

NSS Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum Support Materials

Religious Traditions Module 2: Christianity

- **Textual Background**
- **History and Identity of Israel in the Old Testament**
- **History between the Two Testament**



NSS Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum Support Materials

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Passover

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Sinai Covenant

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**Promise of the New Covenant &
the Hope for the Messiah**

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Topic 1

Textual Background

(The Faith of the Old Testament)

Suggested teaching time: 4 periods (1 hour per period)

Main Points:

1. Passover
2. The Sinai Covenant
3. The Fall of Israel and its captivity
4. The Deliverance of the New Promise and the Hope of Messiah

Text Interpretation:

Christianity regards the Old and New Testaments as its main religious texts. The Bible is also known as the Book of Covenant. It symbolises the close relationship between God and men and signifies that the development of Christian faith is based upon the covenant God made with men.

At the beginning, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. God saw their suffering and asked Moses to bring them out of Egypt. Through the exodus, the Israelites experienced God's salvation and deliverance, forming the foundation of the promise with God. After setting up the Sinai Covenant, the Israelites broke their promise with God and worshipped other idols. God thus made Israel lose in wars and ruined its nation. His intention was to influence His people and reveal to all people His holiness.

Nonetheless, God loved the Israelites. In His compassion, He initiated a "new covenant" with the Israelites. During the days of exile, the Israelites firmly believed that a descendant of David would be sent by God to save them from the governing of non-Jews and to rebuild the Israel nation. They were yearning for the coming of a Messiah.

We will first look into Passover before learning more about the Sinai Covenant, so that we can understand more about the content, the process of making and the meaning of this covenant between God and men. Through the rebellion and the captivity of the Israelites, we will notice although the Israelites broke the covenant many times, God still kept His promise and delivered a new covenant to them.

Period 1: Passover

1. Biblical reference: Exodus 12: 21-42

2. Objectives:

- To understand the background of the Israelites, that they suffered from injustice and slavery under the rule of the Egyptians.
- To understand the origin and meaning of Passover by looking into how God judged the oppressive Egyptian authority and delivered Israelites from Egypt.
- To understand the role of Christianity when dealing with injustice in modern society.



3. Teaching strategies

Background Information

- The Israelites were slaves oppressed and abused by the Egyptians
- God heard the cries from the Israelites and told Moses to bring the Israelites out of Egypt.
- The Egyptian Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go when Moses first requested. God then struck nine plagues upon Egypt but Pharaoh didn't change his mind. At the end, Pharaoh unwillingly let the Israelites leave after God had struck the tenth plague, which killed all the firstborn of man and beast.
- God told Moses to teach the Israelites to wipe the blood of lamb on doorposts and door beams of their houses so that they could be spared from the tenth plague. When the Angel of Death saw the signs on the doors, it would bypass their houses. It was the origin of the Passover.
- The symbolic meanings of Passover are: (1) to commemorate the history of the Israelites being the slaves of the Egyptians; (2) to commemorate God's judgment on unrighteous authority and His deliverance of the Israelites so that they could be free and live with dignity.

Issues for Explorations

- What role does Christianity play when people face injustice and want to change certain social conditions?

<p>Enquiry Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will an unrighteous regime affect people's life? • In the Jewish tradition, how did Passover demonstrate God's responses towards unrighteous regimes? • What responses does Christianity make towards unrighteous regimes in modern society?
<p>Learning Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By looking into the modern example of the oppressive and unrighteous regime in Philippines and the suffering of the Israelites in the times of Old Testament, understand the living conditions under an unrighteous regime. • Through group discussions, learn the process of how God struck ten plagues to compel Pharaoh to release Israelites; and explore the origin and meaning of the Passover. • By looking into some historical events, discover the responses Christianity has made towards unrighteous regimes and think about its role when facing injustice in modern society.
<p>Key Concepts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ten plagues • Origin of Passover • Meaning of Passover
<p>Generic skills, values and attitudes involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
<p>High-order Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can Christianity effectively judge the unrighteous regimes, give hopes and bring changes to people?
<p>Extended Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the responses Christianity has made towards oppressive unrighteous regimes in modern society.



Activity One

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How will an unrighteous regime affect people's life?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills	Freedom, justice, human dignity

Teaching Steps:

1. Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to give actual examples of unrighteous regimes oppressing their people in the world. Encourage students to think about ways that can change improve these situations by making use of Christian teachings.

- Teacher raises the question:
 - Can you give any recent example of unrighteous regimes oppressing their people?
- Teacher shows 'PowerPoint 1' (Unrighteous Regimes), allowing students to know more about how the unrighteous regime in Philippines oppressed its people.
- Teacher and students discuss:
 - Under an unrighteous regime, what kind of life do you think the people will lead?
 - In your opinion, how can such situation be improved?
 - Do you think religions can influence the unrighteous regimes and improve people's life? Explain.
- Teacher and students visit the websites below to understand how the Philippine government and its former president Marcos oppressed its people:
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Marcos
 - <http://www.moreorless.au.com/killers/marcos.html>

2. Teacher points out:

- The situation of people being oppressed by unrighteous regimes is not something recent. During the times of Old Testament, a group of people suffered from oppression as well. Let us now see how they responded to such oppression with their faith.

3. Teacher carries out “The record of the Israelites being slaves in Egypt” activity with students, allowing them to understand the suffering of the Israelites and how God asked Moses to free them from Egyptian slavery.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and hands out ‘Worksheet 1’ (The Life of the Israelites as Slaves) to each group. Guide students to role-play as archaeologists, discovering some ancient scrolls in northern Egypt. Teacher asks students to interpret these scrolls. Explain to students the life of the Israelites as slaves and how they were oppressed by the Egyptians.
- Teacher discusses questions on the worksheet with students:
 - Who were the people on the ancient scrolls? How were they related?
 - What was the situation faced by the Israelites?
 - Do you think the Israelites were given dignity and the right of living?
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas.
- After the sharing session, teacher concludes:
 - At that time, the Israelites lived in Egypt and were ruled by the Egyptians.
 - Later, their population grew and exceeded that of the Egyptians. The Egyptians thus forced them into slavery to control their population growth.
 - The Israelites were given continuous and burdensome tasks. For instance, they were asked to construct warehouses.

4. Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Do you consider it reasonable for the Egyptians to oppress the Israelites as such? Explain.
- If you were one of the Israelites, what would you think?

5. Teacher summarises:

- The Egyptians exploited the Israelites and forced them into slavery. As a result, the Israelites had a lot of hard times and they lost freedom, rights and dignity.
- The Israelites yearned to be saved from such oppression.



Activity Two

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
According to Jewish traditions, how did Passover demonstrate God's responses towards unrighteous regimes?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills	Freedom, justice, human dignity

Teaching Steps:**1. Teacher points out:**

- God heard the cries from the Israelites and asked Moses to deliver them from Egypt. Could the Israelites be freed at the end? How did they flee?

2. Teacher carries out “The Plagues brought to Egypt by God” activity with students, allowing them to learn how God freed the Israelites through striking different plagues upon Egypt.

- Teacher asks students to stay in the same group and hands out ‘Worksheet 2’ (The Account of how God Delivered the Israelites). Teacher asks students to role-play as archeologists again under the following setting:
 - The archeologists found more ancient scrolls. They gathered information from all the scrolls and presented their findings on a PowerPoint. From the PowerPoint shown later, deduce whether the Israelites could flee from the oppressive Egyptians. Teacher asks students to think about the course of all that happened.
- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 2’ (The Quarrel between Moses and Pharaoh) and asks students to focus on (1) the dispute between Moses and Pharaoh on delivering the Israelites; (2) the response from God towards the unrighteous regime.
- After showing ‘PowerPoint 2’, teacher asks students to discuss the questions in Part One on ‘Worksheet 2’:
 - Why did Pharaoh repeatedly break his promise to let the Israelites go? What were his intentions?
 - Do you think it is necessary for people to make long and painful struggles in order to be free from oppression?
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas.

3. Teacher points out:

- Moses demanded Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt. However, Pharaoh repeatedly failed to keep his promise and refused to let them go. As a result, God struck nine plagues upon Egypt to prove that Moses was indeed sent by Him to free the Israelites from Egyptian slavery.
- Every disaster was directly targeted towards the foreign gods worshipped by the Egyptians. For instance, Osiris and Hapi were the river gods, Ra was the sun god and Hathor was the cow god.
- After the warnings from the nine plagues, Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go. However, at the last minute, he hardened his heart and changed his mind. Not until the tenth plague did the turning point of the exile story come. Let us see how it happened.

4. Teacher carries out “The Tenth Plague and Passover” activity with students, allowing them to understand the relationship between Passover and the tenth plague and its meaning to the Israelites.

- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 3’ (The Tenth Plague and Passover) and explains to students the origin of the tenth plague and Passover.
- Teacher asks students to stay in the same group and discuss 2 questions on ‘Worksheet 2’:
 - Do you know why Pharaoh finally freed the Israelites after God had struck the tenth plague upon Egypt?
 - Think about how God responded to the unrighteous Egyptian regime. Do you think the Israelites’ perception of God would change after the tenth plague?
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas.

5. Teacher hands out and explains ‘Students’ Reference: Material 1’ (The Exodus from Egypt and the Passover), wrapping up the above activity.**6. Teacher goes further to discuss with students:**

- If you were one of the Israelites at that time, how would you feel after witnessing the ten plagues upon the place you stayed, punishing the people who oppressed you? What would you feel about fleeing from the regime which abused you?
- How do you perceive God regarding the exodus He initiated? How do you describe God who delivered the Israelites from Egypt?

7. Teacher summarises:

- Exodus showed God's compassion. He intervened in the history to help a group of helpless slaves by striking the most powerful king at that time and freed the oppressed Israelites.
- God saved the Israelites after warning the Egyptians and striking ten plagues. Moses successfully led the Israelites away from Egypt.
- The event showed the fundamental understanding of God in Christian beliefs. He cared for His people; He judged the oppressor and He saved the oppressed. To sum up, the exodus from Egypt was a salvation of the Israelites.
- By observing Passover, the Israelites commemorate the suffering of their ancestors as slaves in Egypt, the striking of the tenth plague by God (i.e. killing the firstborn of all Egyptian families and animals), the sparing of Israelite household during the tenth plague, and the deliverance and departure from Egypt. Until now, Passover is one of the three most important festivals in the Jewish tradition.
- Nowadays, many Christian denominations observe Passover.

- 8.** Teacher may show students 'PowerPoint 4' (Observing Passover) if there is enough time. Hand out 'Students' Reference: Material 2' (Observing Passover) and briefly introduce the rituals.



Activity Three



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What responses does Christianity make towards unrighteous regimes in modern society?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills	Freedom, justice, human dignity

Teaching Step:

1. Teacher asks:

- What responses does Christianity make towards unrighteous regimes in modern society?

2. Teacher carries out “Christianity and Unrighteous Regimes” activity. Give students some examples of how modern Christianity responds to unrighteous regimes. Students can then explore whether these examples imply the value and meaning of the Passover.

- Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference: Material 3’ (Understanding Justice) and briefly explains Christian’s understanding of ‘justice’.
- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 5’ (Responses from the Religion towards Unrighteous regimes), allowing students to understand how Christianity responds to unrighteous regime in reality and how their responses bring changes to people’s lives.
- Teacher divides students into groups of four and hands out ‘Worksheet 3’ (Religion and Unrighteous Regime) to each group. Discuss the questions on the worksheet:
 - How does the religion evaluate the today’s unrighteous regimes?
 - Can you name some concrete ways for a religion to help the oppressed?
 - How can people’s lives be changed under the power of religion?
 - Do you think the examples of which the religion responded to certain unrighteous regimes were similar to Passover? Explain.
- Teacher invites students to present their ideas.

3. Teacher goes further to discuss with the students:

- How do modern people deal with injustice? What actions will they take against the unrighteous regimes?

- Hence, are there any differences between how modern people and Christianity deal with injustice?

4. Teacher summarises:

- Modern Christianity condemns unrighteous regimes and strives to deliver oppressed people in order to bring changes to their lives.
- For instance, the unrighteous Philippine regime abused its people. The local church openly condemned and strongly criticised the government for its dictatorship. Jaime Cardinal Sin even led the Filipinos to fight against the unrighteous regime and finally gave hope to the Filipinos.

Extended activities:

1. Teacher asks students to collect information from newspapers, magazines or the website suggested below. Ask students to present how unrighteous regimes oppress its people in the world today. Students can know more about how Christianity responds to unrighteous regimes and its ways of improving people's lives.
 - “Christ Quickens Poland’s Steps to Freedom” (Open Magazine: April 6 2005):
http://www.open.com.hk/2005_5P42.html
2. Teacher asks students to think about the following questions with reference to the information collected:
 - How did these unrighteous regimes oppress their people?
 - Do you know what changes the oppressed wanted to have?
 - Were there any responses from the Christian faith towards these unrighteous regimes? What were they?
 - Hence, do you think the responses were appropriate?
 - Do you think modern Christianity can effectively monitor the unrighteous regimes in the world? Explain.
 - Apart from Christianity, are there any other religions that play the similar role as well? How do they respond to unrighteous regimes?
3. Teacher can invite students to share the information they have collected in the following period.

