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NGSLEY LARBI - THEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF POVERTY
ELIEF MODELS IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT (2 COPIES)

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Theological Examination of Poverty Relief Models In the African Context

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A Thesis submitted to the Department
of Biblical and Theological Studies
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the biblical models for relieving poverty, and to examine how the Church in Africa can apply the principles behind these models.

The study covers both the OT and NT data. The biblical evidence has yielded the conclusion that poverty came as a result of the Fall and that it is contrary to God's desire for humanity.

We observed that since all human beings bear the *imago Dei,* He is concerned for both the poor and the rich, for it is His avowed intention that all men should live happily and enjoy the fruits of the earth. It is for this reason that He is specially predisposed in favour of the oppressed poor. This is why He has called His people to take up their defense. This call for a special concern for the poor is evident in the poverty relief models set forth in the biblical tradition. We further observed that the relief institutions were to be operational within the context of a community. The care of the poor is therefore a communal responsibility.

A special interest of the study is to investigate the relationship between poverty and oppression. The evidence from the biblical data and the African context have led us to reach the conclusion that the materials presented in this study corroborates the thesis that, though there are intervening variables which are operative in the maintenance of poverty, oppression is the dominant cause.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to two groups of people:

1. All peasant farmers who have suffered injustice, notwithstanding, managed to give a basic education to their children out of their meager resources. My mother, Obaa pa Adwoah Karle, and my father, Opayin Kofi Mensah, of Suhum-Adimadim, in the Eastern Region of Ghana, represent this group.
2. All those, who like Barnabas of the NT, always see some potential in all those they come in contact with. They go out of their way to help outcasts and orphans to have a better future. Drs. T. Adeyemo and W. Dyrness, and Dr and Mrs Heasty represent this group.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AEAM	Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar
BDB	Brown, Driver, and Briggs' Hebrew English Lexicon of the OT
CCPD	Commission for the Churches' Participation in Development
DNTT	The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology
EDOT	Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament
ERT	Evangelical Review of Theology
Gk	Greek
GNP	Gross National Product
IBMR	International Bulletin of Missionary Research
IDB	Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible
IRM	International Review of Mission
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
IVP	Inter Varsity Press
LCWE	Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization
LICC	The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RGC	Redeemed Gospel Church
SIAS	Scandinavian Institute of African Studies
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
TWOT	Theological Workbook of the Old Testament
WCC	World Council of Churches
WEF	World Evangelical Fellowship

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The issue of poverty and wealth is directly related to the economic system which exists in every country. It is also directly related to the global economic system since interdependence has become the new world order that touches every part of human life.

God originally made sufficient resources in the world for every human being to have a reasonable share (Gen.1: 24-31; 9: 3). As a result of the original fall this balance is endangered (Gen. 3: 17-18). There is disequilibrium in the sharing of the earth's resources. Poverty grew out of the fall and greedy patterns of use and mal-distribution of these resources. The strong and the powerful dominate the scene. We are in a situation where some people have more than they really need, while others either have too little or nothing at all. On this Ng'weno writes:

> The earth's ecological system is the only bank from which nations borrow in order to finance their individual economic developments. The nations of the world are its stockholders. Its assets are the earth's natural resources - the air, the water, the flora, and fauna, the minerals. For 200 years a few nations have borrowed heavily from this common bank to fuel their development; they have become the rich nations. Their borrowing continues unabated today. The people who inhabit these few countries use more than half of the world's consumable oxygen every year. They also use a disproportionate quantity of natural resources. And they do all these without a thought about repaying what they have borrowed. The only thing they put back into the common ecological bank is junk: carbon dioxide and other emissions from industrial combustion, as well as toxic waste.[1]

[1]Hilary Ng'weno, "A Run on the Earth's Bank," Newsweek, 16 May 1988, 4.

This situation is true not just at the international level. It is also found within individual countries. The weak and the powerless have always become victims of oppression and exploitation. Because of this situation, the oppressed poor always cry out for justice, mercy and help. But more often than not, their cry is not heard by their oppressors. God, being the God of justice and justification, has specially identified himself with the poor because he sees their mistreatment as an affront to his just nature. The apostle James, the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, writing in the first century, declares:

> Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.[2]

In a context where we have the "hungry poor," the "naked poor," the "sick poor," and the "destitute poor" because of injustice (past and present evil socio-economic systems), what is the message of God's authoritative Word to the Church, the governmental agencies, and the individuals within and without the African continent? What can they do to alleviate the untold human sufferings which abound on the continent of Africa today?

---

[2]James 5:1-6 NIV. Maynard-Reid, in his book Poverty and Wealth in James (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987) concludes that the Church Community from which James wrote did not include the rich; the rich were outside oppressors. He also states that James argues for God's option for the poor, and this should encourage the Church to take up this option and champion the cause of the poor.

MAJOR HYPOTHESIS

God's special concern for the poor is evident in the poverty relief models set forth in Scripture. These models were operational within the context of a community. A contextualized application of some of these models by the Church is crucial if she is to fulfill her role as the Messianic Community.

MINOR HYPOTHESIS

The Church of Jesus Christ, governmental agencies, and the world community are required by the God of creation and the God of redemption to practice justice, which in turn will help to alleviate the suffering of the poor. This should be done in anticipation of the eschatological rule of Yahweh where His domain and dominion will be characterized by justice.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the poverty relief models found in Scripture from sociological, theological and exegetical perspectives, and to examine how the Church in Africa can apply some of these models in order to justify her role as God's redemptive and perfecting community.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

The poverty situation in Africa has assumed alarming proportions, to the extent that it has attracted both local and worldwide publicity. The situation is getting worse and worse. Writing in the Daily Nation of February 1988, Mr. Morara sighs:

> Africa is one of the richest continents on earth. It has the vastest mineral wealth, abundant rivers with the highest hydro-electric power generation potential, rich forest and the greatest amount of solar power, not

> to mention its fertile soils on which almost any crop can do well. Yet Africans are the very poor and have been getting even poorer for the last 25 years. Sad to say, but most African countries have become poorer since independence than they were under the colonial yoke. It is as if we got political independence in order to enjoy poverty.[3]

Writing on the same issue, the 1988 World Bank Report has this to say:

> In contrast to other developing regions, Sub-Saharan Africa has shown consistently weak economic performance over an entire generation. To make matters worse, during the 1980s per capita income has fallen to about three-quarters of the levels reached by the end of the 1970s .... Africa's poor economic performance has now begun to erode the region's productive base and human resources. By the mid-1980s gross investment levels in many countries were too low to maintain the capital stock, and health care and education are now deteriorating.[4]

In some countries in Africa poverty has reduced human beings to anything but humans created in the image of God. People are sorted out as to who should or should not be entitled to the few available rations donated by a foreign agency. Fathers or relief workers are forced to deny food to those children or relatives whose condition seems helpless so that those who have a better chance may survive. Multitudes of children have suffered from permanent brain damage caused by protein deficiency. This is just one of the devastating effects of Africa's poverty.

If every human being bears the imago Dei (God's image), and if God wants the highest good for everyone, then men of good will cannot help but contribute towards the alleviation of human suffering. If the Church has been established by Christ to fulfil her role as a redemptive and perfecting Community on

---

[3]Anderea Morara , "Politics and the Game of Money," Daily Nation (Nairobi), 19th February 1988, 14.

[4]IBRD/World Bank, World Development Report 1988 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 28.

fulfil her role as a redemptive and perfecting Community on earth, then she is under obligation to identify herself with her founder by championing the cause of the poor. If life is the greatest gift of all then what should be our immediate response to a situation

> where people lie dying, not from war or disease but simply of hunger. They lie by the thousands in the open: in freezing rains, in searing sun. If they had strength to look for shelter, they would find none. If they had the strength to look for food they would find none.[5]

The condition described above is as real today as it was in 1984. It is the urgent concern of well-meaning African leaders and individuals. During the 24th Summit Conference of African Heads of State and Government held in May 1988, Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings, the Head of State of Ghana, made the following statement in his address:

> Today's reality for the African people is severe, very severe indeed. Millions of our children will be dead before we turn our speeches into concrete realities for them! Millions of our people on this continent are caught between the relentless cycles of natural disasters on one hand and war and other social dislocations on the other. For the vast majority of us on this rich continent, poverty and despair are our lot with no end in sight as food production declines relative to population growth, as many able-bodied persons, especially [the] youth are unable to find a vocation for their creative energies and the handicapped and the disabled languish in total obscurity. The word "crisis" is no longer able to bear the weight of our countries and our Continent's tragic situations. All that seems to sustain this Continent is the age-old strength of the human spirit with which our people for centuries faced the devastations of colonialism and slavery and the plunder of our resources.[6]

---

[5]Brian Tetly, The Story of Mohamed Amin, with a forward by Bob Geldof (London: Moonstone Books, 1988), 11.
This is a real situation that happened in a refugee camp in Korem, Northern Ethiopia in 1984.

[6]Jerry John Rawlings, Chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council of Ghana , a speech delivered at the 24th Summit Conference of African Heads of State and

Barely four months after this address was given, Hamza Hendawi of Reuter in al-Muglad reports on the devastating and humiliating condition in southern Sudan:

> In a tent for the dying, Majok Akec, a blind orphan in his early teens, crouches on the ground, resting his head on his knees. Suffering from severe malnutrition aggravated by dysentery, he can barely lift an arm to shoo away flies covering most of his face. He is thin beyond belief and has little hair left. Sitting motionless next to him are fellow Dinka tribesmen .... These are among hundreds of thousands who fled a devastating combination of civil war, famine and floods in the south of Sudan. Relief workers say that refugees who sense they have little chance of surviving and no relatives to care for them move of their own free will to the tent at the far end of the camp.... Children incessantly crying and coughing move stiffly on spindly legs, some supported by older brothers and sisters. Their nakedness exposes creased skin and protruding ribcages. There are flies everywhere. Old men intermittently cough and spit. Women, some cuddling infants, are clad in rags and their breasts hang flat and dry. Observing the reporters, they point to their stomachs or to the dying children and make gesture of hunger.[7]

This rather lengthy quotation clearly depicts part of the real situation on the continent today. Here we see the effects of war and poverty and drought with its debilitating, dehumanizing consequences. How long can the human spirit endure this? Is God's authoritative Word relevant in a situation like this? Has it any message to the world community as to the pooling of resources together to attack this monstrous enemy called poverty? What are the implications of the Christ event in situations like this? His presence on earth brought good news to the poor, freedom to those who were in prison, the recovery of

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Government which followed immediately after the celebrations marking the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, 25th May, 1988. Address published by the Embassy of the Republic of Ghana, Addis Ababa.

[7]Hamza Hendawi, "Sudan's Famine Victims Find Perilous Sanctuary," The Guardian, 139, (18 September 1988): 1f.

sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed. If the biblical message is relevant for all people at all times, then it is relevant for the African context today.

Today in Africa, the Church is growing at an unprecedented rate, unprecedented even in African Church history. The Church, however, like a sleeping giant, has not always made the Bible relevant to the needs of society or even to the needs of the believers within the Church. Ecclesiastical committees have spent time debating why they should or should not be involved in social service/ action, rather than actually helping. In most of the cases, these committees are composed of the "rich and the powerful" whose world is entirely different from the world of the poor.

If the world's resources belong to the God of all creation, and He wants every one to have a reasonable share (Pss. 24: 1; 8: 4-8), then what do the various governments of African nations have to do to ensure fair distribution and proper utilization of the nation's resources?

Every now and then one learns of some greedy and callous Africans (politicians or private individuals) who have diverted a substantial part of a particular nation's resources into private accounts in foreign countries.[8] Some have also undertaken some extravagant, irrelevant projects such as the lavish 20 million British pounds coronation staged by Bokassa in 1978 at the expense of the majority of his people. Such misappropriation of

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[8]The cases of Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Dr. O. Idris and Mr. U. Biko of Nigeria are well illustrated in both international and local press. See for example, Baffour Ankomah, "The Way We Are," New African 250 (July 1988): 41; David Lamb, The Africans (New York : Vintage Books, 1984).

public funds has greatly aggravated the poverty situation in Africa.

The issue of poverty and wealth on the continent has assumed a moral dimension. It is not a hysterical flight of fancy. It cannot be argued away, for it is real: you can see, feel, touch, taste, and smell it. It cannot disappear by the use of the magic wand. It calls for protest and solidarity; hard work, determination and prayer. With concerted effort, it can be subdued.

To conclude this section, a quotation from a recent appeal made by the Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) will be appropriate:

> while it is true that man cannot live by bread alone, it is equally true that without bread man cannot live at all.... [G]enuine peace cannot exist as long as millions of men, women and children live under the shadow of starvation, as long as the affluent, whether nations or individuals, ignore the suffering of their less fortunate fellows, as long as those who can act to relieve this suffering fail to do so. If we must arm for war, let it be the war against hunger and poverty.[9]

DEFINITIONS

Defining the Poor

The models used to define the poor include the economic, cultural, and spiritual.

1 Economic Model

The economic model has two differentials, namely, absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute poverty implies a

[9]This is contained in an appeal by the Director- General of the FAO of the UN to the religious leaders throughout the world to support the celebration of the 8th World Food Day 1988 on 16th October.

complete economic destitution that imposes real physical suffering. This condition is marked by a complete or partial absence of the basic means of human survival--food, clothing and shelter.

This state is variously manifested in socio-economic aspects which may include:

> Lack of financial resources
> Lack of means of creating wealth, e.g. land
> Lack of power or voice in how they are governed
> Absence of opportunities for development including lack of or poor provision for education
> Lack of health facilities
> Lack of civil rights including the right of choice.[10]

All the above may contribute to create a situation of "feelings of powerlessness, insignificance, frustration, despair and fearfulness of the future"[11]

In short, the poor in the socio-economic sense, refers to the external, economic and social circumstances within which people live; "the downtrodden, the humiliated, oppressed, the man pleading and crying out for justice; the weak or helpless; the destitute; the needy, dependent person; and the one forcibly subjected to the powerful oppressor"[12]

All aspects of absolute poverty work together in denying the victims a fully or sometimes even minimally, human existence.[13]

Relative poverty on the other hand depends on social expectations as well as our own wishes. This may differ from one

[10]Tokunboh Adeyemo, G. Okoronkwo and E. Ayee, eds., Rich-Poor Society (Nairobi: AEAM, 1988), 20.

[11]Thailand Report, Christian Witness to the Urban Poor (Wheaton, Ill.: LCWE, 1980), 5f.

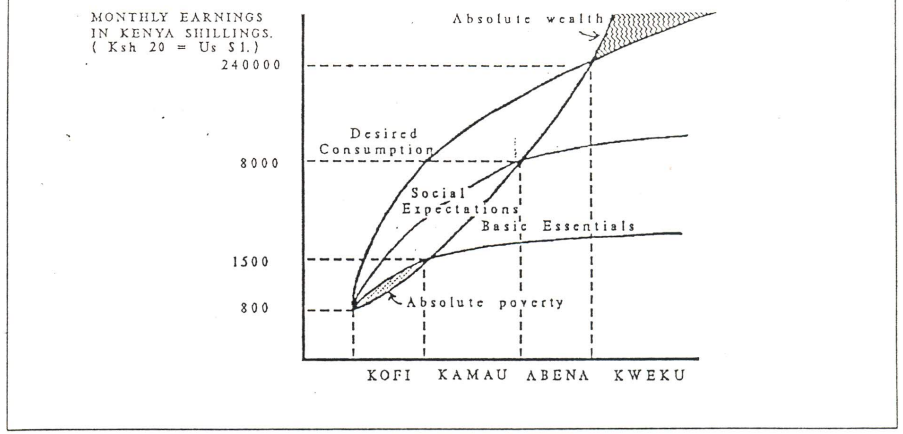
[12]Ibid., 8f.

[13] Paul Harrison, Inside the Third World (Middelsex, England: Penguin, 1978), 406.

society to another, and from one social group to another, and from individual to individual. This kind of so-called poverty is due to the psychological and emotional strain that comes from social inequality as a result of the unbiblical desire to be like others (2 Cor. 10:12 ff).

The two differentials of the economic model are illustrated below.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GRAPH.



Kofi is a peasant farmer from a rural subsistence economy with low social expectations. He migrated into the city in search of a better life where he now earns Ksh.800. He soon realized that he could not make ends meet for the urban cost of living is higher than the cost of living in his rural location. His rent alone took Ksh.200. He belongs to all those whose monthly income falls between 800 and 1500 shillings--those who are absolutely poor.

Kamau has just completed a course in computer programming and systems design. He got a good job in the city. His income is above what is needed for basic essentials. He moved into a two bedroom apartment in a modest location, but the friends he met here ridiculed him for not having a T.V. set or a car and other things they consider to be essential for a "modern city man." He therefore exhausts himself in doing a part-time job in order to meet the social expectations.

Abena earns above Ksh.8000 a month. She is a young administrative secretary to the chief executive of an international company. Her income has managed to catch up with her social expectations. But Abena realizes that there are still a number of things she would want to have. She wants a new Nissan Sunny which sells at Ksh.450.000. She no longer wants to stay with her uncle. So she wants to buy a four bedroom apartment in a beautiful location. This would cost her some Ksh.500,000. Here, if Abena is not careful, she will soon run into debt.

Kweku is a top executive. His income exceeds all his needs--basic essentials, social expectations and desire consumption. He is able to satisfy all the whims and caprices of his family and still have enough to invest in business. He has shares and debentures in different companies. The dividends from his investments increase his investments. We may say here that Kweku is rich in absolute terms.

2. The Cultural Model

Oscar Lewis[14] has identified this as those who suffer from what he calls the "culture of poverty." This refers to those whose poverty is transmitted from generation to generation in spite of economic change. This refers to a situation where poverty has become hereditary.

> It appears to emerge in the context of a social organization which produces many deprived and marginal persons with no sense of identity. It tends to produce psychological features such as feelings of fatalism, helplessness, dependence and inferiority, strong present time orientation with a poor capacity for delay of gratification of needs.[15]

3. Spiritual Model

Here we see the anawim piety concept of OT spirituality. It refers to the inner attitude of dependence on and submission to Yahweh because of social disorientation.

> These persons who seek refuge in Yahweh are being persecuted and ridiculed. They are oppressed and abused. Injustice is done to them. They wrestle with death, with the accusation of sin, and with evil powers. In all this they rely wholly on God and wait for his judgment, for his aid, and for improvement in their lot. The `poor' are those who wait, who have nothing in themselves, and hope to receive everything from God.[16]

4. The Synthetic Model

This is the model of definition I would propose in this paper. This model accepts some of the characteristics of all the

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[14]Oscar Lewis, Life in a Mexican Village (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 1951). Quoted by G. C. Lindegger, "Some Psychological Considerations of Poverty," in Poverty and the Word of God, ed. K. Nurberger (Durban, S.A.: Lutheran Publishing House, 1978), 42.

[15]G.C. Lindegger, "Some Psychological Considerations of Poverty," in Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God, 42.

[16]Hans-Joachim Kraus, Theology of the Psalms (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1986), 152.

three models defined above. It differs from the cultural model in that it sees a direct, though not exclusive, link with economic pauperization. It sees the "culture of silence" as directly related to their inherited economic disposition. It assumes that while economic change alone is not sufficient to reverse the socio-economic condition of these people, it is essential. This model does not see poverty as an immutable cultural phenomenon, although it recognizes social and psychological variables in the maintenance of poverty.[17] It strongly assumes the transforming power of the Gospel of Christ.

The synthetic model also realizes the inadequacy of an exclusively economic approach to the solution of the phenomenon of poverty, such as the suggestion that an equal availability and access to economic resources would necessarily be sufficient to alleviate poverty. It also refutes the fallacy inherent in the cultural model--the suggestion that no amount of economic change would yield any change in those caught up within the culture of poverty. The model appreciates the spiritual contentment facet of the spiritual model as a necessity for a healthy life. However, it sees the attitude of resignation from the world and a life style that has no earthly relevance which is normally associated with the spiritual model, as unbiblical.

Wealth

Wealth is used in this study to mean the material and human resources of individuals and nations. Absolute wealth may be defined as the excess beyond social expectation, and desired consumption.

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[17]Lindegger, "Psychological Considerations of Poverty," in Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God, 43.

The Peasant Farmer

This refers to any person who spends most of his/her time in agricultural pursuits on land for which he/she is responsible. He/she lives on a small plot of land which produces food crops at subsistence level. The peasant farmer and his family consume everything that is produced, except possibly a small amount that is sold to secure other basic necessities. He/she lives at the level of survival and so finds it necessary at times to work for someone else to supplement the family income.[18]

Viable Life

Viable life is life free of the "disabling factors that cripple man's existence and turns life into nightmare rather than joyful celebration." It is life rooted in spiritual and material deliverance from all the factors that negate life of celebration of reconciliation, of worship and of affirmation of faith in the Supreme Being. This is the African "Shalom."[19]

Culture

Culture is used to include the economic, government, and other social systems set up to ensure the welfare of a community. It embraces the language and thought patterns, how people relate towards themselves the world community, the Supreme Being and other unseen entities (their religion).

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[18]Adapted from Edgar G. Nesman, Peasant Mobilization and Rural Development (Rochester, Vermont: Schenkman Books, 1981), 1f.

[19]Adapted from C.C. Okorocha, "Give us Our Daily Bread," in the Living God, eds. D.M. Gitari and G.P. Benson (Nairobi: Uzima, 1986), 196ff.

Worldview

A worldview is "the central systematization of conceptions of reality to which the members of the culture assent (largely unconsciously) and from which stems their value system. The worldview lies at the very heart of cultures, touching, interacting with, and strongly influencing every other aspect of the culture."[20]

Dr. Kraft has delineated five functions of culture.[21] For the purpose of our study, we will list only four.

1. It explains how and why things got to be the way they are and how and why they continue.

2. It serves an evaluational--a judging and validating--function. It gives them "the reason" for action.

3. It provides psychological reinforcement for that group. That is, it inspires, motivates, stimulates people in life's situation.

4. It serves as an integrating function. It puts together, in a coherent whole, their perceptions of reality into an overall design.

Church

The Church is used to denote the social community of God's people which was brought into existence by the Christ event. Christ's disciples were to be the salt and light of the world. Unless otherwise stated, "the Church" shall refer to the Church in Africa.

Social Responsibility

Social responsibility is used to refer to the Church's involvement in society. This has two main facets, conveniently classified as "social service" and "social action." The Grand

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[20]Charles H. Kraft, Christianity and Culture (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1979), 53.

[21]Ibid., 54ff.

Rapids Report has delineated social service from social action in the following ways:[22]

Social Service	Social Action
Relieving human need	Removing the causes of human need
Philanthropic activity	Political and economic activity
Seeking to minister to individuals and families	Seeking to transform the structures of society
Works of mercy	The quest for justice

LIMITATIONS, DELINEATIONS

The study attempts to survey the major biblical teachings on poverty and then systematize the models that are found in this biblical tradition. The material dealt with covers both the OT and NT.

