:26-30). The Bible reveals that Holy Trinity Created Man

in His own image and likeness and endowed with the power to reign over all other animals.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What are the two parts of the Bible?

Q2. What are the five books of Moses in the Old Testament?

Q3. How many books do the New Testament consist of?

Q4. What are the general themes of the Bible?

2.4 MAJOR THEMES

Some of the themes that emerge from the Story of Creation in the Bible are as discussed below:

Concept of God in Bible :

Gospel according to John tells—"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."(John: 1:1-2) In the same way The Book of Genesis tells that the Word created everything. The Concept of Holy Trinity or 'Three in One God' is thus revealed in the Bible. When God created Man He said, "Let us make humankind in our Image after our likeness..." (Gen: 1:26). The use of pronouns 'us' and 'our' indicates that the creator is not a single persona.The Concept of Holy Trinity is ratified in 'The New Testament'. Jesus Christ promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples (John 14: 15-17). So in the Holy Trinity there is The Father, The Son (Jesus) and The Holy Spirit.

There are two accounts of creation story in The Bible. Genesis Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 deal with these themes. Among His creation Humankind is created with utmost care and concern on the sixth day of the week. Genesis1: 27 says, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Again Chapter 2:7 says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust, of the ground and breathed into his nostrils He breath of Life and man became a living Soul." According to the Bible Eve

was created from Adam's rib. The meaning of woman in Bible is 'taken out of man' (Gen: 2:23).

Man's Fall and God's Judgement :

John Milton in his Invocation to the "Paradise Lost" talks about man's first fall into sin. So the first sin committed by man was disobedience. Eve ate the forbidden fruit of knowledge. The punishment was that they lost Eden, Paradise on earth and a curse came upon mankind. Labour pain came to women and Adam was cursed—"in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life." As a result death came to mankind. The Serpent who deceived Eve was cursed too- "Upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life."(Gen: 3:14-21).

Thus from that day Adam and Eve lost the Garden of Eden. Wickedness of mankind multiplied. Cain murdered his own brother Abel (Gen: 4:8-9). When the wickedness of mankind multiplied God punished them. The Great Flood at the time of Noah is one such example. God was furious upon mankind for their wickedness. He determined to end wickedness from the face of the earth. So He killed the entire humanity with the great Flood or the deluge except the family of Noah who at that time was found righteous at the sight of God.

There are such other narrations in the Bible regarding God's Judgement. When wickedness of mankind in Sodom and Gomorrah increased He punished them (Gen: 19:12-29). Israelites were also punished and enslaved to the Egyptians for their wickedness. The tower of Babel is another occasion where God had to interfere in human activities. According to the Bible the many languages we have today was created at Shinar, the tower of Babel.

The Bible is often regarded as a Salvation History. It deals with God-Man relationship; God's Blessing upon mankind, man's failure to respond to His Love and subsequent punishment. Many Covenants made between God and Man is like a constant effort on the part of Creator to strengthen His relationship with His Creation. God made Covenant with Noah and promised not to destroy mankind with deluge (Gen: 9:1-17).God made Covenant with

Abraham, Moses and the Final Covenant was made by Jesus Christ in The New Testament.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5. Which two chapters deal with the Story of Creation?

Q6. Explain the concept of Holy Trinity in the Bible.

Q7. What do women mean in the Bible?

Q8. What did John Milton talk about in his Invocation to *Paradise Lost*?

Q9. How did God punish mankind for their wickedness?

2.5 STYLE AND LANGUAGE

The King James Bible (1611) played an important role in moulding the English nation. It has become the principal book of English religion and the cultural promotion within and outside England. Its language became not just the mechanism for religious expression but also an inseparable example of a predominantly Anglo-Saxon culture. The Bible is filled with so many stories and moral teachings. The English translations of Bible starting with Lollard or Wycliff's Bible (1382),'The New Testament' by William Tyndale (1526), preceding King James Bible were circulated freely. The Mystery plays and the Morality plays are directly influenced by such translated forms of the Bible.

