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Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology

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FEAR, RATIONALITY, . . . : WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

An AJET Editorial

Human beings all over the world are bombarded by the fear of the unknown, especially death. No one wants to discuss the issue of death yet at the back of their minds wonder where they will go when they die. Others in solving matters of faith fluctuate between reason and naturalistic elements of the universe. Where is the place of the supernatural in their everyday lives? While salvation is guaranteed for believers, in what way should they worship the heavenly father they so love? What is the mark of their love? And/or why are they driven to seek extra protection?

The lead article in this issue is a book chapter printed with permission from the publisher. In this article the author, Dr. Richard J. Gehman, discusses from *an evangelical perspective the problem of the fear of death,* a research work in which nearly a hundred participants from different church backgrounds were interviewed. The evidence from the findings points out that "the problem of death and the living dead is very real" (p. 98) requiring a biblical solution. The author discusses salvation in three tenses: past, present and future with reasons why it is crucial and rightly states, "a personal knowledge and experience of salvation is the only solution to the problem of fear of death.

The second article *Naturalism and Reason* by Joseph B.O. Okello examines from a philosophical point of view whether the possibility of reason (thought) can be justified on naturalistic grounds. In this discussion, there is a contrast between what philosophers argue to be the case and what naturalists believe on this matter. The article raises in the readers' mind questions like, 'what is the difference between rationality and naturalism? Is reason part of the natural order of what exists in the universe? What is the function of supernaturalism? After looking at various arguments, the author concludes that naturalism does not provide proper epistemic justification for the possibility of reason. As a science, naturalism enables the discovery of new facts in the world. However, "truths about the world are ultimately accessible only by the correct employment of our

rational faculties; for without reason science cannot take off the ground." (p. 130)

In *Music in Worship in Service,* Dr. Esther J. Kibor provides a solid and comprehensive survey of music as an essential element of Christian worship with the hope that churches will reconsider the type of music that is sung in their congregations. She challenges worship leaders and all those concerned with church ministry to seriously consider the significance and categories of music, and the effect that music has in worship services. By providing key factors to congregational singing, she concludes that music in worship is vital as it draws people to God; it must therefore be characterized by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

In the fourth article, Kenyatta University Professor, Watson Omulokoli follows his series on the *Portuguese presence and Endeavours in East Africa, 1498-1698.* In these two parts, the author looks at the political occupation and presence of the Portuguese and their Christian attempts and efforts during the same period. He provides background information and points out the struggles the Portuguese faced as they tried to conquer and control. He categorically concludes, "when new Christian efforts were embarked upon towards the middle of the 19th century, there was no evidence . . . of Christian presence from these earlier attempts. This state of collapse and . . . vacuum was the prevailing situation when the trio of German Lutherans (Krapf, Rebmann and Erhardt), under CMS, proved pioneers of Christianity in East Africa (p.141).

The final article discusses *witchcraft and sorcery* from *a biblical perspective with implications for church ministry.* After defining the terms witchcraft and sorcery, Dr. Esther J. Kibor describes the effects and extent of these issues stating that fear of illness and death and disobedience have caused people to seek protection in the wrong place. Further she points out that witchcraft and sorcery are real in the Bible and Scripture warns against these vices, which are forms of self-deception brought by Satan. Scripture forbids the use of mystical powers because they are associated with demonic activities. Lack of Christian teaching is the cause of these syncretistic elements among church members.

AN EVANGELICAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF FEAR OF DEATH

Richard J. Gehman

INTRODUCTION

From the study of the Bible and after much discussion with Christians in Africa, the author concludes that the solution to the problem of the fear of sickness and death, is to be rightly related to Jesus Christ. People must be taught thoroughly the riches and fullness of their salvation. Salvation includes: (1) being declared righteous before God through faith in Jesus Christ (justification); (2) growing in faith and obedience to Jesus Christ (sanctification); (3) being perfected and receiving resurrection bodies at the return of Jesus Christ (glorification).

Christians must be taught that death for them is gain, for they will be with Christ in heaven immediately after death. They must understand that Christ's death has brought victory over death. Through Christ's death the penalty for their sin has been completely paid and Satan, the chief enemy of their soul, has been absolutely defeated. Thus the powers of darkness (the evil spirits) have no authority over the believer. Christians must be taught the blessed hope of the believer, the second coming of Christ. By centring their hope on Christ and his return the believers will be able to persevere with hope during times of sickness and death. By receiving Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and being taught of their future hope in Him, Christians will be able to stand strong in their faith through the power of the Holy Spirit.

What has struck the author over the years is the great gulf which separates the ideas of many theologians in Africa (who became known throughout the world by their books), and the beliefs of the average Christian known to him in Kenya. This has been a growing impression of his over the last thirty years of serving in Kenya.

This chapter article is printed with permission from the Publisher: "The book *Who are the Living Dead* by Richard Gehman (ISBN 9966-20-088-6) is published by Evangel Publishing House, Nairobi, Kenya"

Before writing this book the author decided to sit down once again over a period of some months with nearly one hundred men and women whose homes were in every part of the country and beyond, and who were studying at Moffat College of Bible in Kenya. They were Gikuyu, Akamba, Nandi, Luhya, Luo, Masai and Gusii. Although most of them were with the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, numbers of them were with other churches and from other countries in Africa. They agreed that the problem of death and the living-dead was very real in their own churches. They were also united on what they saw as the solution to the problem.

Their many suggestions may be reduced to these two simple, basic ideas: the need for the people to have a right relationship with Christ, and to have adequate teaching from the Word of God.

Developing these ideas, we may say that salvation, full and complete, must be known and experienced by the people of Africa today. People need to know the Lord and be nurtured and taught in the Word of God. The churches need to be renewed, for they are too self-satisfied with their tradition of piety. If the people were truly born again, walking in the Spirit and growing in their knowledge of God's will from the Scripture they would be delivered from the fear of sickness, death and the living-dead.

Following are some practical and pastoral suggestions which come from these Christians in Kenya. Their basic ideas have been developed further through additional research by the author. These suggestions are an alternative approach to the ideas suggested by the theologians in Africa surveyed earlier in this book.

The Biblical Solution to the Fear of Death and the Living-Dead

A personal knowledge and experience of salvation is the only true solution to the fear of death and the living-dead. Salvation that is full and complete has three stages: (1) being saved from the penalty or punishment of sin when we receive Christ as our Saviour (this is the past tense of salvation and took place when each believer was born again; in theology this is called **"justification"**); (2) being saved from the power of sin (this is the present tense and takes place throughout the life of the Christian; in theology this is called **"sanctification"**); and (3) being saved from the very presence of sin (this is the future tense and

will take place when Christ returns again in glory; in theology this is called **"glorification").**

JUSTIFICATION – Being Declared Righteous – a Past Experience

1. People need to be saved, coming to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

As we leave the 20th century and begin moving beyond the year 2000 AD, we find Africa a very different continent from the one we read of 150 years ago. When the gospel was brought to the shores of Africa in the 19th century, there was much opposition to Christianity. The hold of the family and clan on individuals was very real. People who became Christians did so at a great price. They were persecuted for their faith and even thrown out of their families. This opposition continued in many areas until the middle of the 20th century and beyond.

But today in many countries south of the Sahara, Christianity has become an accepted part of present-day society. In many ways baptism has replaced initiation rites. Part of tradition today in the churches is for the young people to be enrolled in catechism classes, preparing them for baptism. No questions are asked. The church leaders do not ask, "Have these young people been saved?" Baptism is what every person wants in order to become a fully grown adult in present-day culture, either in the marketplace or in catechism class.

As a result, churches are being filled with people who are Christian only in name. The younger people under the age of 15, who form 50% of Africa's population, may attend church but may not have been saved. More than that, many individuals who have grown up in churches and been educated in church schools, hold important positions in business, government and education. But many of these second or third generation "Christians" are nominal at best. They have adopted the outer form of Christianity but fail to follow the ways of Christ. They have been baptised, have a "Christian name," are church members, attend church and may even sing in the choir and hold leadership positions in the church. But they may not have been born again.

A very strange and unbelievable thing has happened. The western nations (with the Christian churches which took the gospel to the two-thirds world) and Africa have changed (reversed) their positions. The West was Christian in name in the past. If in 1950 you had asked an American, "Are you a Christian?" the

likely reply would have been, "Do you think I am a pagan?" But today, with the decline of a living, evangelical Christianity in the West, numbers of Americans and Europeans are now publicly and openly admitting that they are pagans – really and truly pagans. They are following the religious rites, practice and beliefs of their pagan ancestors.

We read of Americans returning to the ancient Norse pagan cults, complete with animal sacrifice. They meet out-of doors in nature's temple, "drawing down the moon" and inviting the gods and spirits into their fellowship. Many other Europeans and Americans are outside the church and opposed to anything that is Christian. They work hard in official, public places to undermine and destroy Christianity.

But in Africa, formerly known as the Dark Continent, very few desire to be known as followers of African Traditional Religion. When the census is taken and people are asked, "What is your religion?", they respond, "Christian," "Muslim" or "Hindu." Very, very few claim to be followers of African Traditional Religion. Nominal Christianity is everywhere in Africa today. And without a healthy, live, evangelising and discipling church, the future for Christianity is very dark indeed.

If people are not Christian in their hearts but only wear the clothing of Christianity (baptism, church membership and church attendance), Christ cannot meet their needs during times of sickness and death. They will quickly return to traditional solutions during those times when they have serious problems.

2. People who are converted to Christ must make a complete break with everything associated with witchcraft and the witchdoctor.

Born-again Christians may continue to be oppressed by demons if they do not make a complete break with all their ties with the living-dead. Every object of sorcery and witchcraft which they own must be destroyed. Even the items received from the witchdoctor must be burned. It would appear that the evil spirits are closely tied to certain objects. These objects should be destroyed completely if complete deliverance is desired. Friendship with mediums must also be broken. Friends who may have contact with the spirit world may have demonic influence over a person. Thos friendships must be broken, even if they are close relatives.

When people turn from Satan to Christ there must be a complete break. The church has known and practised this for many years. Whenever an adult comes to personal faith in Christ, if he was known to have visited a witchdoctor or to have practised witchcraft, he is asked to renounce this through a public service.

Under the leadership of the pastor and elders, the person presents to them all the charms, fetishes and materials associated with the mystical powers of witchcraft, sorcery, white magic, black magic, and the living-dead. White magic must be rejected as strongly as black magic. Whether these items were intended to harm others or to defend the family from witchcraft, they must be brought to the public Christian service. The service includes singing, prayer, a message from the Word of God, and a personal testimony of faith in Christ and the rejection of Satan and all the powers of darkness. A fire is built and the materials burned while the Christians sing hymns of victory and triumph.

Conversion to Christ is always a direct turn-about. Salvation means the rejection of the kingdom of darkness and the acceptance of Christ, an entrance into the kingdom of God. But for those who in one way or another had direct association with the powers of darkness, there must be a complete break and a rejection of the past. Satan is real and the powers of his kingdom are real. For anyone to receive complete deliverance there must be a total break with all those things, and with he people who are associated with the occult.

Christians are strengthened when they see the power of Christ in the destruction of these things. In one place a witchdoctor died and left many things in his room, including a bag containing the tools of his trade. People were warned not to touch the bag. They feared that it would cry out when touched. But the pastor had courage. He took the bag and burned it. People were amazed that nothing happened to the pastor. Many people were saved as a result of his testimony to Christ's power.

3. Believers must be taught that salvation is by God's grace, only through faith.

Many Christians do not understand the nature of their salvation. They simply do not understand the biblical doctrine of justification by the grace of God, through personal faith alone. Somehow there remains a belief that they can lose their salvation if they sin. Christians continue to live with fear and uncertainty, not knowing whether they are right with God.

This is not merely a question of correct doctrine. Biblical theology is closely related to our walk with God. Whenever Christians live with doubts and fears, they cannot know and experience the nearness and love of God. If they do not know whether they are ready to meet God when they die, they will be filled with fear when faced with sickness and death.

Martin Luther was a very intelligent young man who wanted to know God and his grace. At the University of Urfurt in Germany he had earned a Master's degree in liberal arts and was planning to attend law school. But all this was changed when he nearly died during a thunderstorm. He cried out in fear, "Help, Saint Ann, I will become a monk."

After making this vow, Martin Luther entered the monastery of the Augustinian Hermits. His one goal inside the monastery was to find the God of grace. "In the monastery I did not think about women, money, or possessions, instead my heart trembled and fidgeted about whether God would bestow [give] His grace on me" (Oberman 1982:128).

Trying to know God's smile of love, mercy and favour, Martin Luther tried the way of works, denying himself in order to please God. The life of a monk was hard as he tried to kill his own will. He ate little food, wore coarse (rough) clothing, worked hard during the day, prayed during the night, fasted, begged for food and denied the desires of the flesh. But his conscience always bothered him; he did not experience peace with God. Luther came to hate God, for He always stood as the Judge and was never satisfied with his works of self-righteousness. Why was God so demanding? Why could Luther not enjoy peace and joy and a sense of God's presence? Why did he not know that God had forgiven him?

Despite all this self-effort to earn salvation he lacked peace and assurance in his heart. "For I had strayed from faith," said Luther, "and could not imagine that I had angered God, whom I in turn had to appease by doing good works" (Oberman 1982:128).

Some years later he was sent to Rome on business for his monastery. This pilgrimage to the "holy" city was Martin Luther's great opportunity to earn his salvation. He celebrated mass daily. He was even sorry that his parents were still alive for he would have been able to help them escape purgatory through

this pilgrimage (visit to Rome), touching the relics of the saints, praying at holy shrines and saying mass in many churches.

Trying to please God he climbed the stairs called the Santa Scala on his knees. On each step he prayed "Our Father," for it was believed that you could save a soul by climbing the steps in this way. But on the top step doubt filled his heart. "Who knows if it is really true?" Years later Luther's son recalled a conversation he had with his father about this experience. "My dearest father told me," said Paul Luther, "that when he was climbing up the Santa Scala and praying at every step he suddenly remembered the words of St. Paul: the just shall live by faith" (Oberman 1982:150).

Whether or not Paul Luther's report is correct, the Protestant Reformation began with this understanding: that peace with God does not come with human effort or good works, trying to please God. Being saved is possible only through faith in Christ who gave his life as a sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus Christ paid the debt for our sin when He died on the cross. Salvation is a free gift. We cannot earn God's favour nor can we merit God's forgiveness. When we repent of our sin and receive by faith this offer of salvation, we are saved. Jesus Christ alone is our hope. He has paid our debt on Calvary. We were neither saved by doing good works, nor are we kept saved by doing good. It is all of grace (Galatians 2:15f; 3:1-3, 10-14).

When people truly experience and understand the grace of God that saves them, their consciences are cleansed and their hearts are filled with hope and joy. They do not fear the day when they will stand before God. For they know that they have been clothed with the righteousness of Christ. So they have no fear of sickness or death.

4. Most Christians lack assurance of salvation and so they are afraid to die. They need to know the biblical basis for the assurance of their salvation.

Here is an experiment for you to try. Tell this story to various Christians and then ask the question. A person had been saved for several years and had served the Lord faithfully. Then one day he had a disagreement with his wife. He became so angry with her that he beat her without mercy. In the middle of this fight he suddenly had a heart attack and died. The question is this: "Will he

go to heaven or to hell?" Many Christians in Africa will answer, "He will to go hell."

