

NEW TRENDS *in*

FAMILY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

(ZIMBABWEAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION & JUDAISM)

ADVANCED LEVEL



Muronzi A.

Maregedze B.

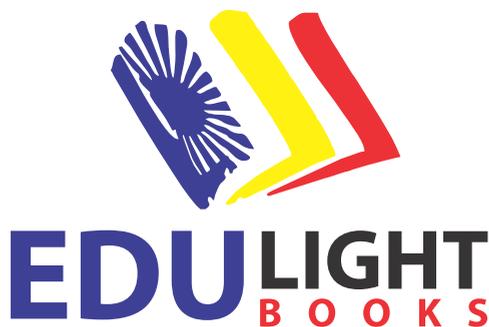


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UPDATED CURRICULUM

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DEDICATION

The book is dedicated to all teachers, students of Family and Religious Studies in Zimbabwe and our families.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all students at Chinhoyi 2 High School Class of 2018 who motivated us to write this book. Edulite publishers provided us with the necessary inspiration to make this book a reality. Mr Watadza, Director of Edulite Publishers remains a star and his team. We are ever grateful. We also, would like to thank Mrs Makore for letting us use her valuable books from her personal library. Thank you so much. We also want to express our gratitude to Mrs Ndewere for assisting with some insights into the Ndebele and Venda traditions as well as the translations of the Isindebele and Venda language. Sincere gratitude to our mentor Professor Obvious Vengeyi for his valuable constructive criticism of this book. Last, but not least we are indebted to love and support we had from our families.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

New Trends in Family and Religious Studies for Advanced level is one of the finest books that was written by Zimbabwean authors in response to the introduction of the New Curriculum. The book addresses the demands of Paper one which comprises of African Indigenous Religion and Judaism. From the onset, the authors introduce indigenous religion positioning the insider perspectives as well as the outsiders' points of analysis. In that same light, students in Zimbabwe studying the Family and Religious Studies course for Advanced level are challenged with revision questions at the end of every chapter.

More insightful is the way the authors situate Indigenous Religion within the broader context of World Religions. In chapter two the authors also tackle some aspects of Ndebele, Venda, Budyá and Karanga religion in particular. Indigenous religions were vilified by the westerners when they came into Africa. In spite of that, there are however, other Africans still wired in western thought systems such that they view indigenous religion with indifference and scorn. The authors went on to discuss about the cosmological beliefs of the indigenous people with a bias of pre-colonial, colonial and independent Zimbabwe. The indigenous people of Zimbabwe believe in a plethora of spirits, such as, the ancestral, alien, avenging, lion spirit, among others. The authors also discuss about the subject of witchcraft which the Indigenous people believe exist, despite the fact that there is no empirical evidence to prove its tenability.

Chapter three deals with the concept of totemism and its importance in the life of the Indigenous people. Symbolism is discussed in chapter four at length with various symbols that are found in different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. The Chapter makes it clear that African Indigenous Religion and symbolism are inseparable. Chapter five confronts the concept of death and afterlife. The indigenous people believe in the concept of afterlife and to substantiate this point the authors use evidence from other studies in Zimbabwe.

Chapter six critically engages the concept of mediumship, how one is possessed and how one becomes a traditional healer. In chapter seven the concept of unhu which is the central value of the indigenous cultures is given attention. Unhu as the authors submit is the behavior that is acceptable to the people who occupy the landscape between Zambezi and Limpopo. The concept of family is discussed in

chapter eight. Family is at the epicentre of the community among the indigenous people. The authors pointed out that the African family is an extended one. The chapter also addresses the concept of community and social responsibility. Life in Indigenous religion is addressed as a communal affair and individual aspect. At the heart of the debate being the communalistic sectionality versus individualism. Thus, kinship becomes vital in the understanding of life in indigenous religion.

Chapter ten deals with the status of women and the authors argue that the status of women in Indigenous Religion was a contested space with Eurocentric and Afrocentric thinkers divided in opinion. The chapter also deals with the reasons why there are few women in political positions despite participating actively in political parties. Chapter eleven focuses on the issue of land tenure and the two authors categorically make it clear that land in indigenous religion is sacred and belonged to the ancestors; the community members are just stewards of ancestral land. Chapter twelve then pays attention to the natural environment, the sacred phenomena and the taboos. Deploying the romanticist perspective on the environment and the revisionists' position, critical engagements are espoused. The aspects of enterprise, the acceptable and unacceptable ways of wealth accumulation in indigenous religions are assessed. Traditional leadership has always been an epitome of the Africans in indigenous systems. Nonetheless, colonial encroachment and facets of independent Zimbabwe remain confronted with the problem of the authority of traditional leaders.

The major second section of book deals with Judaism. Tracing from the topical issue of covenant and the law, debates on the origins of prophecy, the early manifestations of prophecy in Israel, true and false prophets are given scholarly attention, delving into contemporary stand-points. The function of prophets, marriage institution in Judaism, the complex concept of death and related beliefs. Death is viewed as sacred and there are a lot of rituals performed when a Jew dies. The Jews bury their dead in separate grounds in a communal cemetery in Zimbabwe. Health in Judaism is unpacked as the book explains within the context of a relationship with the Supreme Being. The Jews believe in medicinal healing and prayer. The centrality of Land as espoused within the Promised Land discourse is well articulated. Land, just like in indigenous religion, forms the heritage of the Jews such that its value exceeds commercial value attached to modernity in its various faces or phases. Finally, the last chapter deals with the place and intersection of environment with Judaism. The authors conclude by focusing on the negative and positive attitudes of Jews towards the environment.

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CHAPTER ONE

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS AND THE WORLD RELIGIONS

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of Religion
- Explore the place of Indigenous Religion in World Religions.

INTRODUCTION

It is vital to understand religion and its importance. The introduction of the new curriculum has seen the divergence from the old Christo-centric curriculum to a well inclusive curriculum. In this chapter we focus on definitions of the term religion as well as to discuss the reasons why African Indigenous Religion should be considered among the world religions. There has been a debate among scholars as to whether Africa Indigenous Religion should be regarded as a world religion or not. Western missionaries and Eurocentric oriented thinkers are of the opinion that African Indigenous Religion cannot be regarded as a world religion while African scholars argue that it has what it takes to be among world religions.