Chapter one covers introductory matters, namely, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, delineations and a review of related literature.

Chapter two is a detailed discussion of the vocabulary of poverty. Chapters three and four discuss the OT/NT theology of Poverty. Chapter five examines the major poverty relief models in the Bible and how they can be applied in our modern day context. The sixth chapter makes a critical study of the African condition, and how poverty in Africa is related to the biblical concept of oppression. Some ways the African Church can model herself to truly become the biblical Church of the poor are discussed in chapter seven. Our discussion attempts to discover

[22]Grand Rapids Report. Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and World Evangelical Fellowship, 1982), 43f.

the ways and means the Church can contextualize some of the biblical models discussed in chapter five. Two contemporary relief models are examined here. The epilogue examines the future.

The Overall Approach

The approach adopted in this study is both inductive and deductive--a combination of library work with field work. The disciplines of biblical and theological studies are fully employed. The exegetical method employed in this study is the grammatico-historical contextual approach. This is to ensure that the historical, cultural and social settings of the biblical traditions, together with literary and linguistic means by which the traditions were recorded, are fully considered.

The major limiting factors in this project are time and money. I would have liked to visit some other places within and outside the country and conduct a more in-depth survey on the subject, but working within the constraints of time and finance, this was not possible.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following are my assumptions: God originally made sufficient resources for everyone to have a reasonable share. The Fall of man has jeopardized this equilibrium inherent in the original creation. We now live in a greed- stricken world where wealth is unjustly distributed. The forces that are arrayed against an equitable distribution are formidable. Poverty is a natural consequence of greedy patterns of use and mal-distribution of natural resources. The God of creation, who is both the God of justice and the God who justifies, sees poverty

as a scandalous condition inimical to human dignity and diametrically opposed to His will for humankind.

All human beings possess God's image. Though this imago Dei was marred by the Fall, it was not obliterated. He therefore cares for everyone - the rich and the poor. It is His intention that all men should live happily and enjoy the fruits of the earth. It is for this reason that He has come to champion the cause of the poor wherever they have been exploited

The Church in Africa has not seriously considered the need for her involvement in social service or action.

Our Lord Jesus Christ wants the Church to present a holistic ministry (a ministry that addresses the whole man - his physical needs as well as his spiritual needs; his eternal needs as well as his transient needs).

The majority of the rich African Christians have yet to learn how to "throw a party for the poor." It is far easier for the well-to-do to invite another well-to-do brother to enjoy his hospitality.

There are sufficient material resources in the world for everyone and with their proper distribution world poverty would be reduced and everyone would have a place to sleep, food to eat and raiment to put on, plus adequate medical care.

With the combined efforts of governmental agencies, the Church, and individuals, the suffering of the poor in Africa could be eliminated or reduced considerably.

African resources have not been well managed, and when both natural and human resources are well tapped and managed, with the help of the international communities, African poverty will be reduced and there will be enough for everyone.

The operations of the international economic systems, the multinational corporations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have not always favoured development in Africa.

Lastly, I assume that the monstrous colonial experience of Africa and her subsequent partitioning into fragments were exploitative and detrimental to her progress and development.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As can be observed from the annotated bibliography in the appendix, numerous works on the subject have been produced from three main perspectives--exegetical, theological, and sociological. Unfortunately, one searches in vain to find works produced by Africans on this subject. In the course of my research, I reliably learnt that Mr. John Pobee, a Ghanaian theologian now working with the World Council of Churches (WCC), in Geneva, has recently written a book along this line. I did not find any copy in the major libraries I checked. Arrangements to secure a copy from the publishers did not materialize. I did not therefore interact with his findings in my study.

Although one finds multiple volumes of works produced on poverty and wealth, the evidence is clear that a serious exegetical study, has not featured prominently in these volumes. Coupled with this is the realization that the few works written from exegetical perspectives are not always wholly faithful to the biblical text. Having said that, I would like to give credit to Thomas Hanks, Thomas Hoyt, Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid, Walter E. Pilgrim, and Jose A. Pallares. These men, whose works I have listed below, have made tremendous linguistic, exegetical, and

theological contributions to the subject. The Rev. Jim Punton's study of the Hebrew words translated "poor," found in the appendix of the Thailand Report - Christian Witness to the Urban Poor, also falls within this category.

We will now make a quick survey of selected works, which, in our opinion, have made some major linguistic exegetical, theological and sociological contributions to the subject. We will group the works into three main categories--exegetical, theological, and sociological.

Exegetical

Edmonds, Ennis B. "The NT Perspective on Material Possessions." M.A. Thesis, Western Evangelical Seminary, 1983.

This thesis investigates the NT perspective on material possessions. A survey of OT/NT data on the subject is made. Exposition of certain passages from the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles and the General Epistles are considered. Edmonds' work, though not exhaustive, is an exegetical attempt towards the investigation of the biblical perspective on material possessions.

Hanks, Thomas D. God So Loved the Third World. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1983.

Hanks lays a solid lexical and exegetical foundation on the biblical view of oppression, with poverty as its inevitable consequence. He makes a serious, critical and constructive contribution to the search for an adequate biblical theology on the problem of poverty. With the combination of text and context, OT and NT, he strengthens and also corrects the various political and liberation theologies. He sees Luke 4:18f. as Jesus' repromulgation of the Jewish Jubilee.

Hoyt, Thomas, Jr. "The Poor in Luke-Acts." Ph.D. Dissertation., Duke University, 1974.

Makes an exegetical study of Luke-Acts. Pages 14-15 provide linguistic data.

Maynard-Reid, Pedrito U. Poverty and Wealth in James. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987.

The author interacts with scholarship on James up to 1985. His major contribution is his study on the sociological setting of James. He puts the writing of James at a date before AD 50. Examining the attitudes of the rich to the poor in the first century, he exegetes James 1:9-11; 2:1-13; 4:13-17; and 5:1-6. The author's basic thesis is that James comes to us from a

situation of oppression and that the Church community from which James wrote did not include the rich. The rich were oppressors from outside. This is a well researched and highly documented book. In his conclusion, he however, fails to draw together the four passages which he so excellently exegetes. He ends with an appeal to champion the cause of the oppressed.

Pallares, Jose A. A Poor Man Called Jesus. Translated by Robert Barr. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982.

This is an exegetical study of the Gospel of Mark from a radical Third World perspective. Pallares portrays Jesus as a poor man and the friend of the poor. Though this is an excellent approach to Mark with new insights for the reader, one wonders whether Pallares portrait of Jesus is fully accurate.

Pilgrim, Walter E. Good News to the Poor. Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981.

This is one of the best exegetical studies of poverty and wealth in Luke and Acts. Professor Pilgrim surveys the Old Testament and the intertestamental tradition on poverty and Jesus' attitude to the poor as the background for understanding poverty and wealth in Luke and Acts.

Samuel, Vinay and Chris Sugden, eds. Evangelism and the Poor: A Third World Study Guide. Oxford, England :Regnum Books, 1987.

This study contains exegetical, theological and sociological materials produced for a workshop of the Fifth Conference of the International Association for Mission Studies held in Bangalore in 1982. It contains the final report of the workshop and a summary of the discussion. Contributors include Orlando Costas, Samuel Escobar, Paul Hibert, Harvey Perkins, Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden.

The essays cover biblical studies on the poor and the oppressed, the religious experience of the poor and the strategies for Christian witness among the urban poor. The book provides extensive bibliography to the end of 1982. Though publication information on the bibliographical data is not always complete, yet the bibliography will afford the reader the opportunity to examine some of the best available works on the subject.

Sider, Ronald J, ed. Cry Justice: The Bible on Hunger and Poverty. Downers Grove,Ill.:Inter Varsity Press, 1980.

The book surveys the key biblical texts on justice. Sider provides brief commentaries on selected passages and supplies references of lists of commentaries by Protestant and Catholic scholars. These collections, with reflections and questions on each lesson, will help the interested reader to pursue the subject in depth.

Thailand Report: Christian Witness to the Urban Poor.

Wheaton, Ill.: LCWE, 1980.

This pamphlet contains an excellent summary of the urban poor globally. It looks at the Bible and the poor and the strategy for evangelizing the urban poor. It incorporates as an appendix Jim Punton's analysis of the 10 Hebrew words for the poor.

Theological

Boerma, Conrad. Rich Man, Poor Man and the Bible. Translated by J. Bowden. London: SCM, 1979.

This is one of the best theological discussions on poverty and wealth. Combining exegetical insights with theological prowess, the author combs the biblical data from Genesis to Revelation to prove his point that poverty is not due to laziness, lack of thrift, and rootlessness. He establishes from biblical evidence that poverty is due to structural evil. He challenges the unbiblical attitude toward poverty and the poor. He rebukes the contemporary church for its deviation from the NT pattern of protest and solidarity with the poor.

de Santa Ana, Julio, ed. Towards a Church of the Poor. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981.

This excellent book discusses the present challenges of the poor to the Church. It looks at the plight of the poor; the accumulation of wealth and the growth of poverty; religion and popular culture in relation to poverty; the struggle against poverty; the theological reflection of the poor; and makes a theological discussion of the evangelism, the Bible, and the liturgies of the Church of the poor.

Dorr, Donal. Spirituality and Justice. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984.

This book is an original and challenging contribution to theology. It examines the relationship between spirituality and justice. Dorr makes a maiden attempt to work out the relationship between social activists and traditional spirituality. He stresses the need for transformation of society by "kingdom values." Dorr discusses an alternative approach to politics, economics and theology and presents an alternative model of the church. He emphasizes the importance of prayer in the struggle for justice.

Hartman, Robert H, ed. Poverty and Economic Justice. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

The author makes a philosophical contribution to the discussion of the subject of poverty and wealth. Among the questions probed are: who are the poor and what is their identity in society? How do we define our relationship to the poor? How are economic factors related to the larger ethical and social issues? What are the possibilities of solving the problems of poverty? Also, he discusses the

three major theories of justice and concludes with a number of solutions that have been offered in recent years.

Mott, Stephen C. Biblical Ethics and Social Change. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Mott has made an excellent contribution to the subject. Part 1 looks at a biblical theology of social involvement and part 2 examines the various paths to justice. He emphasizes the importance of change in both individual character and social order. He picks up the classic ethical themes of evil, grace, love, and justice; he evaluates methods of social change, including evangelism, direct action, civil disobedience, armed revolution, and political reform. The theme that runs through the book is "the scriptural insistence on the priority of justice to the poor and the oppressed." Mott stresses the role of political authority in social change and concludes that Christians should utilize all available resources to redress injustice, meet basic needs, and provide for the essentials of society.

Stegemann, W. The Gospel and the Poor. Translated by Dietlinde Elliott. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981

Stegemann outlines the plight of the poor at the time of Jesus and how that influenced the reception of the Gospel. He describes the ways in which the Gospel was good news to the marginalised. He calls on those involved in theological reflection and Christian ministries to be sensitive to the scandal of world poverty.

Stott, John. "Poverty, Wealth and Simplicity" in Issues Facing Christians Today. Basingstoke, Hants, England: Marshalls, 1984.

Stott makes an excellent survey of the biblical material on poverty and wealth. He then discusses the issue of what is the appropriate lifestyle of the believer. His basic contribution to the study is his categorization of the poor into "indigent poor," the "oppressed poor," the "humble poor."

Sociological

Aruda, Marcos, ed. Transnational corporations: Technology and Human Development. Geneva: WCC, 1981.

This report looks at modern technology, transnational corporations, science and technology; the dominance of political and social organizations of multinationals.

Barrett, David B. "Silver and Gold Have I None: Church of the Poor or Church of the Rich?" International Bulletin of Missionary Research 7, no.4 (Oct. 1983): 146-151.

This excellent article deals with the global issue of resources and their utilization among Christians. It

provides statistics on Christian wealth. Barrett's thesis is that the global sharing of wealth, poverty and goods in the hands of Christians could solve most of the world's problems of finance, poverty, disease, unemployment, etc.

The Brandt Report. North South: A Programme for Survival. Cambridge, Mass.: The Mitt Press, 1980.

This is the Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt. The report tackles the urgent problems of inequality in the world and the failure of its economic system. The report is of the opinion that major international initiatives are needed if mankind is going to survive.

Brandt, Willy. World Armament and World Hunger. Translated by Anthea Bell. London, England: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1986.

Willy Brandt, the 1971 Nobel Prize for Peace winner, and Chairman of the highly influential "North-South" Commission (The Independent Commission on International Development Issues), assesses the international situation and warns that world hunger, poverty and massive arms race pose a moral challenge and a threat to world security. He reiterates the need to handle all global issues - population explosion, the world debt, conservation of natural resources - on a global basis for the mutual benefit of the rich and the poor.

The book is well written with up to date data on world armament and hunger. Written from experience, the author is authoritative in his presentation.

de Santa Ana, Julio, ed. Separation Without Hope: The Church and the Poor During the Industrial Revolution and Colonial Expansion. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1980.

The author utilizes the facilities of the disciplines of anthropology, history, sociology, and theology to discuss the relationship between the poor and the church during the industrial revolution and the period of western colonial expansion, and how attitudes developed during the era bear upon the problem of the Church's relationship to the poor and the oppressed today. The contributors to the book are high ranking authorities on the various subjects they discuss.

Donders, J.G., ed. War and Rumors of War. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publication, 1986.

This well researched booklet (no. 94 of the Spearhead Series) gives details of war and military spending in Africa and the inevitable result of poverty. It also gives some of the reasons for war in Africa and the role of the Christian community as the bringer of Shalom.

———. Bread Broken. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1984.

This is an action report on the food crisis in Africa, analyzing the food problem and the responses of the Government and the Church. This is an up-to-date source for the nature of the problem in organizational response.

Epszetein, Leon. Social Justice in the Ancient Near East and the People of the Bible. Translated by John Bowden. London, England: SCM, 1986.

Epsztein makes an exhaustive study of the legal and sociological background of texts dealing with social justice, beginning from Mesopotamia and Egypt and then in pre-exilic Israel. This is an excellent sociological contribution to biblical ethics. It roots the ethical teachings of the biblical witness in social reality. It contains excellent bibliographical data on ancient Israel and its environment, and an historical survey of the development of the scholarly study in this field up to and including recent Marxist interpretations.

Green, R.H. and Ann Seidman. Unity or Poverty?: The Economics of Pan Africanism. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968.

The authors bring into the book their expertise on economic matters and their experience as advisors on economic matters to some political figures on the continent. They maintain that fragmented economies set clear limits to the prospects of economic growth and that the dependence of its various political entities on foreign aid distorts and divides the wealth of the continent. They suggest practical steps by which the divided states can come together for cooperative planning so as to achieve the economies of scale which are extremely crucial for Africa's future.

Hay, Donald. Christian Critique of Capitalism. Bramcote, Notingham, England: Grove Booklets, 1977.

Hay argues that the attitude right through the Bible is that consumption ought to be determined according to needs and not according to ability to produce. An excellent contribute to the Christian debate over capitalism.

Hengel, Martin. Property and Riches in the Early Church. Translated by John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.

The author, a professor of NT Theology and Early Judaism at the University of Tubingen, looks at the views of property and riches as found in the teaching of Jesus, the early Church, and the Church fathers down to the fourth century. He compares Christian ideals with those in Judaism and ancient philosophy. He then examines what was taught against what was really practiced.

Mazrui, Ali A. The African Condition. London, England: Heinemann, 1980.

Addresses himself to the six fundamental paradoxes of the African predicament, one of them being that Africa is not the poorest of the continents of the world but it is technically the most retarded. The author, a political scientist par excellence, handles the material with expertise and erudition. His analysis of the African condition is one of the best if not the best.

Mullin, Reymond. The Wealth of Christians. Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1983.

This is an excellent book of background information on poverty and wealth. The author investigates the historical foundations of our attitudes to the acquisition, possession and use of wealth. Looks at Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions as well as Christian teachings on poverty and wealth. Mullin concludes that the wealth of Christians demonstrates the evils deriving from pre-reformation teachings on poverty and from post-reformation doctrines of stewardship. He looks at advertising, marketing, charity fundraising, the community trust, sumptuary laws, and Church/state relationship, pointing out the radical decisions Christians today should make in respect to poverty and wealth.

Ndegwa, Philip. Africa's Development Crisis and Related International Issues. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1985; and its sequel: The African Challenge :In Search of Appropriate Development Strategies. Heinemann, 1986.

These are excellent sources of data on Africa's economic issues. Mr. Ndegwa brings his varied experience as Deputy Director of the United Nations Environmental Programme (1975-1978), Economic Advisor to H.E. President Moi (1979) and Chairman and Chief Executive of the Kenya Commercial Bank (1980-1982), and one time Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya into the discussion of the African economic condition.

Nkrumah, Kwame. Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism. London, England: Panaf, 1971.

The first Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Ghana and the champion of Pan-Africanism analyzes the workings of the international monopoly on capitalism in Africa and shows how neo-colonialism, insidious and complex, is even more dangerous than the old colonialism. He warns that political freedom without economic freedom is meaningless. He points out that the solution for Africa lies in Socialism and an All African Union Government. There are chapters on (i) Africa's resources (ii) obstacles to economic progress (iii) imperialist finance.

Rodney, Walter. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. London, England: Boyle-L'ouverture Publications, 1983.

This well researched book critically examines the colonial past of the African continent. Points out how the West exploited the continent. This book gives the reader the opportunity to examine some of the colonial practices and their detrimental effects on the development programme of the Continent.

CHAPTER 2

THE VOCABULARY OF POVERTY

INTRODUCTION

My purpose here is to make a detailed study of the OT/NT vocabulary of poverty. This will help us to appreciate the diverse nature of the vocabulary describing the phenomena of poverty. In our study we will attempt to discover the variations and nuances occurring within the fundamental meaning of each word group in their respective contexts. Included in this section is the vocabulary for oppression in relation to poverty. This will enable us to understand how oppression is linked with poverty in the Bible. The Israelite society distinguished between several marginalized groups. These groups have been defined here also.

OT VOCABULARY

The vocabulary describing the poor and their condition is diverse in the OT. This is an indication of how the subject occupied the minds of the biblical authors. "There are many references in the OT to poverty as a social phenomenon. No ancient literature contains such a detailed description nor so considered a judgment."[1]

Though a variety of Hebrew terms are used to designate the poor person, it is difficult to delineate the distinctive nuances of each term.[2] They are often used in synonym-

[1]Albert Gelin, The Poor of Yahweh (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1964), 15.

[2]D. E. Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

ous parallelism with others. Ani for instance, is frequently used in synonymous parallelism with ebeyon and dal.

Major terms

1. `Ani (עָנִי) is used to designate the person who is oppressed and dependent; the one who is economically bankrupt;[3] he/she who is wrongly impoverished; the poor; the weak; the afflicted and the humbled;[4] the one who is bent over and laboring under weight, and is not in possession of his/her whole strength and vigour; the humiliated.[5]

`Ani, like its root `anah (עָנָה) and `anaw (עָנָו) depicts the condition of the poor, needy, oppressed and the afflicted. This word can also be translated as "meek." It occurs about 76 times in the Hebrew Bible (including the marginal readings).

`Ani is not contrasted with the rich, but with the violent one, the oppressor who puts the `ani in his lowly position and keeps him there.[6]

`Anaw is closely associated with `ani. The `anaw is the one who, because of his social condition, puts his whole trust in Yahweh. He suffers contempt, persecution and oppression but places his trust in Yahweh's promise, and

[3]Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth in James (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987), 25.

[4]E. Bammel, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1968 ed.

[5]Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation (London, England: SCM, 1974), 291.

[6]Conrad Boerma, Rich Man, Poor Man (London, England: SCM, 1979), 7.

waits for the manifestation of his righteousness.[7] `Anaw tends to be less materialistic in its emphasis.

2. `Ebyon (אֶבְיוֹן) is used to refer to the needy, the poor, a beggar seeking alms; the very poor and the homeless[8]; the one who is in need and is therefore looking for something either from God or men. It differs from `ani in that the latter stresses some kind of disability or distress.[9] It occurs about 61 times in biblical Hebrew, mainly in the Psalms and the prophets.

3. Dal (דַּל) refers to the one who is socially weak, frail and helpless.[10] It may also be used to refer to physical weakness, material poverty; the wretched and insignificant[11] because of one's economic and political orientation.[12] The poorest Jewish peasants left in Palestine during the Babylonian captivity were referred to as the `dal ha'arets.[13] It may also refer to the physical disposition of sickliness.[14] It occurs about 47 times in biblical Hebrew.

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[7]J. M. Bonino, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975),112; cf. Pss.10:9; 18:27; 74:19; 40:17; 102.

[8]Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[9]EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v."poor."

[10]L. J. Coppes, "dal," in TWOT, 1970 ed.

[11]Bammel, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1986 ed.

[12]Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth in James, 25.

[13]Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed. Cf.2K.25:12; Jer.40:7; 5:15f.

[14]EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v."poor."

4. Rash (רָשׁ) is used in a purely socio-economic sense, especially in the wisdom literature.[15] It occurs about 23 times in biblical Hebrew, of which 15 appear in Proverbs.

5. Misken (מִסְכֵּן) appears only in Ecclesiastes and it refers to the dependent; the socially inferior. It is related to the Akkadian muskenu (beggar), a designation Arab beggars still respond to.[16]

The foregoing terms and their cognates combined with six other terms that occur less frequently, graphically portray the scandalous condition within which the poor are helplessly caught up. This condition has been beautifully analyzed by Jim Punton as:

* the oppressed, downtrodden, humiliated
* the powerless and diminished
* the yearning and insistent
* the defenseless and open to exploitation
* the needy and in want
* the subject and dependent
* the diminished and impoverished
* the destitute and bereft
* the dispossessed and evicted[17]

Punton's analysis gives us the variations and nuances which one finds within the fundatmental meaning of each word group. We will devote the next section to study these variations and nuances. In so doing, we will have to use the categories already mentioned in previous pages.