Material 1 – The Exodus from Egypt and Passover

1. The Israelites' escape from the ten plagues, meaning of the ten plagues to the Israelites and the relationship between the tenth plague and the Passover:

- God wanted to compel Pharaoh to free the Israelites. He struck Egypt with ten plagues:
 - Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go after he was warned by the first nine plagues.
 - Despite the first nine plagues, Pharaoh did not give in. God was not being merciless. It only showed how rebellious and stubborn human was.
 - God struck Egypt with the final plague (i.e. killing all the firstborn of all Egyptian families and livestock) so as to deliver the Israelites from Egypt. The last plague was so influential that it involved many lives and it determined the future of the Israelites. Moses had first warned Pharaoh about the coming of the tenth plague, but Pharaoh still did not give in. As a result, an unprecedented plague struck his country and his own family.
- God's salvation of the Israelites upon executing the final plague:
 - Moses taught the Israelites to kill a lamb and wipe its blood on their doorposts and door beams. When God saw this sign, He would bypass their houses and would not hurt the people living inside.
 - When the tenth plague came, Pharaoh's eldest son and all the firstborn of the Egyptian families were killed. Pharaoh permitted freeing the Israelites.
 - The Israelites were God's firstborn. In order to save them, God killed all the firstborn in Egypt.
 - The final plague was a fatal attack to the Egyptians. It was also an unforgettable page in the Israelite history.
- From that time onwards, the Israelites observe Passover to commemorate God's salvation.
 - The term "Passover" means 'He (God) passes over (the house of the Israelites)' in Hebrew, the Jewish language. The event was extremely unforgettable to all Israelites. In times of trouble, they often remind themselves of the Passover, hoping to seek comfort from God.

2. Essence of the Passover: the core message

- The ancestors of the Israelites suffered in Egypt.
- God saved the ancestors of the Israelites.
- The account of how the ancestors of the Israelites fled from Egypt.
- God delivered the Israelites from slavery, allowing them to live with dignity.
- The memories of the event rooted deeply in the hearts of the Israelites. The tenth plague marked their independence. God established the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread so that the Israelites would remember that day forever.
- God was no longer the God for an individual, but one for the whole Israelite nation. From that time onwards, the foundation of the promise between God and Israel was established

- God's salvation of the Israelites foreshadowed His salvation of the entire humankind from slavery of sins.
- The Israelites were God's chosen people whom God established a covenant with.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1996）：《聖經新辭典》，下冊，（頁 300-303）。香港：天道書樓。
2. 思高聖經學會編著（2004）：《聖經辭典》（第 2138 條）。香港：思高聖經學會。
3. 香港公教真理學會（1996）：《天主教教理》（第 766 條）。香港：香港公教真理學會。

Material 2 – Observing Passover

1. Symbolic meaning of Passover dishes

Roasted Lamb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spraying of lamb's blood symbolises the clearing of sins. • On the night before leaving Egypt, the Israelites wiped the blood of lamb on doorposts as a sign so that God would bypass their houses without killing the firstborn. It symbolised God's salvation. • In the New Testament, Jesus symbolised the Passover lamb. He died to save sinners from God's judgment. Jesus' last supper with His disciples was a Passover supper.
Unleavened Bread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Israelites were in haste when they left Egypt. They did not have time to let the dough rise before eating it. • It symbolises God's pure holiness and reminded all human to be holy. Fermentation results from rotting. Thus, unleavened bread symbolises holiness, righteousness, truth and new life. (1 Corinthians 5:7-8)
Maror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A kind of bitter herbs. It symbolises the suffering days of the Israelites as slaves in Egypt.
Saltwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It symbolises the tears of the Israelites.
Matzoh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It symbolises the joy in the hearts of the Israelites after experiencing God's salvation.

2. Rituals of Passover

The Jews observe Passover at home during the 14th to the 21st of the first month of the Jewish calendar (around March to April of the western calendar). The lamb being eaten during Passover has to be selected on the 10th of the first month. The Jews will then wait for four days until the evening of the 14th to kill and roast the lamb for the Passover supper. There will be a worshipping session during supper and the Jews are required to follow a set of strict rituals:

- Light the Passover candles;
- Consecrate the wine;
- Place parsley into saltwater;
- Split the matzoh and save a portion for dessert;
- Recollect the story of God delivering the Israelites from Egypt;
- Bless the Passover supper, matzoh and unleavened bread separately;
- Consume matzoh, maror and wine together;
- Enjoy the Passover supper and the lamb;
- Eat the matzoh dessert to complete the meal;
- Read passages after dinner;
- Read Psalms to praise God for saving the Israelites from slavery in Egypt;
- Conclude the celebration and share their praying experiences.

References:

1. Gaster, T. H. (1953). Festivals of the Jewish Year: a Modern Interpretation and Guide (pp.31-58). New York: Sloane.
2. Lawton, Clive.(1989). Judaism: Religions Through Festivals(pp.30-31). Harlow, Essex : Longman.
3. 張明佑 (1980):《與古希伯來哲士對話—舊約聖經簡介》(頁 31-35)。台南：人光。
4. 韓承良 (1999):《聖經中的制度和習俗》(頁 282-283)。香港：思高聖經學會。
5. 天主教香港教區禮儀委員會辦事處出版：《逾越節晚餐》。香港：天主教香港教區禮儀委員會。

Material 3 – Understanding Justice

Do you know what 'justice' means? A lot of people think justice refers to fairness. According to the research done by Catholics theologians, justice refers to the following:

1. Human Dignity

- The Bible says we are made in God's image. Therefore, human life is holy and is the most basic element of justice.

2. Compassion for the poor

- People who live in poverty need most help. God stands by the poor and strives for their benefits.

3. Role of the government

- The government is responsible for defending human dignity, protecting human rights, and seeking common benefits and welfare for her people.

4. Fair economic development

- Economic development should be done with the interest of the entire humankind instead of a specific group of people in the society. Labour rights should be protected. Poor people should be able to enjoy the fruit of the economic development.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1993）：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，（頁 846-848）。香港：天道書樓。
2. Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. "Major themes from Catholic Social Teaching." http://www.osjspm.org/major_themes.aspx
3. 香港天主教正義和平委員會：社會訓導 www.hkjp.org/social/SOCIAL.HTM

Material 4 – The Background of Moses

1. Childhood

- When Moses was born, the Israelites were persecuted. Pharaoh made an order that all Israelite baby boys must be thrown into the River Nile. Moses' mother put him in a weave basket and hid it among the reeds along the river bank. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.
- Later, Pharaoh's daughter found him and adopted him as her own son. She even hired his mother to nurse him. He was called Moses.
- Moses grew up as a prince in his youth, learning all kinds of knowledge and skills in the Egyptian palace.

2. Golden years

- When he was forty years old, he went out to watch his fellow Israelites during their hard labor. He then saw an Egyptian beating an Israelite. In attempt to stop the conflict, Moses killed the Egyptian.
- Later, Moses fled Egypt to go to Midian. He married a daughter of Reuel (a Midian priest) named Zipporah. He spent forty years in Midian as a shepherd.

3. Old days

- One day, when Moses led his flock to Mount Horeb, an angel of God appeared to him in a burning bush and said God wanted to send him as a leader to bring the Israelites out of Egypt so as to set them free.
- At the beginning, Moses lacked confidence to accept the task. But at the end, he surrendered and went back to see Pharaoh. He requested Pharaoh to free the Israelites.
- Witnessing Moses performing miracles with God's help, Pharaoh finally let the Israelites leave. However, Pharaoh later changed his mind and ordered his troops to bring the Israelites back.
- With God's help, Moses performed a miracle and parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to escape. They were able to get rid of the Egyptian chariots. Later, Moses led the Israelites to live in the wilderness for forty years.
- When Moses was 120 years old, God asked him to climb up to Mount Nebo, the top of Pisgah. God allowed him to see the Promised Land (Canaan). Moses soon died on the mountain.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1993）：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，（頁 187-194）。香港：天道書樓。
2. 思高聖經學會編著（2004）：《聖經辭典》（第 1745 條）。香港：思高聖經學會。

Material 5 – The Ten Plagues and the gods Egyptians Worshipped

Plague	Verses from Exodus	Possible Egyptian gods targeted
1st: Plague of Blood in River Nile	7: 14–25	Khnum: guardian of the Nile Hapi: spirit of the Nile Osiris: his blood was considered to be the Nile
2nd: Plague of Frogs	8: 1–15 / 8:1–11	Heqet: symbol of childbirth, usually depicted as a woman with a frog's head
3rd: Plague of Gnats	8: 16–19 / 8: 12–15	
4th: Plague of Flies	8: 20–32 / 8: 16–28	
5th: Plague on livestock	9: 1–7	Hathor: the cow-like mother goddess Mnevis: a bull-god symbol of fertility Apis: the sacred bull god
6th: Plague of Boils	9: 8–12	Imhotep: gods of magic and healing
7th: Plague of Hails	9: 13–35	Nut: deity of sky Isis: the queen of the gods Seth: gods of vegetation, agriculture and harvest
8th: Plague of Locusts	10: 1–20	Isis: the queen of the gods Seth: gods of vegetation, agriculture and harvest
9th: Plague of Darkness	10: 21–29 / 10: 21–27	Re, Atum, Nut, Bast: different sun gods
10th: Plague on the Firstborn	11: 1 – 12: 36 / 12: 30	Divinity of Pharaoh: Osiris, the giver of life

References:

1. 梅仇笑紅：《出埃及記（教師本）》。
<http://www.bappress.org/ndir05j/ex09.htm>
2. 思高聖經學會編著（2006）：《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列—梅瑟五書》。香港：思高聖經學會。

Worksheet 1 – The Lives of the Israelites as Slaves



A group of archeologists discovered these ancient scrolls in northern Egypt, recording the lives of ancient Israelites in Egypt and the ways Egyptians treated them. These archeologists needed to organise the content of these scrolls in order to understand the living conditions of the Israelites and the difficulties they faced at that time. Try to answer the following questions using the information given below:

Pharaoh told his fellow Egyptians “Look! These Israelites are even more populated and prosperous than we are. Come, let’s trick them in case they become more powerful. If there are conflicts or wars in the future, they may ally with our enemies to fight against us and force us to leave this place.”

“We need to burden these Israelites with labour. Let’s ask them to build two new warehouses!”

“We need to abuse them! Whether it is brick work or field work, they must not stop working!”

1. Who were mentioned on the ancient scrolls? How were they related?

2. What horrible conditions were faced by the Israelites?

3. Do you think the Israelites had dignity and the right of living?

Worksheet 2 – Account of How God Delivered the Israelites

A. Referring to ‘PowerPoint 2’ (The Quarrel between Moses and Pharaoh), discuss the following questions:

1. Why Pharaoh regretted repeatedly to let the Israelites go? What were his intentions?

2. In accordance to the exodus, do you think it is necessary for people to have long and painful struggle in order to be free from oppression?

B. Refer to ‘PowerPoint 3’ (The Tenth Plague and Passover), discuss the following questions:

1. Why Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go after God had struck the tenth plague upon Egypt?

2. Think about how God responded to the unrighteous Egyptian regime. Do you think the Israelites’ perception of God would change after the tenth plague?

Worksheet 3 – Religion and Unrighteous regimes

Refer to ‘PowerPoint 5’ (Responses from the Religion towards Unrighteous regimes) and answer the following questions:

1. How does the religion evaluate the today’s unrighteous regimes?

2. Can you name some concrete ways for a religion to help the oppressed?

3. How can people’s lives be changed under the power of religion?

4. Do you think the examples of which the religion responded to certain unrighteous regimes were similar to the first Passover? Explain.



Material 1 – The Exodus from Egypt and Passover

1. The Israelites' escape from the ten plagues, meaning of the ten plagues to the Israelites and the relationship between the tenth plague and the Passover:

- God wanted to compel Pharaoh to free the Israelites. He struck Egypt with ten plagues:
 - Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go after he was warned by the first nine plagues.
 - Despite the first nine plagues, Pharaoh did not give in. God was not being merciless. It only showed how rebellious and stubborn human was.
 - God struck Egypt with the final plague (i.e. killing all the firstborn of all Egyptian families and livestock) so as to deliver the Israelites from Egypt. The last plague was so influential that it involved many lives and it determined the future of the Israelites. Moses had first warned Pharaoh about the coming of the tenth plague, but Pharaoh still did not give in. As a result, an unprecedented plague struck his country and his own family.
- God's salvation of the Israelites upon executing the final plague:
 - Moses taught the Israelites to kill a lamb and wipe its blood on their doorposts and door beams. When God saw this sign, He would bypass their houses and would not hurt the people living inside.
 - When the tenth plague came, Pharaoh's eldest son and all the firstborn of the Egyptian families were killed. Pharaoh permitted freeing the Israelites.
 - The Israelites were God's firstborn. In order to save them, God killed all the firstborn in Egypt.
 - The final plague was a fatal attack to the Egyptians. It was also an unforgettable page in the Israelite history.
- From that time onwards, the Israelites observe Passover to commemorate God's salvation.
 - The term "Passover" means 'He (God) passes over (the house of the Israelites)' in Hebrew, the Jewish language. The event was extremely unforgettable to all Israelites. In times of trouble, they often remind themselves of the Passover, hoping to seek comfort from God.

2. Essence of the Passover: the core message

- The ancestors of the Israelites suffered in Egypt.
- God saved the ancestors of the Israelites.
- The account of how the ancestors of the Israelites fled from Egypt.
- God delivered the Israelites from slavery, allowing them to live with dignity.
- The memories of the event rooted deeply in the hearts of the Israelites. The tenth plague marked their independence. God established the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread so that the Israelites would remember that day forever.
- God was no longer the God for an individual, but one for the whole Israelite nation. From that time onwards, the foundation of the promise between God and Israel was established

- God's salvation of the Israelites foreshadowed His salvation of the entire humankind from slavery of sins.
- The Israelites were God's chosen people whom God established a covenant with.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1996）：《聖經新辭典》，下冊，（頁 300-303）。香港：天道書樓。
2. 思高聖經學會編著（2004）：《聖經辭典》（第 2138 條）。香港：思高聖經學會。
3. 香港公教真理學會（1996）：《天主教教理》（第 766 條）。香港：香港公教真理學會。





Material 2 – Observing Passover

1. Symbolic meaning of Passover dishes

Roasted Lamb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spraying of lamb's blood symbolises the clearing of sins. • On the night before leaving Egypt, the Israelites wiped the blood of lamb on doorposts as a sign so that God would bypass their houses without killing the firstborn. It symbolised God's salvation. • In the New Testament, Jesus symbolised the Passover lamb. He died to save sinners from God's judgment. Jesus' last supper with His disciples was a Passover supper.
Unleavened Bread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Israelites were in haste when they left Egypt. They did not have time to let the dough rise before eating it. • It symbolises God's pure holiness and reminded all human to be holy. Fermentation results from rotting. Thus, unleavened bread symbolises holiness, righteousness, truth and new life. (1 Corinthians 5:7-8)
Maror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A kind of bitter herb. It symbolises the suffering days of the Israelites as slaves in Egypt.
Saltwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It symbolises the tears of the Israelites.
Matzoh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It symbolises the joy in the hearts of the Israelites after experiencing God's salvation.