THE WORD 'RELIGION' DEFINED

A lot of ink has been spilt trying to define the term 'religion.' The word is derived from the Latin word “*religio*” which means something which attaches or retains moral bond and anxiety of self-consciousness. Cicero says it comes from *relegere* which means to read again or to consider carefully. In this sense, 'religion' means to carefully consider the things related to the worship of gods. The Oxford English Dictionary (1970:271) defines religion as “the recognition of superhuman controlling power, and especially of a personal god, entitled to obedience.” Belief in a god or gods is found in most religions, but different superhuman powers are often revered, particularly those connected with the dead. It should be noted that there are many other elements of religious life which cannot be included in a short definition, but which appear in this book. Karl Marx for example, has defined religion actually as the “opium of the masses.” That is to say that religion functions as a negative force in societies, causing oppressed people to be unaware of their plight or to feel powerless to change it. According to Ellis and Ter Haar, (2004:14) for most people in the world, including in Africa, 'religion' refers to a belief in the existence of an invisible world, distinct, but not separate from the visible one, which is home to spiritual beings that are deemed to have effective powers over the material world. From the definitions above one can say that 'religion' refers to a system or set of beliefs (anthropological, soteriological, cosmological and numinological), practices, feelings institutions, and relationships of human beings with supernatural [beings].

CHAPTER TWO

THE SHONA AND NDEBELE COSMOLOGY

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of God in Indigenous Religion
- Identify the attributes of God in Indigenous Religion
- Explore the existence of spirits in Indigenous Religion
- Examine the types of spirits in Indigenous Religion
- Explain the functions of spirits in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter unpacking the issues of spiritual beliefs of the indigenous people like the Ndebele, Shona, Venda, Budya among others is well articulated. The first port of call is the concept of 'God.' A discussion on whether there was a conception of God in Africa, and particularly in Zimbabwe, before the coming of the westerners is addressed. The various names of God are going to be discussed in this chapter. The various areas that are going to be discussed in this chapter include the ancestral spirits or family spirits and the avenging spirits that are referred to by the Ndebele as *ingozi*. The Shona and Venda call them *ngozi*. Lion spirits and witchcraft beliefs are also going to be discussed in this chapter.

THE CONCEPT OF 'GOD'

The concept of 'God' in Indigenous Religions has been a subject of debate for a long time among the scholars of religion. There are two schools, one which argues that the Africans did not have a concept of God before the coming of the European missionaries, whilst the other argues the opposite as true. Those who say that Africans had no idea of God say that belief in God among Africans is a very recent development. To further elaborate, on the views of western scholars, one is compelled to analyze views of missionary scholars like C. Bullock who argued that "I would be the last one to advocate that translation of our word God by Chishona word Mwari." This assertion shows that missionary scholars blatantly denied that the Shona word 'Mwari' is not translated to mean 'God' in English. H. Stacy says that "Shona people are uncivilized and need to be introduced and taught of the living God and the name Jesus." This perception about Africans by missionaries is wrong and should be rejected with the contempt it deserves. It must be noted that this thinking and view about the religion by missionaries was

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND TOTEMISM

Learning objectives

- Identify lineages of totems and founding ancestors
- Explain the importance of totems in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

The thrust of this chapter is to deal with the concept of totemism which is one of the most important aspects of Indigenous Religions. The background from which totems emerge will also be dealt with. The chapter, finally, explains the importance of totems in Indigenous Religion.

TOTEMS

The Nbebele calls them *isibongo* while the Shona and Venda calls totems *mutupo*. According to Freud (1913:4), a totem, as a rule, is an animal (whether edible and harmless or dangerous and feared) and more rarely a plant or a natural phenomenon (such as rain or water), which stands in a peculiar relation to the whole clan. Conversely, the clansmen are under a sacred obligation (subject to automatic sanctions), not to kill or destroy their totem and to avoid eating its flesh (or deriving benefit from it in other ways). These natural objects are symbolized as totems which are associated with clans or groups of people with a common ancestry. The totemic character is inherent, not in some individual animal or entity, but in all the individuals of a given class. From time to time festivals are celebrated at which the clansmen represent or imitate the motions and attributes of their totem in ceremonial dances. The belief is that the people identify themselves with certain animal species for the purpose of social identify.

Each clan has its own totem, usually an animal for example, *Shumba*, *Shoko*, *Mbizi*, *Kamba* and animal body parts for example *moyo*, *gumbo*. Totems also come in form of objects like fire and water (*dziva*). Totems distinguish clans from each other. Each totem has a praise name (*chidawo*) and this praise name is used to identify a sub clan within a clan. For example, the *Shoko* totem has six praise

SYMBOLISM IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION**Learning Objectives**

- Identify the symbols in Indigenous Religions
- Interpret the significance of symbols in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

Symbolism is a very important aspect on the religious life of the indigenous people in Zimbabwe. There are various symbols that are used by different tribes in Zimbabwe like the baTonga, Karanga Korekore, and Ndebele, Kalanga, among others. These symbols are used for various reasons, from being a method of communicating feelings, thoughts, aspirations and beliefs. In this chapter the focus is on defining symbolism, explaining the different types of symbols as well as to offer the importance of symbolism in Indigenous Religions.

SYMBOLISM DEFINED

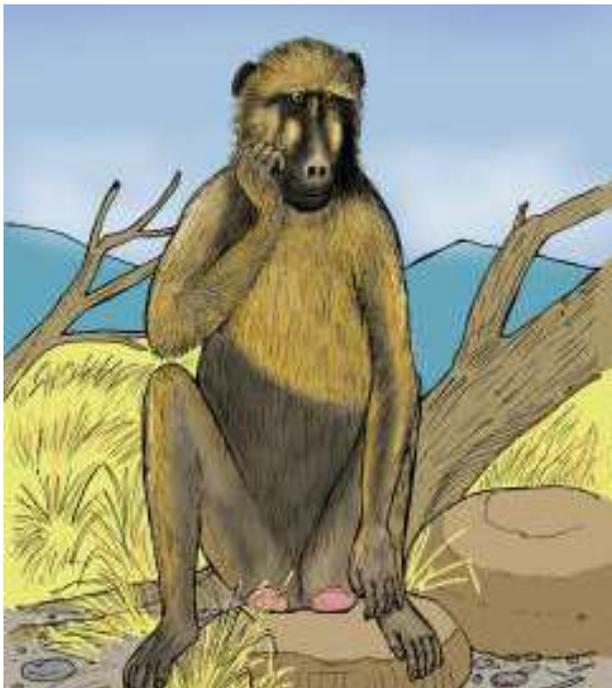
A symbol is an idea, a sign, a ritual art or a behavioural pattern that stands as a means of communicating an inner essence. Symbols in Indigenous Religions include images, icons, objects, and traditional clothes which have sacred connotations. They are objects that believers or followers worship or venerate and pray to. These symbols are sacred and have sacred or symbolic significance or meanings. Symbols are objects that serve as symbols of the faith. These objects are often inspiring to the religion's followers and may be used by them to focus their prayers or announce their faith, such as if worn as jewelry. Symbols are words, gestures by animals or human beings, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning which is only recognized by those who share a particular culture. New symbols easily develop, old ones disappear. Symbols from one particular group are regularly copied by others. This is why symbols represent the outermost layer of a culture. Symbols and iconography are vehicles to express a tribe's spirituality and philosophy. Symbols represent different characters and characteristics and adorn many things ranging from clothing to pottery. Due to the profound nature of these symbols, they are sometimes tattooed onto people's skin.