1. The poor as oppressed, downtrodden, humiliated.

The verb `ana (עָנָה) and its cognates are appropriate here. `Ana conveys the message of force, oppression,

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[15]Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Thailand Report, Christian Witness to the Urban Poor (Wheaton Ill.: LCWE, 1980), 22ff. (Hereafter this document will be referred to as "Thailand Report, Urban Poor").

violation of one's rights; "to force to submission; reduce to subservience;" "oppress, subjugate," do violence to one's person; to degrade; to force a woman to submit for sexual consummation; a situation of abject humiliation.[18]

`ani (עָנִי) is a passive adjective describing the person forced to submission; reduced to the status of non-person; "brought to his knees;" oppressed, subjugated, humiliated. "In a more developed usage it denotes a state of lowliness or distress and hence a man in a state of reduced competence and lesser worth." This term is used to refer to the one who is "wrongfully impoverished and dispossessed."[19]

`Anaw ( עָנָו ) is closely related to `ani above and it comes from the same verbal root. It appears about 21 times in biblical Hebrew. Sometimes used as a synonym of "ani. This may be attributed to the well-known waw-yodh (וי) interchange,[20] though this is disputed by some. "If `ani refers to the person forced to submit then `anaw refers to the same person as submissive to the one forcing." Both are "oppressed" and "humbled" rather than humble. They are derived from the same verbal root and are closely related. Though `anaw is less materialistic they are in some cases used interchangeably; they seem to be virtually the same.[21]

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[18]Ibid; cf. H.H. Esser, "poor," in DNTT, 1986 ed.; EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor."

[19]Bammel, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1986 ed.

[20]EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor."

[21]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 22f.; cf. C. U. Wolf. "poor," in IBD, 1962 ed; EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor;" Boerma, Rich Man, Poor Man, 7.

`Oni (עֹנִי) describes the experience of the one who is trampled underfoot, and in the circumstance is forced to submit to his adversary. It suggests humiliation and suffering from pain as a result of the oppressive condition.[22]

`Anawa (עֲנָוָה) refers to the disposition of the one who humbles himself; a situation of self-submission, self abasement; "where domination or exploitation of others have given way to grace."[23]

2. The Poor as Powerless and Diminished.

Dalal (דָּלַל). This verb and its cognates describe this condition. Dalal means "to become powerless, impotent, ineffectual, debilitated, weakened, be diminished;" resulting in one dropping, dangling, and hanging down.[24]

Dal (דַּל) refers to the "one who is low, poor, reduced, helpless, weak;"[25] the powerless, impotent weakened, weak, incapacitated, rendered helpless,[26] lacking social strength and material power.[27] Dal stresses powerlessness rather than economic need yet since power and wealth are most often combined, dal is contrasted with rich.[28] It was used of the lowest social class of

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[22]Coppes, "Oni," in TWOT, 1980 ed.

[23]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 23.

[24]Ibid.

[25]EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor".

[26]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24.

[27]Coppes, "dal," in TWOT, 1980 ed.

[28]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24; cf.Ex.30:15; Ruth 3:10; Prov. 10:15.

peasants as poor, needy, unimportant.[29] The biblical writers, in using dal, never meant self-caused poverty which is the result of laziness, negligence or extravagance.[30] "The dal lacks power, strength and self determination.[31]

Dalla stresses "the social lowliness and poverty of the people whom it describes."[32] This was used to designate the poorest sort of people left in Palestine during the captivity.[33]

3. **Poor as yearning and insistent.**

`Aba means "to gasp or pant forth;" to "show eagerness, longing, willingness;" "yearning for something or somebody;" to "have an intention or an inclination for something."[34]

`Abeyona connotes desire, longing and yearning.[35]

`Ebyon (referred to above), was originally used in reference to a beggar seeking alms; a helpless and shelterless person;[36] the one "yearning desperately for justice and right;"[37] the one who is oppressed by the

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[29]Esser,"poor," in DNTT, 1976 ed.

[30]F. J. Fabry " דל," in TDOT, 1978 ed.

[31]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24.

[32]EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor."

[33]2 Kings 24:14; Jer. 40; 52:15f.

[34]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Bammel, "ebyon," in TDOT, 1980 ed.

[37]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24.

powerful and the wicked;[38] used generally for the poor and homeless; without food or clothing; those starving and thirsting; the marginalized of society."[39] Later on it was used to refer to "spiritual childhood" (evangelical poverty), that is, the faithful remnant waiting and longing for Yahweh's justice.

4. **The Poor as defenseless and open to exploitation.**

Heleka (הֶלֶךְ) Kidner points out that this is probably an Egyptian cognate and it conveys the sense of one demoralized or overwhelmed; one who is already debilitated, without the means of defence; a beaten, defenseless, and helpless man; vulnerable and at the mercy of his adversary.[40]

5. **The Poor as needy and in want.**

The terms that describe this condition are haser and mashor. When the former is used adverbially it means "to be diminished, decreased, reduced, deficient, short, in want, without what is needed, lacking."[41] Haser used as an adjective refers primarily to "lack of wisdom and understanding.[42] It occurs frequently in the wisdom tradition (about 19 times). Thirteen of these occur in Proverbs.

Mashor means "want, shortage, lack, deficiency, neediness." Other related words are haser, hoser, and

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[38]Coppes, "`ebyon," in TWOT, 1980 ed; cf. Amos 4:1; Prov. 30:14.

[39]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 24; cf. Pss. 132: 15; Job 31:19.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]J. B. Scott, " haser," in TWOT, 1980 ed.

hesron. They all describe the needy, poverty-stricken.[43] This condition may be due to direct injustice or through laziness,[44] idleness[45] or self indulgence.[46] Such causes are not generally attributed in OT to those trapped in poverty.[47]

6. The Poor as subject and dependent.

The relevant terms here are sakan, soken, misken, miskenut, miskenot.

Sakan means to "pull down", to make someone assume a lower position inferior to oneself; "make subordinate and dependent."[48] From subjection it came to mean "be useful, of use, profitable to another."[49]

Soken, a participle, describes "one of inferior and dependent status; a subordinate, servant, attendant."[50] It may also refer to a servant of a high social standing.[51]

Misken seems to relate to the Akkadian muskenu.[52] It suggests dependence, subjection, "the socially inferior."[53]

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[43]Wolf."poor," in IBD, 1962 ed.

[44]Prov. 6:11; 24:34.

[45]Prov. 14:23.

[46]Prov. 21:17.

[47]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 25; cf. Prov. 6:11; 24:34; 14:23; 21:17.

[48]Ibid. cf. Isa. 40:20; Eccl. 10:9.

[49]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 25.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Isa. 22:15.

[52]Wolf, "poor," in IBD, 1962 ed.

[53]Bammel, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1968 ed.

The misken is never said to be responsible for his condition.[54]

Miskenut occurs only once in OT,[55] and suggests "subservience, subjection, dependence"[56]

Miskenot refers to "service places," particularly "storage cities"[57] or "cities built by forced labour."[58]

7. The poor as diminished and impoverished.

Muk describes this condition. It has an Aramaic equivalent meaning: "to sink or bend down;" and a Syriac equivalent meaning: "to be brought low." It refers to someone who was once affluent but who has now been "reduced to nothing." It suggests a different social category than those trapped in poverty. It is used only in Leviticus; it describes one "financially diminished, sunk into poverty" but able to turn the tides around if finances could be secured.[59]

8. The poor as destitute and bereft.

Rush. This root implies destitution.[60] It is used to convey the condition of the landless, dispossessed person; those deprived of their ancestral land et cetera.[61]

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[54]Ibid.

[55]Dt. 8:19.

[56]Esser, "poor," in TDNT, 1986 ed. cf. Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 25.

[57]Coppes, "miskenot," in TWOT, 1980 ed.

[58]Bammel, "miskenot," in TDNT, 1968 ed.

[59]Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 26.

[60]Coppes, "rush," in TWOT, 1980 ed; cf. EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor."

[61]Wolf, "poor," in IBD 1962 ed.; cf. Prov. 30:8.

Yarash conveys the situation of dispossession and eviction. It means "to take possession of" something from another, either by inheriting it or by depriving him of it, either legally, illegally or by conquest.[73] When people are the object, yarash sometimes means "to dispossess"; putting people in such a situation which makes it impossible for them to hold possession or inherit any sort of property.[74] Here also dispossession may be caused by laziness,[75] or self-indulgence.[76] "The yarash is not born into poverty but reduced to it."[77]

Other passages dealing with the poor and his condition which have not been discussed include consideration of the fatherless, widows, aliens, settlers, hired servants, male and female slaves. The biblical language on oppression, which marks the reference to the poor, has also not been discussed. The next section of this paper will be briefly devoted to these.

THE MARGINALIZED

1. The Fatherless.

This comes from the Hebrew word yatome. It could also be translated orphan, destitute, and innocent.[78]

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[73] EDOT, 1980 ed., s.v. "poor."

[74] Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 26.

[75] Prov. 20:4,17.

[76] Prov. 23:20-22.

[77] Thailand Report, Urban Poor, 26.

[78] Holwerda, "fatherless," in ISBE, 1987 ed.

One of the oppressed classes in the Israelite society was the fatherless since the husband or the father was the primary legal representative in biblical times. The widow and her children often had no one to defend them. As a result of this, in every instance in which the "fatherless" are mentioned, "the context is one of helplessness in the face of oppression."[79]

2. Widows.

The term comes from the Hebrew word ('almana). It means a woman whose husband has died and has no adult relative (a grown up son or the brother of the deceased) as her legal defender.[80] The term not only means the state of widowhood but also the state of abandonment and helplessness.[81]

3. The Sojourner; Alien; Stranger.

There are four terms in biblical Hebrew that are translated in English as the "sojourner," "alien," and "stranger." These are ger, tosab, nokri/ben nekar, and zar. Although each of these terms had its own nuances, there is a considerable overlapping in their meanings.[82]

The Israelite community recognized different categories of "outsiders" depending upon the degree of the association an alien had with the community. The ger, and possibly the tosab seem to refer to those aliens who made a

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[79] Ibid.

[80] H.A. Hofner, "גֵּר," in TDOT, 1977 ed.

[81] Holwerda, "widow," in ISBE, 1988 ed.

[82] Holwerda, "sojourner," in ISBE, 1988 ed.

complete identification with Israel including the acceptance of Yahwism.

Ger comes from the verb gur, meaning taking a residence in a foreign country other than one's own. Tosab comes from the verb yasab, meaning to sojourn in an alien country. Ger and yasab have related meanings (Gen. 23:4; Lev. 25:23, 35, 47; Num. 35:15).

Nokri/ben nekar and the zar on the other hand, were used to designate those who lived in Israel without close association with Yahwism. The former category was received whereas the reception of the latter was forbidden.[83] The nekar and nokri (nominal adjectives) are derived from the same root. Nekar and zur (zar) have some similarities and they are associated in many texts (Job. 19:15; Pss. 69:8; Prov. 2:16; 5:10, 20, 7:15; 20:16; 27:2, 13; Isa. 28:21; 61:5; Jer. 5:9; Lam. 5:2; Obad. 11).

4. Slave.

A slave is one who is in servitude either voluntarily or otherwise to an individual, the state, or the temple, which entails the reduction of legal or social status to the level of property. A slave in the ANE including Israel was neither free nor accorded the dignity of a free citizen. His status was one of dependence and subservience.[84]

We will now look at the vocabulary for oppression and its relatedness to poverty.

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[83]Ibid.

[84]Ibid.

BASIC ROOTS FOR OPPRESSION.

There are ten basic Hebrew roots for "oppression." These are briefly discussed here.

1. 'Ashaq

From this verb comes the most important and basic Hebrew words that portray the experience of the oppressed. It occurs about 37 times in biblical Hebrew. Belonging to 'ashaq, is the noun 'osheq (it occurs 15 times in the OT) and 'Oshqah, 'ashuqim ma'`ashaqoth (the words occur 7 times in the biblical Hebrew). There are 59 uses of this word family in biblical Hebrew. Thirty-one of these are used in the context of poverty. The "context in which 'ashaq appears frequently show some kind of injustice, force, or violence."[85]

2. Yanah

This word comes from an Arabic verb that means "to be weak." It occurs about 20 times in the OT. "Oppress," "be violent," "to reduce to slavery," "to enslave" are some of the lexical meanings. Out of these 20 occurrences, 15 are found in the context of poverty.[86]

3. Nagas

Nagas is common in Exodus and Isaiah. It is etymologically related to an Arabic word which translates as "rouse up" "roughly force;" to a south Arabic word "impose tribute"; and perhaps to a Ugaritic root meaning,

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[85]Thomas D.Hanks, God So Loved The Third World (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1983), 5; cf. BDB, 1986 ed., s.v. "ashaq."

[86]Hanks, God Loved, 8; BDB, 1986 ed., s.v. "yanah."

"overwhelm with work." It occurs 23 times in the OT. 20 times of which occur in the context of poverty.[87]

4. Lahats

Lahats literally means "press" or "squeeze" or "oppress". Lahats is used to describe the Jewish oppression in Egypt. Its noun and verb forms occur about 31 times in the OT. Many of these 31 uses are in the context of God freeing His people from oppression in answer to their cry.[88]

5. Ratsats

This literally means "crush, grind, pound" It is used 20 times, 9 times with poverty.[89]

6. Daka'

"Probably the strongest Hebrew word denoting oppression," daka' with its cognates (daka', dakah, dakah, daki, dak) occur 31 times, 10 times with the poor. Etymologically and literally daka' means "pulverise"; "crush."[90]

7. 'anah

"More than any other word, 'anah expresses something of the devastating psychological impact of oppression." The lexical meaning is "oppress," "humiliate", "make someone feel dependent." It can also mean "be humbled (in fasting)" and "rape." Etymologically it is related to an Arabic word that means "be under, submissive." Fourteen out of its 82 usages in biblical Hebrew occur in the context of poverty.

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[87]Hanks, God Loved, 9.

[88]Ibid., 10f.

[89]BDB, 1968 ed., s.v. "ratsats"; Hanks, God Loved," 11ff.

[90]BDB, 1986 ed., s.v. "daka'."

8. ^{II}tsar, ^{II}tsarar

Tsar, noun, occurs 70 times in the OT and etymologically it is related to words signifying "hostility." It comes from the verb tsarar "be hostile, be in conflict," "oppressor." It occurs 70 times, 6 with poverty.

9. ^{I}tsarar, ^{I}tsar, ^{I}tsarah

The verb ^{I}tsarar occurs 46 times in biblical Hebrew. "Etymologically it is related to nouns meaning 'rope' and 'bridle; to an Arabic verb meaning 'tie'[91] It has also been rendered by Holladay as `tie up', be narrow, cramped, hampered, impeded; be hard pressed, in distress, be oppressed, afflicted."[92]

^{I}tsarar is used 5 times in the context of poverty. The masculine noun 'tsar and the feminine 'tsarah, are all derived from the verb 'tsarar. They have related nuances.[93]

10. tsuq

The verb tsuq is etymologically traced to an Akkadian root meaning "narrow." It has been defined as "oppress", or "bring into straits." This verb has five related cognates: the nouns tsoq, "oppression;" tsuqah, "oppression; distress," mutsaq, "oppression, hardship," matsoq, "hardship," and metsuqah, "oppression." Tsuq and its cognates have the basic meaning of oppression, hardship, distress. They describe an experience during a siege by a foreign oppressor.[94]

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[91]Hanks, God Loved, 20f.

[92]Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon, 1971 ed., s.v. "tsarar."

[93]Hanks, God Loved, 20ff.

[94]Hanks, God Loved, 22f.

Apart from the foregoing basic terms for oppression in the OT, there are also ten additional Hebrew words [95] which are less frequent but have the basic meaning of oppression.

To conclude this section, it seems appropriate to provide a summary chart on the vocabulary for oppression.[96]

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[95]Hanks, God Loved, 26 ff.

[96]Hanks, God Loved, 40.

SUMMARY CHART

VOCABULARY FOR OPPRESSION

IN RELATION TO POVERTY IN THE OT

Basic Hebrew Roots	Total Occurrences, OT	Occurrences with Poverty in Context
1. `ashaq	59	31
2. yanah	20	15
3. nagas	23	20
4. lahats	31	17
5. ratsats	20	9
6. daka'	31	10
7. `anah*	82	14
8. IItsarar*	96	9
9. Itsarar*	132	10
10. tsuq and cognates	31	14
Less Frequent Hebrew roots (10)	30	15
Total: 20 Heb. Roots Lexically defined as "oppression;" "oppress," etc.	555	164

*Note: The broader meanings of these roots result in high occurrences with relative fewer links to poverty.

The language of poverty in the OT has a broad spectrum of meaning. It is the situation of oppression, suppression and repression. It is one of depression, dispossession, despoilment, destitution, deprivation, and disillusionment as a result of social digression (injustice) and the disobedience of God's people--their failure to honour their contractual obligation to God and man.

The language shows the condition of those who are oppressed and downtrodden (ani, anaw); subjected and dependent (misken); powerless, weak, and insignificant (dal); defenseless and exploited (heleka); yearning for justice and dignity (ebeyon); those who have experienced material and economic destitution, deprivation, and dispossession and therefore are in want (rash, mashor, yarash).

Oppression is a fundamental structural category as evidenced by the 20 Hebrew roots referred to above. Their frequency of occurrence, and the context within which they occur, provide abundant data for the conclusion that, in biblical theology, oppression is viewed as the dominant cause of poverty.

NT VOCABULARY

The two terms used to designate the poor in classical Greek are ptochos (πτωχος) and penes (πενης) Penes has the root meaning of "burden," or "trouble." From Xenophon (ca.430-354 B.C.) onwards it came to designate the person "who cannot live from his property" but has to work with his hands in order to live frugally. The penes, unlike the

ptochos, is not destitute. He is only a poor relative to the plousios (the wealthy).[97] Whereas penes denotes the one who has to struggle with his hands to earn his living, because he has no property, ptochos denotes a complete destitution which forces the victims to solicit the help of others by begging.[98] "Penes denotes the working poor who owns little or no property, and ptochos signifies the `beggar,' the one whose existence is totally dependent on others.[99] The penes is the respectable poor man. The ptochos is not. All he can do is to hold out his hand. The ptochos is "the marginal man" who is reduced to charity. "The penes is the poor man who has to struggle hard to keep his head above water."[100] The penetes includes the small farmers and artisans who depend upon their own labour.[101]

Although the Septuagint uses both ptochos and penes interchangeably to translate the various Hebrew terms (מִסְכֵּן, דַּל, אֶבְיוֹן, דַּךְ, עָנִי) for poor, the NT with two exceptions uses ptochos exclusively.[102]

Ptochos from Homer (8th-7th cents. B.C.) belongs to the root pte, meaning "crouched together," "be afraid," "duck in fear;" "timid." It suggests utter dependence on society for the basic necessities in order to live. Used as

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[97]Goenen, "πτωχος," in DNTT, 1986 ed.

[98]F. Hauck and E. Bammel, "πτωχος," in TDNT, 1968 ed.

[99]Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[100]Boerma, Rich Man, Poor man, 8.

[101]Wolfgang Stegemann, The Gospel and the Poor (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 14.

[102]See 2 Cor.9:9 (cf.Ps.112:9) and Lk. 21:2 where penichros (synonym of penes) is used.

an adjective, it means begging, dependent on the help of strangers, "poor as a beggar," "poor." As a noun, it means a beggar. It is the opposite of plousios (rich); [103] to "bow down timidly," "destitute," "to be destitute," "to lead the life of a beggar;" "destitution."[104] It means "poor," "miserable," "beggarly," "dependent on others for support." It is used in reference to one's unfavourable economic circumstances as well as one's spirituality; "the thought is also that since they are oppressed and disillusioned, they are in special need of God's help and may be expected to secure it shortly."[105]

Ptochos used metaphorically in secular Greek means "meager," "inadequate," "scanty," "unable," "conceding something." The important derivatives are: ptocheno, beg, live the life of a beggar, be destitute; ptocheia, activity of a beggar, begging, destitution, poverty.[106]

In the LXX ptochos is used to translate five Hebrew words: 'ani, dal, 'ebyon, ras, misken. Penes is also used to translate the first four terms. In so doing, the LXX translators obscured the definite difference that existed in Greek life between the one who makes his living by begging, and the one who has a limited means of support. The fact that these categories of poor people need different kinds of help is also obscured.

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[103]H.H. Esser, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1986 ed.

[104]Huck and Bammel, "πτωχός," in TDNT, 1968 ed.

[105]Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, "πτωχός," in Greek-English Lexicon of the NT, 2nd ed.

[106]H.H. Esser, "πτωχός," in DNTT, 1976 ed.

Though poverty has become an ambiguous term, its original meaning in the NT, in most cases, refers to the "external, economic, and social circumstances in which people live."[107] There are two instances in the NT however, where poor (ptochos) is used metaphorically. In Galatians 4:9, Paul uses ptocha for stoicheia (elemental spirits), and even in this case "it reveals links between the ancient reader and the actual situation of the poor,"[108] which is that of weakness, and dependence. It is used here to show the impoverished nature of the stoicheia. It is used by Matthew (5:3) in a metaphorical sense to suggest evangelical poverty--those whose utter hope and confidence is in God. This is not, however, unrelated to the socio-economic condition of their society.

Oftentimes, in the NT, ptochos is used in the context of social misfits. This is illustrated below:

* Luke 4:18 lists it in the context of prisoners, blind, oppressed.
* Luke 6:20-21 cf Matt.5:3ff. with those who hunger, thirst, and mourn.
* Matt. 11:4-5 lists it with the blind, lame, lepers, deaf, and the dead.
* Luke 14:13, 21 lists it with the maimed, lame, and blind.
* Luke 21:2-3 lists it with a widow.
* Luke 16:20-22 lists it with the one who is hungry and therefore desperately begging for food; the one who is at the mercy of the unmerciful rich man.
* James 2:3-6 lists it with the powerless, the destitute, the one discriminated against because of his unfortunate socio-economic condition.
* Rev. 3:17 lists it with the wretched, pitiful, blind and naked.

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[107]Stegemann, The Gospel and the Poor, 13.

[108]Ibid., 15.

We may conclude by saying that apart from Galatians 4:9, and Matthew 5:3, ptochos in the NT is used in the socio-economic sense. It refers to those who are sick, weak, naked, hungry, or destitute, and therefore desperately looking for help. It suggests discrimination, misery, and abandonment.

Let us consider the viewpoint of Malina, who thinks that "... poor would not be an economic designation."[109] It seems to us that Malina assumes too much when he lists various passages (Matt. 19:21, 26:9,11, Mk. 10:21; 14:5, 7; Lk. 18:22; John. 12:5-8; 13:29; Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 6:10; 8:9; 9:9; Gal. 2:10) and states that from these passages "we simply cannot get any idea of what the authors are referring to except by sticking our own ideas into their words."[110] This seems to border on agnosticism. Much as ptochos used in the company of other words which describe the condition of the poor helps us to have a clear understanding of the conditions of the ptochos, it is not the only means whereby we can come to the understanding of ptochos. Factors like the classical meaning, the subject being dealt with by the biblical writers, the socio-economic conditions of that time, and other extra-biblical data would all combine to help us to capture the NT writers' understanding of ptochos.

CONCLUSION

Our consideration of the biblical data and its social background will reveal that poverty is directly related to

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[109]Bruce J. Malina, The NT World (Atlanta, Ga.: John Knox Press, 1981), 85.