2. Rituals of Passover

The Jews observe Passover at home during the 14th to the 21st of the first month of the Jewish calendar (around March to April of the western calendar). The lamb being eaten during Passover has to be selected on the 10th of the first month. The Jews will then wait for four days until the evening of the 14th to kill and roast the lamb for the Passover supper. There will be a worshipping session during supper and the Jews are required to follow a set of strict rituals:

- Light the Passover candles;
- Consecrate the wine;
- Place parsley into saltwater;
- Split the matzoh and save a portion for dessert;
- Recollect the story of God delivering the Israelites from Egypt;
- Bless the Passover supper, matzoh and unleavened bread separately;
- Consume matzoh, maror and wine together;
- Enjoy the Passover supper and the lamb;
- Eat the matzoh dessert to complete the meal;
- Read passages after dinner;
- Read Psalms to praise God for saving the Israelites from slavery in Egypt;
- Conclude the celebration and share their praying experiences.

References:

1. Gaster, T. H. (1953). Festivals of the Jewish Year: a Modern Interpretation and Guide (pp.31-58). New York: Sloane.
2. Lawton, Clive.(1989). Judaism: Religions Through Festivals(pp.30-31). Harlow, Essex : Longman.
3. 張明佑 (1980):《與古希伯來哲士對話—舊約聖經簡介》(頁 31-35)。台南：人光。
4. 韓承良 (1999):《聖經中的制度和習俗》(頁 282-283)。香港：思高聖經學會。
5. 天主教香港教區禮儀委員會辦事處出版：《逾越節晚餐》。香港：天主教香港教區禮儀委員會。



Material 3 – Understanding Justice

Do you know what 'justice' means? A lot of people think justice refers to fairness. According to the research done by Catholics theologians, justice refers to the following:

1. Human Dignity

- The Bible says we are made in God's image. Therefore, human life is holy and is the most basic element of justice.

2. Compassion for the poor

- People who live in poverty need most help. God stands by the poor and strives for their benefits.

3. Role of the government

- The government is responsible for defending human dignity, protecting human rights, and seeking common benefits and welfare for her people.

4. Fair economic development

- Economic development should be done with the interest of the entire humankind instead of a specific group of people in the society. Labour rights should be protected. Poor people should be able to enjoy the fruit of the economic development.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編（1993）：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，（頁 846-848）。香港：天道書樓。
2. Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. "Major themes from Catholic Social Teaching." http://www.osjspm.org/major_themes.aspx
3. 香港天主教正義和平委員會：社會訓導 www.hkjp.org/social/SOCIAL.HTM



Period 2: Sinai Covenant

1. Biblical reference: Exodus 19-20

2. Objectives:

- To learn about the process of making, content and meaning of the covenants made between the Israelites and God who had saved them from Egypt.
- To understand God's promise to the Israelites and their obligations after experiencing God's salvation and becoming God's chosen people.
- To understand that the Ten Commandments proclaimed by God granted the Israelites a new identity and taught them the rules of getting along with God and the others.
- To think about the value of human beings, and the rules of getting along with each other.



3. Teaching strategies

Background
Information

- God promised Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites, three things: (1) he would have descendents; (2) God would affiliate with his descendents, i.e. He would become God of Abraham's descendents; and (3) God would grant the Promised Land to him and his descendents.
- When the Israelites suffered in Egypt, God sent Moses to lead them out of this land of suffering. Later, God made covenants with them using the Ten Commandments, which became the fundamentals of all laws in the Israel nation. By accepting the laws, the Israelites promised God to observe the laws of His Kingdom as His chosen people. God and His chosen people were affiliated in a unique way.
- The Israelites had to fulfill their responsibilities as God's chosen people (Ex 19:1-8). They had to obey God, keep the promise with God, be His blessed people and serve Him as His faithful servants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Israelites established their state by making a covenant with God. The laws stabilised their state. The Ten Commandments were not harsh. They were guidelines to consolidate the relationship between God and the Israelites as well as that among all the Israelites..
Issues for Explorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do religious rules pay attention to human values and consolidate the interrelationship among people?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did the Sinai Covenant grant the Israelites new identity and value? How did the Ten Commandments in the Sinai Covenant consolidate the interrelationship among the Israelites? Nowadays, can religious rules help people respect human value and consolidate the interrelationship among people?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through discussions on international declarations and treaties, explore how God granted the Israelites new identity and value through making covenants and the Ten Commandments. Through creative activities, explore how God's Ten Commandments helped the Israelites to understand the rules of getting along with each other. Through "Declaration toward a Global Ethic", explore which principles can help people in modern times to respect human value and consolidate the interrelationship among people?
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sinai Covenant The Ten Commandments God's chosen people
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.

High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the principles which can help people in modern times respect the human values and consolidate the interrelationship among people.• Explore the functions of the Ten Commandments or other religious rules on respecting the value of life and consolidating interpersonal relationship in modern times.
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore how religious literature respects the value of life and consolidate the interrelationship among people.



Activity One



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How did the Sinai Covenant grant the Israelites new identity and value? How did the Ten Commandments consolidate the relationship between God and the Israelites?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills	Human dignity, self-esteem/self-respect, freedom, equality, human rights and responsibilities

Teaching steps:

1. Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to think about the tools in modern society (such as laws and international treaties) that can protect human values.

- Teacher points out:
 - i. During the WWII, more developed countries like Germany and Japan started to invade neighbouring countries. A lot of people in Europe and Asia lost their homes. They were living in fear.
 - ii. After the war ended, many countries longed to safeguard people's right to life (including the freedom of speech) so that people would respect each other.
- Teacher raises the questions:
 - i. What do you think is the most effective way to safeguard people's right to life? Is it pure conscience, the laws, international treaties or others?
- Teacher shows 'PowerPoint 1' (Universal Declaration of Human Rights), guides the students to understand that after the WWII, the United Nations had put effort on safeguarding people's right to life and value of life.
- Teacher discusses with students:
 - i. What rights had the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" safeguarded? Do you think the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" did a good job in encouraging people to respect each other? Explain.
- Teacher can visit the following websites, to let students know more about the work of the United Nations and the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights":
 - i. United Nations:
<http://www.un.org/chinese/>
 - ii. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights":
<http://www.pts.org.tw/~abori/law/un/0.html>

2. Teacher points out:

- The constitution of modern international declarations and treaties aims at safeguarding people's right to life. The "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" is one of them.
- At about 1300 BC, God asked Moses to deliver the suppressed Israelites from Egypt so that they could regain freedom. He made covenants with the Israelites using the Ten Commandments.
- What was the significance of the act of God making covenants with the Israelites to the identity and value of the Israelites? Besides, what instructions were included in the first four of the Ten Commandments (the Ten Commandments were the fundamentals of all Israelite laws) as proclaimed by God on Mount Sinai? were these instructions helpful in protecting the new identity and value of the Israelites?

3. Teacher carries out "Reasons of making the Sinai Covenant" activity with students, allowing them to understand the reasons of God making covenants with the Israelites on Mount Sinai and its significance to the Israelites.

- Teacher divides students in groups of four and hands out 'Worksheet 1' (Reasons of making the Sinai Covenant).
- Teacher shows 'PowerPoint 2' (Reasons of making the Sinai Covenant) to let students understand the culture of "making covenant" in ancient times and in modern times, and also the reasons of God making the Sinai Covenant with the Israelites. Teacher then guides students to discuss the questions on the worksheet:
 - i. What were the changes of the Israelites' situation after making the Sinai Covenant with God?
 - ii. Read Ex 20: 1-11 (the first four/ three of the Ten Commandments) and find out what kind of relationship God wanted to establish with the Israelites in the Sinai Covenant.
 - iii. Do you think the first four/ three of the Ten Commandments were helpful in protecting the identity of the Israelites as God's chosen people?
 - iv. Imagine you were one of the Israelites. How would you feel about your new identity as God's chosen people?
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

4. Teacher summarises:

- God made covenants with the Israelites through Moses. The relationship brought about by the covenants was very important to the Israelites. Not only did God save them from the suppressive Egyptian reign and let them regain freedom, the act of making covenants brought the Israelites into God's rule. Thus, they were given a new identity as God's chosen people.
- In the covenant, God promised to protect the Israelites while the Israelites were obliged to obey God's rules.
- Through the first four of the Ten Commandments, God hoped the Israelites would be faithful to Him and respect Him, believing Him as the only God and the only ruler of the Israelites.

- 5.** Teacher hands out 'Students' Reference: Material 1' (Background of God making the Sinai Covenant with the Israelites and its contents), briefly explains it and wraps up the above activity.



Activity Two



Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How did the Ten Commandments in the Sinai Covenant consolidate the interpersonal relationship among the Israelites?	Collaborative skills, communication skills, creativity, problem-solving skills	Love, respect for others, self-respect, justice

Teaching steps:**1. Teacher raises the question:**

- When Moses delivered the Israelites from Egypt, there were about 600,000 men (Nb 1: 45-46, 2: 32). The total number of people was approximately two million if women and children were included.
- In the past, the Israelites were never respected by anyone when they were ruled by the Egyptians. What kind of problems would arise if such a large number of Israelites were about to live together?

2. Teacher carries out “Rules of getting along with others (1)” activity with students, allowing them to think about how the Israelites should behave to get along with each other after being freed from slavery.

- Teacher divides students in groups of four and hands out ‘Worksheet 2’ (Rules of getting along with each other). Students role-play as the leaders of the Israelites and formulate six rules related to getting along with people, so that the Israelites can respect each other and live together peacefully. Students will also decide which aspects of life (such as respecting other’s life and property) each rule addresses to. After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas. After the sharing session, teacher asks the whole class to choose the six most important rules of getting along with each other from all groups.

3. Teacher points out:

- God chose the Israelites to be His chosen people. The Ten Commandments not only consolidated their relationship with God, but also protected their interpersonal relationship.

- Just now we saw how the first four / three Commandments consolidate the relationship between God and the Israelites. Now let us see what instructions are included in the remaining six / seven Commandments and how they helped consolidate the interpersonal relationship among the Israelites.

4. Teacher carries out the “Rules of getting along with each other (2)” activity with students:

- Teacher asks students to read Ex 20:12-17 to learn about the remaining six / seven Commandments. Students summarise the rules of getting along with people (such as respecting other’s life and property) mentioned in each Commandment and complete the second part of ‘Worksheet 2’.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.
- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 3’ (Rules of getting along with people in the Ten Commandments) to summarise the rules of getting along with people mentioned in the fifth / fourth to the tenth Commandment.
 - i. The fifth / fourth Commandment “Respect your father and your mother”: referred to obeying your parents
 - ii. The sixth / fifth Commandment “Do not commit murder”: proclaimed the preciousness of life
 - iii. The seventh / sixth Commandment “Do not commit adultery”: set the standards of a holy and virtuous marriage
 - iv. The eighth / seventh Commandment: “Do not steal”: respected others’ property
 - v. The ninth / eighth Commandment: “Do not accuse anyone falsely”: forbade people to give false witness at courts or to let untruth replace truth
 - vi. The tenth / ninth to tenth Commandment(s) “Do not desire anything others own”: referred to the unlawful thoughts of getting things which belong to someone else
- Teacher can invite students to share:
 - i. Compare the rules of getting along with people suggested by you and the fifth / fourth to tenth Commandments. What are the similarities and differences (e.g. which set of rules care more about mutual respect among people)?

5. Teacher and students carry out a debate on “Can the rules proclaimed by God helped the Israelites live with freedom and mutual respect?”

- Teacher divides the class into several groups and forms the proposition and opposition teams. Give the students time to form and organise their arguments and invite each team to take turn to speak. Students can think about whether God's proclamation of the fifth / fourth to tenth Commandments was to guide the Israelites to protect interpersonal relationship so that they could live in a society with love and justice.

6. Teacher summarises:

- God asked the Israelites to accept His governance through the Sinai Covenant. God's governance was different from that of the Egyptians because God governed them with love and justice. God showed the Israelites a new way of life through the proclamation of the Ten Commandments. He wanted the Israelites to learn to love God and each other.
- The fifth / fourth to tenth Commandments were about relationships among people which include protecting the family, the individuals. They were the rules for consolidating interpersonal relationships.
- In the history of Western civilization, the Ten Commandments were considered as the foundation of Western laws.

- 7.** Teacher hands out 'Students' Reference: Material 2' (The significance of the Ten Commandments) and 'Students' Reference: Material 3' (Brief interpretation of the Ten Commandments), briefly explains it and wraps up the above activity.



Activity Three



Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
Can religious rules still help people in modern times respect each other and consolidate the relationships among people?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills	Human dignity, love, respect for others, self-respect, equality

Teaching steps:**1. Teacher raises the question:**

- In the modern society, are the religious rules such as the Ten Commandments still meaningful to the people? Are the religious institutions helpful in encouraging people in modern times to respect each other and consolidate interpersonal relationship?