That theology (or the lack of a biblical theology) which teaches that you may lose your salvation shows a failure to understand God's great and wonderful salvation, and the grace of God which makes that salvation possible. Many Christians do not understand that they are born *once* into God's family. Though they may displease the Father and lose fellowship with Him, they do not cease to be His children.

Many pastors are afraid to teach the grace of God for fear that God's grace will encourage people to sin. They also fear to preach on the assurance of salvation. If Christians are sure that they are saved, if they know they will go to heaven when they die, will this not lead them to sin? So pastors preach against sin, warning people against the evils of sin so that they will be afraid to sin. Most of the Christians with whom the author spoke had never heard a sermon n the assurance of salvation before going to Bible College. Many pastors seem not to have read the book of Romans where Paul deals with this very question (see Romans 6:1f).

One young man in Kenya believed that heaven was only for the righteous. Therefore, even a saved person might fear the loss of his salvation if he fell into sin.

As we spoke to these students at Moffat College of Bible about this problem, there was one exception, a young man who was saved in 1982. He had the assurance of his salvation before coming to college. He attended catechism and there learned from his pastor about the grace of God, the basis for his salvation. This pastor had been trained in a Bible School.

But in many areas there are few trained pastors so that Christians learn their theology from untrained elders. Some churches, of course, have an Arminian theology and therefore teach their pastors in Bible Schools that people can lose their salvation whenever they sin. Wherever Christians have little Bible teaching and are surrounded by churches which do not believe in the security of the believer, they are bound to fear the loss of their salvation. Without assurance of salvation people will naturally fear sickness and death, for they will be afraid that they are not ready to meet the Lord. They cannot be sure that they

are ready to die. Their consciences bother them. They have not lived perfect lives. Perhaps they will not be accepted into heaven.

Teaching believers the assurance of salvation is not a small matter. Nor is it simply a question of having the correct understanding of biblical teaching. Having assurance of salvation involves both correct doctrine and a right relationship with Jesus Christ. Without an assurance that they belong to Christ and are ready to meet the Lord whenever God calls them home, Christians will fear sickness and death very greatly.

SANCTIFICATION – Growing in a Life of Holiness – A Present, Daily Experience

1. Christians need to experience daily cleansing from sin and the filling of the Holy Spirit so that all feelings of guilt are gone and they are able to show the fruit of the Spirit.

To be saved, of course, does not mean that one may continue in sin. The Bible clearly states that any person "in Christ" is a "new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). By definition a Christian is one who does not live in sin. "No-one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No-one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him" (I John 3:6).

Once a person repents of his sin and trusts in Christ to save him, he becomes a child of God. Christians need to learn the love of God despite their sin, and to know the cleansing blood of Christ for their sin. Every child must grow if he is to remain healthy. In the same way, every Christian must grow in a life of holiness. He should learn to walk by the Spirit as he is filled by the Spirit.

Spiritual breathing is necessary for every person who trusts Christ for salvation. Physically, we breathe out stale air which includes carbon dioxide, and we breath in rich, life-giving oxygen. Without breathing we cannot live physically. Without Spiritual breathing we cannot know and experience the life-giving power of God in us. How then do we breath spiritually?

Breathing out the stale air of the spirit involves confession of sin. Every Christian must know and love the Word of God. As God's Word is welcomed by faith and obeyed, the believer becomes aware of those times when he displeases God. Whenever he sins he should know the joy and privilege of

being able to confess his sins to God with full confidence that God, for Christ's sake, will forgive his sins (I John 1:9).

To breath rich, life-giving air into our spirits is to invite the Holy Spirit to fill us every day. The Holy Spirit lives in the heart of every believer. If the Holy Spirit does not live within someone, that person is not a child of God (Romans 8:9). But it is possible for a child of God to fall into selfish habits, influenced by his fallen, sinful nature. In order for the Christian to manifest the nature of God he must invite the Holy Spirit to fill him daily so that God's Spirit may control him, guide him, possess him and energise him (Ephesians 5:18-20). Only when he is filled by the Spirit can the Christian manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 6:22f).

Being filled with the Spirit means that the Christian is filled with those very qualities needed to face sickness and possible death. Joy is possible because of our hope in God. Peace keeps the mind cool and steady because we know the Lord who is over all. Patience enables a Christian to carry on even during times of trouble. Anyone who knows that his sins are forgiven and that he is right with God will experience an inner assurance that strengthens him during times of trouble.

2. Christians need to know and feel that Christ is near them; that Christ continues to know, love and care for them, even in times of sickness and death.

Because many Christians want to recover from sickness quickly, they desire help to be near and immediate. When God does not choose to heal quickly, these Christians may have many doubts and believe that God is far away. They may not be strong in their Christian faith. They may believe that witchcraft is more powerful and can affect them. In their fear and doubt they turn to the witchdoctor.

This problem is not present among all Christians, nor is it a real problem in every area. Paul grew up in a strong church. His parents opposed witchcraft. His own grandfather had been a witchdoctor who was later saved and became a pastor. So Paul never felt this to be a problem in his area.

But for many others, even in mission centres, African Traditional Religion has a grip on the people. They do not have a strong faith that God is near, that

He can heal and take care of them. These weak Christians go to the witchdoctor for help, saying that the God of the missionaries is not as real as the traditional powers and rites.

The people of God in the Old Testament could testify of their security in the Lord (Psalm 91). The threat of death by an enemy did not trouble the writer of this Psalm for God was his refuge and fortress (91:2-5). Diseases bringing death did not trouble this child of God, for nothing outside of the loving will of God could touch him (91:6-11). He could even step on a snake or stumble upon a lion hiding in the bush without fear (91:13). "'Because he loves me,' says the LORD, 'I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name'" (91:14). Psalm 91 should be learned by every Christian so that it can be quoted with confidence when facing serious sickness or death.

Even though the writer of Psalm 91 lived before Christ, he knew and experienced God's personal and loving care. "He is *my* refuge and *my* fortress, *my* God, in whom I *trust*" (91:2, emphasis mine; see also 91:9). God is so close that He is like a mother hen who protects her young chicks by stretching out her wings to cover them (91:4). Fear is unknown (91:5). He could call upon the Lord and had assurance that God would hear him (91:15).

This Psalm of course does not teach that the believer can escape the results of sin in this world (see Genesis 2:15-17; 3:16-24). The Christian, though saved from eternal death, lives in a body containing the seeds of physical death. Pain, suffering, sickness and eventual death is the lot of every child of Adam and Eve. Even God says of the believer in Psalm 91, "I will be with him in trouble" (91:15). Trouble does come to a child of God. But God's loving presence will never leave him. God's sovereign, strong arm will keep him in God's perfect will.

Nor does the Psalm teach that it is God's will for every believer to be spared fro the attack of the enemy. Psalm 91:11f was applied to the life of Christ by Satan himself (Matthew 4:6). Yet we know that Jesus was spat upon, beaten and finally hung on a cross as a result of the jealousy of religious leaders.

While hanging on the cross Jesus felt the pain of the Father forsaking Him (Psalm 22:1ff). Though we also may feel that God is far from us during times of trouble (Palm 22:11), yet we are assured that God has not despised our suffering nor hidden his face from us. He has heard our prayers even though His will may be different from our wish (Psalm 22:24).

Another Scripture which every Christian should memorise is Romans 8:28-39. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (8:35-39). Not even demons can separate us from His love. This does not mean, of course, that Christians do not have painful experiences. But our confidence is this: because God has chosen us in Christ, "in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (8:28). "All things" may include accidents, sickness, pain and even death. But God is over all. He is all-powerful and full of love. Because we have confidence that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him," we can follow the advice of James: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds" (James 1:2).

3. Whatever Christians experience in life, they must learn to trust in God who is sovereign, full of love and who has all power.

God does have power to heal the sick, cast out evil spirits and defeat the devil in a moment. This we shall speak of later. But the Bible simply does not teach that health and healing are provided for everyone along with their salvation. Nor does experience teach this. We live in a fallen world and we all suffer for the sin of Adam and Eve. We cannot escape pain, suffering and death in this life. It comes to everyone, saint and sinner alike.

Job, a blameless and upright man who feared God (Job 1:1), suffered greatly, losing his family, wealth and personal health. Though he cried out to God for help, there was silence for along time. Behind the whole experience was the sovereign Lord. The purpose of Jobs trouble was that God might receive honour and glory through a man of faith who continued to believe God even though he suffered (Job 1:8-2:10). In the end God reward Job for his faith and patience (Job 42:10-17).

Paul was troubled by a "thorn in my flesh," probably some physical illness (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). Though Paul prayed three times for healing, God denied his request. Instead of healing God provided grace to endure. God has a good reason for doing what He did. It was to help Paul remain humble while experiencing so many special blessing from God.

Habakkuk has a problem with God. "How long O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen?" (Habakkuk 1:2) "Why?" is a question we often have as Christians. God seemed to be unjust and He did not answer the prayer of Habakkuk. During the time Habakkuk had so many questions, God taught

him that "the righteous will live by his faith " (Habakkuk 2:4). Though God does not seem to answer prayer, though injustice is widespread, though God does not do what we think He should, we must simply trust in His sovereign will.

In the end Habakkuk worshipped God with these wonderful words of faith:

> Though the fig-tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,
> though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,
> though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,
> yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Saviour.
> (Habakkuk 3:17f)

"And without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). Mature Christians must learn by God's grace to trust the Lord even when the world is falling apart. Joy in the Lord during times of famine and disease is possible when we walk by faith. This is an experience that requires practical learning. It cannot be learned in the classroom or church building. We can be taught these truths from the Bible in church. But they must be learned in a practical way during times of testing and trouble.

> God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
> Therefore we ill not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its water roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging." (Psalm 46:1-3)

When a child of God learns to experience the real presence of the eternal Creator during times of testing, he can "be still, and know" (Psalm 46:10) the safety and security found in the loving Father.

4. The Christian must experience the power of God by knowing victory over the evil one.

Christians must develop an outlook on life filled with courage, faith and hope because of who they are in Christ. A born again Christian is chosen of God, holy and dearly loved (Colossians 3:12); a child of God (John 1:12); a citizen of heaven already seated in heaven (Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 2:6) along with the rest of God's family (Ephesians 2:19); a member of a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God (1 Peter

2:9fa); an heir of God (Galatians 4:6f), a co-heir with Christ, sharing His heritance with Him (Romans 8:17); and a friend of Christ (John 15:15).

Because of who we are in Christ, we have every right to be free form the many fears brought upon us by the evil one. The mind is the first place where Satan attacks the believer. What the mind thinks will determine what a person does or says. Therefore, every believer must resist the evil one who tempts him or her to doubt and fear.

God has provided us with spiritual weapons to resist the devil (Ephesians 6:10-18). With God's strength the believer can "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4f). Satan is able to place thoughts of fear and doubt into the mind of the believer. But the believer has everything he needs to resist those doubts and fears. Martin Luther said something like this: "You cannot stop a bird from settling on your heard, but you can prevent it from building a nest in your hair." We cannot prevent a doubt or a fear from entering our minds. But we can refuse, in the name of Jesus, to continue thinking those thoughts.

But we must be prepared for spiritual battle. What is needed to defeat the evil one? The answer is seen in Ephesians 6:10-18.

(a) Salvation from our sins: **"the helmet of salvation."** The most vital part of our body is the head. A serious blow on the head will destroy us. Therefore, the head needs protection. The first line of defence against the evil one is to be saved from our sins and to know it.

(b) Christ-like character: **"the belt of truth...the breastplate of righteousness."** The second most vital part of the body is the middle part where all the vital organs are found. The belt and breastplate are representative of the armour every soldier should wear. These represent the character of the believer. If we are to overcome the evil one we must be living lives that are true and right before God. Anyone living a lie, living contrary to the will of God, has opened himself up to the attacks of Satan.

(c) The Word of God: **"the sword of the Spirit."** No Christian can be strong unless he hears, believes and obeys the Word of God. Joshua was commanded to lead the children of Israel into the promised land and defeat the enemy. How could Joshua do this? "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your

mouth," the Lord said. "Meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8).

(d) Prepared to share the gospel with others: **"feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."** The good news of Jesus Christ should be in the heart and on the lips of God's children. The best defence against the devil is a good offensive – being prepared to move here and there with a witness to God's saving grace.

(e) Faith/trust/confidence: **"the shield of faith."** What does a Christian do when he is attacked with "the flaming arrows" of doubt and fear? Without a living, vital, abiding faith in God he will collapse in defeat. Faith is a gift of God which comes from hearing the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

(f) Prayer: **"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests."** Prayer is the talk of children, asking their father for help. Prayer is a confession that we cannot defeat the devil in our own strength. As Jesus said, "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine ... apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:4f).

God has provided all that we need for victory through Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Falling into doubt and fear is simply not necessary, nor is it God's will. As John wrote, "I write this to you so that you will not sin" (1 John 2:1). But victory depends in part on every believer using the weapons God has given to resist the devil.

5. The power of God must be seen and experienced by God's people. God the Almighty has all power to heal the sick, cast out demons and defeat the devil, whenever He so desires.

God's power is often shown when we are stretched to our limit. Sarah was barren, She had not children (Genesis 11:30). When God chose 75-year-old Abraham and promised to make him the father of a great nation, Sarah had no children. Though God continued to appear to Abraham and to renew His promise, He also continued to delay the fulfilment of His promise. When Abraham was 99 years old God revealed Himself to Abraham as "God Almighty" *(El Shaddai)* (Genesis 17:1), and repeated His promise that Sarah would have a child. The following year the Lord appeared to Abraham and promised specifically, "about this time next year" Sarah would have a child

(Genesis 18:10). Sarah laughed to herself in unbelief (18:12). But the Lord responded, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" (18:14) And so it happened when Abraham was 100 years old, 25 years after the first promise, that God fulfilled His promise and gave Sarah a child in her old age.

Several truths are taught in the life of Abraham: (1) God is all-powerful. Nothing is impossible for Him. God can cause the barren to bear children. He can also heal the sick and raise the dead, if he so desires. (2) But God is not always pleased to answer our prayers the way we desire, nor fulfil his promises the moment we want. God is sovereign. We cannot put God in a box. We cannot force Him to do what we want, when we want it. Nor can we use prayer like many use magic. Magic is used to do what we want done – "My will be done." But prayer involves submitting to God's will. "Thy will be done." (3) Faith is essential in our relationship with God. Yes, Abraham was a "friend" of God (2 Chronicles 20:7). But Abraham also confessed that God Almighty was LORD. We cannot command earthly "lords." How much less can we command the Lord of the universe? It was in the context of Abraham's faith in God that James recalled that he was "God's friend" (James 2:23). Abraham was God's friend because he trusted God.

We need to have great faith in the living God whom we know as our Lord and Saviour. God is able to answer prayer for physical needs. But we must also accept God's sovereign will over us. Faith is essential for both – to receive from God a wonderful answer to prayer, or to wait patiently on Him when He chooses not to answer us when and how we would wish.