TYPES OF SYMBOLISM

There are various types of symbols in the Indigenous religion and these include the following.

SYMBOLIC ANIMALS

The totem animals are vital symbols of indigenous life. Different indigenous clans have specific relationships with individual animals, they are not allowed to eat the meat of their specific animal and each totem animal is a sacred symbol. Another symbolic animal is the *mombe yamapakuro*. This animal, according to Mushishi (2010), signifies honour, respect of the mother-in-law, as well as unity of the two families. Failure to give this cow by the son-in-law signifies disrespect of the mother-in-law.



A baboon with its palm on the cheek is a sign that the journey is not safe

Furthermore, when a traveler saw a baboon or baboons seated or walking it signified that there was no problem. The traveler would travel happily and safely. It meant the ancestors had blessed the journey, but if one saw one baboon seated with its palm on cheek looking sad or unhappy it meant the journey was unsafe and

the ancestors of the land would be advising the traveler to go back. The Budya, according to Mushishi (2010), believe that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in four ways, namely: the *tsanganyoka* (lined snake), *shumba* (the lion), the *chisukuviri* (two headed snake) and the eagle. These animals signified the presence of the ancestors to the Budya. It is also a common belief among the Karanga that if a jackal (*gava*) is heard crying during the night that would herald the death of a person. The Karanga believe that when one saw a python in the bush that was a sign that the guardians of the land (*vekunyikadzimu*) will be touring around the land. It was also an assurance of the security of the land and its people. Likewise, the lion was not supposed to be harmed as that would attract severe suffering for either the offender or the whole Shona community, or even both.

SYMBOLISM AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment is also symbolic in Indigenous Religion. The sacred stones and statues are believed to store the souls of sacred spirits and are symbols of both religious and political power. The sun is one of the most important indigenous symbols and it is regarded as female due to its life-giving powers. It is a symbol of hope and new beginning. The other aspect of the environment which is symbolic is the trees and forests. The reason why trees and forests are symbolic among the Shona communities is because of the belief that ancestral spirits live in tree branches. This notion is also implied in death rituals. In the bringing back home ceremony some Shona use the branches of certain big trees. They symbolically drag the branch from the deceased's grave to the homestead. The most commonly used branches are those of *Muhacha/Muchakata* (*Parinari curatellifolia*) and *Mutuwa* (*Kirkia acuminata*) trees. Some trees with religious significance are *Mubvumira* (*Kirkia acuminata*) used to ritually mark the establishment of a new homestead, and *Muzeze* (*Peltiforum africanum*) whose branches are used for ritual purification after burial. In his research Mukamuri found that the following trees also have religious significance. Fruit trees such as *Mushavi* and *Muonde* are meeting places for rain-asking ritual (*Mutoro/Mukwerere*).

Ceremonies for the tutelary spirits, *mhondoro*, are held in an enclosure (*ruchanga*) surrounding the sacred *Muchacha* tree or in a specially made wooden structure which resembles a hut (*dendemaro*). Such gatherings emphasize the proximity of the worshippers to nature and to the trees, the grass, the soil and the rocks. Their environment forms a background to their religion.

THE CONCEPT OF DEATH AND HEREAFTER IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of life after death in Indigenous Religion
- Examine rituals associated with life after death in Indigenous Religion
- Discuss evidence of life after death in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to deal with rituals that are associated with death in Indigenous Religion. This topic has been a subject of debate for many years. Scholars such as Mwandayi, Bourdillon, Mbiti, among others, have discussed this subject in detail. This chapter is going to give a comprehensive analysis of death rituals in Indigenous Religion. There is a plethora of rituals that are done in Indigenous Religion on the dead, starting from the announcement of the death of the person up to the time of interment and even after that. In the Indigenous Religion these include folding (*kupeta*), burial, purification, bringing back the spirit (*kurova guva*) among other rituals. These rituals are done for several reasons some of which according to Kgatla (2014) include to fulfill religious obligation, to demonstrate respect or submission, satisfy emotional needs, strengthen social bonds, enable people to obtain social acceptance or approval and cleanse them from contamination.

THE WORD 'RITUAL' DEFINED

First and foremost, before we dwell much on the death rituals in Indigenous Religion, it is prudent to start by defining the term 'ritual.' The word 'ritual' according to Mwandayi (2011), is derived from the Latin word *ritualis* which is generally translated as 'rite.' He goes on further to say that a ritual may simply be defined as an action usually prescribed by a religion, by the traditions of a community or by political laws because of the perceived efficacy of those actions. Mbiti (1975) defines a ritual or a rite as a prescribed way of conducting a religious action or ceremony. Wallace (1996) defines a ritual as a religion in practice. From

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND MEDIUMSHIP

Learning Objectives

- Explain the practice of mediumship
- Delineate the observances, (*Miko*) and the ethical principles of mediums
- Discuss the criteria to distinguish true from false mediumship
- Explain the concept of mediumship
- Identify early and contemporary mediums
- Assess the interaction between the early mediums and the white settlers
- Critique the roles of Mediums in the Liberation Struggle in Zimbabwe

INTRODUCTION

Mediumship is one of the important duties that the indigenous people aspire to perform. Mediums are the human agents who connect the living with the underworld. Mediums are possessed periodically and they are called through various ways such as dreams, and sickness. There are certain taboos or ethical principles that mediums are supposed to observe. These are going to be discussed in this chapter. Lastly, a discussion focusing on the role that was played by early and contemporary mediums in pre-colonial, colonial and independent Zimbabwe is made.

THE CONCEPT OF MEDIUMSHIP

The concept of mediumship is one of the areas that have received a fair share of research from scholars in Indigenous Religions. A host to a medium is a person who gets possessed by a spirit periodically and when the spirit possesses the *homwe*, it takes control over his or her body. When this happens, the host enters some trance. When a person is in the trance at the beginning, the medium usually starts to twitch and shake violently, sometimes uttering sharp cries and moans. The person may require support and help from the attendant before entering into the full trance or the state of full possession by the spirit. The host, for possession

Chaminuka's whole clan, as Lobengula had commanded. Some tradition says that the Ndebele warriors failed to attack and destroy his shrine at Chitungwiza. They would see it from afar but on getting closer the place would be a pool of water, a hill or gust thick impenetrable fog. Werner (1933) observes that Bute, the son who had been sent away, was fleet of foot, and reached the village in time, and when the warriors arrived they found only empty huts and cattle as the people had been unable to take with them. Bavea was taken back to Bulawayo, but escaped, and in 1887 told the story to Selous, who met her in Lomagundi's country (Mashonaland west).

Chaminuka is well known for two things in the history of Zimbabwe. He is well known as a seer or prophet who hailed from Chitungwiza. He managed to foretell the coming of the white settlers. He is also credited for the miraculous exploits that he did.