2. Teacher carries out “Care for the world” activity with students, allowing them to learn about the background of the composition of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” and the framework it suggested. Teacher and students then explore the significance of the four principles of “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” to the protection of the ways people in modern times use to get along with each other.

- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 4’ (Background of “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”) and ‘PowerPoint 5’ (“Declaration toward a Global Ethic”), let students learn about the background of the composition of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” and the framework it suggested. Students will learn about the four principles of “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” which originated from the Ten Commandments. The principles served as the core value or ethical rules in many religions and cultures.
- Teacher divides students in groups of four and hands out ‘Worksheet 3’ (Caring the Global Village) and guides them to discuss questions on the worksheet:
 - i. Do you agree with the four principles suggested by “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”? Explain.
 - ii. Do you think the four principles of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” are helpful in helping people in modern times respect the values of life and consolidate the interpersonal relationships among people? Explain.

- iii. Which principles among the four in the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” are applicable in Hong Kong? Explain.
- iv. Other than the four principles of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”, what principles do you think should be added? Explain.
- v. Consider the principles of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”. Do you think the rules of the Ten Commandments are helpful in guiding people to get along with each other in modern times? Explain.

3. Teacher summarises:

- Religious rules such as the Ten Commandments are still influencing the modern society and inspired the composition of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”.
- “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” aims at protecting human values in modern times and the harmonious relationship among people.

Extended Activities:

1. Teacher divides students into groups to look for some religious literature. Students then explore how this literature protects human values and the relationships among people.
2. Teacher asks students to think about the following questions with references to the information collected:
 - What beliefs is the piece of literature based on? How does it interpret human values?
 - What teachings does the piece of literature offer in relation to how to get along with each other? What is your opinion?
 - Can the piece of literature help people get along with each other?
3. Teacher can invite students to share the information they have collected in the following period.



Material 1 – Background of God making the Sinai Covenant with the Israelites and its contents

1. The background of making the Sinai Covenant

- The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, being labored all day. God remembered the covenant He made with their ancestor Abraham. Thus, God saved the Israelites. God delivered the Israelites from Egypt on the night of Passover. They crossed the Red Sea and got rid of the Egyptian army who had been following them.
- The Israelites got into the desert. God had mercy on them, gave them food and water, and even saved them from their enemies.
- On the first day of the third month after the Israelites had left Egypt, they came to the desert of Sinai. There they camped at the foot of Mount Sinai (Ex 19: 1-2).
- God asked Moses to go up the mountain to meet Him. God wanted to make covenants with the Israelites (Ex 19: 3-8) and make them the His people.

2. The significance of the Sinai Covenant

- The Israelites were free after leaving Egypt, but a nation of their own was not yet established. At Mount Sinai, they became the people of God, a religious group.
- In the religious aspect, God made covenants with the Israelites. God was God of Israel and the Israelites were God's chosen people. With the covenant, God was the monarch. Israel thus practised theocracy.
- "Theocracy" means God was the lawmaker and the ruler. God proclaimed the laws through Moses. The laws became rules for the people of God, and God led and governed the people.

3. The content of the Sinai Covenant

- God revealed His name.
- God would be the God of the Israelites.
- God would make the Israelites His people.
- God proclaimed rules about religion and morality to the Israelites, such as the Ten Commandments.

4. God's promises in the Sinai Covenant

- Let the Israelites know God (Ex 20: 2-7).
- Called the Israelites His chosen people, the people of God (Ex 19: 5-6).

5. The responsibilities of the Israelites in the Sinai Covenant

- To obey God and keep the promise with God (Ex 19:5).
- To be the people dedicated to God alone and serve Him as His faithful servants (Ex 19:6).

References:

1. 洗錦光：《舊約歷史綜覽：出埃時期的背景》。
<http://www.m-ccc.org/m-christn/Bstudy/JndgeAdd4.html>
2. Mack, Edward. "Covenant, Book of the Covenant."
<http://www.studylight.org/enc/isb/view.cgi?number=T2375>

Material 2 – The significance of the Ten Commandments

1. Ex 20:2 explained the historical background of God's proclamation of the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord, your God who brought you out of Egypt where you were made slaves." It illustrated that God saved the Israelites from Egypt out of His own initiative and made covenants with them afterwards.
2. The Ten Commandments covered not only the religious aspects (the first to fourth/third Commandments: worship God, forbid the worship of idol, honour God's name and the Sabbath), but also valued the ethics and aim to protect the relationship among people (the fifth/fourth to tenth Commandments).
3. The Ten Commandments are the fundamentals of other laws God proclaimed later (Ex 20: 22 – 23:23).
4. The teachings of the Ten Commandments could be summarised as "love" – God's love for people, and people's love for God and for others. It was the shared value among the Israelites and it which governed their lives.

Reference:

吳羅瑜編（1993）：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，（頁 187-194）。香港：天道書樓。

Material 3 – Brief interpretation of the Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two main sections: the first to fourth/ third Commandments explained the relationship between God and man, and the religious responsibilities the Israelites should observe; the fifth/ fourth to tenth Commandments explained the relationship among people, and the ethics and responsibilities one should observe in his family and the society.

1. The first Commandment: Worship no god but me

- People in the ancient Near East were polytheistic. They believed that different gods governed different natural phenomenon and matters. Living in Egypt, a polytheistic country for 430 years, the Israelites could hardly avoid the influence. To stop them from following other people in the ancient Near East to worship idols, God stated in the first place that He was the only God and requested them to worship Him only.

2. The second Commandment/ the first Commandment: Do not bow down to any idol or worship it

- Worshipping idols was popular in ancient times. In the Near East areas, people used materials like wood, stones and metals to make idols for different gods so that people could worship the gods. They believed the statues could protect the worshippers. At the beginning, the Israelites placed idols in the Most Holy Place. Therefore, God proclaimed the Commandment, forbidding them to make and worship idols.

3. The third Commandment/ the second Commandment: Do not use my name for evil purposes

- People in the ancient Near East believed the names of gods had mysterious powers, thus they murmured the names of gods in spells. Besides, many people abused the holy name of God to strengthen their persuasive power according to the Old Testament. The setting up of the third Commandment was to avoid the Israelites to abuse the holy name of God, preventing God's name from being smeared.

4. The fourth Commandment/ the third Commandment: Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy

- People in the ancient Near East had been using "seven days a week" as the method to tell time. The Babylonians set certain days as taboo days or "rest days" (Sapattu) according to the cycles of the moon. When God made covenants with the Israelites, they changed the seventh day of a week as Sabbath. Moreover, they altered the Babylonians' ominous nature of "Sapattu" and worshipped God merrily.

- Follow God's example of resting after creating the world, appreciating the accomplished work, recalling the incident which God led them away from Egypt and worshipping God on that day.

5. The fifth Commandment/ the fourth Commandment: Respect your father and your mother

People in the ancient Near East lived together as tribes. Families were the fundamentals of holding the tribes together. The Israelites still lived close to their parents after they got married. Three or four generations of the same family usually lived together. According to the Israelite traditions, children were considered gifts from God (Gen 15: 5). The parents had the authority of guarding and teaching their children, while the children had to obey and respect their parents. We can see that the commandment of "respecting your father and your mother" reminded not only the youths but also the adults to fulfill the responsibility of taking care of their parents.

6. The sixth Commandment/ the fifth Commandment: Do not commit murder

- In the covenant God made with Noah, the ancestor of Israelite, God had made it clear that "Human beings were made like God, so whoever murders one of them will be killed by someone else." (Gen 9: 6). Therefore, the aim of the sixth Commandment was to remind people to respect humans who were created by God, and to maintain social stability.
- In the times of the New Testament, Jesus further stated that any insulting behaviour such as being angry with or scolding one's brothers were no difference from murder (refer to Mt 5: 21 –23).

7. The seventh Commandment/ the sixth Commandment: Do not commit adultery

- Polygamy was commonly practised in the times of the Old Testament. People regarded women as men's subsidiary "property". Women had to be absolutely faithful to their husbands. The definition of adultery was a double standard. It was adultery if a married woman had sex with a man other than her husband. However, if a man had sex with an unmarried woman or even a prostitute – as long as she was not married or engaged to someone, it was not adultery (refer to Ex 22: 16; Gen 38).
- Ancient Israel considered adultery a "serious crime". Whoever committed this crime would be sentenced to death. In the times of the New Testament, Jesus stated that "anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart" (refer to Mt 5:28).

8. The eighth commandment/ the seventh Commandment: Do not steal

- The original aim of the eighth Commandment/ the seventh Commandment was to forbid kidnapping and selling people, thus can be understood as “do not steal people”. Kidnapping was common in ancient Near East. Human dignity, freedom and preciousness were not valued. Therefore, the books of laws condemned stealing severely. Whoever kidnapped or sold people would be sentenced to death (refer to Ex 21: 16).
- Besides, the Bible also points out that the failure to share one's own things with others in need is also considered stealing (refer to Deut 24: 19-22). It was because God had entrusted people to govern everything on earth. We should allocate resources fairly to make up for others' shortages.
- This commandment also forbade stealing general valuables such as cattle, sheep and donkeys (refer to Ex 22:1-4). It showed the spirit of ownership protection.

9. The ninth Commandment/ the eighth Commandment: Do not accuse anyone falsely

- The original aim of the ninth Commandment was to forbid the Israelites to give false witness at courts to frame-up and incriminate others. Although there was not a complete legal system in ancient Israel, Moses had chosen many judges from the people to deal with disputes as early as the Israelites were wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt (refer to Ex 18: 13 – 26). It can be considered the prototype of a legal system.

The ninth commandment: Do not desire anyone's wife

- The first sentence of Exodus 20:17 states that: “You shall not desire your neighbour's house”, the meaning of “house” not only includes one's dwelling place, but also his wife, slaves and possessions as well. So, the following is the elaboration of the above verse.

10. The tenth Commandment: Do not desire anything belonging to others

- In the original Hebrew text, “desire” was a neutral word meaning “longing for” or “fond of ...” Longing for things can both be good (such as longing for God) or bad. For instance, there were a number of examples in the Old Testament, such as Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 3), the Israelites longing for meat, and David's desire for Bathsheba etc. This commandment wanted people to understand the consequences of greed so that people can restrain greed and be contented.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編 (1993):《聖經新辭典》，上冊，(頁 187-194)。香港：天道書樓。
2. 胡意宜著，匯思譯 (1983):《出埃及記研經導讀》。香港：天道書樓。

Worksheet 1 – Reasons of making the Sinai Covenant

1. The column on the left describes the conditions of the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt. Write down in the right column the changes after the Israelites made covenants with God.

Conditions of the Israelites	In Egypt as slaves	After making covenants with God
Identity	Egyptian slaves	
Occupation	Labours	
Who governed their lives	Governed by Egyptians	
Targets	Mainly followed the culture of slaves in Egypt	
The laws they observed	Observed the laws given to slaves by Egypt	

2. Read Ex 20: 1-11 (the first four/ three of the Ten Commandments) and find out what kind of relationship God wanted to establish with the Israelites in the Sinai Covenant? Put a ✓ in the appropriate and write down the relevant Commandment.

An affiliating relationship; such as Commandment:

A faithful relationship; such as Commandment:

A respectful relationship; such as Commandment:

A submissive relationship; such as Commandment:

3. Do you think the first four/ three of the Ten Commandments were helpful in protecting the identity of the Israelites as God's chosen people?

4. Imagine you were one of the Israelites. How would you feel towards your new identity changing as God's chosen people?

Worksheet 2 – Rules of getting along with each other

1. Imagine you were the Israelites' leader, formulate six rules to encourage people to get along with others, so that they can respect each other and live together peacefully. Put down relevant aspects of life (such as respecting other's life and property) in which each rule addresses to.

The six most important rules	Relevant aspects of life
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

2. Read Ex 20: 12-17 and write down the remaining six / seven of the Ten Commandments. Then put down relevant aspects of life (such as respecting other's life and property) in accordance to the Commandments.

The fifth / fourth to tenth Commandments	Relevant life aspects
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Worksheet 3 – Caring the Global Village

1. Do you agree with the four principles suggested by “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”? Explain.

2. Do you think the four principles of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” are helpful in helping people in modern times respect human values and consolidate the interpersonal relationship among people? Explain.

3. Which principles among the four in the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic” are applicable in Hong Kong? Explain.

4. Other than the four principles of the “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”, what principles do you think should be added? Explain.

5. Take the example of “Declaration toward a Global Ethic”, do you think the rules of the Ten Commandments are still helpful in guiding people to get along with each other in modern times? Explain.



Material 1 – Background of God making the Sinai Covenant with the Israelites and its contents

1. The background of making the Sinai Covenant

- The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, being labored all day. God remembered the covenant He made with their ancestor Abraham. Thus, God saved the Israelites. God delivered the Israelites from Egypt on the night of Passover. They crossed the Red Sea and got rid of the Egyptian army who had been following them.
- The Israelites got into the desert. God had mercy on them, gave them food and water, and even saved them from their enemies.
- On the first day of the third month after the Israelites had left Egypt, they came to the desert of Sinai. There they camped at the foot of Mount Sinai (Ex 19: 1-2).
- God asked Moses to go up the mountain to meet Him. God wanted to make covenants with the Israelites (Ex 19: 3-8) and make them the His people.

2. The significance of the Sinai Covenant

- The Israelites were free after leaving Egypt, but a nation of their own was not yet established. At Mount Sinai, they became the people of God, a religious group.
- In the religious aspect, God made covenants with the Israelites. God was God of Israel and the Israelites were God's chosen people. With the covenant, God was the monarch. Israel thus practised theocracy.
- "Theocracy" means God was the lawmaker and the ruler. God proclaimed the laws through Moses. The laws became rules for the people of God, and God led and governed the people.