God can and does heal miraculously and through medicines. Part of Jesus' ministry was to heal the sick (Mathew 4:23). The apostle John calls these miracles of healing "signs," for the miracles of healing pointed to the power and deity of Jesus Christ (compare John 2:11, 23). Sometimes people think that sickness is due to some sin. For example, the disciples asked Jesus concerning a man born blind, "... Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life' "(John 9:2f). Jesus' miraculous healing of the blind man was recognised as a "sign" (9:16b) and it led to the man believing.

The early apostles continued that ministry of healing (Acts 3:1-10). Through these miracles the early church showed the power of the gospel. The

church became strengthened and grew as a result of people believing (Acts 5:12-16; 8:13; 14:3). Whenever God chooses he can give a gift of healing to particular Christians (1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 29f). The apostle James gave instructions to the early churches. "Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well" (James 5:14f).

We find a tragedy today in the church of Jesus Christ. Some Christians, because of their theology, lack of faith or because of cultural pressures, tend to downplay divine healing. They believe that people were healed in the past, but do not take the Scriptures seriously by believing that God can and does heal the sick today. Other Christians, in reaction to this negative approach, have over played the importance of healing. They have developed a theology which ignores the sovereignty of God. Healing is considered the right of every believer if he or she has enough faith, and is without sin.

The church of Jesus Christ must believe in God's desire and power to heal the sick. Through miraculous healing, people's faith can be strengthened and the unsaved come to know the Lord. The church can grow as people see the power of God meeting their needs.

But we must also understand that more important than healing is the glory we can bring to God through our faith. God is glorified when we continue to trust him during times of sickness and death. Faith is often strengthened when we are made to trust God in the dark. Satan dismissed the faith of Job because God had been so good to him. God showed Satan that Job's faith, and his faithfulness to Him, were not due to his good fortune and health. But this meant Job had to suffer in order to glorify God.

Driving out demons was also a major emphasis in Jesus' ministry (Mark 1:39) and in the ministry of the twelve apostles (Mark 3:14f). The power of Christ over the evil spirits was proof that the kingdom of God had come (Luke 11:20). After Christ ascended to heaven the apostles continued to cast out demons in the name of Jesus (Acts 16;16-18). It continues to be the privilege and right of the Christian church to day to rebuke and exorcise evil spirits in the name of Jesus for the glory of God.

As people see more and more of the power of God manifest in concrete ways, they will grow in confidence that God is not far away nor unconcerned

with their lives. God's power is real and we can trust Him to show His power whenever He chooses to do so.

6. The Christian church must provide the support and encouragement needed during times of sickness and death so that believers can resist the temptation of turning to the powers of darkness.

Growing in faith and obedience to the Lord cannot be done by one believer on their own, separated from the Body of Christ. We need one another. When a person is saved, he is baptised into the church of Jesus Christ. The Christians in each church must be active in caring for one another.

Her lies a great problem. The pastor and elders need to visit the church members in order to comfort them whenever a need arises, to read the Scriptures, to exhort them and to pray with them. But they often do not. If a pastor is responsible for four churches or more, how can he visit the members scattered far and wide whenever they become sick or are in need? The elders need to do this, but they often fail. Yet the sickened moral support and encouragement whenever they find themselves in trouble.

This sharing and fellowship needs to become practical. The people of God need to stand by one another when a fellow believer is in financial or material need. When believers see that their local church is concerned about them, they will develop courage to stand firm against the temptations of the devil.

Members in many churches do, in fact, help one another during times of sickness and death. During the Sunday service they may announce the need of a certain brother or sister in the church. Normally Christians go to the home of the needy after church. They visit the homes sharing the Word of God, singing and encouraging them in the Lord, supporting them financially, helping with the work in the fields and giving them food.

GLORIFICATION – Receiving Resurrection Bodies in Heaven – Our Future Hope

1. Christians will receive glorified bodies (resurrection bodies) when they are raised form the dead in the last day, when Jesus returns to earth. Our salvation will not be complete until this happens.

During our growth in holiness throughout life in this world, we ought also to grow in our understanding of what will happen to us after we die. We need to be taught the word of God so we can grow in faith and confidence to face death when it comes. When Christ returns to the earth we shall all receive our resurrection bodies. When people know and understand this, and what their hope is in Christ after death, they will be greatly encouraged and face death with confidence and faith.

The following steps need to be taken in this life during the process of growing in grace, so that we can be ready for that great day when we shall die and enter into the presence of the Lord.

2. The destiny of the believer – life with Christ in heaven after death must be taught thoroughly.

People fear what they do not know. Christians do not know about life after death because no one teaches them the Word of God on this subject. Though some churches may have a trained pastor of their own, many pastors have five, ten, sometimes fifteen to twenty churches for which they are responsible. This means that untrained elders lead the worship in the churches most of the time. For one reason or another no one teaches the people about sickness, death and life after death. So people do not know. As a result they fear death.

Many believers, therefore, do not know the difference between the judgement of Christians and the judgement of unbelievers. The do not know what will happen to them when the die, nor do they know with certainty whether or not they are ready to meet God.

Clear teaching from God's Word concerning death and life following death will go a long way to assure people. When this assurance is combined with a knowledge that God has forgiven their sins and that they are God's children and belong to Him, they will be able to face death with faith and hope (see chapter eleven of the book).

3. The victory of Christ over death must be stressed.

The reason Christians need not fear death is because Christ destroyed the sting of death when He died and rose again in victory over the grave. 1 Corinthians 15 is a key passage (see chapter twelve of the book). Because Christ died and rose again from the dead,

"Death has been swallowed up in victory."
"Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"
The sting of death is sin, and the poser of sin is the law.
But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through
our Lord Jesus Christ. (15:54b-57)

4. The blessed hope of believers must be taught.

Life is ever full of problems of one sort or another. Discouragements come. Christians may fear and fall away from their faith. They need to be inspired with the hope they have in Christ Jesus, a hope that is fixed on the return of Christ, the resurrection of the body and eternity with Christ in heaven (see chapter thirteen of the book). These "last things", usually grouped together under the term, eschatology (Greek: *eschatos* = "last"), are the crown and completion of the believer's salvation. Within the fullness of that salvation is included "the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

Conclusion

The proposed evangelical solution to the problem of death in Africa which has been given above is a pastoral solution rooted in biblical theology. If pastors and elders would counsel, teach and shepherd their people so that they are rightly related to Christ and know the full and rich salvation which is their is in Him, the fear of death and the temptation to backslide would be gone.

In fact, many Christians in Africa have no fear of death. They are not tempted to return to the mediums and seek protection and help from the living-dead. They have been well taught and grounded in their Christian faith. For them the solution has been applied. For most however, the above solution must be patiently and faithfully applied as pastors and elders teach the Christians concerning the rich and full salvation which is theirs in Christ.

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NATURALISM AND REASON

Joseph B. O. Okello

My intention, in this article, is to examine whether the possibility of reason, and for that matter, thought, can be justified on naturalistic grounds. Philosophers like C. S. Lewis[1] and (more recently) Victor Reppert[2] have argued quite forcefully that thought is invalid if it can be justified on non-rational grounds. Naturalists like Gilbert Ryle,[3] D.M. Armstrong[4] and Thomas Nagel[5] seem to hold that mental processes, like the process of thinking, can be explained naturalistically. But what exactly is meant by naturalism? To be sure, there seems to be no agreed upon definition of the term. However, we can locate basic tenets that naturalists accept as being fundamental to naturalism. I outline some of them below.

Naturalism is the view that whatever exists or happens is susceptible to explanation through methods, which, although paradigmatically exemplified in the natural sciences, are continuous from domain to domain of objects and events.[6] Naturalism repudiates the view that there exists or could exist any events or entities lying, in principle, beyond the scope of scientific explanation.[7] Consider Sanford Goldberg and Andrew Pessin's definition:

> The doctrine of naturalism (N) is a metaphysical doctrine. In broad outline it states that the only properties, states, entities, and events that exist are natural properties, states, entities, and events. The significance of this claim rests on the conception of what is to count as "natural"; in particular, N holds that a property, state, entity, or event is natural when and only when it can be understood in terms of the fundamental theories of natural sciences. So understood, N is a thesis about how to study the furniture of our world. It tells us that if our aim is to come to know of the existence and nature of all there is, then our best guide is natural science.[8]

Immediately following this claim, Pessin and Goldberg add the following statement: "Below we present a defense of N on the grounds that N embodies a sensible repudiation of supernatural forces and entities."[9]

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This then is a definition of naturalism. But what are the tenets of naturalism? First, naturalism maintains that the entire knowable universe is composed of natural objects.[10] Now, the universe may contain some non-natural objects. But, according to naturalists, we have no reason for allowing the existence of these unless they have an impact on the observable behavior of natural objects. This is because natural objects are the only things that we know directly.[11] Second, a natural cause is a natural object or episode that brings about a change in some other natural object.[12] It is solely with reference to natural causes that we explain changes in the behavior of natural objects. We need never go outside the system of natural objects for explanations of what takes place within it.[13] Third, a natural process is any change in a natural object or system of natural objects, which is due to a natural cause or system of natural causes. There are no non-natural processes.[14] Fourth, the natural order is not simply a collection of all the natural objects. It is a system of all natural processes. In principle, nature is intelligible in all its parts, but it cannot be explained as a whole. This is because such an explanation would presumably require reference to a natural cause, and outside nature there are no natural causes to be found.[15] Nature is self-contained as a system with reference to the furnishings of natural explanations. This means that there are no intrinsic limits placed on which natural processes can be naturally explained. Therefore, in principle, they are all naturally explainable.[16] Fifth, methodological naturalism involves explaining natural processes through identification of the natural causes responsible for them. It then tests any given explanation with regard to consequences that must hold if it is true. And the natural method is the way in which one set of natural objects, namely, human beings, operate upon the rest of nature.[17] Sixth, nature is intelligible if and only if natural processes are regular, and accordingly, the natural method seeks to establish natural laws. Moreover, the natural processes that make up the mental and social life of human beings are no less subject to natural laws than are other parts of nature.[18] Seventh, reason is the consistent application of the natural method. And natural science is the purest exemplar of reason. The theories of science are held to the degree that they serve to explain natural processes. However, consonant with the commitment to natural method, any theory is perpetually subject to revision or rejection in view of further tests.[19] Finally, knowledge of the world at any given time is what science tells us at that time about the world. Should there be a conflict between common sense and science, it must be decided in favor of science. But it employs the same method that common sense does. Therefore, it cannot be repudiated without repudiating common sense itself.[20]

These, of course, are not the only tenets of naturalism. Some have been left out intentionally because they have no direct relevance to this paper. Thus, the

nine tenets I have selected will feature throughout the paper. Now, having outlined these tenets of naturalism, what do naturalists have to say in view of these claims? In their book *Gray Matters*[21] Goldberg and Pessin suggest that we should endorse the view that only those properties and things that science acknowledges as existing actually exist. This is because, they argue, we have firm convictions about the reality of some things and the unreality of others. And when it comes to justifying these convictions, science provides us with the best, and most probably, the only way to justify these convictions.[22] They then conclude that a failure to endorse naturalism is tantamount to a failure to be able to justify our firm convictions concerning what is real and what is merely imaginary. For science is the best candidate to play the role of distinguishing between what is merely thought to be real and what is real.[23] Consider that to date, scientific inquiry has been remarkably successful in developing theories capable of predicting occurrence of events in remote times and places, events that human beings would otherwise never expect.[24]

Goldberg and Pessin then proceed to show that no proposal is likely to be as plausible as naturalism. Here they begin with what they call a "straightforward proposal:"[25] namely, only those things that we can see are real. Such a proposal, they recognize, immediately runs into problems. First, it does not provide grounds for ruling against bizarre sightings, when these sightings are sincerely reported.[26] Second, such a method is far too strong, for it would imply that some things that we intuitively accept as real in fact are not. An example of this is that we do not see other people's minds, the dark side of the moon, or black holes. But we do suppose that these things are real.[27]

Thus they modify their proposal in the following manner: Only those things we can see, or whose effects we can see, are real.[28] The problem with this is that we need to know what counts as an effect of what. This would enable us to see the need of a theory of some causal structure of the world. But this brings us close to endorsing the idea that our best theories of the causal structure of the world tell us what is real. And these they take to be our best scientific theories. But this would mean that we are endorsing naturalism rather than coming up with a way other than naturalism to determine what is real.[29] And those who would reject naturalism for some other method must show that their method is as plausible as naturalism when it comes to determining what is real and what is not. It is possible that some such other method may exist. But naturalism appears to be the most reasonable candidate.[30]

Let me provide an initial objection to naturalism in general. First, that naturalism provides a repudiation of supernatural forces is, in my opinion, too

strong a claim. It is not always the case that naturalists have always found a repudiation of the supernatural in naturalism, assuming rightly or wrongly, that naturalism and science are identical. It is quite possible for a naturalist to examine the evidence presented by science and conclude that a supernatural intelligent designer of the universe exists. Moreover, philosophers like William Dembski and J. P. Moreland have examined the scientific evidence and have concluded that there are numerous scientific signs that seem to point to the existence this intelligent first cause. And if we assume on the one hand that God is supernatural, and on the other that science deals only with the natural, what do we make of cases where, say, a former atheist like Anthony Flew becomes a theist, (specifically, a deist) upon examining the scientific evidence? One may be led to conclude that on Flew's admission, science may not altogether rule out the existence of a supernatural being. The upshot of this objection is that we have at least one locatable instance of science providing evidence for the existence of the supernatural. This seems to neutralize the force of the first tenet of naturalism. And as noted earlier a number of scientists contend that scientific evidence points to the existence an Intelligent Designer of the universe. Why should we reject their findings in favor of the "findings" of anti-supernaturalists? If indeed science points to the existence of an intelligent designer, as Flew discovered, then we cannot claim too strongly that naturalism repudiates the possibility of all supernatural causes. Thus here, naturalism's second and third tenets lose their force.

Let me now raise an objection to Goldberg and Pessin. Both argue that science is the best guide in helping us discover what is real. To be sure, this seems to be an epistemological statement. It can be reformulated as a question thus: How do we know what is real? The naturalists will quickly argue that science is the best guide here. Now, upon further scrutiny, one discovers that this answer really advocates for empiricism; for science, with all its experiments and observations, is empirical in nature. Of course there is nothing inherently wrong with being an empiricist. What strikes me as contentious is the fact that this epistemological method is getting preference over and above its equally forceful rival, namely, rationalism. One may argue here, consonant with the eighth tenet of rationalism, that natural science is the purest exemplar of reason. I contend, however, that science and reason can quite possibly be construed as different ways of coming to know that something is or is not the case. However, I doubt that science alone can guide us to proper knowledge without the aid of reason. Consider Aristotle's famous syllogism:

1. All men are mortal.
2. Socrates is a man.

3. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

Here, even without knowing who Socrates is, one can see that premises 1 and 2 provide adequate support for the conclusion. One does not need scientific help to grasp the validity of this claim. I admit, of course, that sometimes we cannot know some things without the help of science (for example, in cases where a doctor wishes to determine the kind of virus infecting a patient). However, I postulate the much stronger claim that at no time will we ever know anything without the help of reason. Even scientists employ reason to make sense of their scientific findings; for reason, and not science, is what enables a person to see that any object of cognition (whether scientific or otherwise) is or is not intelligible.