MBUYA NEHANDA AND SEKURU KAGUVI

Another great ancestral spirit was Kaguvi. His medium was called Gumbo Reshumba. Kaguvi worked closely with Nehanda to mobilize the war efforts in the First Chimurenga in the 1890s. The medium for Nehanda (Gumbi) was Charwe. She was a Hera of the Hwata Mufakase dynasty. She was born around 1862. Sekuru Kaguvi was in charge of Chegutu and Chivhu district, formerly Hartely and Charter respectively, under chiefs Chikwata, Nyandoro, Zvimba, Mangwende, Mashayamombe, Rusike and Seke, among others.



Mbuya Nehanda and sekuru Kaguvi after capture in 1897.

UNHU/UBUNTU IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of Unhu/Hunhu
- Identify and analyse the concept of Unhu/Hunhu in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *Unhu* in Indigenous Religion is one of the areas that have generated a lot of interest from scholars of African Traditional Religion as well as those from the field of Philosophy. In this chapter, a discussion on the concept of *unhu/hunhu*, identifying its characteristics in relation to persons is made. It must be, however, noted that *Unhu* is constructed by the society and not given. It's a social philosophy that can be handed from one generation to another. The Indigenous Religion has people who had systems that made sure that young boys and girls were taught this humanist philosophy.

THE CONCEPT OF *UNHU* OR *UBUNTU*

According to Mandova and Chingombe (2013:100), *Unhu* is a social philosophy which embodies virtues that celebrate the mutual social responsibility, mutual assistance, trust, sharing, unselfishness, self-reliance, caring and respect for others, among other ethical values. It dictates the behavior patterns acceptable to Shona people. The two authors went on to note that, *Unhu* is a Shona word which is *Ubuntu* in Nguni. According to Chimuka (2001:31), the Shona realized that life was lived in the community. Ultimately, the individual conduct was sanctioned by the same society. One's behaviour is considered good if it satisfies the requirements of *unhu*, and is condemned if it does not. So, *unhu* refers to the conception of the Shona of what is right and wrong; beautiful and ugly.

Samkange and Samkange (1980:9) argue that *munhu* in Shona and *umuntu* in Isindebele means a person, a human being, and humanness. He emphasizes that the Shona and Ndebele in pre-1980 made a distinction between white and black, hence the statement '*hona munhu uyo ari kufamba nemurungu.*' What the Samkanges (1980:39) say suggested that personhood or humanness was limited to

THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY INDIGENOUS RELIGION**Learning Objectives**

- Examine the nature of family relations in Indigenous Religions
- Identify ethical aspects that affect family relations in Indigenous Religions
- Explain the concept of respect in Indigenous Religions
- Examine the value of respecting elders in Indigenous Religions
- Identify elements that enhance communal life in Indigenous Religions
- Evaluate the factors that negatively affect the communal system

INTRODUCTION

The institution of family is one of the most important institutions in Indigenous Religions. The stability of the community depended on the stability and unity of the family. The Karanga call it *mhuri*, while the Ndebele call it *imhli*. In Venda, family is called *phuli*. Family consists of various individuals who play different functions and roles. There are also various types of families. In the unfolding chapter, particular focus is on the definition of family, the types of family, family relations, as well as the function of family. The chapter also identifies important virtues in Indigenous Religion.

WHAT IS FAMILY?

Shorter (1998:83) defines a family as a minimum effective group of relatives by blood and or marriage and or analogous groups. By analogous groups he means members who are not related by blood or marriage, for example adopted children.

TYPES OF FAMILY

There are different types of families and these include, the nuclear, extended and child headed families.

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND MARRIAGE

Learning Objectives

- Identify the types of marriage in Indigenous Religions
- Explain pre and post marital rites
- Explain the nature of divorce in Indigenous Religions
- Highlight the procedures of facilitating divorce

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to look at the most important institution in the African society which is marriage. Marriage in Africa is seen as a communal thing. One marries not for himself but for the community. Different types of marriages are going to be discussed in this chapter as well as the concept of divorce. The reason for divorce in African society is also going to be discussed.

THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE

The marriage institution is one of the most important institutions that are highly valued by the various cultural groups that are found in Zimbabwe. The reason why marriage is highly celebrated is because it facilitates procreation. For the traditional Shona, marriage is essentially a communion between two families and not individuals, although the choice of spouses is now usually left to the persons concerned. In the past, parents could choose a spouse for their children. The Shona emphasize that their children should marry from a family that is in the same village and well known by everyone, hence the Shona saying “*rooranai vematongo*.” Marriage negotiations are usually done by senior representatives of the two families. According to Gelfand (1973:166), “a fundamental and basic belief of the Shona marriage is that when a couple marries, the wife must be a virgin and the young man himself should not have had any previous sexual knowledge”. This quotation from Gelfand shows that the Shona people emphasize sexual purity.

Furthermore, it is also a *sine qua non* that when a woman is married she will bear children, and if she fails to do so, provided the man is potent, he is entitled to

Learning Objectives

- Examine the status of women in Indigenous Religions
- Evaluate factors which may promote or hinder women's progress in Indigenous Religions
- Evaluate the involvement of women in politics in Indigenous Religions
- Identify factors which may promote or hinder women's participation in politics

Introduction

The chapter has a focus on discussing the status of women in Indigenous Religion. There are two schools of thought on this issue, on one hand, scholars arguing that women had a higher status and still today they are enjoying a higher status in Indigenous Religion, while the other argues that women occupy a lower position in the society as compared to men. The chapter is also going to look at the participation of women in politics in Indigenous Religion. The number of women who are participating in politics today is very low despite their tremendous role in the liberation struggle. The authors finally identify factors which may promote or hinder the participation of women in politics.

Defining Gender

M. Dube defines gender as;

The societal beliefs, customs, practices that define 'masculine' and 'feminine' attributes of behavior. It is not natural or divine, but a culture specific construct that can be reconstructed and transformed by society. Gender overlaps all other social departments be it economic, cultural and political because people are always socially constructed as men and women in politics, governments, schools, churches, villages, cities, homes, work places, conversations and even in their sexuality.

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND LAND

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of land in Indigenous Religion
- Assess the land ownership system in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

The issue of land is quite an emotive issue in Zimbabwe. This is due to the fact that the land question has not been fully resolved, although the government tried its best in post-independent Zimbabwe. The reason is that land belongs to the community and not an individual. This chapter is going to deal with the concept of land in Indigenous Religion, its sacredness, and its value. The chapter is also going to look at land ownership in the African society.

LAND TENURE IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

The term 'land' according to Bakare (1993), has several meanings in Zimbabwean culture and these meaning can contribute to an understanding and appreciation of it as a cultural reality. The term 'land' for Bakare (1993:46) may mean a ward, community, district, province or territory. People may identify themselves with the *dunhu* (land) they come from. For any Zimbabwean, *kumusha* (home) means a village, district, province or country. Land, therefore, is a place of connection with mother earth where one's roots are; a place of connection and orientation.