3. The content of the Sinai Covenant

- God revealed His name.
- God would be the God of the Israelites.
- God would make the Israelites His people.
- God proclaimed rules about religion and morality to the Israelites, such as the Ten Commandments.

4. God's promises in the Sinai Covenant

- Let the Israelites know God (Ex 20: 2-7).
- Called the Israelites His chosen people, the people of God (Ex 19: 5-6).

5. The responsibilities of the Israelites in the Sinai Covenant

- To obey God and keep the promise with God (Ex 19:5).

To be the people dedicated to God alone and serve Him as His faithful servants (Ex 19:6).

References:

1. 洗錦光：《舊約歷史綜覽：出埃時期的背景》。
<http://www.m-ccc.org/m-christn/Bstudy/JndgeAdd4.html>
2. Mack, Edward. "Covenant, Book of the Covenant."
<http://www.studylight.org/enc/isb/view.cgi?number=T2375>



Material 2 – The significance of the Ten Commandments

1. Ex 20:2 explained the historical background of God's proclamation of the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord, your God who brought you out of Egypt where you were made slaves." It illustrated that God saved the Israelites from Egypt out of His own initiative and made covenants with them afterwards.
2. The Ten Commandments covered not only the religious aspects (the first to fourth/third Commandments: worship God, forbid the worship of idol, honour God's name and the Sabbath), but also valued the ethics. They aim to protect the relationship among people (the fifth/fourth to tenth Commandments).
3. The Ten Commandments are the fundamentals of other laws God proclaimed later (Ex 20: 22 – 23:23).
4. The teachings of the Ten Commandments could be summarised as "love" – God's love for people, and people's love for God and for others. It was the shared value among the Israelites and it which governed their lives.

Reference:

吳羅瑜編（1993）：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，（頁 187-194）。香港：天道書樓。





Material 3 – Brief interpretation of the Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two main sections: the first to fourth/ third Commandments explained the relationship between God and man, and the religious responsibilities the Israelites should observe; the fifth/ fourth to tenth Commandments explained the relationship among people, and the ethics and responsibilities one should observe in his family and the society.

1. The first Commandment: Worship no god but me

- People in the ancient Near East were polytheistic. They believed that different gods governed different natural phenomenon and matters. Living in Egypt, a polytheistic country for 430 years, the Israelites could hardly avoid the influence. To stop them from following other people in the ancient Near East to worship idols, God stated in the first place that He was the only God and requested them to worship Him only.

2. The second Commandment/ the first Commandment: Do not bow down to any idol or worship it

- Worshipping idols was popular in ancient times. In the Near East areas, people used materials like wood, stones and metals to make idols for different gods so that people could worship the gods. They believed the statues could protect the worshippers. At the beginning, the Israelites placed idols in the Most Holy Place. Therefore, God proclaimed the Commandment, forbidding them to make and worship idols.

3. The third Commandment/ the second Commandment: Do not use my name for evil purposes

- People in the ancient Near East believed the names of gods had mysterious powers, thus they murmured the names of gods in spells. Besides, many people abused the holy name of God to strengthen their persuasive power according to the Old Testament. The setting up of the third Commandment was to avoid the Israelites to abuse the holy name of God, preventing God's name from being smeared.

4. The fourth Commandment/ the third Commandment: Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy

- People in the ancient Near East had been using "seven days a week" as the method to tell time. The Babylonians set certain days as taboo days or "rest days" (Sapattu) according to the cycles of the moon. When God made covenants with the Israelites, they changed the seventh day of a week as Sabbath. Moreover, they altered the Babylonians' ominous nature of "Sapattu" and worshipped God merrily.

- Follow God's example of resting after creating the world, appreciating the accomplished work, recalling the incident which God led them away from Egypt and worshipping God on that day.

5. The fifth Commandment/ the fourth Commandment: Respect your father and your mother

People in the ancient Near East lived together as tribes. Families were the fundamentals of holding the tribes together. The Israelites still lived close to their parents after they got married. Three or four generations of the same family usually lived together. According to the Israelite traditions, children were considered gifts from God (Gen 15: 5). The parents had the authority of guarding and teaching their children, while the children had to obey and respect their parents. We can see that the commandment of "respecting your father and your mother" reminded not only the youths but also the adults to fulfill the responsibility of taking care of their parents.

6. The sixth Commandment/ the fifth Commandment: Do not commit murder

- In the covenant God made with Noah, the ancestor of Israelite, God had made it clear that "Human beings were made like God, so whoever murders one of them will be killed by someone else." (Gen 9: 6). Therefore, the aim of the sixth Commandment was to remind people to respect humans who were created by God, and to maintain social stability.
- In the times of the New Testament, Jesus further stated that any insulting behaviour such as being angry with or scolding one's brothers were no difference from murder (refer to Mt 5: 21 –23).

7. The seventh Commandment/ the sixth Commandment: Do not commit adultery

- Polygamy was commonly practised in the times of the Old Testament. People regarded women as men's subsidiary "property". Women had to be absolutely faithful to their husbands. The definition of adultery was a double standard. It was adultery if a married woman had sex with other men. However, if a man had sex with an unmarried woman or even a prostitute – as long as she was not married or engaged to someone, it was not adultery (refer to Ex 22: 16; Gen 38).
- Ancient Israel considered adultery a "serious crime". Whoever committed this crime would be sentenced to death. In the times of the New Testament, Jesus stated that "anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart" (refer to Mt 5:28).

8. The eighth commandment/ the seventh Commandment: Do not steal

- The original aim of the eighth Commandment/ the seventh Commandment was to forbid kidnapping and selling people, thus can be understood as “do not steal people”. Kidnapping was common in ancient Near East. Human dignity, freedom and preciousness were not valued. Therefore, the books of laws condemned stealing severely. Whoever kidnapped or sold people would be sentenced to death (refer to Ex 21: 16).
- Besides, the Bible also points out that the failure to share one's own things with others in need is also considered stealing (refer to Deut 24: 19-22). It was because God had entrusted people to govern everything on earth. We should allocate resources fairly to make up for others' shortages.
- This commandment also forbade stealing general valuables such as cattle, sheep and donkeys (refer to Ex 22:1-4). It showed the spirit of ownership protection.

9. The ninth Commandment/ the eighth Commandment: Do not accuse anyone falsely

- The original aim of the ninth Commandment was to forbid the Israelites to give false witness at courts to frame-up and incriminate others. Although there was not a complete legal system in ancient Israel, Moses had chosen many judges from the people to deal with disputes as early as the Israelites were wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt (refer to Ex 18: 13 – 26). It can be considered the prototype of a legal system.

The ninth commandment: Do not desire anyone's wife

- The first sentence of Exodus 20:17 states that: “You shall not desire your neighbour's house”, the meaning of “house” not only includes one's dwelling place, but also his wife, slaves and possessions as well. So, the following is the elaboration of the above verse.

10. The tenth Commandment: Do not desire anything belonging to others

- In the original Hebrew text, “desire” was a neutral word meaning “longing for” or “fond of ...” Longing for things can both be good (such as longing for God) or bad. For instance, there were a number of examples in the Old Testament, such as Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 3), the Israelites longing for meat, and David's desire for Bathsheba etc. This commandment wanted people to understand the consequences of greed so that people can restrain greed and be contented.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編 (1993):《聖經新辭典》，上冊，(頁 187-194)。香港：天道書樓。
2. 胡意宜著，匯思譯 (1983):《出埃及記研經導讀》。香港：天道書樓。

Period 3: Exile

1. Biblical reference: Micah 3: 9-12; Ezekiel 6: 8-10; 2 Kings 17, 25: 1-21; 2 Chronicles 36: 20-21

2. Objectives:

- To learn about the history of the fall of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel and the captivity of their people.
- To understand that the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel had broken the Sinai Covenant, leading to the fall of their nation and their captivity.
- To understand that God, through the prophets, has reminded the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel that they must repent and restore their relationship with God.
- To learn to be courageous in pointing out social injustice, making the society a more righteous place to live in.



3. Teaching strategies

Background
Information

- God made a covenant with the Israelites at Mount Sinai through Moses. This is the first step of building the relationship between God and the Israelites. God ruled the Israelites with love and justice, and the Israelites obeyed the Commandments and laws which guided their life.
- Thus, the theocracy of Israel was established. Their king was God (Deuteronomy 33:5). The Laws guided the behaviour of the citizens of God's kingdom.
- The function of God's Laws was similar to that of the criminal laws in modern times. Breaking the Laws would be the same as committing crimes, offending the nation and the king, i.e. God. The punishment for breaking the Laws was serious because it threatened the covenantal relationship and the fate of the nation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prophets condemned the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms for gradually forgetting the Sinai Covenant: (1) In religious terms, the Israelites forsook God, worshipped idols and built altars for pagan gods; (2) In social terms, the rulers bribed, the priests and prophets sought money and profits, leaving the people to endure injustice. The prophets warned the people that they would lose their country as a punishment if they failed to repent. • The prophets made prophecies about the fall of the nation and the prophecies were eventually fulfilled. During the 9th year of the reign of King Hoshea of the Northern kingdom Israel, the Assyrians conquered Samaria (722 BC). They captured the Israelites of the Northern kingdom to Assyria. These Israelites had never returned. The Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem (586 BC) and destroyed the Holy Temple. The people of the Southern kingdom Judah were taken to Babylon.
Issues for Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the religious tradition of the Christian faith guide society towards greater justice?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of religious and social problems existed before the fall of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel? • What perspectives did the prophets have in criticising social injustice? What did Israel experience in the end when she refused to accept the prophets' criticism? • Have Christians nowadays led society towards greater justice?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By looking into the example of the strike of bar-fixing workers, learn about what people may do when they are treated unfairly. By role-playing, analyse the problems in the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel and explore the role of the prophets before the fall of their nation. • By discussing in groups, learn about the role of the prophets in times of social injustice. • By studying real life examples, understand that there are still people willing to work hard towards greater social justice.

Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fall of the nation• Captivity
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• By one's own strength alone, can people's concern over social injustice be aroused?
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore and evaluate the ways of promoting greater social justice used by different people, groups and organisations nowadays.



Activity One



Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What kind of religious and social problems existed before the fall of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Justice, common good

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to look into the example of the strike of bar-fixing workers. Help students understand what people may do when dealing with unfair treatments nowadays.

- Teacher visit the following websites with students, helps students learn what actions the bar fixing workers took when being treated unfairly:
 - Yahoo News: bar fixing workers strike demanding pay raise (August 9, 2007)
<http://hk.news.yahoo.com/070809/12/2dbp3.html>
 - Yahoo News: bar fixing workers continued sit-in demanding pay raise (August 10, 2007)
<http://hk.news.yahoo.com/070810/60/2dcem.html>
 - Yahoo News: a group of bar fixing workers caused disturbance in central district(August 11, 2007)
<http://hk.news.yahoo.com/070811/12/2desk.html>
 - Yahoo News: bar fixing workers and police clashed in central district(August 11, 2007)<http://hk.news.yahoo.com/070811/12/2dete.html>
 - Yahoo News: 2 injured in conflict between bar fixing workers and police (September 5, 2007)
<http://hk.news.yahoo.com/070905/12/2f1eo.html>
- Teacher discusses with students:
 - Do you agree that people should reprove social injustice?
 - If social injustice is not corrected, how will people's lives and the development of the society be affected?
 - Based on the example of the bar-fixing workers, in what ways can people reprove social injustice? Petitions or protests?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- Social injustice not only appears in present days. It existed more than 2000 years ago in the Israelite society.

Step 3: Teacher carries out “Report on the analysis of national events” activity with students. Help students learn about the religious and social problems in both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel. Ask students to think about how these problems affected the fate of the nation and the people.

- Teacher may refer to ‘Teachers’ Reference Material 1’ (The religious and social conditions in the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel before their fall), concisely points out that:
 - Ever since Solomon, the Israel nation was divided into the Northern and Southern kingdoms. The Northern kingdom was known as Israel while the Southern, Judah. There were religious and social problems in both Northern and Southern kingdoms.
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (The problems of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel), and explains to students the religious and social problems in both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel more than 2000 years ago.
 - Teacher divides students in groups of four and distributes Worksheet 1 (Report on the analysis of national events). Guides students to play the role of a commentator on national events and answer questions on the worksheet according to the content of PowerPoint 1:
 - Summarise the religious and social problems in both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel. Analyse whether these problems have broken the Sinai Covenant between God and the Israelites;
 - Predict the fate of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel, and give your reasons.
- After completing the worksheet, teacher asks students to present their ideas by role-playing.

Step 4: Teacher further discusses with students:

- Why would there be social injustice when the Israelites violated the Sinai Covenant?
- What were the reasons for the Israelites to forget about the Sinai Covenant they made with God?

- How could the Israelites fulfill their duties listed in the Sinai Covenant again?

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- The people of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel have broken the Sinai Covenant that they made with God, forsaking God and hence forsaking a life of love and justice guided by God.
- In religious terms, the people of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel forsook God, worshipped idols and built altars for pagan gods. In social terms, the rulers bribed, the priests and prophets sought money and profit, leaving the people to endure injustice.

Step 6: Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference Material 1’ (The religious and social conditions in the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel before their fall) and wraps up the activity.

Activity Two

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What perspectives did the prophets have in criticising social injustice? What did Israel experience in the end when she refused to accept the prophets' criticism?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Courage, perseverance, patriotism

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher raises question:**

- As both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel had come to this situation, do you think someone would reprove the wrongs of society and the people?
- If you were a citizen in that society, would you reprove the social and religious errors?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- Right before the fall of Israel, some people reprove the problems in society. They did so for the sake of the nation and the people and they were the prophets of Israel.
- How did they criticise the wrongs in the society? What actions did they take to reprove social injustice? Let us explore together.