In my opinion, no one contends for this view more forcefully than Lawrence Bonjour.[31] According to Bonjour, if the validity of an argument depends on an appeal to experience, the inference is a posteriori. But if the validity of an argument is independent of any such appeal to experience, the inference is justified a priori.[32] Bonjour then claims, quite strongly I suppose, that no argument can be justified on empirical grounds. This is because:

> Any purely empirical ingredient can, after all, always be formulated as an additional empirical premise. When all such premises have been explicitly formulated, either the intended conclusion will be explicitly included among them or it will not. In the former case, no argument or inference is necessary, while in the latter case, the needed inference clearly goes beyond what can be derived entirely from experience. Thus we see that the repudiation of all a priori justification is apparently tantamount to the repudiation of argument or reasoning generally, thus amounting in effect to intellectual suicide.[33]

What is Bonjour saying here? First, he seems to use the terms "rationalism" and "a priori" interchangeably. More specifically, he seems to argue that rationalism, or coming to know a priori that *p*, involves two things: first, it involves reasoning validly from premises to a conclusion. That is to say, it involves the argumentative transition, in thought or discourse, from the premises to the conclusion in an inference.[34] Second, it also involves seeing that a given conditional holds by virtue of examining the antecedent of the conditional in relation to its consequent.[35]

The second thing that Bonjour is saying in the quote above is that if an intended conclusion is included in an empirical premise, then no argument is

necessary; for one can see the fact in the premise. It would be unnecessary, for instance, to try to prove to myself, when I am thinking, that I am in fact thinking. But if a derivable conclusion is not included in the premise that I am thinking, that conclusion goes beyond what can be derived entirely from experience. In which case I would conclude here, following Descartes, that since I am thinking, it must be the case that I exist. For I must exist in order for me to think. Here, Bonjour would say that the transition from "I think" to "I exist" is an a priori transition and is therefore completely independent of experience. And to repudiate the possibility of such a transition is to commit what he terms "intellectual suicide."

Being a rationalist, Bonjour maintains that for rationalism, a priori justification occurs when the mind directly or intuitively sees or grasps or apprehends a necessary fact about the nature or structure of reality. In the simplest cases it is allegedly direct and unmediated, incapable of being reduced to or explained by any rational or cognitive processes of a more basic sort.[36] But this, observes Bonjour, leaves rationalism open to the charge that there is something mysterious, perhaps even somehow occult, about the a priori way of knowing.[37] My initial suspicion is that this mysteriousness is naturalistically inexplicable precisely because it finds its origin in the supernatural. Bonjour, however, thinks he has a natural explanation for the a priori so formulated. He argues that the capacity for rational insight, though fundamental and irreducible, is in no way puzzling or especially in need of further explanation; without such a capacity neither puzzles nor explanations would themselves be rationally intelligible.[38] Moreover, much later in the book he contends (correctly, I think) that many of those who claim to reject rationalism are in fact committed to rationalism by their own philosophical practice.[39] Bonjour then gives several intuitive examples of statements whose truth-values are knowable a priori:

1. Nothing can be red all over and green all over at the same time.
2. If A is taller than B and B is taller than C, then A is taller than C.
3. There are no round squares.[40]

The idea here is that if one understands the various ingredients of the three propositions above and the way in which they are structurally combined, one will be able to see that the propositions have to be true. And it is perfectly clear to one just why these propositions hold. Moreover, one is able to articulate this insight to some extent, though not in a way that lends itself to discursive reduction.[41] Whether or not he "rescues" rationalism from the accusation that the a priori has occultic tendencies is open to question. The upshot of all this,

however, is that if what Bonjour claims is sensible and true, then scientists must be committed to rationalism in order to arrive at scientific conclusions.

Consider, for instance, Stephen J. Gould's justification of evolution on rational grounds.[42] He argues that our confidence that evolution occurred centers upon three general arguments. First, we have abundant direct observational evidence of evolution in action, from both field and laboratory. This evidence ranges from countless experiments on change in nearly everything about fruit-flies subjected to artificial selection in the laboratory to the famous populations of British moths that became black when industrial soot darkened the trees upon which the moths rest.[43] Second, nature has imperfections. Therefore evolution is true.[44] Third, transitions are often found in the fossil record. Therefore, evolution occurred.[45] Prior to providing these three reasons, Gould tells us that the second and third arguments for evolution do not involve direct observation of evolution in action. They rest upon inference.[46] In other words, by observing imperfections in nature, and by looking at the fossil record, we can infer (recall, Bonjour's a priori transition) that evolution occurred. All this is to show that science is fundamentally dependent on rationalism (as formulated by Bonjour) to even begin advancing the claim that science is the only reliable guide to truth. The question is: why make this claim that science is the only reliable guide to truth when science itself is dependent on reason? Why not have reason, or rationalism, or logical inference and so on as the reliable guide to truth? Bonjour has argued that empiricists depend on reason sometimes "unbeknownst to themselves"[47] in order to argue for the superiority of empiricism over rationalism. Moreover, we have seen that Gould, a scientist, and therefore an empiricist of sorts, depended on reason to conclude that evolution is true. Does this not show that something apart from science may in fact be an alternative guide to truth? If so, then we have met Goldberg and Pessin's challenge to provide an alternative to naturalism.

But one may argue that reason is part of the natural order of things in the universe, and therefore on that account, a rational guide to truth is just as natural a guide as a scientific guide. We can make several responses to this objection. First, it seems to be a generally accepted premise among epistemologists that knowledge gained by natural science is knowledge acquired empirically. Also, epistemologists seem to hold that knowledge acquired empirically is different from knowledge acquired through rational reflection. Therefore, if this is the case, then knowledge gained by rational reflection cannot be knowledge gained by natural science. Second, to conclude that reason is science simply because both are natural is tantamount to arguing, by counterexample, that cats are dogs simply because both are animals. Third, and most importantly, whereas there

might be a naturalistic-cum-scientific explanation for the origin of the universe, there seems to be no successful naturalistic explanation for the origin of thought.

This is an argument that both C. S. Lewis and Victor Reppert advance. Owing to space limitations, and also because Reppert gives a sort of "updated" version of Lewis' argument, I will focus more on Reppert than on Lewis. More specifically, I will focus on Reppert's treatment of the possibility of reason as a refutation of naturalism. According to Reppert, arguments from thought, or more specifically, reason, are arguments for accepting a theistic understanding of the universe as opposed to a naturalistic one. My attempt here will only be to show how, on Reppert's terms, naturalism cannot provide epistemic justification for the possibility of reason. Thus, I will not endeavor to show how theism provides a more promising justification for the existence of reason (though I believe that this is demonstrable). This, in my opinion, requires a separate treatment altogether. At any rate, Reppert formulates several arguments from reason to show that naturalism fails to provide epistemic justification for the existence and possibility of reason. Here, he proceeds by describing the nature of our reasoning process and then defends the claim that these processes are essential to our epistemic life.[48] He also observes that Darwin performed rational inferences by supporting the thesis of natural selection with the evidence provided by his observations of the finches on the Galapagos Islands.[49]

His first argument is the argument from intentionality. This is an argument Reppert adapts from Lewis, who argued as follows: Suppose naturalism is true. It implies that between the thoughts of a terrestrial astronomer and the behavior of matter several light years away, we must admit *that* particular relation we call truth. However, if we try to make this truth-relation exist between the matter of the star and the astronomer's brain (considered as a lump of matter), then this relation has no meaning at all. Now, of course the brain may be in all sorts of relations to the star: for example, it is in a spatial relation, a time relation, and a qualitative relation. However, to talk of one bit of matter being true of another bit of matter, according to Lewis, is nonsense.[50] [Emphasis mine] This leads Reppert to argue for Lewis as follows:

1. If naturalism is true, then there is no fact of the matter as to what someone's thought or statement is about.

   But there are facts about what someone's thought is about – implied by the existence of rational inference.
2. Therefore, naturalism is false.[51]

Let me revisit Lewis' conclusion above. According to Lewis, to talk of one bit of matter being true of another bit of matter is nonsense. Now, perhaps this would not appear nonsensical to the naturalist who must essentially hold that matter can be true of another bit of matter, assuming that mental processes are material. Perhaps this is an objection the naturalist might make against Reppert or Lewis. But here, Lewis or Reppert would argue that only statements, and not things, are capable of being true or false. The thing-world possesses no propositional content except as they find articulation in non-material and intelligible entities like mental processes or thoughts. These then find expression in language, verbalized or otherwise. This is the only way we can make sense of truth relations. To think otherwise is nonsense, as Lewis concludes. Thus we seem to have prima facie reasons for suspecting that naturalism may not provide adequate justification for the possibility of rational processes.

Reppert's second argument is an argument from Truth. Here, he cites Paul Churchland who says that we must be prepared to find nothing in the brain that can be true or false. If such an alarming occurrence takes place, the reasonable thing to do would be to deny the existence of truth.[52] Consider Paul Churchland's claim that Reppert cites:

If we are ever to understand the dynamics of cognitive activity, therefore, we may have to re-conceive our basic unit of cognition as something other than the sentence or proposition, and re-conceive its virtue as something other than truth. The notion of truth, after all, is but the central element in a clutch of descriptive and normative theories ... and we can expect conceptual progress here as elsewhere.[53]

Thus, for Reppert, thinkers like Paul Churchland and Patricia Churchland are willing to "pursue a naturalistic methodology in the philosophy of mind" and they are "now prepared to abandon the ideal of truth.[54] This permits Reppert to formulate his argument for truth in the following manner:

1. If naturalism is true, then no states of the person can be true or false.
2. Some states of the person can be true or false – implied by the existence of rational inference.
3. Therefore, naturalism is false.[55]

Now, if it is true that Paul Churchland is willing to abandon the ideal of truth, then clearly he is in error. A closer examination of the passage Reppert quotes reveals that Paul Churchland and Patricia Churchland are both trying to

make the question of truth insignificant as far as the mind-body problem is concerned. Consider, for instance, Patricia Churchland's claim:

> Boiled down to essentials, a nervous system enables the organism to succeed in ... feeding, fleeing, fighting, and reproducing. The principle [sic] chore of nervous systems is to get the body parts where they should be in order that the organism may survive. Improvements in sensorimotor control confer an evolutionary advantage: a fancier style of representing is advantageous so long as it is geared to the organism's way of life and enhances the organism's chances for survival. *Truth, whatever that is, takes the hindmost.*[56] [Emphasis mine]

But the question of truth is a fundamental framework within human rationality such that the more we try to avoid or abandon it, the more real it becomes. For to claim, as Reppert thinks Paul and Patricia are claiming, that no states of the person can be true or false is in itself questionable. And here, we might ask: is it true that no states of the person can be true or false? If we say it is true, we already presuppose that "a state of the person" is not bereft of truth or falsity. If we say it is not true, once again we still presuppose that "a state of the person" is not bereft of truth or falsity.

Reppert's third argument is the argument from mental causation. He argues as follows: Suppose the thought "all men are mortal" is brain state A, "Socrates is a man" is brain state B, and "Socrates is mortal" is brain state C. It might still be the case (from the naturalistic perspective, I presume) that the propositional contents of these brain states is irrelevant to the way they succeed one another in the brain.[57] For example: whether a computer's activity is interpreted as a chess-game or as a word processing program, such an interpretation will not affect the actual output of the computer. Therefore, even if there are intentional states, even if those states can be true or false, it might still be the case that one mental event cannot cause another in virtue of its content. Now here is the absurdity: if all causation is physical causation, it might be asked how the content of a mental state could possibly be relevant to what causes what in the world.[58]

Here, Reppert draws our attention to David Donaldson's anomalous monism, which claims that mental items can be defined by a special quality – intentionality. Mental states can have contents that do not correspond to anything in the material world. Thus, here, while the mind may not be a separate substance from the physical body, it nonetheless has properties that cannot be explained at the level of the physical. And mental states may be physically caused by other mental states, but they are not caused by the propositional

content of other mental states.[59] This, Reppert observes, results in interesting conclusions; for on Davidson's view, it cannot be true of a naturalist that he accepts atheism because of the argument from evil. For though the brain event of "thinking that there is gratuitous evil in the world" can cause the belief "there is no God," it cannot do so in virtue of the propositional content of those beliefs. Hence, if Davidson is right about mental events, one cannot believe this for the reason provided by Davidson himself, or for any other reason.[60] Thus Reppert summarizes his argument as follows:

1. If naturalism is true, then no event can cause another event in virtue of its propositional content.
2. But some events do cause other events in virtue of their propositional content.
3. Therefore, naturalism is false.[60]

The upshot of this third argument is simple: From the naturalist's perspective, when we reason from a set of premises to a conclusion, we do so not because we see that the premises provide adequate support for the conclusion. Rather, it is because we are in a certain brain state at the premises, which in turn cause another brain state, namely, the conclusion. This, of course, eliminates the possibility of a priori inferences that Bonjour alluded to above. But to eliminate such rational inferences is an intellectual blunder. Moreover, it advocates a form of determinism that seems to give little or no reason or standard by which we see that a given argument is valid or invalid. It seems to suggest that our current brain state is what it is at present as a mechanical result of a previous mechanical chain of brain states irrespective of their propositional contents. But on such a formulation, no rational inferences based on truths of proposition are possible. In fact, such inferences are irrelevant. And this is something the naturalist must come to accept. If he rejects it, it only serves to show that it is an event caused by another event in virtue of its propositional content.

Reppert's fourth argument is the argument from psychological relevance of logical laws. He begins by stating that the only acceptable physicalist analysis of knowledge would have to be some kind of causal interaction between the brain and the objects of knowledge.[61] But if we know or have insight into the laws of logic, we must be in some kind of physical relationship to the laws of logic. But this is quite impossible if the laws of logic are metaphysical, non-spatial and non-temporal. We cannot be causally connected to the laws of logic if they are not real. Therefore, we should not be realists about logic. But if we do not suppose that the laws of logic really exist, then we cannot coherently assert that

they do not exist; for if we were to do so, we would have to presuppose the legitimacy of those very logical laws. Thus, philosophical naturalism undermines the laws that are presupposed in the very assertion of philosophical naturalism.[62] The fact of the matter is, it is quite difficult to reject the reality of the laws of logic, like say, the law of non-contradiction; for to reject such a law is to use the law in the very process of its rejection. But to use the law in rejecting the law is to affirm the reality of the law in the process of denying it, which is absurd.

Reppert summarizes his last argument as follows:

1. If naturalism is true, then we should expect our faculties not to be reliable indicators of the non-apparent character of the world.
2. But our faculties do reliably reveal non-apparent character of the world.
3. Therefore, naturalism is false.

I touched on a version of this last argument at the very beginning of this paper. Consider, for instance, the claim that science deals only with what is real. Supernatural entities are not real. Therefore science cannot point to the supernatural. There might be some truth to this claim. But then again, this leaves us to wonder what to make of various scientific claims to the effect that many aspects of nature point to the existence of a supernatural being. The best that the naturalist could do at this point is to try to find an explanation that would do away with these findings.

My aim in this article has been to determine whether naturalism, if true, provides proper epistemic justification for the possibility of reason. It appears that it does not. And on this count alone, naturalism seems to fail. This is not to say that I have determined that naturalism is a complete failure overall. Indeed we must acknowledge that naturalism, in the form of science, has been quite successful in helping us discover important facts about the world. However, even if science this is the case, truths about the world are ultimately accessible only by the correct employment of our rational faculties; for without reason, science cannot take off the ground.