To Zimbabweans, land is something that determines their identity, history and livelihood; and it is more than just a solid part of the earth surface. It is a repository of family ties between the living and the living-timeless that is, those who have died, but still alive in the memories of their loved ones, and those not yet born. According to Bordillon (1998:72), in the traditional system of land tenure, a man was given his fields by his father with the consent of the village headman. A newcomer to the area was normally apportioned fields by the ward or village headman with the cognizance of the chief. Traditionally the land could be returned to the chief or headman when the person to whom it was allocated ceases to use it for any

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND THE ENVIRONMENT**Learning Objectives**

- Examine reverence for nature in Indigenous Religion
- Explain human kinship with nature in Indigenous Religion
- Identify the sacred phenomena in the natural environment
- Assess the significance of sacred phenomena in the natural environment
- Analyse taboos that protect the natural environment

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to discuss the symbiotic relationship that exists between the natural environment and Indigenous Religion. The main debate on the how Indigenous Religion is environmentally friendly has divided scholars based on the romanticized perspective versus the revisionists' stand-point. Secondly, identified more is the topical aspect of sacred phenomena that are found in Indigenous Religion. These include the trees, animals, pools, and caves, among other places. Lastly, the chapter critically analyses the taboos that were claimed to preserve nature. The Indigenous people of Zimbabwe formulated taboos that helped to guard against environmental degradation and exploitation of the flora and fauna.

KINSHIP AND REVERENCE FOR NATURE

It must be spelt out from the onset that there is a symbiotic relationship between Indigenous Religion and nature: Religion and nature are closely related. The Shona believed that they have a relationship with nature, and that relationship called for them to respect and revere it. This is aptly put across by Daneel (2001:900) when he says traditional African ecology, like everything else in Shona, is inseparably linked with Traditional Religion. Environmental protection is sanctioned by the creator, God, and the ancestors of the land. As in most African world views, among the Shona, the natural world consists of plants, animals and all biological life otherwise not classified as animals and plants. Nature, according

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND ENTERPRISE

Learning Objectives

- Explain the values on wealth creation in Indigenous Religion
- Identify the prohibited ways of wealth creation

INTRODUCTION

African people are very enterprising since time immemorial. This can be seen if one looks deeply at the way of life of these people. This chapter is going to look at the subject of enterprise in Indigenous Religion. The Shona and Ndebele were engaged in a lot of activities that made them wealthy. Wealth in Shona is called *upfumi*; the Ndebele calls it *inotho* while the Venda calls it *vhupfumi*. Being wealthy was everyone's aspiration in the African society as this had privileges that went along with it. There are various ways of getting wealth that are going to be discussed in this chapter, both orthodox and unorthodox ways.

WEALTH CREATION IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

In Indigenous Religion people were encouraged to acquire wealth; and the Shona word that is used for wealth is *upfumi*. It must be noted from the onset that *kupfuma* or being wealthy was one of the aims of every Shona person. In an African society, being wealthy came along with a lot of privileges, such as being given a lot of wives through the process of *Kuzvarira*. Most parents in an African society would approach a wealthy person for help during hard times. Power and prestige were also other things that came as a result of being wealthy. The wealthy members of the society were the ones that had the echelons of power. It is because of these, that every member of the African society strived to become rich. Wealth in the African society came in different forms, and some of these included having a large herd of cattle, sheep and goats. In a traditional Shona setting a wealthy person was someone who owned a large herd of cattle. The importance of cattle is shown in the fact that most of the Shona rituals involved the use of cattle. Cattle were also part and parcel of the *lobola* payment. Its importance is still evidenced

INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND HEALTH**Learning Objectives**

- Analyse the concept of health in Indigenous Religion
- Delineate the relationship between the spiritual world and healing
- Examine methods of healing in Indigenous Religion

INTRODUCTION

Health is very important for the prosperity of any nation. It is this understanding that made the indigenous people to have a very robust health system in their society. This chapter is going to look at the health system of the indigenous people. Health in an African society is viewed from the perspective of one's relationship with the ancestors. It is wholesome, covering the physical, mental and spiritual aspect of an individual as well as the whole community. The traditional healer's role is also going to be discussed in the chapter. The chapter will also look at how one becomes a *n'anga*.

THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH IN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Chirongoma says that health is a major concern for the Shona people. The health system is concerned with the human being as a whole. For the traditional Shona religion, health is not just the proper functioning of the body organs, but it consists of mental, physical, spiritual and emotional stability of one self, family members and the community. Good health is generally understood basing on the relationship with the ancestors. Good health is believed to be as a result of a good relationship with the ancestors and bad health is as a result of a bad relationship with the ancestors. According to Machinga (2011), Zimbabwe has a three tier health system. Zimbabweans visit the traditional healer, the prophets from the churches of the spirit; and western style hospitals and clinics for health and healing.

THE TRADITIONAL HEALER

The Shona use a common term '*n'anga*' to describe his roles as a traditional medical practitioner. The Ndebele use the term *inyanga*. There are illnesses such

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of governance in Indigenous Religions
- Identify the processes of governance Indigenous Religions

INTRODUCTION

Politics and religion is inseparable since time immemorial. There was a close relationship between the chief and the territorial spirit medium. The medium is the one who was consulted when a chief was installed. The chief played a plethora of roles in the life of the indigenous people. He acted as a sacred practitioner on ritual occasions. This chapter is going to deal with the traditional system of governance which had the chief at its heart.

THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE

Governance is a very complex and broad concept in the study of politics. It must be noted that the Africans had a clear concept of governance system that was led by the headman and chiefs as well as mediums. Governance can be good or bad. Before going anywhere, it is prudent to define the term 'governance.' The World Bank (1992) defines good governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development. Governance can also be defined as the way in which rules, norms and actions are structured, sustained, regulated and held accountable. The type of governance in the African society is that of participatory governance where the participation of citizens in state affairs is emphasized. Citizens played an important role in the decision making process. This is aptly shown from the Shona sayings such as *Ushé vanhu*. No chieftom could exist without the people. However, other chiefs would rule without taking into considerations the views of the generality of the people.

TENETS OF JUDAISM**Learning Objectives**

- A historical overview of Judaism
- Identify different types of covenants
- Explain the significance of the covenants
- Distinguish different types of laws in the Pentateuch
- Interpret the Decalogue

INTRODUCTION

The chapter addresses vital elements in the study of Judaism, that is, a historical overview in general, Covenant and Law. Defining and identifying the types of Covenants forms the first section whilst the Law is explained in great depth as presented in the Pentateuch. The interpretation of the Decalogue, particularly, its significance forms another vital element of the chapter.