Step 3: Teacher carries out “The Message of the Prophet” activity with students. By looking into the example of Jeremiah, help students understand the message preached to the Israelites before the fall of the Israel nation, and also the relationship between this message and the Sinai Covenant.

- Teacher divides students into groups of four and distributes Worksheet 2 (The Message of the Prophet); then shows PowerPoint 2 (The Prophet Jeremiah) and guides students to answer the questions on the worksheet:
 - Summarise the perspectives from which the prophet criticised social injustice in Jeremiah's speech.
 - What was the relationship between the prophet's message and the Sinai Covenant?

- Do you agree that the prophet's message could arouse the people to fulfill their duties listed in the Sinai Covenant? Explain.
- After completing the worksheet, teacher invites students to present their ideas.
- Teacher discusses with students:
 - Was the prophet's message an opinion of the majority? What were the effects of their opinions on leading the society towards greater justice ?

Step 4: Teacher distributes 'Students' Reference Material 2' (The prophet's appointment, duties and message), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- The prophets in the Old Testament were people chosen by God to transmit His messages. They were very faithful and did not care about personal benefit. They were courageous in reproving injustice and they focused on building a kingdom that would please to God.
- The prophets in the Old Testament criticised social injustice from the angle of the "covenant". They reminded the Israelites to keep their promises with God, so as to build a society that practises love and justice.

Step 6: Teacher further discusses with students :

- Could the prophet's ideals be practiced? Explain.
- What other factors were necessary in order to practise the prophet's ideals?
- If a society has abandoned love and justice, will the people be able to re-achieve them? Explain.

Step 7: Teacher carries out "The final destiny" activity with students and helps students learn the fate of the Israelites.

- Teacher asks students to read 2 Kings 17:7-23, 25:1-21 and learn what happened to the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel as they faced their final destiny of destruction.
- Teacher raises questions:
 - Was the fall of Israel within your expectation?
 - How did the historical facts differ from your predictions on Worksheet 2?

Step 8: Teacher further discusses with students:

- Do you think it was reasonable for the Israelites to lose their country and homes under such religious and social corruptions?
- Why would the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel lose their homeland by breaking the Sinai Covenant that they made with God?
- Do you think that the Israelites would have a deeper understanding of God and the requirements of the Sinai Covenant after the fall of their nation and the captivity?
- Would social injustice inevitably lead to the fall of the nation? Explain.
- Can the Christian faith impose a positive effect on leading society towards greater justice? Explain.

Step 9: Teacher summarises:

- God delivered the Israelites from Egypt and made the Sinai Covenant with them, hoping that they would live by the standards of love and justice.
- However, the Israelites gradually forgot their relationship with God. They were tempted to do things that the God forbade.
- God asked the prophets to deliver His messages. They foretold the future of the nation and their messages were all about the religious and social ills found in the nation. The prophets warned the Israelites to repent and Jeremiah was one of them.
- Yet, the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel did not listen to the prophets. Their religious and social sins led to their punishment by God.
- In the 9th year of the reign of King Hoshea of the Northern kingdom Israel, the Assyrians conquered Samaria (722 BC). They captured the Israelites of the Northern kingdom to Assyria (2 Kings 17:1-4). These Israelites had never returned. Later in 586 BC, the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Holy Temple. The Israel nation fell. The people were taken into captivity and lived under oppression.

Step 10: Teacher distributes ‘Students’ Reference Material 3’ (The fall of the Northern and Southern kingdoms), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.

Activity Three



Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
Have Christians nowadays led society towards greater justice?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Justice, courage, perseverance, equality

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher raises question:**

- Have Christians nowadays led society towards greater justice?

Step 2: Teacher carries out “Leading society towards greater justice” activity with students and helps students learn about the fight of Father France Mella for social justice. Let students understand that nowadays there are still Christians leading society towards greater justice.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 3 (Sweetie’s ideals) and helps students learn how Father France Mella guides society towards greater justice.
- Teacher divides students in groups of four, distributes Worksheet 3(Leading society towards greater justice) and guides students to explore:
 - Whose rights did Father France Mella fight for?
 - Father Mella was willing to guide society towards greater justice. Was it related to his identity as a priest?
 - Do you think it is better for a priest to promote social reforms? Explain.
 - Some Roman Catholic theologians think that the definition of justice includes being respectful towards men, seeking benefits for the poor, reiterating the role of the government and promoting fair economic development. Do you think that Father France Mella practised these teachings?
 - Is there any other effective way to lead society towards greater justice?
- Teacher asks students to write down their discussion results on the worksheet, and report afterwards.
- Teacher may visit the following website and let students learn more about Priest France Mella.
 - 《Our Voice of Hong Kong Shue Yan College》 March, 2005 〈 Together in “sweet” and bitter 〉 :
http://stu.syc.edu.hk/~ourvoice/release2005/200503/release200503_03b.htm

Step 3: Teacher further discusses with students:

- If there were no such person as “Sweetie” to yearn for social reforms, will society become more just?
- How would you evaluate the social activism of “Sweetie”? How did “Sweetie’s” action inspire you?
- By one’s own strength alone, can people’s concern over social ills be aroused? Explain.

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- In the past, there were prophets to reprove various social injustice in Israel. Today, Father France Mella guided society towards greater justice through concrete actions.
- Father France Mella saw the injustice in Hong Kong society. He was faithful and he did not care about personal benefit, trying his best to fight for the rights of the disadvantaged.
- Christians have always wanted the society to be governed by love and justice, so that everyone will be treated fairly.

Extended Activities:

1. Refer to newspapers, magazines and the following websites, learn that in present days, there are different people, groups and organisations leading the society towards greater justice through various means (e.g. columns in newspapers, protests, bomb attacks to express demands). Teacher asks students to explore the similarities and differences between these means and the methods used by prophets in the past, and to evaluate these methods.
 - Hong Kong Independent Media: We owe the youth an apology(March 3, 2008)
 - http://www.inmediahk.net/public/article?item_id=308484&group_id=20
 - Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese: weekly comment
 - <http://www.hkjp.org/article/index.htm>
 - Protests against World Trade Organization :
 - http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_4510000/newsid_4519300/4519302.stm?bw=nb&mp=rm
 - Self-immolation of Vietnamese Buddhist Monk :
 - <http://www.newcenturynews.com/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1057>
 - The king of Spain narrowly escaped bomb attack :
 - <http://www.people.com.cn/BIG5/paper1787/14064/1254428.html>
2. Teacher asks students to discuss the following questions based on the information collected:
 - In the present days, which actions can lead the society towards greater justice?
 - How do these actions differ from those taken by the prophets in the past? Would you support such actions without reservation?
 - Do you think such actions are effective in promoting social reforms? Explain.
 - If you discover social injustice, what actions will you take to reprove the injustice?
3. Teacher may refer to the analysis of different issues by the 《Church Brain Trust》 of the Mission Enhancement Project (MEP) by the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, see <http://www.202.153.107.138/web/mcp/download.asp>
4. Teacher can invite students to share the information they have collected in the following period.

Material 1: The religious and social conditions in the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel before their fall

Ever since Solomon, the Israel nation was divided into the Northern and Southern kingdoms. The Northern kingdom was known as Israel while the Southern, Judah. There were religious and social problems in both Northern and Southern kingdoms. These problems eventually led to the fall of the whole Israel.

1. Religious conditions

- Pagan worship
 - The people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms inhabited with some foreign tribes. They had their own gods, their own rules and rituals. The Israelites at that time followed the foreign customs, worshipping Baal and the stars. They also practised divination and witchcraft, and even consulted fortune tellers and spiritual media (2 Kings 17:7, 21:1-15).
- Setting up idols, altars and offering sacrifices to pagan gods
 - God has given the Ten Commandments to the Israelites through Moses, forbidding the making and worship of idols (Exodus 20: 4; Deuteronomy 5: 8). Still, the Israelites of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms built pagan places of worship in all their towns. They built temples on the hills. Stone pillars and images of the goddess Asherah were put up on all the hills and under every shady tree. The Israelites served them and burnt incense for them. Some would even sacrifice their own children as burnt offerings to pagan gods (2 Kings 17: 9-18, 21: 1-15).
- Forsaking God
 - God had sent lions to kill those who did not fear Him (2 Kings 17: 26, 33). Those who feared Him worshipped God and the pagan gods at the same time. Such syncretic religion displeased God. He sent prophets to warn the people and ask them to repent, but they rejected the prophets' warning and did not return. They even blasphemed against God, breaking the Sinai Covenant that God made with them. (2 Kings 17:9, 13-15)

2. Social conditions

- Rulers bribed, people abused
 - As the governing class of the nation, the rulers should protect the people. However, the rulers of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel governed for bribes. They did not follow God's rules, doing a lot of bad deeds and even brutalising the people. They skinned the people alive and ate their flesh. They striped off their skin, broke their bones, and chopped them up like meat for the pot. They turned Jerusalem into a city of murder and injustice.(Micah 3: 1-11)
 - When Menahem was King of Israel, he forced each rich person to give him 50 pieces of silver. He then gave 34,000 kilograms of silver to the Assyrian emperor who invaded Israel, so as to win his support, strengthening his own power over the country. (2 Kings 15: 17-20)

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 - The priests and prophets should follow God's order in helping people to know more about God. However, the priests and prophets of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel did not set a good example. They taught and practised divination for the sake of money.
 - The prophets deceived the people and perverted the rights and wrongs. They proclaimed peace to those who could pay them, but threatened war for those who could not.(Micah 3: 5-11)

- The poor were oppressed
 - The Israelites of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms did not love God or man. They oppressed the poor, and forced the people who could not pay them money into slavery. They deprived the poor of their rights and made them live under injustice .(Amos 2: 6-7)

References:

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Material 2: The prophet's appointment, duties and message

1. The prophet's appointment

- The sovereignty of moulding prophets belonged to God. God gave the prophets a unique and personal call before they proclaimed the word of God to the people. Therefore, a prophet must first be allowed to stand before God and be called by God before going to the people.

2. The prophet's main duties

- To proclaim the word of God
 - Prophets proclaimed the word of God to the people, guiding them to know more about God. They believed that by proclaiming God's word, they could change the situation. God told the prophets His own and sent them to declare His will to the Israelites or gentiles.
- To prophesy
 - God asked the prophets to foretell the people about the fate of the nation, asking them to repent and fulfilled their covenant with God. Prophets in general would point to the social situations at that time and predict the future. They gave warning and encouragement and persuaded the people to repent.
- To concern about social and ethical conditions
 - Prophets also played the role of politicians in their nation. They courageously went to the kings and reproved the injustice of the kings and rulers. They also showed compassion to the oppressed. Prophets such as Moses and Jeremiah all cared a lot about helpless people and condemned the oppressors.

3. The content of the prophet's message

- The fall of Judah, the massacre and the captivity of her people was not due to her military weakness in comparison to Babylon.
- The Jews violated the Sinai Covenant and disobeyed God's laws and Commandments.
- The prophets condemned the Jews for sins such as stealing, killing, committing adultery, lying, worshipping foreign gods, not observing the Sabbath, coveting others' wives etc.(Jeremiah 7:9, 8:19, 17:19-27), and also for not maintaining social justice and oppressing the poor.

- Though the prophets kept persuading the Israelites to repent, the Israelites could no longer pull themselves out of their sins. (Jeremiah 8: 4-7)
- The Jews did not worship God whole-heartedly and forsook God. They were immoral and did not maintain social justice. Therefore, God punished the Israelites and caused both Israel and Judah to perish.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編 (1996): 《聖經新辭典》，下冊，(頁 423-427)。香港：天道書樓。
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Material 3: The fall of the Northern and Southern kingdoms

1. How the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel fell

- The fall of the Northern kingdom Israel (930-722 B.C.)
 - In 738 BC, Assyria invaded Syria and overtook the whole Palestine. Assyria established a super power empire. Its territory extended to Iran in the east, Egypt in the south, the Mediterranean Sea in the west and Urartu in the north.
 - The Assyrian Empire was known for her large-scale military, fine weapons and brutal reign of terror.
 - In the 6th year of the reign of King Hoshea (725 BC), Assyria invaded Israel the Northern kingdom. He imprisoned Hoshea and besieged Samaria where a lot of Israelites lived in for three years.
 - In the 9th year of the reign of King Hoshea (722 BC), the Assyrian king conquered Samaria. They captured the Israelites of the Northern kingdom to Assyria. Then he relocated people from Babylon, Cuth, Ivvah, and Hamath, and settled them in the cities of Samaria to replace the exiled Israelites.
 - These Israelites were captured to Assyria and never returned. Now only Judah remained.

- The fall of the Southern kingdom Judah (930-586 B.C.)
 - In 626 BC, the new Babylonian Empire rose up and destroyed the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC.
 - The new Babylonian Empire eventually conquered Judah, Tyre and Egypt and so on. It became the new overlord of Mesopotamia.
 - The Southern kingdom Judah was established for 480 years, twice longer than that of the Northern kingdom Israel. After the captivity of the Israelites of the Northern kingdom to Assyria, Judah had lasted for more than a hundred years.
 - In the 9th year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah (588 BC), the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem. They camped outside the city and built siege walls around it.
 - In the 11th year of the reign of Zedekiah (586 BC), Jerusalem fell. Zedekiah was captured in the plains near Jericho. Nebuchadnezzar killed Zedekiah's sons and took his eyes out, and then captured him to Babylon.