End Notes

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[15] Ibid.
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[17] Ibid.
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[31] Lawrence Bonjour, *In Defense of Pure Reason: A Rationalist's Account of A Priori Justification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) p. 5
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Bonjour, p. 6
[36] Bonjour, p. 15-16
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[38] Ibid.
[39] Bonjour, p. 100
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[41] Ibid.
[42] Stephen J. Gould, *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1983) p. 257
[43] Ibid.
[44] Gould, p. 258
[45] Ibid.
[46] Gould, p. 257
[47] Bonjour, p. 100
[48] Reppert, p. 72
[49] Reppert, p. 72-3
[50] Reppert, p. 74
[51] Ibid.
[52] Reppert, p. 77
[53] As quoted by Reppert, p. 76
[54] Ibid.
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[56] As quoted by Reppert, p. 76
[57] Reppert, p. 78
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MUSIC IN WORSHIP SERVICE

Esther J. Kibor

Introduction

We have a saying in our language that says, "music is the heart of a language." How true is this saying when we think of music in the worship of our God, the heavenly father who has done so much for us in Jesus Christ. Music plays a great role in the worship of a church. In music people lift up voices and hearts to God. Robert Webber rightly states, "worship is a meeting between God and His people"[1] In this meeting the presence of God is felt and a response is given in praise and thanksgiving. In the words of Terry Wardle, music "blends the sermon and prayers, making the worship a wonderful celebration of God's self-giving in which Christians energetically declare the worthiness of God.[2]

Yet strong feelings abound about hymns and music in worship. While some are positive, for example, "wasn't the music great today? The anthem was inspiring; it's good to attend a church where the music is high quality." Others are negative, and unlike the positive comment, may state something like this, "I don't understand why we can't ever sing anything we know. The pastor always seems to select hymns nobody ever heard before. That anthem didn't do anything for me." The reason for such statements is threefold: people can sing; music evokes significant events in the life of an individual; music in worship develops faith, and "singing is one part of worship in which all present can participate by blending their voices toward the common goal of praising God. Carol M. Noren concurs with this threefold reason in saying that "music is the most corporate act of church service ...[that] ...unites worshippers as they interact with God in songs."[3]

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[1] Robert Webber, *Worship: Old and New*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1982), 11-12.

[2] Terry Wardle. *Exalt Him: Designing Dynamic Worship Services*, (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1992), 24.

[3] Carol M. Noren. *What happens Sunday Morning: A Layman's Guide to Worship*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 56-65.

Music in worship expresses itself in praise and adoration not to mention confession and thanksgiving as congregations gather to sing and focus on the nature and glory of God. There is need, then, to carefully select songs and choruses that have positive and victorious themes if music is to evoke true worship in the hearts of worshippers. What then are the basic categories of music? How significant is music in worship? What effect does good music bring to worship in our churches today? The focus of this article is to provide a solid and comprehensive survey of music as an essential element of Christian worship in the hope that churches will reconsider the type of music that is sung in their congregations.

Three Basic Categories of Music in Worship Service

James White describes vividly three basic categories of music that are likely encountered in worship. These include, **congregational music** that is chanted by everyone in worship service; **choral music** sung by some in the worship service; and **instrumental music** that may be accompanied by movement only.[4] While these are broad categories, they can still be broken down into several forms, for example, in the congregational music are reflected the anthem, introit, ascription and hymns. For choral, there is the gradual and selected music. However, in many worship services the music is sung accompanied by instruments. In everyday life, believers listen to praise albums and other spiritual songs to minister to their spirits. These songs refresh and prepare them for worship whether in anticipation for corporate worship service or personal quiet time. Whatever category of music is used, peoples' hearts are always tuned into God making them ready to utter praises.

The Significance of Music in Worship Service

The significance of music in worship is well captured by Noren in analyzing the type of music used in worship in each of the above categories. First **congregational music** is best for it is participatory and interactive rather than passive. In worship both visitors and regular attendants are likely to join in if the hymns as well as songs and choruses are familiar, easy to sing and favourites of the congregation.[5] It is vital that the first song or hymn a

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[4] James White. *Introduction to Christian Worship*, (Nashville: Abington Press, 1980), 100-102.
[5] Noren, 58-59.

congregation sings should always be one that can be sung well. The first song or hymn usually has a way of attracting new comers.

Secondly, congregational singing has long been part of Christian worship. The New Testament gives several references to such singing. For example, Jesus and his disciples in the upper room after the Passover meal; Paul and Silas in the Philippians' jail; the admonition given to the Colossians (chap.3) and the singing of the multitudes in the book of revelation.

Thirdly, congregational singing too shapes and reinforces faith.[6] In emphasizing this point, Allen and Borror rightly point out that "music is one of the best ways to teach biblical truth [for] when the word is set to music, it penetrates the mind and heart and stays there."[7] Even for those without faith in Christ, music can be used as an evangelistic tool to reach them especially when we consider the vitality of scripturally composed and contemporary songs.

Choral music with its roots in the Old Testament times was used when monasteries were established. This music became more complex and sophisticated with time as trained choirs came up. Like congregational songs, choirs are important in "proclaiming the word, performing music too difficult for congregation to sing, and in leading worshippers in singing hymns."[8] In the context of the church's ministry, choirs serve crucial roles in the pastoral, educational and outreach functions. They provide fellowship and are a means of involving people in worship. And in areas of improvement, say, in weak preaching, choirs can offset such weakness in a worship service.[9]

There is need for proper location of the choir members in the worship service if a choir is to play the three liturgical functions discussed above. Proclamation is suggested when the choir is behind and a bit above the pulpit in front of the congregation. The music then will come from the position where the scripture will be preached. It also creates a sense of intimacy and mutual encouragement[10].

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[6] Noren, 58.
[7] Ronald Allen and Gordon Borror. *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel*, (Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1982), 163.
[8] Allen and Borror, 163
[9] Noren, 61.
[10] Noren, 62.

Solidarity is suggested with the other worshippers if the choir is located at the rear balcony. Here, the choir members together with the worshippers face the liturgical centers and/or the cross (where one exists). This position facilitates mediation for there is no visual distraction. Needless to say, choir members should avoid the mentality of being engaged in a performance. Those who sit in a split chancel or elsewhere and leave their seats to stand on the chancel steps to face the congregation when singing[11] portray this function.

Instrumental music serves many functions. An organ or a piano can be used for the prelude and postlude of worship services to prepare people to worship and for praiseful fellowship. They can also be used for processionals and recessionals, and as background music during silent prayer. But background music must always be soft, and not too loud as to disrupt the praying persons' attention. Remember even the one playing the background music should also be involved in praying. Further instrumental music can be used during offertory time and other periods of meditation in the service.[12]

In Psalm 150, there is a list of instruments used in the worship of God: trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, strings, pipe, and cymbals. Many references in the Bible call people to worship through the use of instruments. In I Chronicles 25:1, musicians used the lyres, harps, and cymbals to prophesy. A combination of strings, for example, lyre and choirs were used in processions (Ps. 81:2). Use of instruments in music was a way of communicating to large numbers without the intrusion of words. The trumpet and the horn were used separately and together for music of acclamation and praise respectively. The style as given by the psalmist is that of "let everything that has breath praise the Lord (Ps. 150:1).

From the above, we cannot overestimate the power and significance of music in worship. In so doing, we can easily prevent people from attaining a deeper understanding and richer experience of worship. As a gift from God, music has an "emotional and mental stimulation unmatched by any other means of communication. Words alone are very strong ...[but] when they are put into ... [the] 'right' music ... they can be burned into the mind and consciousness indelibly.[13] So there is need to develop and use words (in music) to express creativity in praise and worship of our living God. This is only possible when singers and instrumentalists, as found in OT, are trained to lead worship (I Ch. 15:16-22).

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[11] Noren, 62.
[12] Noren, 64.
[13] Allen and Borror, 160.

The Effect of Music in Worship Service

Music is integral in worship despite the varying scenes in the singing of any corporate worship. From observation, some congregations sing with boundless joy and glow on their faces, clearly pointing out that "I love you Lord" and "I want everyone to know it." Others do not even open the hymnal; they just exist until something important revives them. Still others go through the motions of opening their books and their mouths in seeming dynamic participation yet with no thought of what is sung. Further some sing only if they know the song or chorus. What then is the effect of music in worship?

Singing is a dynamic living function that is caught. It is interactive and draws attention that an audience cannot just sit and listen in silence. Even those who are not skilled in music or do not know the songs or hymns or choruses are actively engaged.

As congregations lift up their voices to God in music, power and excitement is unleashed. Music opens up peoples' hearts in response to the nature and attributes of God and this response is expressed in body movement, for example, the lifting up of hands and the springing of the feet up and down in singing. In concurring with this vitality of music as bodily expression of praise, Wardle rightly says such movement denotes "surrender, dependence and a desire to draw closer to God.[14] It is a reflection of an intense feeling that music has power to encourage and uplift hearts, thus, opening them up to the spirit's touch. To allow this to happen, we must create room, select and choose solemn reflective songs and/or hymns that call people to the cross and repentance.[15] The standard of the music must "involve blending of intonation, tone colour, rhythmic integrity and a sense of music style."[16] In spite of these standards, we must exercise care in choosing music that will relate worship to life, be it contemporary or classical. Consideration should be taken because music that is conducive to worship depends on the nature and culture of the congregation. While some prefer classical, others contemporary, especially the young people. But balance must be maintained.

In the African context, the type of music sung in worship services does not necessarily matter much. With the influence of technology all types of music are sung. Whether the music is cyclic in pattern or one in which there is a mix of

[14] Wardle, 36.
[15] Wardle, 94.
[16] Allen and Borror, 157.

intercultural and western rhythms or where there is a variety in melody and frequent change of keys, the worship leaders must beware and determine which music to play so as to reach the diverse congregations. However, the thrust of the music itself, in my understanding, must touch the worshippers' hearts, level out differences and communicate the gospel and in the process encourage and edify congregants to maturity. The challenge is for the worship leaders and all concerned in the worship service to consecrate themselves so as to allow the worship to be awe inspiring and God honouring.

Key Factors to Congregational Singing in Worship

Several key factors serve to maintain a balance in the midst of obstacles to effective singing in congregational worship. There is need to create a comfort zone for the congregation, an atmosphere devoid of tension, where a spirit of warmth and friendliness pervades, and where people are not embarrassed to 'make a joyful noise to the Lord.' The creation of such an atmosphere and mood calls for worshippers to, first, examine their own personalities. Are they friendly, warm, accessible and confident? Second, have a proper accompaniment. For example, full sound, and right choice of instrument to accompany. Third, worship leaders must select songs, at least in the beginning, that are easy to sing and well known by the congregation. A good hymn does not need much direction. Fourth, some songs must be put in a lower key for all to sing. And as found in the African context, harmony is key. Fifth, give permission to the members not to participate by saying, 'you may not know the words yet, but feel free to join in and hum along. Listen to the words and phrases because that is part of worship too.' And last, but not the least, lighten the spirit of the congregation by creating life and humour[17].

Worship leaders need to consider these key factors so as to make worship services meaningful in accordance to what God intends them to be for the glory of His name. It is very important that worship leaders explain the meaning of hymns, songs, and choruses; and ask people to ponder the words and phrases. A checklist for effectiveness would include such questions as, "Are the songs meaningful? Am I enthusiastic? Am I avoiding the routine? Am I explaining enough but not too much? And, Am I alert to the emotional energy of the congregation?"[18] Remember regular evaluation of the worship service will go a long way to impact the congregation positively.

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[17] Jack Hayford, John Killinger and Howard Stevenson. *Mastering Worship,* (Christianity Today Inc. Portland: Multinomah Press, 1990), 53-54.
[18] Hayford, Killinger and Stevenson, 57-58.

Conclusion

Music in worship is vital because it draws people to God. There should be a balance between classical and contemporary music so as to cater for all age groups. The hymns, songs and choruses must be addressed to God; there must be spontaneous praises that reflect the quality of our devotional lives. Music as Noren describes must be characterized by the filling of the Holy Spirit and be an expression of a conscious faith.[19] This conscious expression of faith will avoid the singing of familiar hymns, songs and choruses thoughtlessly and leave the unknown to remain silent. Worship leaders and all those engaged in church ministry must be mindful of the music in their worship services.

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[19] Noren, 58.

PORTUGUESE PRESENCE AND ENDEAVOURS IN EAST AFRICA, 1498-1698

Watson A. O. Omulokoli

PART II & III

II. Political Occupation and Presence, 1498-1698

Early Picture and Background

Our knowledge of outside contact and interaction with East Africa seems to go back to the first century A.D. The first major communication from this period comes from a Greek sailor from Alexandria, Egypt.[1] He made a comprehensive survey of the seashore in the latter part of the first century. Together with the explorations, every valuable information which was gathererd, was carefully recorded. Eventually, this information was compiled into a guidebook for sailors making sea voyages in this part of the Indian Ocean. It was entitled, the ***Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*** (meaning, the circumnavigation or sailing around in the Indian Ocean, as it was then referred to by the Greeks and Romans). This writing still survives today and is the main source of knowledge on conditions on the eastern coast of Africa in that ancient period.

Further outside contact resulted in trading expeditions aimed at the region, and as a consequence of this, multi-ethnic settlements seem to have developed at the coast of eastern Africa by the fourth century A.D. The principal source for this period is from Claudius Ptolemy, who probably lived in the second century, but whose existing information in his ***Geography*** seems to represent the knowledge of fourth century Greeks from Alexandria.[2] Among other things, we gather that the Black stock of people were beyond, to the south of the area explored then, near the Pangani and Rufiji rivers in Tanzania. Furthermore, it was indicated that the interior had snow-capped mountains and l akes out of

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which the River Nile flowed. There is then a break in information when it seems that contact with East Africa by the Greeks from Alexandria may not have continued beyond the collapse of Rome in the fifth century A.D.

Over the centuries, however, Arab and Persian traders continued to ply this region as gold and iron added to ivory as the leading commodities from there. With the flow of trading expeditions by Arabs, Arab settlements began to appear in these coastal areas. A further development came in the form of Arab domination over the local inhabitants. This was clearly evident in the seventh and eighth centuries, but the process seems to have slowed down for the next four or five centuries. It was actually in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that steady increases of Arab incursions into the territory were in evidence.[3] As this took place, there were instances where Arab settlers became assimilated into the existing majority Bantu population. This Arab ascendancy and domination in the thirteenth century was the prevailing situation on the eastern coast of Africa when the Portuguese arrived there at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries.

Portuguese Entrance On the Scene

European contact with East Africa came as part of the historic voyages of exploration aimed at finding a sea route around Africa to India and the Far East.[4] These wider explorations aside, European interest in the north-eastern part of Africa was linked to the search for the legendary powerful ruler, Prester John, and his influential Christian kingdom. Over the years, this was thought to be the same as the Christian empire in Ethiopia.[5] It was in this connection that while the exploration of the eastern coast was going on from the south, contact was also made in the upper section from the north.