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**DEFINING JUDAISM**

Judaism has been understood as a religion, a race, a culture, and a nation.

TYPES OF JUDAISM

There are several sects in Judaism, which include: Orthodox Judaism. Orthodox Jews are typically known for their strict observance of traditional Jewish law and rituals. For instance, most believe Shabbat should not involve working, driving or handling money. Orthodox Judaism is a diverse sect that includes several subgroups, including Hasidic Jews. This form started in the 18th century in Eastern Europe and holds different values than traditional or ultra-Orthodox Judaism. Hasidic Jews emphasize a mystical experience with God that involves direct communion through prayer and worship. Chabad is a well-known Orthodox Jewish, Hasidic movement.

PROPHECY**Learning Objectives**

- Reflect on definitions of prophecy
- Critique theories on the origins of prophecy

INTRODUCTION

The chapter focuses on the meaning of prophecy, and theories on the origins of prophecy. Did prophecy originate in Israel or outside Israel? Debates in support and against both aspects are dealt with in the whole chapter. Developing from traditional and contemporary debates on the subject of origins of prophecy, Biblical and non-Biblical references are essential to study this complex debate.

WHAT IS PROPHECY?

It is a message from a prophet. The U.S.A English Dictionary defines prophecy as a prediction which is made by an individual who is divinely inspired. Two broad theories have been propounded by religious scholars in an attempt to explain the origins of prophecy, namely, the Traditional and Borrowed Phenomenon theory. A theory is a general set of ideas/explanation[s] that try to explain how something works.

Israel's Historical Traditions tell us of the importance of prophets to her political life. The examples which can be followed is the story of the institution of the monarchy and the rise to power of Saul, where Samuel plays a major role in the decisions and actions. Samuel was also at the forefront in the appointment of David (1 Samuel 8-12; 15-16). Gad is described as "David's seer" (in 2 Samuel 24:11). However, it is Nathan's relationship to his king which illustrates best the prophet's role: on building the temple (2 Samuel 7; the Bathsheba affair (2 Samuel 12) and during Adonijah's rebellion when David was old, Nathan's advice and criticism swayed the king. Nathan is active too in the moves to anoint Solomon, while his father still lives (1 Kings 1).

These early prophets were consulted about the future. They were thus in conflict

EARLY MANIFESTATIONS OF PROPHECY

Learning Objectives

- Examine early forms of prophecy
- compare the early forms with similar phenomena in surrounding nations

INTRODUCTION

The topic of early manifestations of prophecy has variously been interpreted with two broad approaches, namely the inductive and deductive approach. This chapter deploys the inductive approach which gives primacy to the text in efforts to unpack the early forms of prophecy. Dreams and visions are understood as outstanding aspects in light of the topic, although ecstasy has been identified in some instances within the Biblical text.

DREAMS

It is an event that is seen by an individual when he/she is asleep. God can visit a person in a dream and speak with him, for example, the prophetic call of Samuel was made possible through dream (1 Samuel 3:1ff). In Deuteronomy 13:1ff which say that, "if a prophet has arisen among you or a dreamer of dreams..." clearly points to the existence of this aspect in Ancient Israel. It should be noted that dreams received by non-Israelites needed a Hebrew interpreter, for example Joseph (Genesis 41:25-33) was called from prison to interpret Pharaoh's dream. Daniel also interpreted king Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:24-45).

LOTS (*URIMAND THUMMIN*)

These were cast to detect a guilty person. In Joshua 7:14-19 Joshua discovered by lots the person who had offended God by taking spoils from the doomed city of Jericho. Achan was caught and was stoned to death in the valley of Achor. Lots were probably put in a basin and rapidly rotated. The answer was given by a lot which leapt first. This method was sometimes divinatory, e.g. the usage of sacred

FUNCTIONS OF PROPHETS**Learning Objectives**

- Explain functions of prophets
- Assess the functions of prophets

INTRODUCTION

Prophets performed various roles in the Israelite society and were conceived as such. In that light, the people understood and/ interpreted them differently, with some arguing that they were intercessors, champions of social justice, the conscience of the leaders and the powerful members of their societies, miracle workers, to mention only these among many to discussed in the unfolding chapter.

PROPHETS AS INTERCESSORS

Intercessory role implies praying on behalf of the other. This, however, may not imply that the prophets or prophetesses were rigid to the intercessory role only. With Abraham, he prayed for Abimelech who had taken his wife Sarah. The language of 'blessing and cursing' was used towards Abimelech so that he complied with the demands of Yahweh. Genesis 20:7 offers insights into how Abraham interceded for Abimelech the King of Gerar. Initially, Abraham had told Abimelech that Sarah was not his wife upon arrival into his land. This led the King of Gerar to send his men for Sarah and he took her as his wife. As events unfolded, the truth was later on told such that the King had to return Abraham's wife. To avert the curse that was to befall Abimelech if he did not return Sarah, prayer was useful, particularly the one made by Abraham.

PROTESTED AGAINST EVIL

Whenever excess in evil took shape in society, Yahweh called a prophet to address such societal evils. The case of Moses who was called when the people of Israel had made their cries to Yahweh under the brutal and oppressive hand of Pharaoh in Egypt is a good example of a prophet protesting against evil. The extent to which

**WAYS USED BY PROPHETS TO RECEIVE
MESSAGES FROM GOD****Learning Objectives**

- Identify ways in which prophets received their message
- Examine methods used by prophets to receive their message

INTRODUCTION

There are a plethora of ways that were used by prophets to get prophetic messages from God and these include dreams, visions, and auditions, among other methods. In this section we are going to look at some of the methods that were used by prophets to receive messages from God.

DREAMS

Dreaming was a common method of receiving messages from God by Israelite prophets. The Israelite community acknowledged that God could communicate through dreams. This is evidenced on Numbers 12:6. God communicated to his prophets through dreams and visions. It must be noted, however, that this method needed an interpreter because in some cases dreams given would not be clear. Dreams that were given to Israelites were self-explanatory, while those given to non-Hebrews needed interpreters. A good example is the case of Pharaoh who had to look for a Hebrew interpreter because the Egyptians had failed to do so. This method is subject to abuse especially here in Zimbabwe. A lot of people have been duped their hard earned cash and advised to enter into marriages because of misinterpretation of dreams.

VISIONS

The other method that prophets used to get messages from God is through visions. In the bible there are prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Amos who experienced visions. Isaiah saw the Lord in the temple. Jeremiah was shown the vision of a boiling pot facing from the north as well as the branch of an almond tree. Amos was shown the vision of locust, plumb line and the Lord on the altar. All this is clear evidence that visions were an acceptable way of getting prophetic messages

**METHODS USED TO COMMUNICATE
PROPHETIC MESSAGES****Learning Objectives**

- Identify methods used by prophets to communicate their message
- Evaluate methods used by prophets to communicate their message

INTRODUCTION

By virtue of being a prophet, one was put at an advantage and sometimes vulnerable in society. In delivering their message/s, prophets in Israel deployed various means. In some cases, especially when confronting those in power (political office), there was need to be conscious of respectability, at the same time making sure the message from YHWH reaches its audience. In some instances, using brutal tone in language was observed. Having such complex circumstances, the chapter identifies and evaluates the methods used by prophets to communicate their message. Some of the methods encompass usage of poetry, parables, songs and dance, symbolic language, dramatization and hyperbolic language.