- Nebuzaradan, the adviser of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar and the commander of his army burnt down the Holy Temple, the palace and the houses. He also tore down the city walls. Nebuzaradan then captured the people who were left in the city, the remaining skilled workmen, and those who had deserted to the Babylonians. He left the poorest people who owned no property in Judah and put them to work in the vineyards and fields.
- Judah fell and her people were taken into captivity. It symbolised the fall of the whole Israel nation.

2. The relationship between the breaking of the covenant and God's punishment on the Israelites

- God delivered the Israelites from Egypt, a land of slavery, and made a covenant with them at Mount Sinai. God's purpose was to guide the people to live in justice and be faithful to Him by obeying the Covenant.
- However, the people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel did not obey the Covenant. They did not fear God and they committed much unrighteousness. They broke their promises with God and sank in sins.
- The kings of the Northern kingdom, who imported pagan rituals and customs, did not follow God's teachings. They did not listen to the prophets and refused to repent either. Finally God showed His wrath towards the Northern kingdom, Israel, causing the fall of the country and the captivity of her people to Assyria.
- However, the Southern kingdom, Judah, did not learn her lesson from the fall of the Northern kingdom. They continued to deviate from God's laws and teachings and followed the pagan customs. Eventually Judah the Southern kingdom fell.
- The fate of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel clearly showed that disobeying God would lead to His punishment.

References:

1. 林獻羔：〈以色列被擄歸回〉。
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2. “The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia,” <http://studylight.org/enc/isb/>

Worksheet 1: Analysis of national events

1. Put yourself in the role of a commentator on national events. Make use of the information provided in PowerPoint 1, summarise the religious and social problems in both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel, and analyse if these problems have broken the Sinai Covenant between God and the Israelites.

	Problems	Has the Sinai Covenant between God and the Israelites been broken ? (Put a ✓ in the appropriate <input type="checkbox"/>)
Religious		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes; the part of the covenant that is broken: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> no
Social		<input type="checkbox"/> yes; the part of the covenant that is broken: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> no

What warning would you issue to the people in order to solve the above problems?

2. Predict the fate of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel, and explain your answers. Put a ✓ in the appropriate .

punished by God;

reasons: _____

national prosperity;

reasons: _____

protected by God;

reasons: _____

others;

reasons: _____

Worksheet 2: The Message of the Prophet

1. According to Jeremiah's speech, summarise the perspectives from which the prophet criticised social injustice. Put a ✓ in the appropriate and put down a relevant example.

The perspectives of economy;

e.g. _____

The perspectives of religion;

e.g. _____

The perspectives of politics;

e.g. _____

Others;

e.g. _____

2. How is the prophet's message related to the Sinai Covenant? Put a ✓ in the appropriate

.

Awaken the people to obey the Sinai Covenant

Reiterate the Sinai Covenant

Remind the Israelites that they are God's chosen people

Others : _____

3. Can the prophet's message arouse the Israelites' awareness of their obligation of fulfilling their duties of the Sinai Covenant? Explain.

Worksheet 3: Leading society towards greater justice

Based on the PowerPoint about Father France Mella, discuss and answer the following questions.

1. Whose rights did Father France Mella fight for?

2. Father France Mella wanted to guide society towards greater justice. Was it related to his identity as a priest?

3. What are the “advantages” and “disadvantages” for a priest to promote social justice? Explain.

4. Some Roman Catholic theologians think that the definition of justice includes respecting people, seeking benefits for the poor, reiterating the role of the government and promoting fair economic development. Do you think Father France Mella had practised these teachings?

5. Do you think there are other effective ways to lead society towards greater justice?



Material 1: The religious and social conditions in the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel before their fall

Ever since Solomon, the Israel nation was divided into the Northern and Southern kingdoms. The Northern kingdom was known as Israel while the Southern, Judah. There were religious and social problems in both Northern and Southern kingdoms. These problems eventually led to the fall of the whole Israel.

1. Religious conditions

- Pagan worship
 - The people of the Northern and Southern kingdoms inhabited with some foreign tribes. They had their own gods, their own rules and rituals. The Israelites at that time followed the foreign customs, worshipping Baal and the stars. They also practised divination and witchcraft, and even consulted fortune tellers and spiritual media (2 Kings 17:7, 21:1-15).
- Setting up idols, altars and offering sacrifices to pagan gods
 - God has given the Ten Commandments to the Israelites through Moses, forbidding the making and worship of idols (Exodus 20: 4; Deuteronomy 5: 8). Still, the Israelites of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms built pagan places of worship in all their towns. They built temples on the hills. stone pillars and images of the goddess Asherah were put up on all the hills and under every shady tree .The Israelites served them and burnt incense for them. Some would even sacrifice their own children as burnt offerings to pagan gods (2 Kings 17: 9-18, 21: 1-15).
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Period 4: Promise of the New Covenant & the Hope for the Messiah

1. Biblical reference: Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Ezekial 36: 24-28; Isaiah 11: 1-9
2. Objectives:
 - To learn about the background of God's renewing the new covenant with Israel, and the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and a ruler.
 - To understand that upon the fall of the Israelite nation, God promised to save the Israelites and to make a new covenant.
 - To understand that the Israelites were still God's chosen people under the new covenant; and that God promised the Israelites to let them return to their homeland and rebuild their nation.
 - To know more about the qualities that a good religious leader should possess, so that she/he could lead her/his people to pursue desirable values.



3. Teaching Strategies

Background Information

- The Babylonian king, Nebuchanezzar, destroyed Judah, pulled down the temple, captured many elite groups/professionals and brutally killed many people.
- Upon the fall of the nation of Israel, God did not forsake the Israelites but made a new covenant with them, retaining their status as God's chosen people and promising to lead them to return to their homeland.
- The subject matter of the new covenant: (1) God made a new covenant with the Israelites who were still His people; (2) God promised the Israelites that they would be able to return to their homeland; (3) God forgave the sins of the Israelites; (4) God granted a new heart to the Israelites so that they would be willing to obey; (5) God granted a new spirit to the Israelites so that they would obey God.
- God promised to send the Messiah to be the new king of the Israelites. The Messiah should be a descendant of David and would rebuild the Israel nation in Jerusalem.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Messiah, as a person and a ruler, should be able to lead the Israelites to rebuild their country and to urge them to obey God's commandments.
Issues for Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What qualities should a good leader possess?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Israelites were exiled and their nation was perished. What hope did God give them? • What qualities, both as a person and as a ruler, did the God-promised Messiah possess? • What qualities should a religious leader possess for an ideal society to be established?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through group discussion, help students understand how God's promise of salvation encouraged the Israelites whose nation had perished, enabling the Israelites to understand how they would be able to return to their homeland, to restore their nation and to remain as God's chosen people. • Through reading the prophet's description about the Messiah, help students learn about the qualities, both as a person and as a ruler, the God-promised Messiah possessed. • Through John Maxwell's twenty one qualities of a leader, study the qualities that a good leader should possess.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new covenant • God's chosen people • The Messiah
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the qualities that the officials of the Hong Kong Government should possess in order to lead the people to pursue an ideal society.
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the example of one contemporary politician or leader and see what qualities, both as a person and as a ruler, he/she possesses.

Activity One



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
The Israelites were exiled and their nation was perished. What hope did God give them?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Truth, sanctity of life, belongingness, patriotism, common good

Teaching Steps :

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to think about what hope the Israelites could have after experiencing the fall of their nation.

- Teacher discusses with students:
 - The Israelites were exiled and their nation was destroyed. They lost their homes and were forced to leave their homeland. If you were those Israelites who were exiled to Babylon, how would you feel?
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (The New Babylonian Kingdom & the Captivity of the Israelites) and let students learn about how Nebuchadnezzar devastated Judah and brutally treated the Israelites.
- Teacher shows PowerPoint Two (Reasons for Israel’s Destruction) and let students learn about the two main reasons of Israel’s destruction and the two worries of the exiled Israelites after the destruction of their nation.
- Teacher and students discuss how they would respond to the two questions below that perplexed them if they were the Israelites:
 - The first concern: God promised to give land to Abraham’s descendants. Would the Israelites have a chance to restore their nation and return to the promised land of God?
 - The second concern: In the Sinai covenant, God chose the Israelites to be His people. Now, the Israelites had broken the covenant, would they be able to restore their relationship with God?

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “Israelites’ Hope” activity with students and help them explore the hope that God had given to the exiled Israelites.

- Teacher points out:

- At that time, Babylon was a prosperous country with great military strength. The exiled Israelites did not have any chance to restore their nation. Under such circumstances, let us see what hope God had given to them.
- Teacher shows ‘PowerPoint 3’ (God’s Salvation) and distributes ‘Students’ Reference Material 1’ (God’s New Covenant with the Israelites). Teacher helps students to understand the new covenant between God and the exiled Israelites: that the Israelites would return to their homeland and God would send the Messiah to restore their nation.
- Teacher hands out Worksheet 1 (Hope in Hardship) and guides students to discuss the questions on the worksheet:
 - How did God’s salvation address the first worry of the Israelites?
 - How did God’s salvation address the second worry of the Israelites?
 - Do you think God’s salvation could comfort the Israelites? Explain.

Step 3: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Which part of the new covenant do you think was the most important to the Israelites? Explain.
- If you were the Israelites, would you be comforted after reading the plan of God’s salvation? How would you comment on these plans?

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- Having experienced destruction of their nation, exile from their country and loss of God’s Promised Land, the Israelites doubted if God would forsake them from then on.
- However, God did not break the covenant He made with Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites. After the destruction of Israel, God asked some other prophets to spread His message to reiterate His promise.
- God promised to bless the remaining people and to re-make a new covenant with them so as to extend the relationship between God and the Israelites. In the new covenant, God promised to retain the status of the Israelites as God’s chosen people. In addition, God promised to send the Messiah, a new king of Israel who would lead the Israelites to return to their homeland and rebuild their nation.

Step 5: Teacher briefly explains ‘Students’ Reference: Material 1’ (God’s New Covenant with the Israelites) and wraps up the activity.

Activity Two



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What qualities, both as a person and as a ruler, did the God-promised Messiah possess?	Collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills	Truth, sanctity of life, common good, justice, kindness, goodness, respect for fairness, respect for quality and excellence

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher reviews the main points in the last session with students and raises the question:

- Why would God allow the Israelites to experience the destruction of their nation? Could the Israelites still have hope about the future?

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “What kind of king is the Messiah?” activity with students and guides students to analyse the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and asks students to imagine that they were the Israelites who had broken the sacred covenant with God and disobeyed His laws by doing a lot of unjust things. At last, they were exiled to Babylon and were ruled by Nebuchadnezzar. They hear from the prophets that God promised to send the Messiah to save the Israelites. Students then imagine what personal qualities would the Messiah possess? What qualities of a ruler would he display?
- Teacher hands out Worksheet 2 (The Qualities of the Messiah: as a person and as a ruler) and let each group complete the section ‘The Messiah in My Mind’ under Question 1 first, filling in five qualities as a person and as a ruler respectively.
- After completing the section, teacher invites groups to present their ideas.
- Teacher asks each group to study Isaiah 11: 1-9 to learn about the qualities, both as a person and as a ruler, of the Messiah whom God had foretold through the prophets. Guide students to answer the questions in Worksheet 2:
 - How did Isaiah describe the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler?

- How did the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, address the two concerns of the Israelites after their nation had been destroyed?
- After completing the worksheet, teacher invites the groups to present their ideas.
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 4 (The Qualities of the Messiah) and summarises the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, as found in Isaiah 11: 1-9.

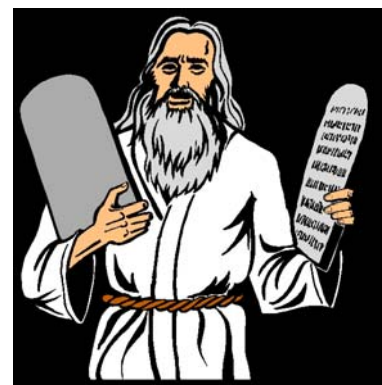
Step 3: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Is there a huge difference between the qualities of the Messiah you have in your mind and those that were listed in Isaiah 11: 1-9 (1 is little difference; 5 is huge difference)?
- Which of the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, as listed in Isaiah 11: 1-9, are the most important in your view? Explain.
- Do you think that the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, as listed in Isaiah 11: 1-9, were sufficient? Do you think it is necessary to add some other qualities?

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- When the Israelites experienced destruction of their nation and exile from their homeland, God promised the coming of the Messiah. The Messiah would lead the Israelites to return to the Promised Land and to restore the nation of Israel.
- The qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, could help the Israelites restore their relationship with God. The Messiah would administer justice in ruling and help the Israelites follow God's laws and commandments as well.

Step 5: Teacher distributes 'Students' Reference: Material 2' (The Qualities of the Messiah: as a person and as a ruler), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.



Activity Three



Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What qualities should a religious leader possess for building an ideal society?	Critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills	respect for quality and excellence, enterprise

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher raises the question:

- According to Isaiah 11: 1-9, imagine what sort of society the Israelites would like to live in. For instance, a society with people who would be willing to follow God’s laws and commandments, revere Him and assure peace and justice in the society?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- The exiled Israelites hoped that the Messiah would be different from the previous kings of Israel. The coming Messiah should be able to lead the Israelites to build an ideal nation that would revere God.
- What qualities do you think a religious leader should possess so that he can lead his followers to pursue ideal values?

Step 3: Teacher carries out “The Difference between Political and Religious leaders” activity with students, and guides students to understand the different qualities possessed by political and religious leaders.

- Teacher plays ‘The Wednesday File: Success comes with Ma (the Horse)’ (elected as Mayor of Taipei, 1998/12/09, 25 minutes); and then plays ‘The Sunday File: Master Xingyun’ (2007/4/15, 22 minutes) or ‘The Sunday File: Rebel Bishop - Chen Rijun’(2004/7/15 , 23 minutes).
- Teacher discusses with students:
 - Do you think political leaders and religious leaders should possess different qualities?
 - Compare the qualities possessed by a religious leader with that of a political leader. What is the greatest difference?