The first contact with the north-eastern coast of Africa was made by a Portuguese, sailor, Pedro de Covilha, who used the traditional route through the Red Sea. He left Portugal in 1487, and after travelling widely in the north-western section of the Indian Ocean, and therefore, coming in contact with the northern sector of the coast of eastern Africa, he finally went through Zeila and entered Ethiopia in 1494, and remained there toll his death there over thirty years later.[6] This means that in the process, he touched on the fringes of the northern coast of eastern Africa before the celebrated stopover in East Africa by Vasco da Gama in 1498 on his way to India.

In the case of East Africa proper, the first European arrival was the Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama. Building on the earlier efforts of

Bartholomew Diaz, he rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1497, and sailed up the eastern coast of Africa. In the process, he stopped at various points on the east African coast in 1498 before crossing over to his eventual terminus, Calcutta in India, which he reached in that same year, 1498.[7]

Portuguese Efforts at Conquest and Control

When Vasco da Gama returned to Portugal from India in 1499, plans were laid out for the securing of the eastern coast of Africa as a corridor to India and the Far East. The main aim was to set up a viable settlement in India because of the commercial potential which it seemed to hold out. To ensure that it was not endangered, it was proposed that fortresses should be established in the Indian ocean along the main routes of the anticipated trade.[8] The architect of this scheme was one, D'Alburquerque, and in the space of ten years, these plans were implemented to such an extent that by 1509, Portugal had established a foothold along the eastern coast of Africa. In about this same year, 1509, D'Alburquerque became the Portuguese viceroy of India.

To succeed in their plans, Albuquerque had wanted the control of three places: Socotra on the Red Sea, Ormuz on the Persian Gulf, and Malaca in the Chinese sector. Yet beyond possessing and controlling these strategic operational points, it was also necessary to keep the supply trade routes open and free from danger and interference. This is where the Portuguese conquest and occupation of eastern Africa came in. It was not an end in itself, but rather as a means of controlling the waterways in its trading circuit. When the implementation of the desired conquest was carried out between 1500 and 1509, it was with a lot of cruelty and savagery.

In a series of attacks and battles the Portuguese systematically brought the coast under their control. On his second voyage to India in 1502, Vasco da Gama took over Kilwa after defeating its ruler. Next, in 1503, another Portuguese, Ravasco overcame and took Zanzibar into Portuguese authority. These beginnings were followed by more force when in 1505, Portugal dispatched D'Almeida as the new viceroy to India. He had with him a fleet of over 20 ships to assist him in taking control of three centres on the coast of eastern Africa: Sofala, Kilwa, and Mombasa. In the ensuing attacks, Sofala, the inlet to the gold in the interior fell easily. Similarly, Kilwa, which had about 4,000 inhabitants in 1505 succumbed without much resistance. It was at Mombasa, which had a population of about 10,000 in 1505, that the Portuguese met with much resistance before gaining temporary victory. Although

vanguished at this time, trouble persisted in Mombasa for more than the next 200 years.

To the south, Mozambique was overcome and taken in 1507 and was to eventually emerge as the strategic headquarters of Portuguese authority on the eastern coast of Africa. The conclusion of the ten year period of conquests and control came in 1509 when a combined force of Egyptians, Arabs, and Persians was defeated at sea by the Portuguese, hence eliminating, for the time being maritime resistance to Portuguese expansionist schemes. In that same year, 1509, the king of Portugal attempted to consolidate the gains in the region by appointing a governor-general specifically for the entire strip of the eastern coast of Africa.

In the course of their time of occupation of this territory, the Portuguese did not have stable continuous rule over East Africa in particular. This explains why, in great measure, they did not gain much from the coastal areas of East Africa. Although they had outposts on the shores, unlike the Arabs whom they replaced, they did not venture into the interior. Lack of profit aside, they incurred such immense losses that, "it has been estimated that the overall Portuguese trading losses during her two hundred year control of the East African coast ran as high as 40 percent over revenue".[9] Portuguese dominance over East Africa in the 200 years of their presence was tentative, weak, and short-lived.

Uneasy Foothold On the Territory

Throughout the period of Portuguese occupation, Mombasa, which was emerging as the principal town in East Africa then, did not surrender easily to Portuguese attempts at controlling it. While Mombasa was consistently hostile, Malindi and Zanzibar were well disposed towards them. In part, this was a consequence of the fact that because Malindi and Zanzibar were not on good terms with Mombasa, they often assisted Portugal in its attacks on Mombasa. This was part of the picture in a period when Portuguese occupation and presence in East Africa was constantly punctuated by active hostility between its forces and Mombasa.

The catalogue of battles included that of 1528 when Nuno da Cunha, on his way to India as viceroy, attacked Mombasa with the assistance of Malindi and Zanzibar. This time, although unwillingly, Mombasa surrendered. About 50 years later, a Turkish pirate aroused rebellion in Mombasa against the Portuguese, although he was defeated on the two occasions on which he tried

this. First, in 1586, he helped Mombasa to drive away the Portuguese temporarily. Three years later in 1589, he tried again, with the help of a Zulu group, the Wazimba.[10]

Although the Portuguese succeeded in putting down the rebellions of 1586 and 1589, Mombasa continued to be troublesome. In view of this, the Portuguese attacked again in 1592, damaged the town extensively, and replaced its ruler with the one in Malindi who now combined both. With Mombasa now in their hands, the Portuguese took measures aimed at making the town their capital in East Africa. As part of this scheme, in 1593, they built Fort Jesus as a garrison or fortress to look after their military interests. As has been observed, this face-saving step may have been taken when their dominance was on an irretrievable slide. Thus, "In 1593, in an effort to contain the political disaffection of the coast, the Portuguese built and garrisoned the great citadel of Fort Jesus at Mombasa, but already the north-east corner of the Indian Ocean was slipping from their grasp".[11]

Despite these fortifications, times and fortunes were not in Portuguese favour. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, after a century in East Africa, Portugal began weakening its hold on the area. This development should, however, be viewed on the backdrop of the fact that in reality the Portuguese had no political or commercial stakes in East Africa. They were interested in it merely as a transit base for their really claims in India and the Far East. With no interest in the local people, it is no wonder that "No significant attempts were made to colonise the northern region of the coast and it has been estimated that towards the end of the sixteenth century, after a long period of peace, there were hardly fifty Portuguese living north of Cape Delgado".[12]

Portuguese Defeat and Withdrawal

There were a series of setbacks and stages through which the Portuguese presence and occupation of East Africa came to an end. While these were taking place in East Africa, on the home front in Europe drastic changes which had jolted Portuguese power and influence had already been effected. At the heart of these changes was the fact that when the Portuguese royal lineage ran out without an heir, Philip II, King of Spain, inherited the Portuguese crown in 1580 as the next one in line.[13] Armed with his own set of priorities in Spain, Philip was not in a position to salvage Portuguese projects. Portugal remained in this state of royal subservience until 1640.[14]

In the theatre of operations on the eastern coast of Africa, the beginning of the end set in in 1622 when Persians drove the Portuguese out of Ormuz, and therefore, from the northern sector of its possessions and corridor in the Indian Ocean. On the heels of this set-back, the Portuguese were faced with a serious rebellion in 1630-1631 in Mombasa. The leader was the Portuguese-installed ruler, Yusuf bin Hassan, who had been taken to Goa for upbringing and education by the Roman Catholics as a young man. Now he reverted to Islam and led this rebellion against his masters, the Portuguese. Although the Portuguese eventually crashed the rebellion and regained power over Mombasa, the foundations of their authority there had been severely shaken.

In the next series of systematic defeats, the principal protagonists were the Omani rulers of Muscat. Beginning at home, the Imam of Oman drove the Portuguese out of their stronghold in Muscat, in 1650, in the same way in which they had been driven out of Ormuz earlier. In 1652, the Imam of Oman went on and drove the Portuguese out of Malindi, further reducing their territorial claims in East Africa.[15] In the case of Mombasa, which was the last major Portuguese stronghold, the initial assault was made by the Imam of Oman, Sultan bin Seif. It was however, his son, Imam Seif bin Sultan, who waged the final attack in which Mombasa was taken in 1698 with the capture of Fort Jesus from the Portuguese. This defeat, together with the driving out of the Portuguese out of their remaining East African possessions is taken to mark the end of their "rule in East Africa north of Mozambique".[16] Although the Portuguese tried to regain control and make comebacks as in the case of the efforts in Mombasa in 1727-1729,[17] for all practical purposes, Portuguese presence and occupation had come to an end at the close of the seventeenth century. It is for this reason that it is safe to say that Portuguese ascendancy and domination in East Africa lasted about two hundred years, 1498-1698.

END NOTES

[1] Robert W. July, A History of the African People.(New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 76 [Other sources talk of "Hippalus, a Roman sailor who sailed down the Red Sea in A.D. 45 and discovered the regularity of the monsoon minds". Zoe Marsh and G.W. Kingsnorth, An Introduction to the History of East Africa. (Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1961), 9].

[2] Roland Oliver, and J.D. Fage, A Short History of Africa. (Baltimore, Maryland. Penguin Books, 1962), 96.

[3] Oliver and Fage, 97-99.

[4] C.P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa. 4 vols. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964),1:119. In the scientific rationale for exploration, " the discovery of a route to India by sea was a master ambition".

[5] Roland Oliver, ed., The Cambridge History of Africa. Vol. 3 From c. 1050 to c. 1600. (Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1977),179-181. [See also Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions. (Middlesex, England. Penguin Books, 1964),140].

[6] Oliver, ed., Cambridge History, 80.

[7] Groves I.,125. Before sighting the shores of India on 17th May, 1498, Vasco da Gama had stopped at Mozambique, Mombasa, and Malindi en route.

[8] Marsh and Kingsnorth, 12

[9] July, 85

[10] July, 85 [see also Oliver, ed., Cambridge History, 229, with indications that in addition to Mombasa, there was revolt in other towns].

[11] Oliver and Fage, 101 [see, Oliver, ed., Cambridge History, 230].

[12] Oliver, ed., Cambridge History, 227.

[13] Marsh and Kingsnorth, 16 [See, H.H. Johnston, The Opening Up of Africa. (London. Williams and Norgate, n.d.), 173].

[14] July, 85.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Marsh and Kingsnorth, 17

[17] David Barrett, et al eds., Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1973.(Kisumu, Kenya. Evangel Press, 1973), 21.

III. Christian Attempts and Efforts, 1498-1698

Introduction and Overview

In their maritime operations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Portuguese set out to accomplish many goals.[1] Of these, four were particularly crucial to their efforts. First, there was the desire to contribute to scientific

knowledge by unearthing fresh geographical information. Secondly, they aimed at carrying out trade and conducting commercial ventures in the new territories that came under their control. In the third instance, they set out to exercise political dominance by bringing into subjection the peoples of the new regions that they identified. Fourthly, they aimed at providing spiritual guidance by spreading the Christian faith to the people of the various areas that they came across.

In the application and success of the objectives in East Africa, the Portuguese generally fared badly. On the geographical front, they were successful with regard to identifying the key areas along the coast. In the area of trade and commerce, their performance in East Africa was abysmal. This was largely because of their neglect of the area, in preference for India and the Far East, but also partly because of their lack of success on the political level Indeed, on the political plane, the Portuguese struggled endlessly for survival throughout their two hundred year period of occupation and presence in East Africa. By the time that they were finally driven out, they could not look back and point to a period and places where they had firm and unassailable strongholds in the region.[2] In the area of Christian activity, the fortunes here were adversely affected by the severe setbacks in the political arena. This resulted from the fact that in their operations the Christian efforts were inextricably linked with the Portuguese political and administrative machinery.[3]

Scattered Attempts

On his way to India in 1498, Vasco da Gama received a friendly welcome at Malindi. Before he left, he erected a pillar as was customary, as a sign of the amicable relationship between the town and the Portuguese establishment.[4] On his second visit to India in 1502, he drove his earlier initiatives to the logical conclusion when he helped the Portuguese to conquer and capture several towns along the coast. The next major event came when Francisco d'Almeida made sweeping conquests of the eastern coast of Africa in 1505 on his way to India as well. Although it is alleged that he left two priests behind, it was with the understanding that they were to serve as chaplains to the Portuguese soldiers and community rather than to work among the local population.[5]

Among the places that Almeida had effectively put under Portuguese control was Kilwa. Not long after, in 1506, there were reports from there of about 40 people who wanted to become Christians. Although advice was given that their admission to the Christian faith should not be rushed, the resident Portuguese captain, helped the group to get baptised, and in the process of

ignoring this caution, he aroused Muslim anger. All the same, Christian efforts at Kilwa were stalled when the Portuguese moved from there in 1513 and relocated to the more prosperous town of Sofala to the South.

Here and there instances of chance contacts and occurrences were reported, but more often than not the outcome did not amount to much. Such was the case with the visit to Malindi of the renowned Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier. Although he stopped at Malindi for a short time in 1542 on his way to India as an envoy of the King of Portugal, there was no demonstration of missionary interest in East Africa on his part.[6] In an isolated case John Dos Santos, a Dominican friar stationed on the Isles of Kerimba baptised a nephew of the ruler of Zanzibar in 1591. This incident annoyed the ruler so much that to avert further crisis, the young man was sent to Mozambique and from there he was transferred to India and was not heard of again. All the while Dominican and Augustinian monks seemed to have activities at Faza, Pate, Zanzibar, and Mombasa, but in each case, the results were either meagre, or shortlived.[7]

Focus On Mombasa

It is ironic that, Mombasa, where the Portuguese had the most persistent political problems, is also the place from which any meaningful records of Christian activity issued. In the period of most intense efforts, it was here that the nearest thing to sustained missionary activity took place, and the architect who spearheaded it was the Portuguese viceroy of Goa. Apart from Mombasa, he is reported to have had interest in Lamu, where he sent three priests, and in Zanzibar, where he sent one priest.[8] In the case of Mombasa, all this took place in that period of relative calm and tranquility following Portuguese military victories after the political disturbances of the 1580's.

In the 1580's, the Portuguese had to contend with and counter fierce rebellion against their authority in and around Mombasa. In 1592, they seemed to have achieved some decisive victory, and so they proceeded with the process of re-establishing some semblance of stable authority there. As part of this development, in 1593 they commenced the construction of a military garrison, Fort Jesus, and completed it in 1595. It was then, with Mombasa seemingly under control, that they stepped up Christian activities there, with the peak being noted in the fruitful years of 1597-1599.

There were a number of developments which stood out as noteworthy in Mombasa in this period. First, one of the key things which the viceroy of Goa did was to build a monastery for Augustinian monks. Next, a House of Mercy, to help in the care of widows, orphans, the sick, and disabled was constructed.