[110]Ibid., 84.

the structures of society. Both testaments see the rich and the powerful as the oppressors of the poor and the powerless. These rich oppressors are addressed as a social group, not as individuals

> Among my people are wicked men who lie in wait like men who snare birds and like those who set traps to catch men. Like cages full of birds, their houses are full of deceit; they have become rich and powerful and have grown fat and sleek. Their evil deeds have no limit; they do not plead the case of the fatherless to win it, they do not defend the rights of the poor (Jer.5:26-28).

Apostle James also writes: "Is it not the rich who oppress you?" (James 2:6; cf. 5:1).

Other causes of poverty in the Bible

The biblical data, however, indicate that although oppression is the basic cause of poverty, it is not the only cause. The underlisted are seen as some of the causes of poverty.

1. Religious apostasy

This refers to the alienation between the person and God--vertical alienation. Its various manifestations are these:

a) The writer of Deuteronomy records that rebellion against God's will inevitably results in abject poverty and a life of misery (Deut. 28:15-68). The Israelites' apostasy revealed itself in two facets--worshipping of foreign gods, and oppressing the poor (including the alien, fatherless and widow). The exiles of 722 and 586 BC were due to these two main sins. The entire book of Judges, 2 Kings 14:26;17; 21:1-18 give further evidence of the results of the moral failure of the Israelites.

b). Sabbath breaking--Isa. 58:13-14; Neh. 13:15-18.

c). Neglect of cultic responsibilities--Hag.1:1-11; 2:6-9. 18-19; Mal. 3:6-12; Isa. 58:13-14; Neh. 13:15-18; Prov. 3:9-10.

2. Social alienation

This refers to the alienation that exists within the human populace. This is manifested in different social ills like:

a) War-Gen.14:10-11; 2 Kgs. 6:24-7; (cf. Jam.4:1-3).
b) Bad governments--excessive administrative costs, bureaucratic extravaganza ("the ways of the king"; 1 Sam. 8:4-5; 10-18; Eccles. 5:8; Neh. 5; Mich. 3:1-4, 9-12; Ezek. 22:23-31; 31.

3. Ecological Causes

This is the alienation that exists between humankind and creation. This alienation results in famine (Gen.12:10; 26:1, 45:11); drought (1 Kgs. 17:1-16); hurricane/ tornado (Job 1:16); lightning (Job 1:16); earthquakes, volcanoes (Gen. 19:24-29); illness, death, plagues, forced emigration (Ruth 1:1-6; 2 Kgs. 4:1-7); insect plagues (Exod. 7-12; locusts (Joel 1).

4. Self - alienation

-Laziness, sloth (Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4; 19:15; 20:13; 24:30-34; 28:19).
-Drunkenness (Prov. 23:19-21; 21:17)
-Extravagance, wastefulness, disobedience (Prov. 13:18; 21:5; cf. 3:13ff.).

The biblical evidence seems to suggest that the two main causes of poverty are idolatry and oppression. The evidence from Judges seems to suggest further that idolatry, oppression, and poverty are interrelated. We see from Judges that the rebellion of the Israelites against Yahweh always led to retributive justice. They were given over to their enemies to be oppressed. And the end result of the oppression was poverty, misery, and death. Thank God that always their repentance led to their restoration.

The OT/NT data on poverty as a social phenomenon strongly suggest that it is a scandalous condition that calls for abolition. Whereas spiritual poverty--an attitude of dependence and submission to God--is seen as an attitude to be cultivated, material poverty is seen as a social ill to be fought against with all vehemence. Terms used in the Bible are part of a historical process. Consequently, for the subject of poverty to be properly understood, the vocabulary used to represent the poor person and his/her condition should be set against their historical background. Realizing all the nuances which have been attached to them in the process of time, it is crucial that attention is paid to who says what, where and to whom.[111] The understanding of this cultural/historical context will help us to understand the subject from the point of view of the biblical writers--an understanding which is necessary for the formation of a proper biblical theology of poverty.

[111]Boerma, Rich Man Poor Man, 4.

Table 1

OT BOOK	MAJOR HEBREW WORDS FOR THE POOR					
	עָנִי	אֶבְיוֹן	דַּל	רָשׁ	מִסְכֵּן	מוּךְ
	ani	ebeyon	dal	rash	misken	muk
EXO.	22:25	23:6 23:11	23:3 30:15			
LEV.	19:10 23:22		14:21 19:15			25:39 25:25 25:35 27:8 25:47
DEUT.	15:11 24:12 24:14 24:15	15:4 15:7 15:7 15:9 15:11 15:11 24:14				
JUDG.			6:15			
RUTH			3:10			
1Sam		2:8	2:8	18:23		
2Sam	22:28		3:1 13:4	12:1 12:3 12:4		
Esther		9:22				
Job	24:4 24:9 24:14 29:12 34:28 36:6 38:15	5:15 24:4 24:14 29:16 30:25 31:19	5:16 20:10 20:19 31:16 34:19 34:28			
Psa.	9:12 9:13 9:18 :(19) 10:2 10:9 10:9 10:12 12:5 :(6)	9:18 12:5 :(6)				

Psa.	14:6 18:27 :(28) 24:24 :(25) 25:16 34:6 :(7) 35:10 35:10 37:14 40:17 :(18) 69:29 :(30) 70:5 :(6) 72:2 4 12 74:19 21 82:3 86:1 88:15 :(16) 109:16 22 140:12 :(13)	35:10 37:14 40:17 :(18) 49:2(3) 69:33 :(34) 70:5(6) 72:4 72:12 72:13 72:13 74:21 82:4 86:1 107:41 109:2 109:22 109:31 112:9 113:7 132:15 140:12 :(13	41:1 72:13 82:3 82:4 113:7	34:10 82:3		
PROV.	3:34 14:21 15:15 16:19 22:22 30:14 31:9 31:20	 14:31 30:14 31:5 31:20	10:15 14:31 19:4 19:17 21:13 22:9 22:16 22:22 22:22 28:3 28:3 28:11 28:15 28:7 28:14	10:4 13:7 13:8 13:23 14:20 17:5 18:23 19:1 19:7 19:22 22:2 22:7 28:6 29:13		

ECCLES.	6:8			4:14 5:8	4:13 9:15 9:15 9:16	
ISA.	3:14 3:15 10:2 14:32 26:6 41:7 49:13 51:21 54:11 58:7 66:2	14:30 25:4 29:19 32:7 41:17	10:2 11:4 14:30 25:4 26:6			
JER.	22:16	2:34 5:28 20:13 22:16	5:4 39:10			
EZEK.	16:49 18:12 18:17 22:19	16:49 18:12 22:19				
AMOS		2:6 4:1 5:12 8:4 8:6	2:7 4:1 5:11 8:6			
HAB.	3:14					
ZEPH.	3:12		3:12			
ZECH.	7:10 9:9 11:7 11:11					
TOTAL OCCURENCES	76	61	47	33	4	5

NOTES:
1. The words here are the six major Hebrew words for the poor. For convenience, I have chosen to exclude other forms of these words which appear in the text.
2. The verses in bracket are those in the Hebrew text.

CHAPTER 3

AN OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY OF POVERTY

INTRODUCTION

Poverty as a social issue developed after the Fall, and the word "poverty" does not occur in Genesis. Poverty as a social phenomenon can only be understood in an historical socio-economic context. In this chapter we will, therefore, examine the creation order, the purposes of the covenant (the Decalogue and the Mosaic legislation), the departure from the law which brought about the phenomenon of poverty within the Israelite community and the cry for justice by the prophets. The expressions of the Psalter, the sages, the ANE documents, and the intertestamental writers on the issue of poverty will also be examined. This will form the broad base for our study of the OT poverty relief models.

THE CREATION ORDINANCE

The biblical God is the God of abundance. It is contrary to reason to imagine that a pure and holy God would create human beings in His own image without ensuring the creation of corresponding plenitude of resources to sustain them. The creation record in Genesis suggests the idea of plenitude inherent in the original creation. At the peak of the creative activity by the Creator-King, we read:

> And God said, " Let the land produce living creatures ... And God saw that it was good. Then God said," Let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, and

> over all the creatures that move along the ground." ... God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish ... the birds ... and over every living creature that moves on the ground."[1]

The Genesis narratives provide us with a de facto principle about God and creation and man's relationship with the Creator and creation. God is presented as the Creator of the universe; this implies that absolute ownership rests with Him alone. Man, though a created being, is different from creation in that he possesses the imago Dei. On this Brunner has observed:

> Man, in contrast from all the rest of creation, has not merely been created by and through God, but in and for God. He is, what he is originally, by God and through God; he is also in and for God. Hence he can and should understand himself in God alone. Just as it is said of no other creatures, `let us make,' so also it is said of no other that it has been created `after his likeness' or in `his image.'[2]

God has given the earth to man as His sole trustee. God's command to man to "subdue the earth" did not imply the transfer of right of ownership of the earth and all that it offers to man. Rather, it places humankind in a subservient role. Both the ownership and the fertility of the earth lie in God's hand. Any claim of economic ownership, therefore, either by individuals, groups of people or nations is secondary and subordinate to God's ownership.[3] The Bible is not silent on these facts. It declares:

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[1]Gen. 1: 24-31.

[2]Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt, quoted in William Dyrness, Themes in Old Testament Theology (Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1979), 78.

[3]C. Wright, Living as the People of God (Leicester, England.:IVP, 1983), 67.

> The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.[4]
>
> The highest heavens belong to the LORD but the earth HE has given to man.[5]
>
> what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands, you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the sea.[6]

These three psalms see man as a dependent creature. Yahweh is the source of his being. Man rules over creation because God has put him there as His trustee. The all Sovereign God, the Exalted One, has chosen heaven as His exclusive realm (Ps. 115:16). He, out of His grace and mercy, has divinely appointed man as the ruler of the earth in His behalf. He lives under God's rule and care, and he enjoys the abundant blessings that come from God alone (Ps.116:12-13). Man has nothing to offer God in payment for His goodness. The Psalmist observes, "How can I repay the Lord for His goodness to me?" (Ps.116:12). Man has nothing to offer to God for His benevolence. He is to acknowledge Yahweh's worth by worshipping and praising Him.

An integral part of man's worship of Yahweh is his practice of justice and righteousness. This justice and righteousness are not abstract terms; rather, they refer to how one relates to God and those He has created in His own image. This includes the proper utilization of the earth's

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[4]Ps. 24:1.

[5]Ps. 115:16.

[6]Ps. 8:4-8 NIV.

resources for the benefit of humankind. By so doing, he acknowledges his dependency upon God and the fact of his stewardship. In biblical theology, the practice of justice and righteousness are directly related to man's acknowledgement of God's Lordship, and this is true worship.

Stewardship is therefore the key word in the creation perspective.[7] The stewardship of man includes man's application of his God-endowed abilities--talents, gifts, and ingenuity--to bring the best out of the earth. Professor C. Wright has delineated four main ethical principles as foundational to the understanding of man's economic stewardship.[8] We will now examine these principles.

The Responsibility of Work

Man is a worker right at the beginning of creation. Responsible work antedates the fall. Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Before man was created, "there was no man to work the ground," (Genesis 2:5). The first act of dominion over the created order was the "naming ceremony" that was entrusted to Adam (Gen. 2: 19-20). Man fulfills his particularity and uniqueness as God's image-bearer in "work." He is a steward over the created order. His stewardship includes his caring for and use of creation for the service of God and humanity. Thus exploitation, wastage and despoliation are evil and display man's

[7]Wright, Living as the People of God, 68.

[8]Ibid., 68ff.

fallenness. Man by nature and by divine responsibility is a worker. Not only does he have responsibility to work but also he has the responsibility to see to it that others are able to do work. To prevent or deny a man from working constitutes an infringement on his stewardship and is an offence "against his humanity and the image of God in him as well as failing in one's responsibility to God for him."[9]

Expectation of Growth

God's command "...let them have dominion" and "be fruitful and increase in number ...subdue the earth"[10] have two dimensions. The fruitfulness and increase in number refers to the human populace. There is also an anticipated abundance in the earth's resources to sustain humankind. This is evident in the fact that in the immediate context of man's dominion over the earth, the produce of the earth and the food necessary to sustain him are spelt out.[11]

These twin aspects of increase and dominion are again spelt out in the Noahic covenant.[12] The anticipated outcome of Yahweh's blessings is growth/increase. Again, in the immediate context, what human life would need for its sustenance and growth is spelt out. Here, unlike 1:29, meat is provided as an additional supplement to man's diet.

All along, God had anticipated that there would be abundance to sustain human life because of His blessings.

[9]Ibid., 69.

[10]Gen. 1:26, 28.

[11]Gen. 1:29.

[12]Gen. 9: 3.

This idea is found both before and after the fall. Calvin's comments on "let them have dominion" are significant here.

> The use of the plural number intimates that this authority was not given to Adam only, but to all his posterity as well as to him. And hence we infer what was the end for which all things were created; namely, that more of the conveniences and necessaries of life might be wanting to man. In the very order of creation, the paternal solicitude of God for man is conspicuous, because he furnished the world with all things needful, and even with an immense profusion of wealth, before he formed man. Thus man was rich before he was born. But if God had such care for us before we existed, he will by no means leave us destitute of food and other necessaries of life, now that we are placed in the world. Yet, that he often keeps his hand as if closed is to be imputed to our sins.[13]

Shared Produce

Trusteeship implies that whatever profit or income is accrued from the trust will be administered according to the instructions of the owner. Consumption that does not consider the needs of others is a complete violation of the principles of economic stewardship enshrined in the creation ordinance. "We are as responsible to God for what we do with what we produce, as we are for what He has given us `raw'."[14]

The Universal "Pollution"

The great rebellion (Gen.3) introduced "pollution" into the whole universe. The equilibrium inherent in the original creation was shattered. Man's relationship with his Maker, his fellow man, and with his environment were broken.

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[13]John Calvin, Genesis (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1948), 96.

[14]Wright, Living as the People of God, 70.

The universal pollution breeds, inter alia, greed, strife and warfare among individuals and nations; it engenders selfish exploitation and despoliation of the earth's resources. Man has failed to realize and apply the principles of his stewardship. In his greed, wantonness and revelry, he uses wealth as an instrument of oppression and subjugation. The productive resources of the earth have become a matter of conquest, seizure and despoliation instead of divine gifts to be enjoyed by all.

It was the blessings of Elohim that produced the abundance. The Fall brought about the great reversal. The original bliss and Shalom of Eden turned into "the sweat of thy face" in a poverty ridden environment of "thorns and thistles" (Gen 3:18,19). On this, Calvin sighs:

> And he assigns as the reason, that the earth will not be the same as it was before, producing perfect fruits; for he declares that the earth would degenerate from its fertility, and bring forth briers and noxious plants .... They think more correctly who acknowledge that, by the increasing wickedness of men, the remaining blessing of God is gradually diminished and impaired; and certainly there is danger, unless the world repent, that a great part of men should shortly perish through hunger, and other dreadful miseries.[15]

The great reversal jeopardized the total equilibrium of the creation order. The spiritual and economic life of man was marred. Productive resources as well as means of production and distribution were affected. The universal blessings God intended for the human community were supplanted by the curse.

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[15]Calvin, Genesis, 174.

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

God's answer to this universal sin was the election of Abraham:

> The LORD had said to Abraham, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.
> I will make you into a great nation and I w i l l bless you;
> I will make your name great and you will be a blessing;
> I will bless those who bless you, and who ever curses you I will curse and all peoples of the earth will be blessed through you.[16]

The original blessings on all mankind (Gen. 1:28) which were lost through the Fall are restored and fulfilled through Abraham and his offspring.

THE EXODUS

Before this covenant people became a force to reckon with, they were an insignificant, disinherited, oppressed minority. Their cry for justice reached the ears of the just and righteous God:

> And Yahweh said "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their slave masters, for I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land, to a land flowing with milk and honey.... And now, behold the cry of the children of Israel has come to me; even I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them."[17]

So by mighty acts of both retributive and distributive

[16]Gen. 12:2-3 (my emphasis); cf. Gen. 12:7; 15:5-21; 17:4-8; 28:13-15; 35:11-12; 46:3; Ex. 3:6-8; 6:2-8; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8, 13-14.

[17]Exod. 3:7-10 (my own rendition).

justice they were brought to Sinai.[18] There He established them into "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation":

> You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.[19]

At this crucial point of salvation history God displayed His mighty acts of justice to liberate the poor and the oppressed. This divine intervention was regarded as a "righteous" act, or an act of justice (Micah 6:4-5). The author of Psalm 103, for instance, cites the Exodus event to affirm that, "The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed" (Ps. 103:6-8).

This liberative work of Yahweh was motivated by two factors. He did it because of the injustice of oppression. God by His very nature is challenged to action when people made in His own image are treated as non-beings. It is a direct assault on His nature. He declares, "Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says the LORD. "I will set him in the safety

[18]The Hebrew words for righteousness and justice are (sedaqah) and (mishpat) respectively. Two aspects of justice may be distinguished. With respect to the plague, justice as a concept is represented by the word shapatim (Exod. 6:6; 7:4; 12:12). This is translated "judgement." This aspect of the concept of justice is usually referred to as retributive justice --an act or acts of God in which He brings punishment/destruction upon the wicked--the perpetrators of injustice. Distributive justice is God's act of deliverance on behalf of the oppressed, the downcast, the poor and the needy, the weak, and the powerless. The exodus is referred to as "righteous act". (see Ps. 103:6-7; 72; Micah 6:4-5; cf. Dr. Chester Wood, Biblical Theology of Mission class notes).

[19]Exod. 19:4-6 NIV.

for which he longs" (Ps. 12:5). It is contrary to His nature to ignore the cry of the afflicted (Ps. 9:12).

The other factor was His covenant with Abraham--to call a people who will be the vehicle of salvation to the whole world (Ex. 6:5-7). God's response to the cry of the oppressed for justice is not limited to the covenant people; for the writer of Exodus describes the event itself as "mighty acts of justice" (Ex. 6:6; 7:4).

This oppression - deliverance motif of Exodus is the key to understanding salvation history. It shows God's concern for the poor and the oppressed everywhere. The Exodus event displays the kind of justice He expects from humanity.

The New Community

The exodus event was to determine the way they were to understand the productive asset (the land) and the produce of the land.

> Then you shall declare before the LORD your God: "My father was a wandering Aramean and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, putting us to hard labor. Then we cried to the LORD the God of our Fathers and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the first fruit of the soil that you, O LORD, have given me." Place the basket before the LORD your God and bow down before him.[20]

The exodus motif is the determining factor for the ethical and religious behaviour of the Israelites. Their

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[20]Deut. 26: 5-10 NIV.

conduct towards God and the world community should all stem from the exodus event. Yahweh's act on behalf of the "powerless" (Israelites) against the "powerful" (Egyptians) was to determine the way they handled property. Brueggemann, commenting on this, has observed that

> The exodus provides the central model for a redefinition of property when God intervenes on behalf of the slaves against the establishment of Egypt, on behalf of those without property at the expense of the property owners.... The model of Yahweh on behalf of the powerless against the possessors clearly means to assert that unbridled and oppressive power is not free to assemble for itself all the possessions it is able to amass.[21]

From our Exodus 19 text we see God as the God of deliverance. In view of His historical acts of justice on behalf of this "bunch of slaves," He calls upon them to "obey me fully and keep my covenant." By their act of obedience they will become His "treasured possession," a "kingdom of priests" and a "holy nation." They gave their endorsement to the covenant in the following words: "We will do everything Yahweh has said."[22]

Israel's calling in covenant relationship with God is summarized in four phrases:

1. "My treasured possession"

Treasured possession comes from the Hebrew word, segullah. This comes from Ugaritic and Akkadian root sakalu, meaning "to set aside a thing or property."[23]

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[21]Walter Brueggemann, "Reflections on Biblical Understanding of Property," IRM 256 (Oct. 1975): 354-361.

[22]Exod.19:8; cf. 24:3.

[23] Walter Kaiser, Toward an Old Testament Theology (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1978): 105.

2. "Although the whole nation is Mine"

By virtue of God's creation, the whole world is His. All the nations belong to Him, yet He has deemed it fit to choose Israel as a "peculiar nation"

3. "A kingdom of Priests"

Israel as a nation was to function as a kingdom of priests to stand before God to mediate on behalf of the whole world.

4. "A holy nation"

Israel was a nation and a kingdom at the same time. It was not just any kingdom but a kingdom of priests. The adjective "holy" therefore applies to both nation and kingdom because they are one and the same. For Israel to qualify to approach God and also to mediate for the nations, the basic prerequisite is holiness. The ethical behaviour of the Israelites was constantly tied to the exodus event: "I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy."[24]

God's holiness has two facets. One stresses his "otherness," his "numinous" character. The other aspect expresses the righteousness, and goodness of Yahweh. This became the foundation of the ethics and morality taught in the OT.[25]

God's historical intervention in the affairs of men to restore justice and righteousness is an expression of His holiness (Isa.5:16). The setting of "righteousness" and "justice" in OT theology is in the context of the exodus

[24]Lev. 11:45 NIV; cf. Kaiser, OT Theology, 105.

[25]Kaiser, Toward an Old Testament Ethics, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1983), 143.

event. The subject of wealth and its distribution in the OT cannot therefore be adequately discussed outside this context. Gelin's observations here are relevant:

> When he established the people of God in Sinai and Kadesh, he gave them a common soul and a kind of collectivist sensibility, facilitated by the semi-nomadic structure of life. As a result of this quasi-organic solidarity, individuals lived and acted as a function of the whole; the individual was to the group what the member was to the living body. Hopes, trials and possessions were shared. The blessings foreseen and promised by Yahweh were to be enjoyed by all.[26]

God's idea for the sedentary society of the Israelites was that "there will be no poor among you ...."[27] Though God's will on this was unequivocal, its fulfillment was contingent on their obedience to the Sinaitic covenant.[28] God, however, foresaw that His covenant people would be rebellious and covenant violators, so He elsewhere declared ..."the poor will never cease from the land."[29]

Because of the fact that the poor would always be on the land, He established the various poverty relief institutions, so that the covenant people would regularly respond to the needs of the poor. This "preferential option for the poor" was a religious responsibility deeply embedded in the exodus event. Failure by the able to take up this option would incur God's displeasure.[30] This seemed to have

[26]Albert Gelin, The Poor of Yahweh (Collegeville: Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1964), 15.

[27]Deut. 15:4.

[28]Deut. 15:5.

[29]Exod. 15:11.

[30]Deut. 15:7-11.

been based on two warrants: God's holiness: ("I am the LORD") and their own history ("Remember, you were strangers and foreigners ...").

We find in the various legal documents of the OT this recurrent theme of God's special option for the poor and the needy. This special concern is evidenced in the Mosaic legislation instituted to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the needy which we find in the three legal traditions.

The Book of the Covenant.