- What ideal values are worth pursuing in contemporary society? What qualities should a religious leader possess so that he can lead his followers to pursue those ideal values?

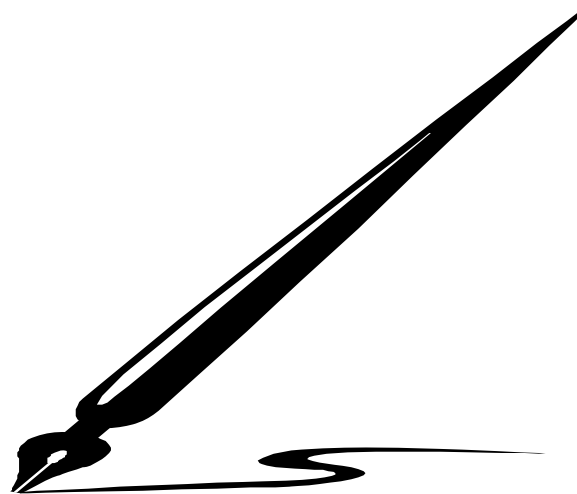
Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- God promised that He would send a Messiah who possessed the qualities of a leader. The Messiah would lead the Israelites to build an ideal nation that would revere God.
- In the same way, our society needs religious leaders of high quality to lead people to pursue ideal values and to build an ideal society.





Extended Activities:

1. Teacher distributes Appendix 1 (21 Qualities of a Leader) to students. Let them scrutinise the study conducted by an expert on leadership, John Maxwell, about the qualities of contemporary leaders.
2. Teacher briefly introduces these 21 qualities and explains that these qualities can determine if a leader is good or not. The more qualities a leader possess, the better the quality of the leader.
3. Teacher hands out Worksheet 3 (Qualities of a Leader) and completes the questions in the worksheet with students:
 - Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which of these qualities should the leaders of the society of Hong Kong possess so that an ideal society can be built in Hong Kong?
 - Hence, why do you think the qualities selected above are important for the leaders in Hong Kong?
 - Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which of those do you think you possess?
 - Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which five of them are the most important to you? Explain.
 - Apart from these 21 qualities, do you think a good leader should possess any other qualities? What are those qualities?
4. Teacher can invite students to share the information they have collected in the following period.





Appendix One: 21 Qualities of Leaders


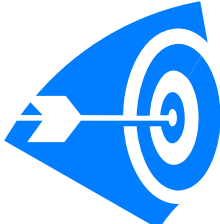


<p>1. Character: foundation of leadership</p> <p>Leadership is to bring out the ability and willpower of people towards a common goal. It can trigger self-confidence from people.</p> 	<p>2. Charisma: First impression can affect overall situation</p> <p>How to develop one's charisma? To actively help others and to affirm oneself instead of eagerly asking others to affirm you.</p>	<p>3. Commitment: difference between dreamer and doer</p> <p>People do not follow indecisive leaders. One's commitment level can be shown from many things: your working hours, your determination to improve, your sacrifice for people whom you serve...etc.</p>
<p>4. Communication: you'd only be walking by yourself by you lack it</p> <p>Leaders need to transform their knowledge and vision into enthusiasm and passion in order to pass them on to others. If a leader cannot clearly spread the message and encourage others to join, the message is useless.</p>	<p>5. Competence: people will follow you if you have it</p> <p>Competence is beyond the level of words. It is the leader's ability to communicate, plan and execute so that others can trust your leadership and are willing to follow you.</p>	<p>6. Courage: one who is courageous is better than many</p> <p>An important virtue of men is courage, because it can fuel other virtues during times of difficulties.</p> 
<p>7. Discernment: no mystery unsolved</p> <p>Smart leaders only believe half of what they hear; only discerning leaders know which half to believe in.</p>	<p>8. Focus: the clearer you focus, the less confused you will be</p> <p>What people say, what people do and what people say they'll do can be completely unrelated.</p>	<p>9. Generosity: if your candles can light up other candles, then it'll burn forever</p> <p>Nobody obtains honour for getting things. Honour is a reward for giving.</p>



<p>10. Initiative: don't leave home if you don't bring it with you</p> <p>Success is impossible without actions. Successful people continuously engage in something. Although they make mistakes at times, they never quit.</p>	<p>11. Listening: to win others' heart, please use your ears</p> <p>A good leader always encourages others to voice what she/he needs to know, not what she/he wants to hear.</p> 	<p>12. Passion: One life only, use it fully</p> <p>If one doesn't love his job, there will not be success.</p>
<p>13. Positive attitude: if you believe in yourself, you will be able to achieve</p> <p>In this generation, our biggest discovery is that we can change our attitude to change our lives.</p>	<p>14. Problem-solving: don't let your difficulties stumble you.</p> <p>You can evaluate the ability of a leader by the magnitude of the problems she/he handles. We usually choose to resolve issues that we can manage.</p> 	<p>15. Relationships: if you are easy-going, people are more willing to follow you.</p> <p>One important tip to success is to know how to live with others.</p>



<p>16. Responsibility: if you don't carry the ball, you can't lead the team.</p> <p>You should be the first to take up the responsibility if you want to be successful. An analysis shows that all successful people have a common characteristic: they are willing to bear responsibility.</p> 	<p>17. Security: Even very able person cannot live without it.</p> <p>If one only wishes oneself to succeed and to take all credits, one can never be an outstanding leader. She/he cannot provide a sense of security to the others. She/he will restrict brilliant people and limit potential development of the organisation.</p>	<p>18. Self-discipline: before leading, learn self-discipline</p> <p>Talents without self-discipline are like an octopus wearing ice-skates. There are nonstop movements, but it is unclear whether the octopus is moving forward, moving backward or spinning.</p>
<p>19. Servanthood: if you want to stand before men, remain behind them at first</p> <p>True leaders serve the others and consider the benefits of the others. Although they may be unwelcome or unappreciated at times, they don't mind. It is because true leaders treat others with passion instead of being driven by self-glorification. They are willing to sacrifice themselves for others.</p>	<p>20. Teachability: nonstop leading, nonstop learning</p> <p>The time you spend to listen and to read should be ten times as much as the amount of time you use to talk. This attitude will ensure your continual learning and growth.</p>	<p>21. Vision: you can only grasp what you see</p> <p>To own the future is to firmly hold onto opportunities before they manifest fully.</p> 

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1. 約翰·麥斯威爾著，徐顯光譯 (2000): 《天生領袖—領導 21 特質》。台北：道聲出版社。
2. Maxwell, John C. (1999). *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow*. Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Material 1: The New Covenant God Re-established with Israelites

1. Background of new covenant establishment

- The Israelites destroyed the covenant that God had made with their ancestors several times. This deserved severe punishment—captivity of Israel and Judah. Nonetheless God did not forsake them. Through prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, God re-established a new covenant with them to conserve the holy status of God's chosen people. (Jeremiah 31: 33; Ezekiel 36: 28)
- This new covenant was extremely meaningful to these Israelites who had experienced the pain of losing their own nation. This new covenant also allowed the Israelites to have a deeper understanding of God: (1) God's name is holy (Ezekiel 36:23) and He would punish those who violated the covenant; (2) God was gracious and was willing to forgive people's sins and give them hope (Jeremiah 31: 34).

2. Content of the new covenant (Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Ezekiel 36: 24-28)

- God established a new covenant (Jeremiah 31: 31-33; Ezekiel 36: 28)
 - God established a new covenant with the Israelites to keep their status as God's chosen people
- God promised the Israelites that they could return to homeland (Ezekiel 36: 24, 28)
 - God promised the captive Israelites that they could return to their motherland to rebuild their homes.
- God forgave the sins of the Israelites (Jeremiah 31: 34; Ezekiel: 36: 25)
 - Although the Israelites consistently sinned and defiled God's name and the land God had given (Ezekiel 36: 18), God used water to cleanse them and forgave them.
- God gave a new heart to the Israelites so that they would be willing to obey Him (Jeremiah 31: 33; Ezekiel 36: 26)
 - The Israelites had always believed that a person's heart was the most important for a human being. It was the source of morals and wills. God changed the hearts of the Israelites from a stubborn one to an obedient one so that they would willingly follow God.
- God gave a new spirit to the Israelites so that they would be willing to follow God's laws and decrees (Ezekiel: 36: 27)
 - God gave the Israelites a new spirit so that they could follow God's laws and commands.

3. God's Promised Deliverance:

Upon exile, two struggles that the Israelites faced	God's Promised Deliverance
1. God had promised Abraham that his descendants would have their own land. Would the Israelites still have the chance to restore their nation and return back to God's Promised Land?	1. The captive Israelites could return to their motherland. 2. The Israelites could rebuild their homes upon return. 3. God would send the Messiah, David's descendant, to be the king of Jerusalem leading the Israelites to rebuild the Israel nation.
1. In the Sinai Covenant, God had chosen the Israelites to be His people. Now the Israelites had broken the covenant, could they restore their relationship with God?	1. Established a new covenant with the Israelites so that they remained as God's chosen people. 2. God gave them a new heart and a new spirit so that they could obey God and follow His laws and decrees. 3. God forgave the sins of the Israelites.

References:

1. 胡意宜著，陳惠榮譯 (1982)：《耶利米書研經導讀》。香港：天道書樓。
2. 晏保羅著，吳美真譯 (1995)：《以西結書研經導讀》。香港：天道書樓。
3. 游斌(2007)：《希伯來聖經的文本、歷史與思想世界》(頁 326-388)。北京：宗教文化。
4. 梁雅明 (1992)：《先前的盟約》。香港：思高聖經學會。
5. 沙邦傑著，陳芳怡譯 (1999)：《舊約導覽》。台北：光啓出版社。
6. 摩協•培曼著，胡安德譯 (2007)：《舊約之旅》。香港：思高聖經學會。

Material 2: Messiah's Personal Qualities and Ruling Principles

1. Description of the Messiah in Isaiah 11: 1-9

- Personal Qualities:
 - David's descendant (verse 2)
 - Spirit of God will be with Him (verse 2)
 - Full of wisdom, knowledge and skills (verse 2)
 - He knows the will of God (verse 2)
 - He will honour God (verse 2)
 - He finds pleasure in obeying God (verse 2)
- Ruling Principles:
 - He will not judge by appearance or hearsay (verse 3)
 - He will judge the poor family and defend the rights of the helpless (verse 4)
 - He punishes the evil (verse 4)
 - He will rule his people with justice and integrity (verse 5)
 - There will be peaceful ruling in Jerusalem (verses 6-9)

2. How did the personal qualities and ruling principles of the Messiah response to Israelites' questions during exile?

Upon exile, two situations that the Israelites struggled	Response from Messiah's personal qualities and ruling principles
1. God had promised Abraham that his descendants would have their own land. Would the Israelites still have the chance to restore their nation and return back to God's promised land?	The Messiah would be David's descendant. He would rule Jerusalem with peace.
2. In the Sinai Covenant, God had chosen the Israelites to be His people. Now that the Israelites had broken the covenant, could they restore their relationship with God?	The Messiah would have the spirit of God and a heart that feared God. He would rule with justice, integrity and peace. He would follow God's laws and commands.

References:

1. 吳羅瑜編 (1993)：《聖經新辭典》，上冊，(頁 149-159)。香港：天道書樓。
2. 游斌 (2007)：《希伯來聖經的文本、歷史與思想世界》(頁 275-294)。北京：宗教文化。
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Worksheet 1: Hope in Hardship

1. Write down your ideas in the space below.

After the destruction of their nation, the two concerns of the Israelites	God's promise of salvation
The first concern: God promised land to Abraham's descendants. Would the Israelites have a chance to restore their nation and return to the promised land?	
The second concern: In the Sinai covenant, God proclaimed the Israelites to be His chosen people. Now, the Israelites had broken the covenant, would they be able to restore their relationship with God?	

2. Do you think God's promise could bring comfort to the Israelites? Explain.

Worksheet 2: The Qualities of the Messiah, as a person and as a ruler

1. Read Isaiah 11: 1-9 to learn about the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler and complete the table below.

	My understanding about the Messiah	Isaiah's description of the Messiah
Qualities as a person	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	
Qualities as a ruler	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	

2. How did the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, address the two concerns of the Israelites after their nation had been destroyed? Please complete the table below.

After the destruction of their nation, the two concerns of the Israelites	How the qualities of the Messiah, both as a person and as a ruler, address these concerns
The first concern: God promised land to Abraham's descendants. Would the Israelites have a chance to restore their nation and return to the promised land?	
The second concern: In the Sinai covenant, God proclaimed the Israelites to be His chosen people. Now, the Israelites had broken the covenant, would they be able to restore their relationship with God?	

Worksheet 3: Qualities of a Leader

1. Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which of these qualities should be possessed by the leaders of Hong Kong so that an ideal society can be built? (Please put a \checkmark in the appropriate space.)

	Qualities to be possessed by leaders of Hong Kong		Qualities to be possessed by leaders of Hong Kong
1. character		11. listening	
2. charisma		12. passion	
3. commitment		13. positive attitude	
4. communication		14. problem-solving	
5. competence		15. relationships	
6. courage		16. responsibility	
7. discernment		17. security	
8. focus		18. self-discipline	
9. generosity		19. servanthood	
10. initiative		20. teachability	
		21. vision	

2. Refer to the above question, why do you think the qualities selected would be important for the leaders in Hong Kong?

3. Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which of them do you think you possess?

4. Out of the 21 qualities of a leader listed by John Maxwell, which five of them are the most important to you? Explain.

5. Apart from these 21 qualities, do you think a good leader should possess other qualities? What are these qualities?



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