In addition, places of worship were provided, including a chapel in Fort Jesus, and an Augustinian Church in the town for worship by the general public. Through these activities, Augustinian monks reported that in 1599, their work had registered about 600 converts. Among these, was the exiled ruler of Pemba who was named Philip at his baptism. From then on, there were reports of even larger figures of conversions each year, often hitting the one thousand mark.[9]

In the duration in which all this was going on, the ruler of Mombasa was the same one who was in charge of Malindi, but who had been assigned to Mombasa in the 1590's when the Portuguese took control there following the brief disquiet of the 1580's. In 1614, however, quarrels sprang up between the Portuguese and the imported rulers from Malindi. Eventually, this resulted in the murder, under suspicious circumstances, of the ruler, Hassan bin Ahmed. In what turned out ultimately to be a cosmetic patch-work, the Portuguese took the ruler's seven year-old son, Yusuf bin Hassan, to Goa for education under the Augustinians, while his uncle served as regent ruler, awaiting Yusuf's turn on maturing. While in Goa, he was ostensibly converted to the Christian faith, and named Dom Jeronimo Chingulia at his baptism.[10]

He went on and married a Portuguese noblewoman and returned to East Africa in 1626 as the ruler of Mombasa and Malindi, among other places. From the beginning, there was friction between him and his Portuguese overlords. In addition to these disagreements he seemed to have two other problems. First, it was alleged that in his treatment of the subjects under him, he was tyrannical and despotic. Secondly, there were reports that he was given to a life of duplicity and double standards in that while he behaved as a Christian publicly, he was following Muslim ways secretly in private. When matters came to a head in 1631, he rebelled, attacked the Portuguese, and caused much havoc before fleeing to Arabia.[11] From this disastrous event, Portuguese control in East Africa, and any efforts at Christian activity that were connected with it were on a steady decline until complete extinction came at the end of the seventeenth century.[12] As Barrett has summed it up, the existing Christian efforts and the related "organized missionary work in Mombasa had thus collapsed long before the arrival of the first Protestants".[13]

Conclusion

When new Christian efforts were embarked upon towards the middle of the 19th century, there was no evidence or trace of Christian presence from these earlier attempts. This state of collapse and the resultant vacuum was the prevailing situation when Johann Ludwig Krapf arrived in East Africa in 1844.

It is with this in view that it has been categorically and accurately stated that Christianity, as it exists in East Africa today was introduced there by Krapf and his German missionary colleagues, Johann Rebmann and James Erhardt. This trio of Lutherans working under the auspices of the Anglican body, the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) proved to be the pioneers who introduced Christianity in East Africa. [14]

END NOTES

[1]C.P.Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, Vol. I to 1840. (London. Lutherworth Press, 1964 Reprint) [First Published in 1948], 119.

[2] Robert W. July, A History of the African People.(New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 84-85.

[3] Roland Oliver, ed., The Cambridge History of Africa, Vol. 3, from c. 1050 to c. 1600. (Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1977), 231.

[4]Lamin Sanneh, West African Christianity: The Regions Impact. (London. C. Hurst and Co., 1983), 21. As part of the enterprise of exploration crosses were planted to signify Portuguese priority in areas contacted.

[5] Zablon Nthamburi, ed., From Mission to Church: A Handbook of Christianity in East Africa. (Nairobi. Uzima Press, 1991), 2

[6]Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions. (Middlesex, England. Penguin Books, 1964), 148.

[7] Carl-Erik Sahlberg, From Krapf to Rugambwa: A Church History of Tanzania. (Nairobi. Evangel Press, 1986), 12.

[8]John Baur, The Catholic Church in Kenya: A Centenary History. (Nairobi. St. Paul Publications - Africa, 1990),16.

[9]Nthamburi, ed., From Mission to Church, 4.

[10]Baur, The Catholic Church in Kenya, 17.

[11]Zoe Marsh and G.W. Kingsworth, An Introduction to the History of East Africa. (Cambridge. Cambridge Press, 1961), 16-17.

[12] Lukas Malishi, A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania. (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Episcopal Conference, 1990), 11. [See Barrett, David. et al. eds., Kenya Churches Handbook. (Kisumu, Kenya. Evangel Publishing House, 1973), 29. This was an unsuccessful attempt which disappeared with the end of Portuguese occupation and presence in 1698].

[13] David Barrett, et.al.eds., Kenya Churches Handbook, 30.

[14] Watson Omulokoli, "The Introduction and Beginnings of Christianity in East Africa", Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology 22, no. 2 (2003): 29-33.

CONTRIBUTORS INVITED FOR *AJET*

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Scholarship: Articles should reflect serious scholarship based on library or field research. Bibliographic references should preferably be no less than ten. The English composition should be accurate and readable, without the need for extensive editing.

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WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR CHURCH MINISTRY

Esther J. Kibor

Introduction

Many years ago, a primary school mate of mine was admitted into a hospital diagnosed with malaria. I visited her at the hospital. After a few minutes of conversing with her, I saw a funny looking necklace around her neck. I asked her what it was and she plainly responded, "This is my 'charm' given to me by my father for protection against harm and any other bad omen and eyes." With a smile, I asked, "Why hasn't it protected you from the malaria you are now suffering?" Well, instead of answering my direct question, she chose to change the subject of conversation.

The prevalent problem of witchcraft and sorcery in the traditional worship, whose beliefs and practices are firmly held in many parts of Africa and the world at large, has been carried over into the Christian church. Needless to say, we cannot make generalizations concerning this problem because beliefs vary from one people group to another. The usage of the term witchcraft here with its counterpart forms is found in popular speech to refer to all harmful employment of mystical powers. The belief in sorcery and witchcraft in Africa is indeed "a great tyranny spreading panic and death"[1] With wonder, one may ask, "How many people in Africa who like my school mate above are captivated by the fear of witchcraft and sorcery? What is the biblical perspective of these issues? What implications are there for those involved in church ministry? In attempting to answer these questions, the article is significant in providing implications for solving this problem in our churches today.

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[1] E.G. Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion* (London: Sheldon Press, 1974),11.

Definitions of Sorcery and Witchcraft

Witchcraft is an evil thing which is often hereditary. It is an activity of the soul; often nocturnal and deal depending on dreams[2]. "It is a social or rather an anti-social phenomenon.[3] Some of those who confess witchcraft might be doing it for fear that they might have bewitched someone while sleeping, unconsciously and in ignorance. The belief has to do with a theory that the witch devours the spiritual life of the person and in the process causes physical death. In this line of thought, E. Bolaji Idowu writes that,

> African concepts about witchcraft consist in the belief that the spirits of living human beings can be sent out of the body on errands of doing havoc to other persons in body, mind or estate; that witches have guilds or operate singly, and that the spirits sent out of the human body in this way can act either invisibly or through a lower creature – an animal or a bird.[4]

Witches are believed to be predominantly women helped by "devils" or "evil spirits.' They acquire their witchcraft through various ways: 1) Inheritance from mother or father. 2) Believed that witchcraft substance can be picked up, bought, or swallowed. 3) Purchased from old women who sell it at cheap prices so that the poor people can easily buy it. 4) Can be intentionally acquired from demons.[5]

Sorcery, on the other hand, is the use of black magic and medicines against others. Gehman points out that both activities "focus on areas of competition for personal gain within society."[6] The practitioners of these activities use medicine and/or mystical powers for harmful purposes. Witches are known to be doing the opposite of what is the norm in society because of the evil within them, which is more an act of the mind. Hence, they perform wicked deeds because of their nature. They are also associated with animal familiars, which are believed

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[2] Parrinder, 123.
[3] Parrinder, 132.
[4] E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*, (London: SCM Press, 1973), 175-6.
[5] E.A. Ade Adegbola, *Traditional Religion in West Africa*, (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1983), 318.
[6] Richard Gehman, *Africa Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective*, (Nairobi: East Africa Publishers, 1989), p.78.

to provide transportation (hyena) during their mission and actually used to accomplish the intended evil on the enemy (snake). It is also said their physical characteristics set them apart and they are often sitting alone and eating alone. Every misfortune in the community is blamed on them. Mircea Eliade states, "they are believed to harm others either because they possess powers that emanate from their aberrant personalities or because they perform anti-social magic technically referred as sorcery"[7]

Activities attributed to witches include, 1) eating human flesh. This is a symbol of bodily harm or destruction that can be inflicted on people through evil spiritual machination. 2) Infliction of material loss. 3) Cause of barrenness and sterility, and 4) infliction of incurable diseases, etc.

It is believed by many that witches meet together. In reference to this, Robert H. Nassau writes:

These meetings are secret; preferably in a forest, or at least distant from a village. The hour is near a midnight . . . their spirit bodies meet – not hindered by walls or other physical objects. They pass with instant rapid through the air, over the tree-tops. At their meetings they have visible, audible, and tangible communication with evil spirits.[8]

The Effects of Witchcraft and Sorcery

Nearly all over Africa, death from natural cause does not exist. Whatever ill befalls a man or a family, it is always the result of witchcraft.[9] John Mbiti supports this statement and adds, "Some exceptions like epidemics are attributed to God."[10] If they were not attributed to witchcraft and sorcery, then, the logical results would be neglect of the spirits.[11]

Tokunboh Adeyemo, quoting Abrahamson who writes on the origin of death, says:

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[7] Mircea Eliade, "witchcraft" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* vol. 15 (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1987), p. 424.
[8] Robert Hamill Nassau, *Fetishism in West Africa* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), p. 123.
[9] Nassau, p. 117.
[10] John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (London: Heinemann, 1969), p. 44.
[11] Mbiti, p. 83.

By far the commonest cause is believed to be magic, sorcery and witchcraft. This is found in every African society, though with varying degrees of emphasis; and someone is often blamed for using this method to cause the death of another. The living-dead and spirits are another cause. The fourth cause of certain deaths is God, especially those for which there is no other satisfactory explanation, like death through lightning or the death of very old people.[12]

Gehman, in support of the above, writes that, "Every kind of misfortune and evil is blamed on witchcraft. The wasting of person's body and the swelling of his internal organs is evidence that a witch is eating his soul and drinking his blood."[13] Since in several parts of Africa there is high rate of infant mortality, there are lots of suspicions, jealousies and fears attributed to witchcraft. Even with the pandemic problem of HIV/Aids, some communities see it as caused by witchcraft.

Those who are prone to accusations are 1) close relatives. When one gets sick, his mind immediately goes to people who have some grievance against him and naturally such people are those with whom he has close contact, his own relatives for that matter bear the blame. Witchcraft is very seldom leveled against distant acquaintances. 3) Women generally, especially in polygamous homes where there are co-wives who fight for the exclusive love of their husband. This problem is always rooted in jealousy. 4) Mothers and daughters-in-law. A woman whose child dies usually accuses her mother-in-law of being responsible (the envy that exists between them). If the wife falls sick, she believes that it is her mother-in-law who is bewitching her so that she could have all the love of her son for herself. 5) Old women are also accused of witchcraft because of their age. 6) Queer ugly people. Those people who are socially handicapped. They are liable to accusations of witchcraft and are usually held responsible for any outbreak of serious deadly disease or any misfortune.[14]

Gehman summarizes well the belief that the powers of witchcraft and sorcery breed deep fear and suspicion which undermine initiative and engender an underlying atmosphere where misfortune or some unusual event takes place.

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[12] Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Salvation in African Tradition,* (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1979), p. 66

[13] Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective*, p. 78.

[14] Adegbola, *Traditional Religion in West Africa*, p.326.

It can also cause hatred and exacerbate antagonistic behaviour in social relations.

The Extent of Witchcraft and Sorcery

In observing the extent of witchcraft, Parrinder who is also echoed by Kato writes, "Witchcraft has appeared in many parts of the world, in one form or another. It became particularly prominent and developed in Europe in the later middle ages and Renaissance periods. Still in modern Africa beliefs in witchcraft is a great tyranny spreading panic and death."[15] In support of this, Parrinder further describes, "witchcraft is still very widely feared and apparently just as much under the influence of modern civilization and Christianity as ever before.[16] To protect himself against misfortune, sickness, unemployment, lack of promotion, failure in examination, and all ills of life, human has recourse to the diviner and witchdoctor.

It is unfortunate that when several traditional worshippers become Christians, though they do not wear fetishes; still believe in their power. They also dread their influence if possible they should be directed to them. Some think that white magic, which simply acts on the defensive, should be allowed. There are therefore those who wear them for defense while others hang them on the doors or garden fence to ward off evil spirits. The Zarean song expresses the dilemma experienced by these Christians as follows:

> Miserable Christian,
> At mass in the morning
> To the fortune teller in the evening
> The amulet in the pocket
> The Scapular round the neck[17]

There are those who have "no hesitation in going to the Juju man or to the fetish priest when it is considered expedient."[18]

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[15] Byang H. Kato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa* (Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1975), p.22.
[16] Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, p. 133.
[17] Justin S. Ukpong, *African Theologies now, Spear head no.80.* (Eldoret: Gaba Publications, 1984), p. 9.
[18] Ukpong 1984, p. 9.

From the above description one immediately concludes that witchcraft is prevalent in traditional worship and that several Christians still retain some fear of it. In fact some church adherents would hesitate when asked questions about it. Fear of illness and death has caused several persons to preoccupy themselves with protection by wearing charms and other anti-witchcraft medicines. This kind of fear calls for serious reflection on ways to remedy the situation. And the secularistic approach to supernatural powers must be rejected. In what ways, then, shall people solve this problem? This question brings us to the next section on the biblical perspective on the topic.

The Reality of Witchcraft and Sorcery in the Bible

The bible recognizes the existence of witchcraft and sorcery, and the reality of magical powers. The Egyptian magicians were able to perform similar miracles like those produced by Moses (Ex. 7:11, 22; 8:7, 18, 19; II Tim. 3:8). In the book of Daniel the reality of the power of Babylonian magicians is assumed (1:20, 2:27; 4:7, 9; 5:11). Satanic powers will also be experienced in the end time (Rev. 9:1-20). The authority of the anti-Christ will be supported by miracles and signs (II Thess. 2:9-12; rev. 13:13-18). On the same thought, Gehman rightly writes, "Scripture always assumes the reality of demonic forces even though it teaches the deceptive nature of many of the liar's servants."[19]

Mysterious powers exist (Ps. 91). We fight against principalities and powers of darkness (Eph. 6:10ff) and our Lord Jesus Christ claimed authority over these spiritual powers. It is also listed as one of the acts of the sinful nature in Galatians 6:20.

The Bible, too, recognizes the possibility of human beings in their free agency making pacts with the devil, in virtue of which he was allowed, under divine administration, to share with them some of his supernatural powers as prince of the power of darkness, and god of this world. God condemned such pacts as unholy. Those who made them were called witches and wizards. [20]

Those who have been delivered from the power of witchcraft speak of its reality and of witches as existing in reality. They say that this is Satan's power at work, using demons and human agents to expand his wickedness and rebellion against God on earth. Some say that witchcraft exists and someone with a weak faith is vulnerable to the witches' attacks. A weak faith is one mixed with

[19] Gehman 1989, p.90.
[20] Nassau 1969, 136.

doubts. Doubt is a powerful weapon of the devil. The fight against witchcraft and sorcery is a spiritual one, and those who hope to win must arm themselves with the sword of the spirit as Paul correctly states in Ephesians 6:17.

The witch of Endor in I Samuel 28:11-15 was a reality. Nassau says "she did 'bring up' real departed spirits; perhaps only on that one occasion, and then only by direct divine and not satanic power and will, and for a divine object [for] she herself seems to have been surprised (v.12) at the real success of divination which formerly may have been, in her hands, only deceptions"[21]

There are numerous other references in the Bible referring to sorcery, for example, Exodus 28:18 and Ezekiel 13:17-23, which require further study on the topic.