King James' Bible is easy to read and to interpret. The sentences are very poetical filled with diction. Adam's joy after seeing Eve is very poetic,

"This is now bone of my bones,

And flesh of my flesh,

She shall be called woman,

Because she was taken out of man." (Gen: 2:23)

Again in Genesis Chapter 3:15

> "I will put enemity between Thee and the Woman,
>
> And between thy seed and herseed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The King James Bible uses the Anglo Saxon dialect. Words such as thou, thine, thy, thee, shalt are very often used in the Bible. This is an implication of the Anglo-Saxon influence during King James' time.The Bible uses 'parables' and stories as means to instruct and impart moral lessons. The use of symbolism plays an important role in ratifying God's Covenant with man. The most visible symbol used to ratify God's Covenants is the rainbow that we see after rainfall. God promised not to destroy mankind with flood and as a symbol he created the rainbow. That is why after the rainfall the rainbow appears as a sign of new hope.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q10. Describe the significance of King James' Bible.

Q11. Give examples showing the influence of Anglo-Saxon dialect in King James' Bible.

Q12. Write a note on the use of symbolism in the Bible.



2.6 LET US SUM UP

After reading the unit, you have become familiar with King James' Bible. You are now aware that the Bible consists of two parts: The Old Testament and The New Testament. By now, you have become familiar with the Story of Creation of mankind as well as about the Holy Trinity. The use of symbols in the Bible standas proof of God's Covenant with Man. You are also acquainted with the influence of Anglo-Saxon dialect in King James' Bible. You must be able to find out by now that the Bible uses 'parables' and stories as means to instruct and impart moral lessons.



2.7 FURTHER READING

1. The Bible: Authorized King James Version (Oxford World's Classics)



2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q 1 : The Bible consists of two parts—'The Old Testament' and the 'The New Testament'. The Old Testament contains the Holy Scriptures of the Hebrews or the Jews written by anonymous Hebrew authors incorporating the traditions and teachings of the Jewish Prophets before the birth of Jesus Christ. The New Testament solely concerns the life and teachings of Christ and His Apostles.

Ans to Q 2 : Genesis , Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Ans to Q 3 : The New Testament consists of Four Gospels namely Mathew, Mark, Luke and John.

Ans to Q 4 : The Bible basically deals with the theme of God, His Works of Creation, Provisions, Judgement, Deliverance, His Covenant, and His Promises. The Bible sees what happens to humankind in the light of God's Nature, Righteousness, Faithfulness, Mercy and Love. The Book of Genesis is one of the best examples where divine and human relationship is best explained.

Ans to Q 5 : There are two accounts of creation story in the Bible. Genesis Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 deal with these themes.

Ans to Q 6 : The concept of Holy Trinity or 'Three in One God' is revealed in the Bible. When God created Man He said, "Let us make humankind in our Image after our likeness..." (Gen: 1:26). The use of pronouns 'us' and 'our' indicates that the creator is not a single person. The concept of Holy Trinity is ratified in 'The New Testament'. Jesus Christ promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples (John 14: 15-17). So in the Holy Trinity there is The Father, The Son (Jesus) and The Holy Spirit.

Ans to Q 7 : The meaning of woman in Bible is 'taken out of man'.

Ans to Q 8 : John Milton in his Invocation to the "Paradise Lost" talks about man's first fall into sin. So the first sin committed by man was disobedience. Eve ate the forbidden fruit of knowledge. The punishment was that they lost Eden, the Paradise on earth and a curse came upon mankind.

Ans to Q 9 : When the wickedness of mankind multiplied God punished them. The Great Flood at the time of Noah is one such example. God was furious on mankind for their wickedness. He was determined to end wickedness from the face of the earth. So, He destroyed the entire humanity through the deluge except the family of Noah who at that time were found righteous in the eyes of God.

Ans to Q 10 : The King James Bible (1611) played an important role in moulding the English nation. It became the principle book of English religion and the cultural promotion within and outside England. Its language became not just the mechanism for religious expression but also an inseparable example of a predominantly Anglo-Saxon way of life.

Ans to Q 11 : The King James Bible uses the Anglo Saxon dialect. Words such as thou, thine, thy, thee, shalt are very often used in the Bible. This is an implication of the Anglo-Saxon influence during King James's time.

Ans to Q 12 : The use of symbolism plays an important role in ratifying God's Covenant with man. The most visible symbol used to ratify God's Covenants is the rainbow that we see after rainfall. God promised not to destroy mankind with flood and as a symbol he created the rainbow. That's why after the rainfall the rainbow appears as a sign of new hope.



2.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss the story of creation as mentioned in King James' Bible.

Q2. Write notes on The Old Testament and The New Testament.

Q3. Describe the language of the King James' Bible.

Q4. Write a note on the themes of the King James' Bible.

Q5. Discuss the significance of the King James' Bible in England.

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