POETRY

Prophets used poetic messages by adopting short sentences full of repetition and linking words. This was so because it was easier for people to memorise the message and hence, people ended up taking the message seriously. Also imperative was that the message could be passed from one generation to the other. R. Carroll in his book, 'When Prophecy Failed,' dealt with the issue extensively.

PARABLES

C. H. Dodd defines a parable as a story with a single meaning. Prophets could use stories that drive their message home. Hosea's marriage has been used as such (Hosea 1-3). Nathan used a parable on 2 Samuel 12:1-7 to confront King David when he had taken Uriah's wife. In another case, Isaiah of Jerusalem used the parable of the Vineyard in Isaiah 5. Parables were a diplomatic way of rebuking a high ranking official. It was also thought provoking leaving the audience with questions which needed answers.

**TRUE AND FALSE PROPHETS:
ISRAEL AND ZIMBABWE DEBATES****Learning Objectives**

- Explain the concept of false prophecy
- Trace the circumstances that led to the development of criteria to distinguish true and false prophecy
- Assess the criteria used to differentiate between true and false prophets

INTRODUCTION

The debates and/or discussions on the marks of true and false prophets have existed in Zimbabwean street talk, media circles and academic discourse with a corpus of works produced by the Religious experts, theologians, philosophers, the so-called prophets among many. A number of names of such individuals associated with prophecy include Emmanuel Makandiwa, Walter Magaya, Eubert Angel, Passion Java, Tavonga Vutabwashe, Tapiwa Freddy and Adventure Mutepfa, to mention only these among many. It is vital to note that the above-mentioned are not the pioneers of prophecy in Zimbabwe, but from the precolonial and colonial eras, the phenomenon has been existent. Contexts of explanations differ in that in Indigenous Religion, prophets also exist.

From an analysis of the theories on the origins of prophecy, it can be noted that prophecy was closely connected with seership and that in some instances the roles of these two offices overlapped. In the earliest stages of prophecy there were slight differences between prophets and seers for both were foretellers. In this ensuing battle for human allegiance, it seems there were battles on two fronts. Prophecy versus seership and Israel versa prophecy/seers. Prophets and seers (who seemed to eventually have changed their title to prophet (1 Sam 9:9) fought to control the audience and to get the respect of the audience. This led to accusations and counter accusation amongst the prophets.

Israel as a people battled especially with the conflict between true and false prophets. These accusations led to the development of the notion of some prophet

PROPHECY, POLITICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Learning Objectives

- Examine the involvement of prophets in politics
- Explain how prophets addressed social injustice

INTRODUCTION

The office of prophecy among other factors has been found to be associated with addressing political and social ills. Many prophets can be observed to have been involved one way or the other in confronting those in authority for justice to prevail. Moses, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Amos among others are such prophets who made efforts to see social justice prevail in society. Justice entails the administration of what is just especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or assignment of merited rewards or punishments (Merriam-Webster.com). The Cambridge Dictionary propounds the same explanation noting that it is fairness in the way people are dealt with.

MOSES.

The people of Israel under Pharaoh in Egypt suffered from the repressive methods deployed against them, especially the working conditions. In Exodus 2, Moses' sense of social justice manifests as he proved disturbed and moved by the conflict which happened between an Israelite and an Egyptian. Moses' intervention saw the unfortunate death of the Egyptian. Seeing that the story was discovered, Moses later on decided to run away.

It has to be stressed that Moses also involved himself in the politics of the day by confronting Pharaoh in Egypt. By being called into the prophetic office in Exodus 3, Moses automatically became involved in the politics of his day as the people of Israel were under Egyptian bondage. He becomes, also, an agent for unity among the people of Israel as he under the guidance of YWHW, mobilized the people to go to the Promised Land. The idea of nationhood can thus be traced from Moses, although Joshua later on fulfilled the promise in leading the people to Canaan.

JUDAISM AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

Learning Objectives

- Examine the nature of marriage in Judaism
- Explore marriage rites in Judaism

THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE IN JUDAISM

The verb that most dominates the act of marriage is the Hebrew term *laqar* which means “to take” or “to take possession,” “to chose, to accept.” This shows that in the patriarchal Israelite society, the man was the one who has the initiative in marriage, the woman being, often, its subject. Another word used equally seldom is *onah* probably derived from the verb *anah* which means to answer or to certify. This word expresses the idea of cohabitation. However, it must be noted that cohabitation was not allowed in Israel. The other Hebrew word for a Jewish marriage is *kiddushin* which means sanctification or holiness. Marriage, (*kiddushin*), is generally interpreted as a blessing in Judaism. Those who are not married in Judaism are viewed as without peace, without blessings, living without true joy, without Torah and even without true life's goodness. The stories from Genesis 12 onwards identifying Abraham, Sarah, Esau, Jacob, and many others demonstrate the birth of family on wisdom grounds. The Decalogue has that commandment which stresses on the value for the family through obeying the father and the mother. Respect to God and parents is used as a 'bridge' which demonstrate the centrality of family in Judaism. 'Honour your father and your mother' (Exodus 20). The centrality of marriage and the value of family to Judaism is seen from the creation of the world. God created Adam and Eve and marriage was born as an institution through them. The significance of marriage is stressed on the verse; 'for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh' (Genesis 2:24). Traditionally, the bride and groom fast the day before their wedding, to emphasize the spiritual nature of their impending union.

In antiquity, children were advised to marry while young for reasons of a good functioning of family. The father and mother had to work for their family whilst energetic. The minimum age of those willing to get married according to Jewish law

DEATH AND RELATED BELIEFS IN JUDAISM**Learning Objectives**

- Explain how death is perceived in Judaism
- Compare perceptions of death in Judaism with perceptions of death in other religions

INTRODUCTION

The chapter is going to look at the concept of death in Judaism, the various perceptions in Judaism and the death rituals that are carried out in Judaism. The Jews believe that death is a natural transition from the physical world into the spiritual world. Death should happen to the aged and not the younger ones. The Jews also respect the dead body and to show this, they perform a lot of rituals. A body is buried underground or in a cave. In public cemeteries, they have their own consecrated ground where their dead are buried. The chapter will also look at various death rituals that are performed such as notification and confession, tearing the garment, *sheloshim*, among other rituals.