Warning against the Use of Witchcraft and Sorcery in Scripture

The scripture warns and actually forbids against the use of mystical powers. The first warning is given in the Old Testament book of Exodus 22:18, "You shall not allow a sorceress to live" (compare with Lev. 19:26; 20:6, 27). A complete warning is found in Deuteronomy 18: 9-12, which reads as follows:

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

In this passage the Lord warns Israel that they should not follow the heathen practices of the Canaanites which caused them to be destroyed.

As we saw earlier, in disobedience, the children of Israel turned to these pagan practices (I Sam. 28:3, 9; II Kg. 23:24). As a result, the judgment of God fell upon them and they were taken into captivity.

In the New Testament sorcery is listed among the works of the flesh (Gal.5:20) and is closely linked with idolatry. Simon the sorcerer was rebuked by the Apostle Paul and commanded to repent in Acts 8:9-24). Elymas the magician was rebuked as "the son of the devil" and "enemy of all righteousness" (Acts 13:6-12). When the gospel was received in Ephesus, the magical charms and medicines of the converts were burned. Gehman writes "the total value was

[21] Nassau 1969, p. 136.

50,000 pieces of silver, representing a total worth of 50,000 working days (Acts 19:18, 19). Sorcerers are among those who are specifically excluded from the holy city, the new Jerusalem in Revelation 21:8 and 22:15.[22]

Gehman continues to state that "divination was also condemned, for example, the shaking of arrows, consulting household idols and examining the liver (Ez. 21:21). Astrology (study of stars) was common in the ancient world even as it is today, compare Psalm 81:12; Amos 5:15, 26; and Acts 7:41-43"[23]

The other reason why witchcraft and sorcery is forbidden in the scripture is because of their association with demonic activities. Sorcery is associated with practices of spiritism (II Kg. 23:24), spirit of harlotry (Nah. 3:4) and idolatry (Mic. 5:12). During the apostasy of Jezebel, witchcraft was revived (II Kg.9:22). The evil of witchcraft is in the dependence upon the creature and in disobedience upon the will of God. It is demonic idolatry to seek for a wizard rather than God. If one does this, he removes God from His rightful place of preeminence (Isa. 8:19).

The scripture also teaches that there is self-deception brought by Satan. On the other hand, several of the specialists (diviners, witchdoctors, sorcerers, etc) considered in this article are liars whose concern is to acquire more wealth. Over 90% are liars.

Why is witchcraft and sorcery so tenacious in African communities? In response to this question, the next section will discuss syncretism as a result of failure to preach conversion and repentance in our local churches.

Syncretism the Failure to Preach Conversion and Repentance

Syncretism is defined as mixing of elements from religions; a function or activity that no one committed to the truth of Jesus Christ can accept. Yet without proper education of the church members, there are always nominal aspects of Christian teaching which can easily yield themselves to syncretistic elements.

While repentance is paramount in church ministry, Parrinder reminds us that in ministering to sorcerers [and witches], "no healing is complete until the

[22] Gehman 1989, p. 90.
[23] Gehman 1989, 95.

horn of witchcraft is surrendered"[24] As ministers of the word, we need not fear because we have a Lord who sends us with a promise of 'power . . . over . . . power (Lk.10:19), the 'power with authority' (exousia) over all the powers (dunamis) of the enemy, and this is the kind of Saviour the animist, nominal and syncretistic persons have been seeking. "The Christ of the animist conversion experience is a Lord of power."[25]

This is the power we are called upon to proclaim. We must be obedient to the great commission given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 28:18-20), which is threatened by syncretism in making the unique salvation of Christ non-effective. We are called upon to follow the example of the apostles who did not compromise though faced with tendencies to do so.

Paul in Ephesus did not compromise under the pressures of tradition, culture and religion; instead be called on the new converts to make a total break with magic. We read that the new converts volunteered to burn their magical books and objects, which were worth a large sum of money.

There was no compromise, as we saw earlier, for Simon the magician (Acts 8:4-24) who wanted to add the power of the Holy Spirit to his own powers.

Those who enter the church fold for the sake of whatever gain they could make through the Christians' new influence, and the believer's Holy Spirit but inwardly practices works of diabolism and sorcery must be rebuked.

In Colossae, Paul made no room for compromise. As Gehman writes, "To allow additions of asceticism and angel worship to creep into the Christian church would have changed the very nature of the Gospel."[26] To accept the intermediaries along with Christ can only lower the position of Christ. Therefore, no syncretism is allowed or permitted.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by saying that like the prophets of old we need to fight against syncretism. Jesus must be preached as the only way to God (Jn. 14:6); there is salvation in no other name except that of Jesus (Acts 4:12).

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[24] Parrinder 1974, 142.
[25] Donald McGavran, *Crucial Issues in Missions Tomorrow*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), p. 142.
[26] Gehman 1989, 95.

Secondly, follow-up ministry must be emphasized for the new converts.

Thirdly, conversion messages must be preached in the churches especially to second-generation Christians who are not converted and can easily revert back to old traditional religion because of boredom and dissatisfaction.

Fourthly, proper teaching on what the bible teaches about witchcraft and sorcery need to be considered seriously.

Finally, Christians need to understand that they are fighting against principalities and powers, against spiritual and wicked forces in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12). They need to understand that prayer is a weapon against the wiles of the devil. The devil has used its powers to bind some lonely Christians with perpetual diseases, bad tempers, hatred, all opposed to God and his righteousness. But Christians must wake up and fight it in the name of Jesus Christ.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Diane B. Stinton

Jesus of Africa: Voices of Contemporary African Christology

Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004, 303 pp, US$25

Stinton's book represents a major contribution to the study of current African Christologies. Stinton is professor of theology at Daystar University, Nairobi, and her book is the result of her doctoral work at the University of Edinburgh. The research behind the book is outstanding. Stinton combines a thorough understanding of published studies of African Christology over the past half-century with current ethnographic research in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana. To this she has added a set of in-depth interviews with leading African Christological theologians (Bujo, Ela, Mugambi, Nasimiyu, Oduyoye, and Pobee). Though the ethnographic research is limited to three English-speaking countries in East and West Africa, the inclusion of findings from focus groups and participant observation ensure that this is not simply a survey of what the professional theologians are saying; rather it is thorough study of what Africans of many social and educational contexts are thinking and saying about Jesus. The interview excerpts she has chosen to include are colorful and brilliantly illustrate her generalizations. She deeply appreciates the importance of theologizing in the vernacular, and she brings an often overlooked awareness of women's perspectives of Jesus.

Stinton begins her presentation with a historical survey of the development of Christologies in Africa. She then examines the sources of African Christology, which she identifies as the Bible and other Christian tradition, African culture, and African religions and culture. The heart of the book is her analysis of four over-arching images of how Jesus is understood by African Christians: as Life-giver (including Healer), Mediator (including Ancestor), Loved one (including Family member and

Friend), and Leader (including King or Chief). Her understanding and explanation of how Africans understand Jesus is clear and comprehensive, though occasionally her categorizations appear forced. Though she is primarily descriptive of how AfricanChristians understand the person of Jesus Christ in their lives, she also provides a measure of evaluation, her primary criteria being whtehr or not Jesus is "significant to life in Africa today" (222).

Stinton's evaluation might have been stronger had she taken more into consideration the degree to which the most widely held images of Jesus correspond t Biblical images of Jesus, though she does emphasise the importance of Scripture controlling Christological images. Her own sympathies are clearly with a Christology of social engagement, and she emphasizes relevance and innovation as primary values in theological thinking. Besides providing an excellent study of the state of Christological thinking in Africa today, the book is valuable as a source for potential case studies in contextual theology. In places the book still reads like a doctoral dissertation (with appropriate "dissertation-ese"), but this does not detract from its readability, partially because of the excellent chapter and section summaries. This book is highly recommended for anyone who wishes to become acquainted with the state of Christology in Africa, for theological libraries throughout Africa, as a textbook for graduate level courses on Christology in the African context, and as a primary resource for anyone teaching Christology in Africa.

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Damtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach, editors
African Higher Education: An International Reference Handbook
Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2003. 723 pp.
hb, f78

This impressive work of reference is a fruit of the African Higher Education Project at the Centre for International Higher Education, Boston College, USA. Both editors, Damtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach, work as co-directors there. The other contributors, 76 in number, are researchers and administrators of higher education, coming from Africa and the West, mainly US.

In a few years time we have seen a number of studies addressing various aspects of higher education in Africa. One example is Ajayi, Goma and Johnson's *The African Experience with Higher Education* (Accra 1996), which outlines important aspects of higher education in Africa from historical perspective. Another example is the Association of African Universities' *Guide to Higher Education in African* (New York 2002), which surveys university systems and individual state universities, country by country. The present volume is an important addition to these two. Its general part (chs. 1-13, pp. 3-148: "Themes") has a wider and deeper approach to the current challenges of higher education in Africa than does Ajayi et al, and its more special part (chs. 14-65, pp. 151-648": "Countries") offers other kinds of analyses than that provided by the Association of African Universities (2002)

It is for obvious reasons hardly possible to give a fair presentation of the wealth of knowledge found in this volume. Its first part includes separate chapters on topics like the development of higher education in Africa, university governance and university-state, financing and economics of higher education in Africa, private higher education in Africa, foreign aid financing of higher education in Africa, massification and future trends in African higher education, women in universities,

tertiary distance education, the language predicament in African universities, student activism in African higher education, scientific communication and research in African universities, and African higher education in relation to the world. The second part then goes through all 52 countries, discussing historical patterns (a little) and contemporary challenges (much more). The volume concludes with two indices (themes/countries and institutions) and two bibliographies. The two latter are organized according to nation and region; one lists 914 articles and books on higher education in African, the other lists another 301 [sic] doctoral dissertations on the same topic.

This volume will for many year to come be an indispensable source and discussion partner for anyone engaged in research on higher education in Africa. But also the general practitioner will find a lot of useful information here – and that include those of us who are responsible for the running of theological institutions of various kinds. The most important thing is of course the documentation of the simple fact that there is no such thing as an "African" way of solving the problems of higher education! The challenges of Namibia and Nigeria are not the same, and neither are those of Madagascar and Mali. The historical backgrounds, the challenges, and the experiences all differ and so indeed do the solutions.

Nevertheless, two things should especially be notices. First, the volume has a generally positive approach to private institutions of higher education. In addition to a separate chapter in the first part addressing this topic (ch. 5, pp. 53-60), many of the country entries (chs. 14-65, pp. 151-648) do the same. It is here repeatedly said that the private institutions offer valuable additions on study programs of state institutions, and that due to their relatively small size they may be able to attract new ideas and create new programs more rapidly than the state colossuses are able. Still, some of their problems are also highlighted. For example, the "for-profit-institutions" may be forces to accept students with low qualifications whereas the "not-for-profit-institutions", which are often affiliated to some religious body, may tend to value the religious affiliation of the employees higher than their professional competence. However, as theological institutions generally are of the "not-for-profit" type, the description of the private institutions as having few full-time academic staff is hardly

appropriate for them to rely on poorly paid part-time staff coming in from state universities.

Secondly, and more directly related to the problems facing theological institutions of higher education, the volume shows no interest in the difference of approach to theological and religious studies generally evident between Anglophone Africa and francophone Africa. Some of the AJET readership will be familiar with the problem in terms of the different possibilities of securing state accreditation instead in such respective regions. In the present volume the problem surfaces frequently; however, without being directly addressed. A comparison of the chapters on Kenya and Madagascar may illustrate this. The Kenya chapter (pp.359-371) lists by name all thirteen private universities, including state accredited ones. The Madagascar chapter (pp.403-413) simply says that there are some religious seminaries for the training of clergy without including these seminaries in the general discussion. The different approaches to theological and religious studies in these two chapters reflect a much deeper problem than a difference of authors. Rather, it reflects a general marginalization of theological and religious studies in the academia of francophone Africa. This is a problem that ought to be explicitly addressed.

In conclusion, it must be said that this volume is an extremely important contribution to the understanding of higher education in Africa. The price will obviously prevent many potential readers from obtaining a copy. Nevertheless, it deserves to be familiar with the leadership circles of theological education in Africa. What is more, its challenges deserve to be met with more research on the role of theological and religious studies within society and academia in Africa. In spite of the impressive number of 301 doctoral dissertations on questions related to higher education in Africa, there should be room for a few more relating to theological and religious studies programs on the continent especially in light of the importance of religion in African society.

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Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder
Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today
Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2004. 488 pp. with index. US$30

Bevans and Schroeder are to be congratulated for developing a text that takes it place beside David Bosch's *Transforming Mission* as one of the most important of contemporary missiology texts. Sweeping in scope, irenic in tone, it covers the breadth of mission history and theology in readable fashion. The foundation the authors lay to build their theology of mission – that of prophetic dialogue – is astonishing in its depth and clarity.

Bevans and Schroeder build their theological case by examining six theological constants, "doctrinal themes to which the church must be faithful at every boundary crossing and in every context" (p.2). These themes are Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, salvation, anthropology and culture. To make their case, they trace these six constants through the history of the church using a typology of three streams of theological development set out by Justo Gonzalez in *Christian Thought Revisited.* The steams of missional theology they use to follow through the history of the church are 1) conservatives, called Type A and characterized by the word "Law"; 2) liberals, called Type B and characterized by the word "Truth"; and 3) radicals/liberationists, called Type C and characterized by the word "History." As a foundation for their mission theology, the six "constants" are traced through the lens of typologies throughout six historical periods of the church. This analysis sets the stage for the discussion in the final section, in which they analyze each stream in contemporary mission theology and propose a synthetic model of prophetic dialogue built largely on Gonzalez' second and third theological streams.

Several elements of this work are outstanding. First is the depth of the presentation of Roman Catholic, Orthodox, conciliar and evangelical

Protestant perspectives – a feature unique to this text. Bevan and Schroeder make entire realms of theology accessible to the reader in lucid and interesting prose. Second, while they note that the breadth of their discussion prohibits anything but caricatures of each stream, I felt that in many ways they captured all three streams in admirable fashion. Persons representing each stream will find elements that they will quibble over, but by-and-large most would agree that Bevans and Schroeder have fairly presented the perspectives. Third is the irenic tone of the book. While the authors are clear from the outset which stream they favor (Stream C), they are careful to frame what they consider the strengths of each stream in their discussion without building straw figures in the process. While I found the stream I represent (Stream A) comprised of several historical figures and perspectives that I found strange, the broad brushstrokes still painted a reasonably accurate picture. Third, and finally, they purposefully work hard to incorporate insights and discussion from the elements of the church that are frequently overlooked, including not just African, Asian, and Latin American perspectives, but also perspectives from the early church that were ultimately judged to be heretical (e.g. Nestorians). This is perhaps one of the most important contributions of the for readers in Africa.

One question that must be asked of the text is a distinctly post-modern one. Do we really learn more about 20 centuries of mission theology or more about the 20th century spin that Bevans and Schroeder (and Gonzalez) put on it through the paradigm they use? For example, do we really see a stream of radical/liberation theology from Antioch through Irenaeus to the present day? Or are the authors just re-reading theology in a way that makes sense to contemporary ideologies?

All in all, however, Bevans and Schroeder are to be congratulated for developing a text that will almost certainly take its place beside David Bosch's *Transforming Mission* as one of the most significant texts on contemporary missiology. This book deserves a place on every theological library shelf, and use as a textbook for schools that offer courses in mission theology.

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