Exod.20:22-23:13

The assumption underlying the covenant code was that all permanent and helpless poverty would be abolished. To realize this, the following provisions were made pivotal in the code:

> Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt. Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will be around and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like the money lender; charge him no interest. If you take your neighbour's cloak as pledge, return it to him by sunset, because his cloak is the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.[31]

> Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous. Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt. For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the

[31]Exod. 22: 21-27 NIV.

> same with your vineyard and your olive grove. Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household and the aliens as well may be refreshed. Be careful to do everything I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.[32]

The Deuteronomic Code

Some of the requirements in the Deuteronomic Law are repetitive of the Exodus tradition while others extend beyond that tradition.[33]

Interest-free loans were required. Retention of a poor man's cloth overnight as a pledge for a loan was forbidden. Wages due to Israelites and resident aliens were to be paid promptly. Bribery and the perversion of justice were condemned.[34] Kidnapping of a fellow Israelite as a slave was punishable by death.[35]

The command to leave sheaves, olives, or grapes for the benefit of the poor was extended beyond the seventh year to each harvest time.[36] Generosity to the poor was pre-requisite for Yahweh's blessings. Tithing arrangements were to take care of the Levites who had no land allocation, as well as aliens, the fatherless, and widows. At the Passover and the Feast of Booths, the covenant people were to include servants, Levites, strangers, the fatherless and the widows in the celebration.[37]

[32]Exod. 23: 6-13 NIV.

[33]Deut. 24: 10-15.

[34]Deut. 16: 18-20; cf 24:17.

[35]Deut. 24:7.

[36]Deut. 24:19-22.

[37]Deut. 14:28.

As in the Covenant Code, the theological reasoning underpinning the care for the poor is echoed in the repeated refrain: "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this."[38] Because God had compassion over them and delivered them from their misery, they should also have compassion over the poor and help to reverse their misery; that is, they were to be "little deliverers."

A passionate appeal for generosity towards the poor is made.[39] Yahweh's continued blessing was not automatic. It was dependent on the generosity of the people to the poor. The fact that the poor would always be among them should encourage them to be more generous.[40]

The concept of the Sabbatical year comes up again as found in the Covenant code. Three things were required every seventh year:

a) The land was to lie fallow[41]

b) All debts were to be cancelled[42]

c) Slaves were to be freed with gratuity[43]

The purpose of the Sabbatical year was to prevent injustice and oppression and any kind of permanent poverty from taking root among the people of God.

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[38]Deut. 24:18,22.

[39]Deut. 15: 7-11.

[40]Deut. 15:11.

[41]Deut. 23:10-11.

[42]Deut. 15:1-2.

[43]Deut. 15:12-18.

The purpose of the Sabbatical year was to prevent injustice and oppression and any kind of permanent poverty from taking root among the people of God.

On the actual application of the Sabbatical year, de Vaux is of the opinion that it was not observed.[44] John Yoder, however, thinks that it was observed.[45] Since the relief institutions were comprehensive (we will see this in a later chapter), its application would have made permanent, debilitating poverty impossible. The cry for justice by the prophets seems to confirm that these provisions were never systematically followed. We may not be certain but one thing is clear: the institution of the Sabbatical year "existed as a powerful symbol to Israel of God's concern for the poor and for justice."[46]

The Holiness Code

Much of the material here is similar to what has been discussed elsewhere in this paper. It includes laws on the Peah and Leket which would provide the poor with additional source of provision/income:

> When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the Lord your God.[47]

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[44]Ronald de Vaux, Ancient Israel (New York: McGraw - Hill, 1961), 174f.

[45]John H. Yoder, The Politics of Jesus (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), 64ff.

[46]Walter E. Pilgrim, Good News to the Poor (Minneapolis, Minn: Augsburg, 1981), 23.

[47]Lev. 19:9-10; cf. 23:22 NIV. Peah is the crop at the corners of the field. Leket is the crop or grapes that have fallen. They were to be the poor man's provision. The

The code also demanded proper behaviour towards the deaf and the blind, proper administration of justice, prompt payment of wages to a hired worker.[48] The striking difference between the other codes and the holiness code is the radical legislation on the ancestral land. Leviticus 25:10-24 stipulate that every 50th year the following were to be observed:

1. The land was to lie fallow
2. Slaves were to be set free
3. Debts were to be cancelled
4. All ancestral lands were to be returned to the original owners unconditionally.

The land of Canaan was divided among the Israelites equally by lot.

> Originally, the land was divided among the clans of the tribes so that a relatively similar amount of land was available to all the family units. The larger tribes got a larger portion and the smaller tribes a smaller portion (Num. 26:54). By lot the land was further subdivided among the protective association of families (mispaha) and then (Josh. 18-19) the extended families (beth-av).[49]

The allotted land was to remain the possession of the recipient forever. The rationale behind this law was that the land was distributed by Joshua and Eleazar the priest according to the will and command of God.[50]

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application of this law of gleaning is illustrated in the story of Ruth (Ruth 2:1ff.).

[48]Lev. 19:13-15.

[49]Stephen Mott, "The Contribution of the Bible to Economic Thought," Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987): 25-34.

[50]Josh. 14: 1-5; 18:1ff.

The land therefore could not be disposed of permanently. The only circumstances that could warrant selling one's land were illness, disability or famine. But even in this case, the dispossession could only last for 49 years after which the land should revert to the original owner:

> Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan....[51]

Hence all land disposed of was only on a lease basis. The reason is that God alone owns the land: they were all tenants. "The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants."[52] The legal implications here are that one can sell only what one owns. And if one buys something that has been illegally sold, the buyer has no right to it. The right still rests with the original rightful owner.

God's intention as expressed in the biblical data was that He wanted to "maintain a healthy and peaceful society, where all people are equal and have equal opportunities in their economic life, by protecting and securing the rights of the owner on his lands."[53] This equality must be understood to mean equal rights for all persons within the

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[51]Lev. 25 : 10 - 17.

[52]Lev. 25: 23.

[53]Dov Rosner "Economic Security and Income," in Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God (Durban: Lutheran Pub. House, 1978), 138.

covenant. It also implies equal access to means of production.

A DEPARTURE FROM THE NEW ORDER

Introduction

The patriarchs were semi-nomadic people pitching their tents wherever pasture and water were available to sustain their livestock.

The basic social unit was the family--"three or four generations descended from a surviving male parent."[54] There was also the tribe/clan composed of a group of families who had a common ancestral history. The tribes of Yahweh descended from their common progenitor, Abraham.

Their possessions were counted in terms of livestock which belonged to all the members of the family or tribe. Individuals owned no land. One could, however, own ornaments and clothing. All the members of the family had a common destiny. Possessions or poverty were both commonly shared. While there were no rich or poor classes, a particular family could be rich or poor depending upon the size of the family and of its flocks and herds. Their ability to ward off marauders who were constantly on the attack and other natural threats also affected their possessions. Wealth was generally considered as a sign of God's blessings. God's blessings on the patriarchs became evident in their material possessions.[55]

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[54]A.D. Verhey, "Poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[55]Gen. 26:12f; 24:1; 27; 39:5.

The Deuteronomic Code stresses a close relationship between human action and divine response. Obedience to Yahweh's covenant was prerequisite to His blessings.[56] Abundant material possessions then became the sign of God's favour.

Poverty as a term does not occur in Genesis, although famines were reported[57] and prosperity was not universal. Wealth mainly consisted of livestock (large flocks, asses, donkeys, herds of cattle) and men and maid servants.[58] Position in the family, not possessions, determined individual status.[59]

The wilderness wandering was also characterized by a nomadic lifestyle where families and tribes were closely knitted together. The various tribes together had a common destiny wrapped up in the Sinaitic covenant.

In such a communal sensibility wealth was not the possession of an individual or a few people. It belonged to the "whole" and was also held for the common good of all as a vehicle for the viability of the whole family, tribe or clan.

The Canaanite influence

Their entrance into Canaan and the subsequent acquisition of landed property made sociological changes. The nomadic

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[56]Deut. 7:13; 14:29; 15:10,18; 23:21; 24:19; 30:16.

[57]Gen. 12:10; 41.

[58]Gen. 30:43; cf Job 1:3f; cf 42:12.

[59]Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE; cf. F.C. Grant, "The Economic Background of the NT," in Background of the NT and its Eschatology, W.D. Davies and D. Daube, eds. (Cambridge, England: The University Press, 1956), 96-114.

lifestyle changed into agricultural life style. The normal system of family property became the goral "lot" or "plot;" heleq "portion;" or nahalah "heritage."[60]

The change from the nomadic lifestyle to the agricultural lifestyle also led to different kinds of social stratifications. These social stratifications developed over a period of time. Things seemed to have been different in the early days of the settlement as de Vaux portrays here

> all the Israelites enjoyed more or less the same standard of living. Wealth came from the land, and the land had been shared out between the families, each of whom guarded its property jealously (cf. the story of Naboth in I Kgs. 21:1-3). Commerce, and buying and selling of real estate for profit, were as yet unimportant factors in economic life.... Excavations in Israelite towns bear witness to this equality in standards of living. At Tirsah, ... the houses of the tenth century B.C. are all of the same size and arrangement. Each represents the dwelling of a family which lived in the same way as its neighbours. The contrast is striking when we pass to the eighth century house on the same site: The rich houses are bigger and better built and in different quarters from that where the poor houses are huddled together. Between these two centuries, a social revolution had taken place.[61]

The Influence of the Monarchy

The major shift was largely caused by the advent of the wars of the monarchical system. The national wars of conquest recorded in the book of Joshua broke the power of the Canaanites to drive away the Israelites out of the land.[62] But the tribal wars of occupation were to take place later.[63] It is therefore granted that for a

[60]De Vaux, Ancient Israel, 166.

[61]Ibid., 72f.

[62]Josh. 18; 23: 12ff.

[63]Judges 1, 2.

considerable period, the Israelites lived together with the Canaanites, Israelites occupying mainly the hilly areas which were less fertile whereas the Canaanites retained the central plains and the fortified cities.[64]

The social organization of the Canaanite tribes was different. Tribal allegiances had given way to private land ownership which determined the rights and duties of individuals. Land tenure was treated like any other private commodity--it could be easily disposed of at will.[65] The royal inclusion of the Canaanite territory into the Israelite state therefore created room for two different types of property ownership. Able families could secure new estates from the Canaanites. This greatly widened the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The wealthy land owners became city dwellers while slaves or feudal farm labourers worked on the farms. Commercial activities in the cities created more wealth for the entrepreneurs which increased their purchasing power to acquire more real estate in the countryside.[66]

The Influence of the Army

The ancient tribal levy could not support the mercenary force needed for the royal military campaigns. Furthermore, the king's chariot warfare was expensive to run. The need for more land to enable the monarchy to

[64]Siegfried Herrmann, A History of Israel in OT Times (London : SCM, 1975), 86ff.

[65]H.E. von Waldow, "Social Responsibility and Social Structure in Early Israel," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 32 (April 1970): 182-204.

[66]von Waldow, Ancient Isreal, 197.

support and to equip its soldiers and also run the administration of the centralized state system, which was introduced by King David and his successors, became urgent. Royal prerogatives were therefore exercised to acquire more land that was necessary for its programmes.[67]

The Crown was able to secure more estates through the confiscation of lands from conquered enemies and also by direct purchase from the Canaanites. The Israelite land tenure system was adapted to meet the exigencies of the time. Family lands which became vacant were not reallocated but became crown property.[68] The royal lands were taken care of by royal appointees as fiefs in return for service.[69] The cost of this was heavy, both in human and material resources.

There was also the conscription of Israelite peasants for the king's task force. In addition, to meet the king's regular provisions requirements, "a tenth of the grain, the vintage and flocks" were exacted from the people.[70]

The combined effect of the foregoing was to create a society where a small stratum of the inhabitants were plutocratic and aristocratic land owners while a greater number of the people languished in poverty. The king and his royal officials, the urban merchants, and the businessmen all profited from the Israelite golden age of

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[67]G. Wittenberg, "OT Prophets," in Affluence Poverty and the Word of God, 144; cf. 1 Sam. 8:10ff; 22:7.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid.

[70]1 Sam. 8:10ff; 1Kgs. 5:13-18; 9:15-22; 12:1-11.

instrument of oppression instead of an instrument of justice. It was within this context that Yahweh called upon His prophets to proclaim His message of denunciation.

THE PROPHETIC ORDER

Introduction

The prophets saw poverty as directly related to structural evil. This was the result of the failure of the people of God to keep their part of the covenant. They also saw poverty as directly related to oppression--a situation in which the poor themselves did not have any control other than to look to Yahweh for deliverance. To correct this social digression God raised up prophets. They saw that Yahweh's covenant with His people had been trampled upon by the powerful at the expense of the powerless. They could not help but speak against the status quo. In so doing, they did not use neutral words; rather, they chose "photographic words"[75] to describe the poor person and his/her oppressed condition, and also the oppressor.

Criticism by Amos, Micah and Isaiah

The eighth century prophets were the earliest of the prophets to speak on behalf of the poor. Their critique of the social order found its roots in the covenant tradition. (Isa.1:10; Jer.7:9; Hos.1:11; 4:2,6; Am. 2:8 cf. Ex. 22:26; 3:12 cf. Ex. 22:13).

AMOS' DIATRIBE

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[75]Gelin, Poor of Yahweh, 19.

The prophetic diatribe of Amos clearly describes two different social classes within the Israelite community: the powerful, wealthy dominant class on the one hand, and the poor, powerless peasants (the voiceless majority) on the other hand.

> They sell the righteous for silver and the needy (אֶבְיוֹן) for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor (דַּלִּים) as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed (עֲנִיֵּי)[76]

Here Amos uses three of the five main terms which are used in biblical Hebrew to designate the poor and their condition.

Amos directed his diatribe against the injustices being done against a well defined group of people termed ebeyon dallim, and anawim,[77] The ebeyon referred to the needy, poor and homeless; those without clothing, shelter, food, and water; the destitute; a person who has taken to begging and alms seeking because of this condition[78]. The dallim were the peasants who were materially poor and therefore socially insignificant; the wretched and powerless who were not participants in the decision making process; those who existed only as material objects to serve the interests of the dominant class--the powerful. The anawim [79] were the needy peasants who had humbly submitted their case to God for His verdict. The anawim are identified with the "righteous' (Saddiq).[80] These poor peasants here are

[76]Amos 2:6-7.

[77]Amos 2:6; cf. 4:1; 5:12: 8:4,6.

[78]Amos 2:7; cf. 4:1; 5:11; 8:6.

[79]Amos 2:7; 8:4.

[80]Amos 2:6; 5:12.

described as righteous not only because "they could be trusted to pay [their debts] eventually,"[81] as Sunukjian suggests; or because they were those who were not in debt and who there was no lawful reason to sell[82], as Milliard will have us believe. I believe they were righteous because they were working hard to produce what they humanly could and thereby fulfill the divine mandate (to subdue the earth); they had the desire to pay off their debt but could not do this because the dominant force had created a system whereby the harder you worked, the poorer you became. The peasant's income was never enough to pay off the principal loan and the interest.

The dispossession of the peasants came in stages: the economic pressure compelled one to secure loans using his garment. The pressure increased and additional loans became necessary. He was still not able to pay off the loan and the interest thereon so he is brought before the court, which was controlled by the creditors. Through their oppressive decrees, the poor man was found guilty. A fine was imposed. The peasant's land was taken as a lien in lieu of the payment of the debt and fine. By virtue of the same oppressive decrees, he was made to work on his own land as a tenant working more for the creditor than for himself, but at least he retained his independence (5:11). Finally, a court action is instituted against him. The court gives an order for the debtor or his son, et cetera. to be sold as a

[81]Donald R. Sunukjian, "Amos," in The Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC), 1985 ed.

[82]Alan R. Millard, "Amos," in the NIV Study Bible, 1985.

slave or else other circumstances force him to sell himself into slavery, because of the debt (silver) and also because of his/her inability to fulfill the terms of the bond. "... because they sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes."[83]

The debtor would have to continue borrowing in order for him and his family to survive. The righteous here should therefore be seen from this perspective: the peasant's continuous efforts to work hard; his desire to pay off the debt; his struggle to break the debt trap although he could not because someone more powerful than himself was making it impossible; and God's identification with him in this matter. The Lord of creation sees this struggle as the struggle of the righteous.

Amos was also against the profiteering practices of the greedy, powerful and wealthy grain merchants of the urban areas whose sole concern was to make profit at the expense of the poor.

> Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor (ebeyon) of the land, saying, "When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat"? Skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales, buying t h e poor (dallim) with silver and the needy (`ebeyon)

[83]Amos 2:6. Here the poor peasant is sold into slavery for his inability to discharge the debt for which a pair of sandals had been used as a seal of the contract. From Ruth 4:7, we note that an agreement becomes binding when symbolically sandals are given to the other party as a seal (the contract that a property has been transferred or redeemed). "Hence, the Hebrew word na 'alayim, `a pair of sandals', acquired the meaning of `bond'." (See Bernhard Lang, Anthropological Approaches to the OT (London, England: SPCK, 1985). The poor man here is being sold because of a "bond" or a contractual obligation which has been sealed by the giving of sandals.

> for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.[84]

The "courts of justice" in collision with the powerful class became instruments of injustice against the powerless poor.

> You who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground; you hate the one who reproves in court and despise him who tells the truth. You trample on the poor (dal) and force him to give you grain. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor (`ebeyonim) of justice in the courts.[85]

The wealth of the rich agriculturalists was acquired through the exploitation of the poor. With this ill-gotten wealth, they built winter and summer houses adorned with ivory.[86] The prophetic indictment was that because they exploited the poor in order to do this, "Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them."[87]

The rich oppressors are warned to turn from their evil ways. They are to seek and love what is good which includes the maintenance of justice in the courts.[88]

For Amos, worship and justice should go together, else worship becomes detestable.

> I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like never-failing stream![89]

[84]Amos 8:4-6 NIV.

[85]Amos 5:7,10,11,12 NIV.

[86]Amos 3:15.

[87]Amos 5:11.

[88]Amos 5:12-15.

[89] Amos 5: 21-24 NIV

MICAH'S DIATRIBE

Micah's diatribe took place around 750 to 686 B.C. during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Micah (Mic. 1:1; Jer. 28:18) was a contemporary of Isaiah (Isa. 1:1) and Hosea (Hos. 1:1). His ministry might have taken place before Hezekiah's religious reforms. He was from Moresheth in Judah, about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem, near the Philistine city of Gath.

His message was directed against the ruling class, probably the king's civil and military officials who controlled the power structure of Judah.

> Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. They covet fields and seize them and houses, and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellow man of his inheritance.[90]

The leaders and rulers who were supposed to administer justice "despised justice and distorted all that was right." They, in collaboration with the false prophets and greedy priests, were bent on amassing wealth at any cost. In so doing, they perpetrated wickedness and bloodshed in Jerusalem and all of Israel:

> Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel. Should you not know justice, you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones; who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?" Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done.[91]

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[90]Micah 2: 1-2 NIV.

[91]Micah 3: 1-4 NIV.

ISAIAH'S DIATRIBE

Isaiah, a dweller in Jerusalem and an associate of the court officials, had a deeper insight into the moral fabric of the ruling class. Like Micah, he spoke against the exploitation of the rural folks by the ruling class. "Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land."[92]

Isaiah was critical of the exploitation of the poor, the miscarriage of justice and oppression of the powerless including the widows and orphans.[93] He was against the legal enactments by the ruling class which were meant to exploit the poor for their selfish gains.

> Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor (dallim) of their rights and rob my oppresessed people of justice making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.[94]

Amidst the message of comfort, Isaiah calls the attention of the ruling class to the fact that the rule of justice is the foundation of biblical religiosity.[95]

Summary of the Prophetic Diatribe

Amos, Micah and Isaiah were violent against the ruling class whose lifestyle was demonstrated in expensive building structures. Some maintained summer and winter houses constructed with hewn stones,[96] a building technique

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[92]Isa. 5:8 NIV.

[93]Isa. 1:21ff.; cf. 5:7, 20ff.

[94]Isa. 10:1-2 NIV.

[95]Isa. 58:6-9.

[96]Amos 3:15 ; 5:11

introduced in Israel first by Solomon and later by Ahab in his extensive building projects in Samaria, and finally copied by the upper strata of society.[97] These houses were adorned with ivory inlay or furnishings.[98] They reclined on expensive beds inlaid with ivory. They ate the choicest lambs and fattened calves. They were not content to drink wine from goblets; instead, they consumed it by the bowlful (expensive wine bowls); they also used the most expensive perfume (finest lotions).[99] This was an era characterized by opulence, revelry and wantonness. All this was done disregarding the rights of the poor and respect for God.

> For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah .... He looked for justice, but behold, oppression (bloodshed); for righteousness,but behold wailing.[100]

Yahweh condemns their greed:

> Woe to those who keep on accumulating houses and lands till no space is left for the poor to stay. And you (the rich) live alone on that big land.[101]

Their wantonness and revelry are also condemned:

> Woe to those who rise up early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine. They have harps and lyres at their banquets, tambourines and flutes and wine, but they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD, no respect for the work of his hands. Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding ....[102]

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[97]Wittenberg, Affluence, Poverty and the word of God, 141; cf. 1 Kgs. 22:39. Recent excavations of Samaria have unearthed ivory inlays in some of the buildings dating from this period.

[98]Amos 3: 15; 6:4.

[99]Amos 6: 4-6; cf. Wittenberg, Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God, 142.

[100]Isa. 5:7 (my translation).

[101]Isa. 5:8 (my translation).

The prophets saw oppression/poverty as directly related to structural evil. Their attitude to structural evil was twofold:

1. They challenged the people and their leaders to pursue justice. The oppressing of the poor, widow, fatherless, and alien (the marginalized of society) was denounced. They were fiercely against injustice; for example, Elijah rebuked Ahab for murdering Naboth and stealing his land. Amos denounced the oppressive practices of the rulers and insisted that there should be justice for all. Jeremiah denounced King Jehoiakim for using forced labor to rebuild his luxurious palace.[103]

2. The leaders and their followers were told to encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

Other indictments against oppression/poverty by different prophets are also recorded elsewhere.[104]

The prophets saw the poor as `ebeyon, the one who desperately looks for help either from God or from man; they saw him/her as a beggar--the one who is lacking something and therefore stretches his hand out for help. They saw him/her also as dal, the weak, frail, helpless and powerless individual. The poor person was also ani, the bent over, the one labouring under excruciating pain caused by a heavy burden and therefore not in possession of his whole strength

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[103]1 Kgs. 2; Amos 2:6ff; 4:1ff; 5:11ff; 5:24; 8:4ff; Jer. 22:13ff.