THE CONCEPT OF DEATH IN JUDAISM

The Old Testament does not have a well-developed theology of death and the after-life. Just like in Indigenous Religion, death in Judaism is a natural transition from the visible to the invisible or spiritual ontology where the spirit, the essence of the person, is not destroyed but moves to live in the spirit realm (King, 2013). From a Jewish perspective death is not the end of everything but a means to an end. It is a gateway to another life. In the bible death at times is referred as sleeping. This is evidenced in 2 Kings 16; 20 which says '*And Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried in the City of David.*' The same concept of death is seen on 1 Kings 14:31 and 1 Kings 2:10, among other verses. This concept of death implies that when a person dies he does not totally vanish, on this earth but he or she 'returns' in this world or the underworld in the same form or in spirit. The other view of death is found on 1 Kings 2:1~2 which says *when David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon, saying, 'I am about to go the way of the earth.'* This verse gives

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN JUDAISM**Learning Objectives**

- Explore the concept of well-being and health in Judaism
- Discussing the concept of well-being and health in Judaism

THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH IN JUDAISM

The concept of health in Judaism, according to Bromely (1998), is quite a broad one. He alludes that health is the original state of a human being. It is the absence of any form of evil. The Jews believe that God is the creator of life and the giver of health that sustains life. Praglin (2011) has it that Ancient Israel's covenantal relationship affirmed God alone as healer, source of both health and illness and restorer of body and spirit. Health in Ancient Israel does not refer to physical wellbeing only but also to spiritual wellbeing. Harsel (1983) concurs with this and posits that health in the Old Testament embraces both the physical, mental and emotional qualities. The implication of this view is that being a healthy person requires the body and the mind functioning harmoniously. Physical illness is understood to have psychological and spiritual effects. In the same vein, spiritual or emotional disorder may manifest itself through physiological symptoms. So, health living in Israelite religion should be viewed within the context of harmonious functioning of the body and mind. Bromely (1998) states that in the Pentateuch illness is sent by God to punish the transgressor or to make clear divine displeasure as evidenced by Exodus 4:11 and Exodus 32:39.

PERCEIVED CAUSE OF DISEASE IN ISRAELITE RELIGION

Aluede and Ekewenu (2009) argue that pain and disease have been regarded as punitive measures from God for man's short coming. Pain and disease, therefore, do not come naturally but they come as curses from God. Simudson (1982) says that, the bible connects sickness to human sin. This implies that any disruption of health is a consequence for disobedience or wrong doing, for example, 2 Samuel 12:14. This same belief was there during the time of Job. His friends attributed his

STATUS OF WOMEN IN JUDAISM

Learning Objectives

- Identify the roles of women in Judaism
- Assess the status of women in Judaism

INTRODUCTION

The Decalogue requires respect for both mother and father. More notable is that the father comes first in Exodus 20:12, but the mother comes first in Lev. 19:3, and many traditional sources point out that this reversal is intended to show that both parents are equally entitled to honor and reverence. One scholar notes that, the role of women in traditional Judaism has been grossly misrepresented and misunderstood. The position of women is not nearly as lowly as many modern people think.

However, despite low status of a woman as a sexual chattel, a Jewish woman has a far higher status in all other aspects of Mishnaic private law. Thus, a wife participates in a reciprocal arrangement of matrimonial entitlements and obligations, performing specified household chores and producing a requisite amount of cloth in return for maintenance at a prescribed standard that befits her social class. The catalogue of spouses' conjugal rights and duties treats intercourse as primarily the wife's right and the husband's duty.

On property transfer an interesting rule preserves the wife's title to property she brings to the marriage and even her power of sale (though this requires her husband's consent, because of his legal right to the earnings of her property). Likewise, a husband cannot sell his wife's property without her consent. Notable women in Judaism include; Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah, and Isaiah's wife, among other women.

One of the roles that women in Judaism did was being a prophetess. A prophetess is simply a female prophet (Isdore Guvamatanga, Herald Zimbabwe, 2016). Just like a prophet, a prophetess is a person called by God. A prophet (male or female) is the mouthpiece for the one who sends him or her; the prophet speaks on behalf

JUDAISM AND THE LAND QUESTION**Learning Objectives**

- Assess the land tenure system in Judaism
- Evaluate the significance of the land in Judaism

INTRODUCTION

The land of Israel is central to Judaism. Randtorff (1975:23), however, finds it very strange that there is no land theology that has been developed despite its centrality. Land tenure in Judaism refers to the laws governing ownership and occupation of land. The idea of Jewish land tenure backdates to the Abrahamic covenant. God's covenant with Abraham includes a promise that Abraham's descendants will inherit the area from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates. Nonetheless, Israel's tenancy in the Land is conditional. The story of Abraham begins when God tells him to leave his homeland, promising Abraham and his descendants a new home in the land of Canaan (Gen.12). This is the land now known as Israel, named after Abraham's grandson, whose descendants are the Jewish people.

The land is often referred to as the Promised Land because of God's repeated promise (Gen. 12:7, 13:15, and 15:18, 17:8) to give the land to the descendants of Abraham. The land is described repeatedly in the Torah as a good land and "a land flowing with milk and honey" (e.g., Ex. 3:8). M.J.L Staff purports that, The Land is a gift to the Israelites with the provision that they live up to certain moral and religious standards (Leviticus 18:26). Exile is threatened if these conditions are not met (Leviticus 26:32). Koeras (1998:230) concurs with the above and submits that Israel's ownership of land was not determined by birth but by their covenant relationship with God.

THE LAND TENURE SYSTEM IN JUDAISM

There are various land tenure systems that are found in Israel. These include the fact that land belonged to YHWH and therefore it could not be sold. However,

JUDAISM AND ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION**Learning Objectives**

- Evaluate Jewish attitudes to the natural environment
- Assess how the Jewish attitudes influence environmental conservation

INTRODUCTION

Judaism is one of the oldest religions of the world. However, focus on environmental conservation in various studies is a recent phenomenon as compared to Judaism. Scholars are divided on the attitudes and position of Judaism to nature. One group argues that Judaism is not environmentally friendly as there are suppositions of elevating humanity to be supreme at the same time underplaying the significance of nature which is non-human.

According to Vogel (1990), Judaism does not regard preservation of the natural environment or protection of nature as a societal value, it holds that humans are not just part of nature but have privilege and distinctive moral claim; it believes that nature can threaten humans as well as the obverse; it argues that nature should be used and enjoyed as well as protected. So what this means is that human beings have a dual role to play towards the environment; to exploit as well as to protect it. Scholars who supports that Judaism is environmentally friendly usually quotes Deuteronomy 20:19-20 which notes that;

When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them; for you may eat of them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field men that they should be besieged by you? Only trees which you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down that you may besiege the city that makes war with you, until it falls.

The verse suggests that one should not destroy fruit trees during war times. The reason for taking this stance being that human beings may probably benefit from its food in the long run. The verse also suggests that human beings can destroy



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