[104]Isa. 3:13ff; 5:7ff; 10:1ff; Jer. 5:28ff; Ezek. 18:10ff.

and vigour. She/he is in a state of humiliation. Also, the prophets saw the poor person as anaw, the one whose only source of strength and help is God.[105]

> With vivid realism the prophets described the violation of the covenant, the oppression and injustice of the social order. They condemned the kings and other authorities who failed to protect the poor; they protested against the professional prophets, priests, and sages who said what their clients wanted to hear instead of what the justice of God required; they ridiculed the vain women who lived in luxury careless of the cries of the poor; they sentenced dishonest and avaricious merchants, selfish and heartless creditors, covetous land-owners, and venal judges to the judgement of God. They announced that God was on the side of the poor, that He was their ally, that they were His people, and that His covenant law stood as an alternative to and judgement upon a social order that simultaneously generated brutalizing poverty and luxury.[106]

An examination of the prophetic diatribe reveals that what the prophets demanded was that there should be mispat and sedaqah (justice and righteousness) in the social order. Isaiah, to name but one, pronounces God's judgement on the ruling class because instead of maintaining the rule of justice and righteousness, they rather practised injustice and acts of unrighteousness.

> See how the faithful city has become a harlot!
> She once was full of justice; righteousness
> used to dwell in her but now murderers!
> Your silver has become dross.
> Your choice wine is diluted with water.
> Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves;
> they all love bribes and chase after gifts.
> They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;
> the widow's case does not come before them.
> Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty

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[105]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, 291.

[106]Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.; cf. Jer. 22:13-17; Hos. 5:1f.; 10. Jer. 8:8-10; Hos. 4:4-6; Am. 7:10-17; Mic. 3:5-7; Isa. 3:16-26; Am. 4:1-3; Am. 8:4-6; Am. 5:11.; Isa. 5:8; Mic. 2:1-4; Isa. 1:23; 3:13-15; Am. 5:7,10,12.; Isa. 3:15.

> the Mighty one of Israel declares:....[107]

Here, it seems, what Isaiah is demanding is necessary justice and righteousness defined in the context of the covenant.

"Righteousness and justice" is then the keynote of the prophetic diatribe. Their criticism of the social order must be understood from this perspective.[108] This is substantiated in the following diatribe:

Amos also illustrates this perversion of mispat and sedaqah thus:

> He looked for justice (mispat) but behold, oppression and bloodshed (mispah) for right-eousness (Sedaqah) but behold, wailing (sacaqah).[109]

> Yet you have turned justice (mispat) into poison, And the fruit of righteousness (sedaqah) into wormwood. For those who turn justice (mispat) into wormwood and cast righteousness (sedaqah) down the earth.[110]

He again illustrated this when he insisted that justice and righteousness are foundational to cultic practices:

> But let justice (mispat) roll down like waters
> And righteousness (sedaqah) like an ever flowing stream.[111]

Mispat and sedaqah as understood by the prophets are defined within the context of the covenant. The covenant stipulates the relationship that should subsist between God and the Israelites and also among the Israelites

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[107]Isa. 1:21-24 NIV.

[108]Wittenberg, Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God, 149.

[109]Isa. 5: 7.

[110]Amos 6:12; 5:7.

[111]Ibid., 5: 24.

themselves. This kind of relationship is defined by the Decalogue, the Covenant code, the Legal code and the Deuteronomic code. Mispat denotes the rights and duties of the parties to the covenant. The execution of these rights and duties which are stipulated by the covenant become acts of righteousness. Eichrod's observation here is relevant:

> "Justice" mispat is no abstract thing, but denotes the rights and duties of each party arising out of the particular relation of fellowship in which they find themselves. In this way everyone has his own special mispat: the king, the Deity, the priest, the first born son, the Israelite as a group, and so on. The task of righteousness is to render this justice, and claims which it implies, effective in the proper way, so that the good of all those united in the one community of law may be safeguarded.[112]

The prophets' demand for justice and righteousness, was informed by their understanding of their contractual obligation to God and the members of their community. This covenant relationship was rooted in the exodus event. Wittenberg realises this fact when he states that:

> The prophets were concerned with affluence and poverty, because they realise that God's loving acts in history, the liberation from Egypt and the giving of the promised land, imply that God wants free men on free soil who can serve him and their fellow men intentionally and joyfully. This basic relationship is seriously disrupted if landed property is used as a basis for an unscrupulous exploitation of the neighbour, depriving him of his freedom and all means of existence.[113]

With that quotation we will conclude this section on the prophets by reiterating that, the poverty relief model we see in the prophetic diatribe is the "Prophetic-Critical Model." This model constantly evaluates critically the

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[112]W. Eichrodt, Theology of the OT, vol. 1. (London, England: SCM, 1964), 241.

[113]Wittenberg, Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God, 149f.

social fabric and insists on the rule of justice and righteousness. It attacks the structures that create and maintain poverty. It warns the people about God's judgement and the need for repentance for the restoration of God's favour.

THE PSALTER

The prophets were not the only social group who addressed the subject of perversion of justice to the poor and the needy. The psalmists also had something to say. The confessions and prayers of the Psalter were impregnated with the dilemma of the poor and society's responsibility to them.

The poor person suffered injustice because the powerful people in society had despised God's covenant with His people. The enemies of the poor are referred to as the rash'im--the wicked, who were the oppressive social class: "They are greedy for gain; have abundance and yet afflict the widows, the fatherless and the poor."[114]

The hopes of the poor were not realized and injustice continued to reign. In their state of helplessness, they turned to Yahweh in prayer for the vindication of his justice and honor:

> "Because of the oppression of the weak and groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says Yahweh. "I will protect them from those who malign them."[115] But the needy will not always be forgotten nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish.[116]

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[114]Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth, 28; cf. Pss. 10:3-11; 31:16; 35:10; 37:14,16; 94:3-7.

[115]Ps. 12:5.

[116]ps. 9:18.

Yahweh is the one who brings deliverance to the poor, the oppressed and the lowly as they look to Him.[117] Through this self-identification of the poor, the poor person takes on a religious meaning - he is the humble and virtuous person who calls on the name of Yahweh. The "poor" therefore becomes synonymous with the "righteous". They are God's "favourites" because of their social condition and their dependence on Yahweh for protection and sustenance.[118]

The royal psalms see the king as God's vice-gerent who is to uphold justice and care for the poor.[119]

The psalmists, like the prophets, looked beyond the human scene and pointed to the messianic age when the servant of Yahweh would reverse the experience of the poor and the needy and establish His rule which would be characterized by justice and righteousness.[120]

DIVINE FAVOURITES - EVALUATION

Now, why are the poor God's favourites? Has God made a preferential option for the poor just because they are poor? Is the poor person righteous just because of his/her poverty?

In answering these questions Conrad Boerma has observed:

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[117]Ps. 14:5-6; 34:6,9,15,22; 37:14; 74:19; 113:7 132:15-16; 146:7; cf. Heb. 3:13f.

[118]Ps. 14:5.; cf. Isa. 3:15; 14:32. Pss. 25:16; 40:17; 69:29; 86:1; 109:22; cf. 72:2,4,12ff; 132:15; 9:9-10; 10; 5; 7; 40. Also Zeph. 3:12.

[119]Pss. 72:1, 4; cf. 82:1-4; 132:15.

[120]Isa. 11:1-10; cf. 29:19; 41:17; 61:1; Ps. 132:15.

> The fact that the poor man is sometimes - and with increasing frequency--called righteous is not so much to his own credit; he is righteous because his oppressor is so terribly unrighteous. He is therefore righteous in comparison with his oppressor, who withholds his rights.[121]

It seems to me that Boerma's answer is not convincing. How can one become righteous because his/her counterpart "is so terribly unrighteous". Is righteousness a relative term?

The Bible nowhere "glorifies" or "romanticizes" poverty. Indeed, elsewhere the poor are criticised because of their moral deficiency:

> O LORD, do not your eyes look for truth? You struck them, but they felt no pain; you crushed them, but they refused correction. They made their faces harder than stone and refused to repent. I thought, `These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the LORD, the requirements of their God.' So I will go to the leaders and speak to them; surely they know the way of the LORD, the requirements of their God." But with one accord they too had broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds.[122]

Here we see both the lowly and their leaders condemned for their moral laxity.

Isaiah also gives us another interesting example:

> Therefore the Lord will take no pleasure in the young men, nor will he pity the fatherless and widows, for everyone is ungodly and wicked, every mouth speaks vileness.[123]

I propose that the poor (including the alien, the fatherless, the widow) are God's favourites for two reasons: their attitude before God (i.e. their humility) and the very nature of God (i.e. His relationship with humanity).

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[121]Boerma, Rich Man Poor Man, 36.

[122]Jer. 5:3-5 NIV.

[123]Isa. 9:17 NIV.

The poor person is rather an object of exploitation. Realizing his own hopeless condition and also the justice of God in face of human rebellion against His covenant, he turns to God for his vindication. He comes with the attitude of humility and submission to Yahweh whose justice, righteousness and honor are at stake. He cries out to God who has promised to hear the cry of the needy. They remain faithful to God in the midst of a perverse generation. This, in the forensic sense, is accounted to them as "righteousness." Zephaniah, identifies these poor people with the righteous remnant who will survive God's judgement against the nation.[124]

The next reason hinges on the very nature of God. God created humankind in His own image. He wants everyone to have a fair share of the earth's resources which will enhance a life with dignity. Through historical accident, the world is polarized between the rich and the poor; the powerful and the powerless, the "haves" and the "have-nots." The marginalized among humanity bear the greatest evidence of the tragedy of sin. This polarization enables the powerful to exploit the powerless to the extent that those made in the image of God are dehumanized and reduced to the level of beggars and paupers. This situation is an affront to the nature of God and his character as the Merciful One. It is also inimical to human dignity as God's image bearer.

Those without natural helpers are to be helped by the king as God's vice-gerent, and the whole community as God's agents. Where the king and the leaders fail in this

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[124]Zeph. 3:12.

responsibility, God takes over the role of the human helpers. The poor, the alien, the fatherless, the widow therefore become the people of God not because of their spiritual or moral standing before God but rather because of their helplessness and because they suffer injustice and despoilment.[125] On this, Gutierrez states:

> The God who is self-revealed in this preferential love for the poor is a God who loves gratuitously .... A God who would love the poor simply and solely because of their situation of desolation and despoilment, oppression and exploitation, shocks us and thereby shows us that the love of God who is our Father, the God of the kingdom, is absolutely gratuitous.[126]

With that quotation, we will now direct our attention to the examination of the views of the sages on the subject.

PROVERBS

In traditional societies the moral values of the people are communicated through proverbs or expressed in the form of a folk tale with moral connotations. These may serve as prescriptions for action or act as a judgement in times of moral laxity.

The OT sages, like the wise men in many traditional societies, were great and respected men in the Israelite society. Some of them were kings, for example Solomon. The concerns of these wise men were practical and philosophical matters which were understood within an everyday religious environment.

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[125]Cf. Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 27:19.

[126]Gutierrez, "Itinerario," 59, quoted by Victoria Araya, God of the Poor (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987), 58.

God is the source of wisdom and real wisdom is the fear of Him which leads to patterns of behaviour that would preserve the Israelite identity. The instructions, reproofs, and corrections detailed in this book were to lead to acceptable conduct which would merit Yahweh's approval and bring peace and harmony within the community.

Diligence and devotion to work is a necessary requirement if one is going to avoid poverty and experience prosperity.[127] Submission to discipline and correction will avoid poverty and shame and bring honor.[128] The sages advised against pleasure seeking, drunkenness, wantonness, and revelry because they cause poverty and deprivation.[129]

These wisemen observed the power and influence of the wealthy. They have many friends because of their wealth. Their wealth therefore becomes their fortress. The poor man on the other hand, has no influence, no friends, no earthly security. The pride and self-confidence of the wealthy person is indirectly renounced, whereas humility is extolled.[130]

They saw real wealth as one that has come because of God's blessings. Wealth acquired through diligent labours which has Yahweh's blessings "adds no trouble to it," because it is free of God's curse, unlike ill-gotten wealth which leads to death. The sages were critical of ill-gotten

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[127]Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4; 12:11; 14:23; 19:15; 20:13; 21:5; 24:33f. 28:19.

[128]Prov. 13:18.

[129]Prov. 21:17; 23:20f.

[130]Prov. 10:15; 14:20; 18:11; 19:4, 7.

wealth and preferred poverty instead of such ill-acquired wealth. They had a positive evaluation of wealth inasmuch as it was fairly acquired.[131]

The wise men reiterated that one's attitude to the poor determines his/her relationship with Yahweh: "He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God."[132] "He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward him for what he has done."[133]

Liberality towards the poor was highly encouraged.[134] The sages, in their observation, realized that the rich lord it over the poor.[135] They advised them that instead of ruling over the poor, they should be liberal towards them by sharing their wealth with them because this will earn them God's blessings.[136]

The sages were not unfamiliar with the world of the poor. They saw that the poor suffer from exploitation and dispossession. So they warned:

> Do not exploit the poor because they are poor, and do not crush the needy in court, for the LORD will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them.[137]

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[131]Prov. 10:22, cf. 10:2; 11:28; 13:11; 15:6; 19:22; 21: 6; 28:6,8.

[132]Prov. 14:31 NIV; cf. 17:5.

[133]Prov. 19:17 NIV.

[134]Prov. 21:13; 28:27; 31:20.

[135]Prov. 22:7.

[136]Prov. 22:9.

[137]Prov. 22:22 NIV.

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Because the poor have no friends and they are ruled over by the powerful, and suffer injustice, and have neither the voice nor the power to talk for themselves, the king should be their voice:

> Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.[138]

Some scholars believe that the sages were critical of the poor because "the sages viewed poverty as self-incurred.... That the poor are poor because they seek after pleasure and are frivolous, because they ignore instruction and reproof, and because they are too hasty."[139]

Others insist the attitude of the sages against the poor was because they themselves were associated with the ruling class.[140] There is evidence to counteract this view, however. I see their advice on diligence, devotion to duty, and abstinence from drunkenness, as instructions to the whole community. Obviously, as in any society, there were pleasure seekers, frivolous and lazy people. The sages talking from general experience realized the effects of such behaviour. They were not criticizing the poor as such; instead, they were advising all people including the lazy folks to cultivate the sense of devotion and diligence to duty.

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[138]Prov. 31:8-9.

[139]Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth, 27f.

[140]Robert Gordis, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature," Hebrew Union College Annual 18 (1943-44): 77-118, cited by Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth, 109.

Their association with the "elite" and their elitist status afforded them the opportunity to evaluate the ills of the society as a whole. Unlike the prophets who used epithets like:

> "The rich are enemies of the poor." "They are godless, haters, persecutors, men of violence, plunders, usurers." "They fight the poor, lay in wait for them, catch them in a net, seize them in claws, traps, or nets." "They are like lions, snakes, adders, they are arrogant, full of vanity and wicked." "They have a high opinion of themselves; they are scornful and crafty; Their mouth is full of curses,"[141]

as taunts and tirades to show their disapproval of the social system. By contrast the sages, operating from a philosophical and practical frame-work, communicated their disapproval by way of royal diplomacy. By the use of proverbs (parables, discourses, oracles), they were able to express their views on the social situation without incurring the displeasure of their fellow members of the elitist ruling class.

By so doing, the sages, though they had their biases, were able to communicate to all and sundry within the community their moral/religious obligations, violations of which would disrupt the social equilibrium.

The need for justice to the poor and needy, including orphans and widows, was a paramount concern for the Ancient Near Eastern peoples. Israelites were not the only people whose institutions advocated social justice. We will therefore examine some other literature on the subject.

JUSTICE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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[141]Boerma, Rich Man, Poor Man, 36f.

Embedded in the legal codes of the Ancient Near East was the idea of the need for impartiality of the judge towards the helpless (the poor, widow, fatherless). The god is regarded as the promoter of the poor in the ancient law codes of Ur-Nammu (Ca. 2050 B.C.), Hammurabi, and in various other documents of the ANE. The tablets of Ugarit also express this idea.[142]

King Hammurabi saw himself as the vice-gerent of the god Marduk. Part of his responsibility was to establish justice to the needy. Pritchard says that this act of justice refers to:

> a royal act aiming at the restoration of the social equity whenever economic or other changes created discrepancy between the social status established and protected by law, and the needs or claims of certain groups of the population.[143]

About social justice, Hammurabi states:

> I always governed them in peace; I sheltered them in my wisdom. In order that the strong might not oppress the weak that justice might be dealt the orphan (and) the widow. ...I set (it) up in order to administer the law of the land...to give justice to the oppressed.[144]

The social reform movements in ancient Summer (Sumeria) during the third millennium B.C. reversed the social abuses connected with widows and the fatherless.

The virtue of advancing the cause of the widow and fatherless is also found in some Ugaritic myths.[145]

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[142]F.C. Fensham, "jurisprudence," in ISBE, 1982 ed.

[143]J.B. Pritchard, ed., Ancient Near Eastern Texts (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 269.

[144]Ibid., 178.

[145]Ibid., 153, 151, 149.

The striking difference between the pagan social systems of the Ancient Near East and that of Israel was that for Israel there were established institutions that catered for the needs of the marginalized of the Israelite society. Institutions like the "Sabbatical," the "Jubilee," "tithing and gleaning" which were relief and development institutions in OT were non-existent in ANE social systems.

THE INTERTESTAMENTAL TRADITION

The time from Nehemiah to the birth of Christ, about 400 years, is referred to in biblical history as the intertestamental period (c.432-5 B.C.). "The time between the testaments was one of ferment and change--a time of realignment of traditional power blocs and the passing of a Near Eastern cultural tradition that had been dominant for almost 3,000 years."[146] The events, literature, and social forces of this period greatly influenced the NT world. Three of the more significant literary works of this period of oppression and internal strife were the Septuagint, the Apocrypha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. The apocryphal writings are relevant to our subject here, so we will now examine the attitude of some of the writers to poverty and wealth.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN THE INTERTESTAMENAL PERIOD

The social situation in Palestine after the exile was a difficult one. The examination of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature brings into focus complaints, insinuations, castigations, and denunciations of the status

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[146]NIV Study Bible, 1431.

quo. Ben Sira's attack on prevailing injustice for instance, sounds much like the prophetic diatribes

> Like one who kills a son before his father's eyes is the man who offers a sacrifice from the property of the poor. The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; whoever deprives them of it is a man of blood. To take away a neighbour's living is to murder him; to deprive an employee of his wages is to shed blood.[147]

Interestingly, the information one finds in the Wisdom Literature, about the hopeless condition of the poor vis-a-vis the powerful exploiter, is found here also. One also finds denunciation of ill-gotten wealth, and the blessings of wealth acquired through diligence.

> What fellowship has the wolf with the lamb? So the sinner with the godly. What agreement between the hyena and a dog? And what peace between the rich and the poor? As wild as is the lion's prey in the wilderness: so the rich eat up the poor. As the proud hate humility: so does the rich abhor the poor.... Riches are good unto him that has no sin, and poverty is evil in the mouth of the ungodly.[148]
>
> Woe to you, you rich, for you have trusted in your riches, and from your riches shall you depart.... You have committed blasphemy and unrighteousness and have become ready for the day of slaughter.
>
> Woe to you, you sinners, for your riches make you appear like the righteous, But your hearts convict you of being sinners.... Woe to you who devour the finest of wheat, and drink wine in large bowls, and tread underfoot the lowly with your might.... Woe to you who acquire silver and gold in unrighteousness and say: "We have become rich with riches and have possessions; ... and our granaries are full as with water ...." Your riches shall not abide but speedily ascend from you. For you have acquired it all in unrighteousness"....[149]

POVERTY AND WEALTH IN GREEK/HELLENISTIC THOUGHT

[147]Ben Sira 34:20-22.

[148]Ibid.,13:18ff.

[149]Enoch 94:8-97:10.

In early Greek thought poverty had no religious value. It neither gave a person any special standing before the gods nor did it command their special protection. Generosity by the wealthy towards the destitute was considered a virtue because of its benefit to society; it was not considered as an ethical or religious act as such. There were established public institutions which cared for the poor. Poverty in later Greek philosophy was regarded by some as a favourable prerequisite for virtue. The highest goal in life was that one should live virtuously irrespective of all natural conditions--wealth or destitution.

There was no separation between external wealth and virtue in Homer. Nobility and wealth became identical. The gods controlled the gain or loss of wealth (nobility). Plato and Aristotle did not see any intrinsic value in riches. The value of wealth was determined on the basis of its service to society. They were to be rejected if they did not build up the community (polis).[150]

Aristotle limited wealth to material possessions and admitted that it could be put to positive or negative use. Plato, on the other hand, distinguished between material riches and true riches, which had three components: wisdom, virtue and culture.[151]

Later Greek philosophers, the Stoics, despised wealth because it made a person dependent upon material things,

[150]Hauck and Kasch, "πλουτος ," in TDNT, 1968 ed.; cf. F. Selter, "πλουτος ," in DNTT, 1986 ed.

[151]Ibid.

thus preventing him/her from relying on the only sure support, which is the person himself. They thought poverty made one wise, not riches.[152]

CONCLUSIONS

We started by asserting that the phenomenon of poverty can only be understood in an historical socio-economic context and that our vocabulary for poverty (chapter two) should be understood within this context.

It has also been asserted that there was plenitude of resources in the original creation. The Fall affected the productivity of the land, as well as means of production and distribution. We have indicated that the purpose of the law was to ensure a just and equitable relationship between God and man on the one hand, and man and man on the other. We have suggested that the Exodus event was the demonstration of God's righteousness when He brought retributive justice against the Egyptians, and distributive justice in favour of the oppressed Israel.

What was to control the social ethics and morality of the Israelites was the remembrance of their own history (the Exodus) and their understanding of the Law as an expression of God's holiness. The Mosaic legislation, we intimated, was the logical outflow of the Decalogue. The law showed Israel the uniqueness of Yahweh and their own uniqueness. The institution of the monarchy was placed within the context of the Law to show the Israelites that they were not to be like the surrounding nations who,

[152]Hauck and Kasch, "πλουτος, " in TDNT.

evidently, were not following the moral and ethical expressions of Yahweh. Israel tragically violated the law which demanded just and equitable social relations. This failure require the prophetic order whose cry for justice was based on the prophets' understanding of the covenant.

We have noted that the OT does not condemn riches per se, for they are seen as the blessings of Yahweh. What it condemns is ill-gotten wealth--riches exacted at the expense of justice to the poor and the needy. Our study has also led us to conclude that poverty is seen as a scandalous condition which needs to be abolished, and that the perpetrators of poverty are the enemies of God. Spiritual poverty, an attitude of dependence upon Yahweh on the other hand, is seen as an attitude to be cultivated.

The statement that "the poor will always be with you" (Dt. 15:11; cf. Matt. 26:11; Mk. 14:7; Jn. 12: 28) was not meant to acquiesce to the phenomena. Rather, it was meant to solicit their generosity towards the disadvantaged of society. The uncertainties of life and variations among humans result in some people becoming poor. Because of this, Yahweh challenges His people to generosity so that "there should be no poor among you" (Dt.15:4).

Our examination of the Mosaic legislation has yielded the conclusion that God established the institution of the Jubilee, the Sabbatical, Tithing and Gleaning in order to eliminate poverty or at least break the poverty cycle within the Tribes of Yahweh. However, the non-application of these institutions caused poverty and oppression to become ingrained in the Israelite community. The prophets and the

Psalter therefore pointed to the day of the Servant of Yahweh, who would bring justice to the needy. And this was the expectation of the "poor of Yahweh"--the faithful remnant. This then leads us to the next subject of this thesis--the NT theology of poverty.

CHAPTER 4

NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY OF POVERTY

Social Background of the NT

Our understanding of the NT theology of poverty will be inadequate without a firm understanding of its sociological background. It is within this background that we capture the meaning of the ptochos and penes, terms used by the NT writers to denote poverty.

When Jerusalem fell to Babylon, its most influential classes (the intellectual, political and economic groups) were banished to Babylon. "The poorest of the land" (daalat 'am-ha ares) were left behind. They lived in abject poverty and disillusionment.[1]

The period of the resettlement saw renewed tensions between the wealthy landowners on the one hand and the peasant farmers and landless tenants on the other. Their resettlement came during a period of poor harvest and partial crops. This worsened the problem of the poor as many were rendered destitute. These people had no choice other than to mortgage their fields in order to be able to buy grain, and also to meet their tax obligation to Persia. Many lost their land as a result; others fell into slavery because of their debts. To correct the situation, Nehemiah instituted his economic reforms based on the covenant.[2]

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[1]2Kgs. 24: 14; 25:12; Jer: 40:7; cf. Sigfried Hermann, History of Israel in OT Times (London, England: SCM, 1975), 279.

[2]Neh. 5:1-13; A. D. Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.; John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 365; cf. Hag. 1:6,9-11; 2:15-17.

When Alexander the Great conquered Persia and Greece became the dominant world power, he looted the treasuries of the Persian empire and established colonial policies over the conquered territories. Greek became the language of commerce and the Hellenistic merchants and businessmen took advantage of this. Alexander's death in 323 BC saw a division of the Middle East between Seleucus I and Ptolemy, his two Greek generals. The former took Syria and the latter took Egypt. Palestine, however, became a buffer zone, as both generals claimed it.[3] "It changed hands between them five times in 22 years."[4] This warfare which followed Alexander's death dissipated the wealth of Greek and Asian cities. The countryside was placed under severe economic pressure. "Slave trade increased, and the competition with slave labor drove down the wages of the free."[5] The rule of Simon Maccabees realized new hope for the poor and the needy - in the context of God's promise, as the following indicates:

> Then did they till their ground in peace, and the earth gave her increase, and the trees of the field their fruit.... He provided victuals for the cities.... He made peace in the land and Israel rejoiced with great joy.... Moreover, he strengthened all those of his people that were brought low....[6]

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[3]Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[4]Alice Parmelee, A History of the People of Israel (Wilton, Connecticut: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1973), 98.

[5]Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[6] 1 Macc. 14:8-15; cf. Mic. 4:4; Verhey, "Poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

Then came the days of Roman domination and their oppression created once again a gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots," as the following depicts:

> the land was unproductive and there were few natural resources. Those who rented land stood the risk in an unproductive year of loosing to the land owners their goods or, if it became necessary to indenture themselves, their freedom. Small farmers were threatened with the appropriation of their land by the Romans if they were unable to pay the tribute. The result was an abundance of fugitive slaves, and miserable free working men.[7]

Jerusalem saw an extravagant display of wealth by the wealthy merchants, land owners, and the priestly aristocracy while at the same time there was a large group of people languishing in poverty and obscurity.

During the rule of the Hasmonean priest-kings John Hyrcanus (135-104 BC) and his successors, Israel again lapsed into "the old conflicts between covenant law and royal despotism with its concentration of wealth in a Jerusalem aristocracy."[8] In the countryside, the latifundia of the rich city agriculturalists were managed by slaves or paid administrators.[9] "This development was due to the fact that more and more free peasants in the countryside lost their holdings, and lived in the cities in a dependent position."[10]

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[7]David Rhoads, Israel In Revolution, 6-74 c.e.: A Political History Based on the Writings of Josephus (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 81.

[8]Verhey, "poverty," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[9]H. E. Von Waldow, "Social Responsibility in Israel" Catholic Biblical Quarterly 32 (April 1970): 197.

[10]Ibid.; cf. Ronald de Vaux, Ancient Israel (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 72ff., 166ff.

Stegeman[11], using different sources, lists the following as some of the causes of the pauperization of large segments of the Palestinian population.

1. When Pompey subdued Judea in 63 B.C. he radically reorganized Palestine to the extent that the Jews were deprived of their coastal cities and the Dekapolis. This severely curtailed trade, and created a great number of dispossessed farmers.

2. Herod the Great expropriated large farmlands from the people which were then sold to some wealthy land owners. This led to a huge concentration of land in the hands of a few individuals. The resultant effect was that a great number of dependant farmers were created.

3. Heavy taxation was imposed on the people by the Herodian dynasty and the Roman overlords. This caused disaffection and resistance among the impoverished peasants and tenant farmers.

4. Crop failures badly affected the small farmers and tenants and artisans since this was the source of income for those who lived in the rural areas.

With the foregoing background we will proceed to discuss the NT teaching on poverty.

NT TEACHING

The hopelessness of the poor person's condition caused by the sins of society called for a new system of rule that would be characterized by justice and righteousness. The OT prophets pointed the people to the day when the Servant of Yahweh would appear on the human scene and bring a just and

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[11]W. Stegemann, The Gospel and the Poor (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 19f.

righteous rule.[12] This was the expectation of the poor of Yahweh.

Looking critically at the social tension that existed in the intertestamental period (and this cannot be separated from the tension that existed during the birth and ministry of Jesus), one can conclude that the use of ptochos for poverty in the NT has its basis in the real life situation of the people in question: these were people who were really desperately poor, wretched, and disillusioned about their society and therefore looking for help. In addressing the situation, the NT authors use of ptochos was informed by two sources: the classical Greek understanding as well as the OT understanding of the poor.

The NT documents present Jesus as the hope of the poor - those that were spiritually poor as well as socially destitute and therefore despondent.

According to Matthew, Jesus made this "preferential option"[13] for the poor - the hungry, the thirsty, the strangers (homeless and defenseless), the destitute, and the imprisoned when He reiterated that one's attitude towards these designated people would form the basis for

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[12]Isa. 11:1ff; 29:18-21; 32:3; 35:5-6; 42:1-7; 61:1f.

[13] This term was coined during the second General Conference of Latin American Bishops, commonly referred to as the Medellin Conference. This was held in 1968 in Medellin, Colombia. This was ratified in 1979 during the third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, called the Puebla Conference. The Latin American Liberation theologians adopted it as the basic characteristic of theologizing within the context of Latin America.

one's admission into His eternal kingdom of bliss, justice and righteousness.[14]

Luke's emphasis on the subject of poverty and wealth is greater than Matthew's. Luke and James are the NT writers in whose works the words "poor" and "rich" occur most frequently.[15]

The theme of the "great reversal," the expectations of the OT and the intertestamental apocalyptic writers, is clearly expressed by Luke right at the beginning of his Gospel. He begins with the magnificat (Mary's hymn of praise),[16] associated with Hanna's hymn.[17] Here we see a clear expression of the reversal of things--the rich oppressors, the powerful and the arrogant come under serious attack/criticism and priority is given to the poor, the lowly, and the hungry: "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble things. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty."[18]

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[14]Matt. 25:31-46. Theologians of different traditions have tried to assign all sorts of meaning to "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine" (v.40). See for example, Donald Carson's commentary on Matthew in the Expositors Bible Commentary ed. by F.E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1984). Whatever meaning one makes out of this, what is really crucial is that, in the discourse (Matt. 25:31-46), Jesus was referring to a real people who are oppressed and therefore need real material help.

[15]"Rich" occurs 28 times in the NT. It occurs 11 times in Luke and 5 times in James. "Poor" occurs 34 times in the NT. Luke has 10 and James 4.

[16]Lk. 1:46-55.

[17]1 Sam. 2:1-10 (v.8).

[18]Lk. 1:46-55.

Jesus' quotation of Isaiah's prophecy recorded by Luke[19] confirmed His ministry as the fulfillment of the messianic expectations. When John the Baptist cast doubt upon his mission, He vindicated His messianic mission by appealing to the events that had been taking place in His ministry.

> At that time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So He replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."[20]

By this testimonial, Jesus put His ministry in the context of OT expectations in which all human misfortunes would be reversed by the Messiah. The good news, from Luke's perspective, is therefore the announcement that the realm which would reverse all injustices has become a reality in the history of humankind. The reversal is predicated on a fundamental historical fact that the root cause of all human injustices and misery (sin) has been dealt with. Just as the Jubilee (reversal of social disequilibrium) was predicated on the Day of Atonement[21] (reversal of all the sins of Israel), so also Isaiah's prophecy and Luke's announcement of the arrival of the eschatological Jubilee are predicated upon the forgiveness of sin. This is to say that the basis for the reversal of all injustices is the forgiveness of sin.

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[19]Lk. 4:18f; cf Isa. 61:1ff.

[20]Lk. 7:21ff; cf Matt. 11:5f.

[21]Lev. 25:8ff.; cf. Lev. 16:1ff.

The coming of the Servant of Yahweh has reversed the despicable nature of human history. Now "pollution" in the universe is removed (Col. 1:20). Man can enter into new relationship with God and enjoy the fullness of His blessings (Col.1:21-23). The expected Messiah has come! And the good news is that He has established His victory over the Devil and has restored cosmic harmony. The first fruits of the final destruction of evil are now with us. The fetters of the strong man (the Devil) are broken and captives are being liberated! The kingdom is now a "present reality attacking evil, driving out demons, healing the sick, and forging new relationships of trust between alienated groups."[22] But before the final realization of the effects of the work of the Messiah, "the Devil still roars even while Christ is already Lord."[23]

Luke in his beatitudes calls down blessings on those who are socio-economically poor. They are blessed because at the end time their condition will be reversed. At the same time he calls down woes upon the rich and the powerful. Woes are pronounced against them because, at the end time they will suffer loss.[24]

Matthew in his beatitudes stresses the spiritual and moral condition of the poor. The poor in spirit are the meek, those who hunger and thirst for the establishment of

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[22]Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, "God's intention for the World," in The Church in Response to Human Need, eds. V. Samuel and C. Sugden (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Eerdmans, 1987), 132.

[23]Ibid., 137.

[24]Lk. 6:20ff.

God's righteousness and justice in a perverse society.[25] Matthew stresses the spiritual disposition of the disciples whereas Luke stresses the socio-economic condition of the same disciples. Jesus was addressing the very same disciples but Matthew and Luke slanted the material to meet their respective interests.

Holwerda's balanced comments on the relationship between Luke's "poor" and Matthew's "poor in spirit" are helpful here:

> Both Matthew and Luke... have the same persons in view, for the poor are the disciples of Jesus, who, like the anawim of OT, know real poverty and oppression, but who as the humble and meek look to the Lord for their salvation. Thus interpretations of the "poor" that understand Matthew in exclusively spiritual categories or Luke in exclusively material categories overlook the anawim piety and status that is the background for both.[26]

The messianic kinship has two facets in the now and the eschaton (the end time): the "yet" and the "not-yet." Now the cancellation of sin has been made[27] and the eschatological year of Jubilee has been inaugurated, though the full benefits of the reign of the Messiah are not yet fully actualized. The complete reversal of the condition of the poor is still awaited.

The synoptics teach that discipleship calls for generosity to the poor.[28] Luke condemns the insensitivity

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[25]Mt. 5:3ff.

[26]Holwerda, "poor," in ISBE, 1986 ed.

[27]Lk. 24:47.

[28]Mt. 19:16-22; Mk. 10:17-22; Lk. 18:18-23.

of the rich towards the material needs of the poor. This insensitivity could deprive the rich of God's eternal bliss.

Though the term ptochos does not occur in Acts, the book teaches that the early church seriously implemented the teachings of Jesus on poverty and wealth. The records show that the infant church enjoyed the spirit of free sharing to the extent that there was no needy person among them:

> All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as he had need.[29]

> All the believers were in one heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy person among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.[30]

These believers did not see property as an individual possession to be lavishly squandered. Neither did they see it as a tool for oppressing the poor. Rather, wealth was seen as a possession to be used for the benefit of the entire community.

PAUL AND THE POOR

Some have suggested that Paul did not seem to have been so occupied with the subject of poverty and wealth. Unlike the Gospels where the poor are blessed and the rich and their corrupt riches condemned, and Acts where communal

[29]Acts 2:44-45.

[30]Acts 4:32-35.

sharing of possessions was the norm, Paul seemed to have had different concerns. Hengel, commenting on this, states:

> the tension of the expectation of an imminent end was relaxed in favour of the task of worldwide mission; and secondly, in the long run the form of love communion practiced in Jerusalem was just not possible. It was impossible to maintain a sharing of goods in a free form, without the kind of fixed organizations and common production which we find, say, at Qumran.[31]

Paul, however, was not at all that ambivalent on the subject of poverty and wealth as some would have us believe. He warned about the dangers and evils of riches. He argued that godliness is not a means to riches, and suggested that godliness with contentment is the greatest gain. Paul taught that the believer should be content with the possession of food, clothing, and shelter.[32]

In the epistle to the Corinthian church, Paul also condemns the class struggle between the "haves" and the "have-nots." He calls for moderation and sensitivity toward one another.[33] To establish that Paul was not ambivalent on the subject of injustice by the rich against the poor, we will now direct our attention to the exegetical study of 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

EXCURSUS: ABUSE AT THE LORD'S SUPPER (1 COR. 11:17-34)

Introduction

The first epistle to the Corinthians was an occasional response to some conflicts that had emerged in the

[31] Martin Hengel, Property and Riches (London, England: SCM, 1974), 35.

[32]1 Tim. 6: 5ff.

[33]1 Cor. 1:26-29; 11:17-34.

Corinthian church between Paul's departure from the city (ca. A.D. 52) and the writing of the letter under review (ca. AD 55). The letter was apparently written in Ephesus in response to a verbal report from Chloe's household (1:11 cf. 16:17) and a letter from the Corinthian church (7:1ff).

Professor Fee posits the following as the social set up of the Church:

> the picture that emerges is one of a predominantly Gentile community, the majority of whom were at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, although there were two or three wealthy families. As former pagans they brought to the Christian faith a Hellenistic worldview and attitude towards ethical behaviour. Although they were the Christian church in Corinth, an inordinate amount of Corinth was yet in them, emerging in a number of attitudes and behaviour that required radical surgery without killing the patient.[34]

Our aim here is to examine the nature of the problem at the Lord's supper and Paul's theological treatise to combat it. This will enable us to see that Paul, like the OT prophets and Jesus, was deeply concerned about justice to the poor and needy.

The Nature of the Problem

The precise details of the abuse of the Lord's supper are not certain. The ambiguity, as Fee has rightly pointed out, lies both in Paul's language[35] and the cultural gap between the Greco-Roman world and our world. On the

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[34]Gordon D. Fee, First Corinthians, publication of the New International Commentary on the NT, gen. ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 4.

[35]The terms that pose difficulty are "go ahead with his own supper", (v.20) "wait for/receive, accept, welcome, one another" (v.33), "having houses to eat and drink in" (v.22), and "eat at home" (v.34). Cf. Fee, First Corinthians, 533.

multifaceted nature of the problem, Fee provides the following insights:

> First, since the church gathered for such meals in the homes of the rich, most likely the host was also the patron of the meal (cf. Rom. 16:23). Second, archeology has shown rather conclusively that the dining room (the triclinium) in such homes would scarcely accommodate many guests;[36] the majority therefore would eat in the atrium (the somewhat larger entry "courtyard"), which would still seat only 30 to 50 guests on the average. These material realities are complicated by a variety of sociological factors. In a class-conscious society such as Roman Corinth would have been, it would be sociologically natural for the host to invite those of his/her own class to eat in the triclinium, while the others would eat in the atrium. Furthermore, it is probable that the language "one's own supper" (v.21) refers to the eating of "private meals" by the wealthy, in which at the common meal of the Lord's supper they ate either their own portions or perhaps privileged portions that were not made available to the "have-nots." This is further complicated by the question of the relationship of this "private supper" to the Lord's Supper, especially in light of the language "after supper" for the blessing of the cup (v.25). Did the wealthy eat their "private meal" before or in conjunction with the eating of the bread that constituted the Lord's Supper? And how did it affect "those who have nothing?"[37]

The precise details of the abuse of the Lord's Supper may not be certain. However, we may conclude from the text that the abuse had two dimensions--horizontal and vertical (the abuse of the poor and the abuse of the Lord). Our historical reconstruction yields to the following additional factors: (1) the phenomenon of cultic meals as part of worship in antiquity, and (2) evidence from Acts 2:42, 46;

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[36]"The triclinia average about 36 square meters (about 18x18ft.) [19 1/2 x 19 1/2]. If they actually reclined (triclinium = a table with three sides on which to recline) at such meals, there would be room for about 9 to 12 guests at table" (Fee, First Corinthians, 533).

[37]Fee, First Corinthians, 533f.

20:7, 11, and Jude 12, would seem to suggest that the "Lord's Supper was most likely eaten as, or in conjunction with, such a cultic meal."[38]

The abuse of the Poor 11:17-22

The key terms here are:

1. "to assemble together" (vv.17, 18)
2. "to eat" (vv.20-22)
3. "divisions/factions among you" (vv.18-19; cf.21, 22).

As the Corinthian believers assembled together to eat the Lord's Supper, instead of being in fellowship (koinonia) of mutual care, they were divided along sociological lines.

The verb sunerchomai, "come together," "gather together; "assemble," "meet" is repeated five times in verses 17-22 and 33-34. The other forms of this word are again used in 14:23, 26 to mean the assembling of the believers for worship. As at this time, sunerchomai, seems to have probably become a semi-technical term for the gathering together of God's people for worship.[39] Their problem was their failure to let their gathering reflect the real fellowship of believers (koinonia). The indictment against them is that when they came together as a church, there were divisions among them. This division, unlike the previous one which was around some personalities, was along sociological lines. Because of this, Paul refuses to admit that they were having the Lord's Supper at all in as much as "each one goes ahead with his own supper," and "one remains

[38]Ibid., 532.

[39]Ibid., 536.

hungry, (whereas) another gets drunk (or is overfed)" (v.20).

Three interpretations of the problem have been suggested:[40]

1. The advocates of one school of thought place emphasis on "each one" (idion) and claim that the problem at stake was that of extreme individualism in which each one enjoyed his own supper instead of the Lord's Supper. The weakness of this position is that it fails to account for the sociological issues of "some being hungry," and "in despising those who have nothing."
2. Another school of thought stresses the verb prolambanei come before hand). This verb is used in conjunction with the verb ekdechomai (wait for) in v.33 to mean that some, apparently the rich, ate their own sumptuous meals before those "below" were able to arrive.
3. The third view is represented by Theissen and others who posit that the real problem was the failure of the "haves" to share their food with the "have nots" among them. Theissen translates the word idion (one's own, belonging to one, personal) as "private" and postulates that the rich were eating their sumptuous private meals at the Lord's Supper, at an earlier starting time. And in so doing, they had humiliated the "have-nots."[41]
4. Winter holds a modified form of the third view above. From the study of prolambano (v.21) and ekdechomai (v.33),

[40]Ibid.

[41]G. Theissen, The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 145-174.

he argues that prolambano here means to "devour" instead of "take beforehand." "Devour" points to their selfish eating of their own food in front of the "have nots" (11:22). He translates ekdechomai here as "receive" with hospitality (i.e., sharing their food with the poor) instead of "wait."[42]

While we may not be accurate in our historical reconstruction of the problem, we may, however, be sure that the "haves" were displaying a habit that was inconsistent with the Jesus movement, in that their conduct humiliated the "have nots." This was seen as inimical to the dignity of God's image bearers, and in so doing they were treating the Lord's Body disrespectfully.

Abuse of the Lord (11:23-26)

For the Corinthians to develop a proper mind set Paul was to remind them of the historical grounding of the ritual (sacrament) tradition which they had preserved but whose significance they had forgotten.

Dr. Wood has rightly pointed out that the remembrance motif is the key to the understanding of Paul's solution to the problem. This motif stresses the goal, intention, and result of the death of Christ[43]

The first aspect of the remembrance starts with the "bread" identified as Christ's body "which is for you ... do this in remembrance of me" (11:23, 24). The second aspect

[42]B.W. Winter, "The Lord's Supper at Corinth: An Alternative Reconstruction," Reformed Theological Review 37 (1978): 73-82.

[43]C. Wood, "Paul and the Poor," (unpublished essay) 16ff.

of the remembrance deals with the cup,"... the new covenant in my blood... do this in remembrance of me" (11:25).

Paul's primary concern in the matter is spelt out in the sacrament tradition with the respective remembrance motif (11:23b,24,25) and his interpretive gloss (11.26). The patterns of behaviour of the powerful at the Lord's table humiliated the powerless. By so doing, the bond of fellowship of the believers which Christ established by His life and death was despised. Because of the self-aggrandizement of the rich, they were not fulfilling their missionary mandate-- "proclaiming of the Lord's death until he comes". Commenting on the behaviour of the rich vis-a-vis the Lord's supper, Professor Fee observes that

> By their going ahead with their own private meal, and thereby humiliating the "have-nots," the wealthy have also apparently lost touch with the meaning of the Lord's supper itself. The words of the institution are repeated to remind them of why they celebrate such a meal, a reason that goes back to Jesus himself. They do this to "remember him" in a special way, namely to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." Their actions are obviously not in keeping with the essence of that proclamation.[44] It seems certain that their version of the meal is less than satisfactory right at this point, probably not so much because they were not "thinking on Christ" properly, or failing to be right in communion with Him, but because by their abuse of one another they were negating the very point of that death- to create a new people for his name, in which the old distinction based on human fallenness no longer obtain.[45]

Paul's insertion of the sacrament tradition, with reference to the "new covenant in His blood" points out to the Corinthians that the ultimate aim of the death of Christ is to establish a community of redeemed people, as was God's

[44]Fee, First Corinthians, 547.

[45]Ibid., 557.

covenant with Israel, by mutual care and availability one for another.[46]

The remembrance motif (bread-blood) was inserted to counteract the behaviour of the rich Corinthians in that the bread motif urges them to emulate the self-giving, others-oriented life of Jesus. The blood-covenant motif brings them back to God's central missiological activity--the formation of a community of people, with love, justice, and mutual concern, based on the blood of the new covenant, as their communal ethos. The two remembrance motifs point to proclamation by word and deed of the significance of Christ's death and that such proclamation points to the eschaton, when Christ will establish His perfect society.

Solution to the Problem: Discern the Body, Wait for One Another (11:27-34).

The impropriety of the Corinthians had resulted in a pollution within the divided community. The ally of the poor (God) took sides with the "have-nots" against the "haves." As in the Exodus, God inflicted judgment on the proud and powerful. Some were sick, others were weak, and tragically some had even suffered death (1 Cor.11:30). This all happened because of the unworthy manner in which the rich approached the Lord's table. The warning still stands: "... whoever eats ...in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the Lord's table" (1 Cor. 11: 27). Paul's intention here "is to correct the first abuse by warning them of the dire consequences if they persist in behaviour at the Supper that reflects failure to understand its true

[46]Wood, "Paul and the Poor," 21.

nature."[47] The indictment against the rich was that they were partaking of the Lord's supper in an "unworthy manner", This term is the translation of the adverb (anaxios), a NT hapax legomenon. This has been translated by some as "unworthily."[48] This translation makes the verb more applicable to the one doing the eating than the manner in which it is being done. That is to say, this translation looks at the inward, individual attitude, instead of a behaviour that has external repercussions. Writing on the adverse effects of this kind of translation on English-speaking Christians, Dr. Fee observes:

> This is especially true in the more pietistic sectors of the Protestant tradition. People are "unworthy" if they have any sin in their lives, or have committed sins during the past week. This in turn resulted in reading v.28 personally and introspectively, so that the purpose of one's self-examination was to become worthy of the Table, lest one come under judgement. The tragedy of such an interpretation for countless thousands, both in terms of a foreboding of the Table and guilt of perhaps having partaken unworthily, is incalculable.[49]

The evidence, however, seems to suggest that Paul's concern here was the behaviour of the Corinthian believers when they came together as a church (11:17-20; 33, 34). The manner in which the Lord's supper was observed seems to be Paul's major preoccupation (vv. 20-22). Here Paul reprimands the believers for the improper, outward, corporate behaviour of the rich towards the "underdogs"

[47]Fee, First Corinthians, 559.

[48]The Old KJV, for instance, adopts this translation. Interestingly the NKJV adopted the more favourable translation--"in an unworthy manner."

[49]Fee, First Corinthians, 560 n.10.

when they gathered together. The evidence seems to strongly support that what Paul was addressing was social relations among members of the corporate body, that is, the relationship between the rich and secure believers vis-a-vis the poor and defenseless believers.

Their unworthy patterns of behaviour had brought pollution. To reverse this, and insure the peace and well-being of the community, they were told to adopt patterns of social behaviour that befit their call as the Community of the King.

The proper understanding of the Lord's Supper demands a proper discernment of the body. That is, they were to distinguish acceptable conduct that would reinforce the corporate solidarity of the body based on the new covenant--the life and death of Jesus.

The specific application of this discernment principle is that when they come together to eat they should "receive" ("accept," "welcome," "wait for," et cetera) each other. If they wanted to eat their "privileged lot", then in order not to humiliate the "have-nots" and incur further punishment, they should eat their private meals at home.

Paul's understanding of the new covenant led him to a firm belief in community ethics whereby he sees that the blood of Jesus not only reconciles humans with God but also humans with humans--the formation of a new Christo-centric community in which the feelings of the poor and the needy, the marginalized of society, are given proper consideration. Any Christian community, that observes the Lord's Supper but fails to realize this becomes guilty of

sinning against the "body and the blood of the Lord" (1 Cor.11:27).

Paul and the Poor: Further Considerations

The apostle Paul was also concerned about the welfare of widows (1 Tim. 5:3-17), strangers, and other marginal groups (Heb. 13:2). He mentions "extreme poverty" in the Macedonian churches and the generosity towards the saints (2 Cor. 8:1 ff). He espouses the greatest thesis on the supreme and inescapable incentive for Christian generosity--"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

All the foregoing evidence combines to affirm that Paul was concerned about the issue of poverty and riches. He placed his teaching in the context of the biblical tradition--God is the ally and champion of the poor and needy. All his followers, by vocation, are required to take up this option.

JAMES AND THE POOR

James' attitude towards poverty and riches was directly informed by three sources--the OT, the Intertestamental, and Jesus' traditions;

He strongly condemns the insensitivity of the rich toward the poor, and protests against prejudice against the poor in favour of the rich.[50] The Apostle James declares that the pure and true religion is the one that is sensitive to the needs of the poor and the underprivileged class. The

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[50]Jam. 2:1-13.

true religionist is therefore the one that shows solidarity with the poor and the needy. He declares

> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.[51]

James is highly condemnatory of the rich oppressors. The apostle, like the OT prophets, roots his judgement in the covenant tradition.[52] He takes up the case of the poor, the exploited, and the oppressed class. These were the poor working on the large commercial farms owned by the rich agriculturalists.[53] Wealth acquired through exploitation is denounced. He announces that the wailing of the poor because of their oppression has reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts.

The wantonness and revelry of the rich at the expense of the powerless poor are condemned. James goes beyond Lev. 19:13 and sees the mistreatment of the poor as murder. By equating exploitation and oppression with murder, James seems to have been influenced by the intertestamental teaching on the withholding of workers' emoluments: to take away a neighbour's living is to murder him: to deprive an employee of his wages is to shed blood (Sir.34:22; cf. 1 Enoch. 96:5).

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[51]Jam. 1:27.

[52]Lev. 19:13; Dt. 24:14-15; Mal.3:5.

[53]Jam. 5:4-6. The Gk. choras which designates large tracts of farms or lands, or a large estate. See J.H. Ropes, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 288; cf. Maynard-Reid, Poverty and Wealth, 85.

CONCLUSION

We stated that the NT writers used words which vividly depicted the condition of the poor. The ptochos are the destitute, sick, poorly clothed, and the disadvantaged of society; one dependent on others for his existence. We have pointed out that the NT writers did not condone material poverty and that the issue of poverty was a serious social problem during the time of Jesus. Jesus made a stand on the issue when He placed His ministry within the context of the Jubilee.[54]

The central thrust of the NT message is that the society God wants for His people is one characterized by justice and righteousness. Any infringement on what is just and right (defined within the context of the new covenant) is an affront to the justice and righteousness of God. The society that God wills for His people is the one built on mutual support for one another--the strong supporting the weak (1 Jn. 3: 17-20; Gal. 6:2; Ro. 15: 1). The oppression of the weak by the powerful is a violation of God's will. When this develops among the people of the Messianic community, they forfeit their vocation and right to exist under His banner.

The early Jesus movement took His teachings on support for the poor and the needy seriously; they developed what may be called the communal, koinonia, contentment/spirit-quality models for the relief of poverty.

Another model which is directly related to the above models is the prophetic consciousness model. This model

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[54]See Lk. 4:18; cf. Isa. 61; 11:4; 42.

ensures that the structures that undermine the equality-justice-righteousness motif of the communal ethos are checked constantly.

The development of these models will occupy our attention in later chapters.

Both the OT and the NT condemn riches that are exacted at the expense of the powerless. Poverty is not condoned by the biblical writers. It is seen as a scandalous condition which needs to be abolished. Those who perpetrate poverty are enemies of God--the ally of the poor.

Riches are to be acquired legitimately and to be used for the service of humankind to the glory of the God of creation. Wealth could be either good or bad depending on how it is acquired and how it is used.

CHAPTER 5

POVERTY RELIEF MODELS

Prolegomena

One of the values of the African traditional communities is the establishment of justice and equity. The parameters of justice and equity are assumed to have been defined and handed down by the tribal elders. The traditional rulers therefore have the responsibility of ensuring that stability is established and maintained in their various areas of jurisdiction, through a just and equitable rule of the leaders and also a just and equitable behaviour of the subjects. It is the ruler's responsibility to protect the members of the community. A situation of oppression and deprivation is considered abnormal.[1]

The corporate community is a moral community; behaviour within the group is prescribed by relationship. Morality is defined by the mores, the manners and customs of the community. Good morality is seen as having a good relationship with all people, irrespective of status. This is the ethos of morality within the corporate institution. Conformity to the expectations of the community is rewarded by praise and honour. Deviants are punished, either by penalty, the imposition of fines, ridicule, social disapproval or by means of ostracizing.

Since individuals within the community would not like to be ostracized, they endeavour to stay within the norms of

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[1]Kwesi Dickson, Theology in Africa (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984), 135.

the society. A high premium is placed on "corporate existence;" isolation from one's family, clan, or tribe is considered as cutting one off from a life-sustaining organ. Everyone therefore does his/her best to fulfil his/her obligations to the community. Professor Kofi Opoku's comments here are relevant:

> Society therefore is a series of interrelationships in which each one contributes to the welfare and stability of the community, and avoids that which is disruptive to the community's life.[2]

Some maintenance mechanisms are enshrined in the community's code of ethics that prevent the ruler from enslaving his people. The African concept of the "community" encourages property acquisition and utilization of wealth for the benefit of all the members of the community.[3] Extremes of wealth and poverty are abnormal in the community. Destitution of members of the community is abhorred. The system of social differentiation based on economic factors is quite alien[4]. Status in the family, clan or tribe is determined by position not by possession. Position on the other hand, is determined by honour, age, sex, and legitimate wealth. Individual property ownership is not acquired to the detriment of the members of the larger community of which the individual is a part.[5]

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[2]Kofi Asare Opoku, West African Traditional Religion (Accra: PEP International, 1978), 162.

[3]Julius Nyerere, Ujamaa - Essays in Socialism (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1974), 1ff; cf. Kwesi Dickson, Theology in Africa, 71, 135.

[4]Alyward Shorter, ed., African Christian Spirituality (London, : Geoffrey Chapman, 1978), 27.

[5]Dickson, Theology in Africa, 71.

Modern Africa has seen a complete breakdown of some of these moral values. In the great majority of cases, the leaders of independent African countries have not always upheld justice and righteousness. To a large extent they have become instruments of oppression. One of the main goals for the struggle for political emancipation was to achieve economic development and prosperity. Several factors have made this goal elusive. Exploitation by foreign powers and neo-colonialism, which is seen in various ugly forms, are some of the external factors which have militated against the realization of this goal. The incessant and unnecessary wars within the continent, the effects of the Sahel drought, the economic mismanagement and misappropriation of public funds by the ruling powers and their associates; all have compounded the economic and social misfortunes that have dampened the euphoria of independence.

For the theological task in Africa to be relevant, it can not be too strongly emphasized that a failure to consider this "is not only to have a less than authentic cultural approach, but also to ignore the spirit of the Scriptures which demonstrate again and again God's concern for the poor and the oppressed."[6]

Hitherto, "The Church in Africa, with its strong colonial legacy and conservative outlook, has not developed a theology which is comprehensive, realistic and biblical enough to deal with the socio-political and economic systems and issues that have become the scourge of post-

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[6]Ibid., 136.

colonial Africa."[7] African theologians have mainly been engaged in what Professor Dickson calls "the cultural battle." This battle was necessary due to Africa's colonial history and the dehumanizing experience of her children as beasts of burden. This battle was important because it basically defined the selfhood of the African.

But can we say "bravo!" to the theological champions of this task, and at the same time invite them to join the tradition of the prophets of old, to address the economic and political "slavery" and "colonization" and the status of women in our society which are our present-day experience? If this thesis is able to contribute to this end, then the present writer's heart's desire has been met.

Delineations of the Present Study

The present study focuses on the application of the biblical models for relieving poverty. The first section of this study discusses the issue of hermeneutics and its significance in communicating and applying the "oracles" of God. The discussion of the interpretive task is followed by the discussion of the major poverty relief models found in Scripture. This is followed by the implications of the relief models for the worship, service, fellowship, and teaching ministries of the Church in Africa.

INTERPRETATION AND AUTHORITY

An adequate understanding of the principles of biblical interpretation is crucial, in that the biblical data has

[7]J.M. M'Ikunyua, "Development and Justice," in The Living God, eds. D. M. Gitari and Benson (Nairobi: Uzima, ATF 1986), 251.

been the source of authority in the Evangelical/Protestant theological task. The crucial issue is therefore how the Bible should be interpreted and what should be the guiding principle for an adequate interpretation. A principled procedure for interpretation of Scripture is necessary so as to avoid a distortion of the biblical data.

Everyone comes to the exegetical task with a particular set of presuppositions, which are determined by the cultural, intellectual, and religious framework from which one interprets reality. There is therefore nothing like a pre-suppositionless interpretation of reality.[8] Accepting the hermeneutical view that recognizes the necessity of presuppositions in the interpretive task, we would like to reiterate that this then is the context in which the African understands Scripture.

The kind of subjectivity referred to here is not an uncontrolled or absolute subjectivity which has no room for the role of the Holy Spirit in the interpretive task. Rather, it refers to the subjectivity that the interpreter has no control over because of his/her humanness--the total upbringing that defines his/her personality.

[8]This subject is well discussed by the following authors: Duncan S. Ferguson, Biblical Hermeneutics:An Introduction (Atlanta: World Publishing, 1960); Rudolph Bultmann, Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolph Bultmann, ed. and trans. S. M. Ogden (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1960), 289-297; J.D. Smart, Interpretation and Scripture (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961; C. Rene Padilla, "Hermeneutics and Culture - A Theological Perspective," in Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture, eds. J.Stott and R. Coote (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 63-94.

Adequate Pre-Understanding

For us to be able to adequately exegete the texts relating to the poverty relief models, the following presumptions about the Bible are asserted:

The Divine Self-disclosure

The Scriptures are the true record of God's encounter with man in and through history. By proclamation, mighty acts of justice and the establishment of a social entity, God has made Himself known to humankind. This self-disclosure took place in a particular context--historical, cultural, and linguistic.

The result of the Divine self-disclosure is the written Scriptures. A human language was used to record this God-human encounter for all time. The authority of the Bible rests, therefore, in the fact that the Scriptures are the expression of God's will for every generation. If we allow the Scriptures to inform and reform/transform our conduct, challenge our beliefs and inform our behavioural patterns, then the Bible becomes authoritative. Sherlock and Sent's remarks here are pertinent:

> One of the most important hermeneutical questions concerns the authority of the Bible. But how may we test whether the Bible functions as an actual authority for us? If we understand the Bible only in such terms that it merely backs up our existing ideas, we will find in the Bible only what we are looking for. It then functions only to authoritatively support our given ideas. If, however, we find the Scriptures not only support us, but also challenge our beliefs and admonishes our actions, this indicates that our interpretation is on the right track. This is because when we find ourselves challenged by what we find in the Bible, it is actually functioning as authoritative. It is not being used as an authority figure to confirm our perspective. The principle which expresses this is ecclesia reformata reformanda: `a reformed church always needs reforming'. This reformation

> principle itself calls us to test even Reformation principles![9]

Adequate Approach

The necessity of adequate pre-understanding rests in the fact that it minimizes the possibility of distorting the biblical data to the extent that God's intended message is not obsecured. Adequate approach to the hermeneutical task on the other hand, maximizes meaning discovery.

Adequate pre-understanding without an adequate exegetical approach to the interpretive process will still distort the meaning of the text. The exegetical approach that enables the interpreter to extract maximum meaning of the text as understood by the original receptors is the one that should be adopted.

The traditional approach has been the "intuitive" approach.[10] In reaction to this approach, the grammatical historical approach (where the interpreter comes to the text as an outsider and uses the modern tools of grammatical and historical studies to determine the meaning of the text) was developed during the period of the Enlightenment by the rationalists. They believed that one can wholly understand the meaning of reality through the process of reasoning. A more recent approach (the one favoured by the present writer) is the Grammatico-historical-contextual approach.

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[9]Eta Sherlock and Bill Sent, Oxford Conference on Christian Faith and Economics, "Stewardship, Creation and Economic Growth" [photo copy].

[10]A. Berkeley Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1963), 92.

Traditional (Intuitive) Approach

In reaction to the Roman Catholic position that only as mediated through the trained priestly class can ordinary people receive the truth of God's Word from the Bible, the Reformers postulated what is called the perspicuity of Scripture. By this, the Reformers meant that what is necessary for salvation is clear and can be easily understood by all from the Scriptures. It was believed that the Bible was sufficiently clear for all Christians to read. This, however, has been interpreted by some to mean that the Bible is a simple book, direct and clear in all that it says. To this, Ferguson writes:

> The Bible is a very complex book. The concepts are subtle, and the writing is occasionally obscure, hidden behind centuries of history and the barriers of language and culture. So parts are direct and simple; those can easily be understood by any literate person who has some acquaintance with the Biblical world. Other parts remain out of reach for the average reader or anyone who does not have a grasp of the history and culture of the biblical times and training in critical methodology.[11]

The merit of the traditional (intuitive) approach is that the Scripture is meant for ordinary people not only the trained scholar. The role of the Holy Spirit in illuminating the meaning of Scripture for the believer is highly recognized. Finally, this position stresses that the purpose of Scripture is not merely an intellectual exercise; rather, its purpose is to command obedience and faith in God.

The demerits are that it assumes that the concept of reality is the same in all human culture. This may easily

[11]Ferguson, Biblical Hermeneutics, 28f. (emphasis mine).

lead to allegorization and the distortion of the original message. Secondly it fails to take into account the cultural and historical latitudes of Scripture.

The Scientific Approach

This approach uses the facilities of modern linguistics, literary criticism, historical and anthropological studies to bridge the gap between the original authors and the present readers. The problem with this methodology is that it is not always sensitive to the contemporary social, economic, political and cultural contexts of the present reader. Its main emphasis is the meaning of the original text. The application of the text in the contemporary experience of man is not always considered. It also assumes that the interpreter can achieve objectivity without participatory involvement.[12] As pointed out elsewhere in this paper, this type of objectivity is not possible since man is not a tabula rasa.

The Grammatico-historical-contextual Approach

This approach combines the insights from the scientific approach with the insights from the modern hermeneutical debate. It stresses that the biblical text should be interpreted in the light of its total context--literary, historical, theological, linguistic and cultural. The approach is based on the proposition that God's self-disclosure took place within a particular culture, using their linguistic and other cultural symbols. The

[12]Padilla, "Hermeneutics and Culture," in Down to Earth, 67.

theological purpose of this communication was to meet the total needs of the receptors.

Concluding this section, it will be appropriate to agree with Smart and Carson that:

> There is no method by which we can compel Scripture to give forth its meaning. We may observe all the proper exegetical rules and yet fail to hear the voice of God or discern His will. We must consistently follow adequate exegetical rules. But that alone is not enough. An adequate approach to the interpretive task must include a personal factor....[13]

> a self-conscious dependency upon the Word of God and an equally self-conscious brokenness and contrition that hungers for the illumination of the Holy Spirit as the Word is studied. Only then will the inevitable auxiliary influences...provide creative energies and ask probing questions, instead of usurping the place of control.[14]

The discussion will now re-examine the poverty relief models and see how they could be applied in our modern setting. This is done with the assumption that the Mosaic Legislation contained sensitivities and structures that were meant to effectively assist the poor of that society, and that Jesus in the NT followed this tradition. These sensitivities, objectives, and principles inherent in the relief models of both the OT and the NT have universal validity even today.

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[13]Smart, Interpretation and Scripture, 306.

[14]D.A. Carson, "A Sketch of the Factors Determining Current Hermeneutical Debate in Cross-Cultural Contexts," in Biblical Interpretation and the Church, ed. D.A. Carson (Nashville, Tenn.: Nelson, 1985), 15.

BIBLICAL MODELS RE-EXAMINED

The Tithing Model

"Tithe" comes from the Hebrew maaser, a'sar. Maaser, (noun) means the "tenth part" or "tithe." Maaser is the cognate of the verb `asar, "to take the tenth part." Dekate, a corresponding Greek (Gk) noun, is a cognate of the verb dekatoo, meaning "collect tithes" in the active sense, and "pay tithes" in the passive. The compound apodekatoo can mean to collect or pay tithes.[15]

The origin of the practice of tithing is unknown. It antedates the time of Moses and it was practiced in lands from Babylonia to Rome.[16]

Goods subject to tithing in Israel included new wine, olive oil, fruit, cattle, and sheep. Items like wool, cloth, wood, weapons, gold, silver, donkeys, et cetera were subject to tithing throughout the ANE.[17]

The Levites, the aliens, the fatherless, and the widows who were resident among the Israelites were to benefit from the tithing system. The tithing was to enable the needy of the Israelite society to eat and be satisfied. When this kind of generosity was extended to the needy then Yahweh would bless the people.

The main provisions for tithing are found in Deut. 14:22-29; Lev. 27:30-33, Num. 18:21-32. The exact history as to how it was really administered is not at all clear.

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[15]E.E. Carpenter, "tithe," in ISBE, 1986 ed.; Heb. 7:6,9.

[16]T. Alton Byrant, ed., The New Compact Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan,1967), 587.

[17]E.E. Carpenter, "tithe," in ISBE.

Different reconstructions have been suggested. There seem to be about three different tithes according to the texts quoted above.

1. **The Levitical Tithe**

This consisted of the tithe to the Levites who had no allotment of land or inheritance.[18] One-tenth of the Levitical tithe went to the priests or to the temple.

2. **The Household Tithe**

A second tithe from the remaining nine-tenths of one's produce was set apart and eaten by the household, perhaps in Jerusalem.[19] This tithe could be changed or converted into money by non-residents of Jerusalem, with twenty percent added to its price. This money could be used to buy food, drink, or oil and be eaten at an appropriate place in reverence to Yahweh.

3. **The Tithe of the Poor**

This is the third tithe, according to Josephus. It was the tithe for the poor which occurred in the third year.[20]

If the above reconstruction is valid, then it would mean that the tithing rate could add up to thirty percent of one's total income.

The Gleaning Model

The farmer at the time of the harvest was to leave the peah, shichecha, and leket for the poor, to provide them an additional source of income. The peah is the crop at the

[18]Num. 18.21-32; Deut.14:27.

[19]Deut. 14:22-26; Lev. 27:30.

[20]Deut. 26:12; cf. Josephus Ant. 8:22 (240-43).

corners of the field. The leket is the fallen crop which the farmer was to leave for the poor. The shichecha is the forgotten crop. The crop at the corners, the fallen crop, and the forgotten crop were all meant for the disadvantaged of society.[21]

The Jubilee Model

The radical difference between the Jubilee model and the other models was that ancestral lands were returned to the original owners. This system made it possible for the individual, the family, et cetera, to make a fresh start. Since land was the basic source of wealth, every fifty years, a person, family or clan had the opportunity to start anew. Private property was not abolished, but the means of producing wealth was regulated in such a way as to avoid the widening of the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots."

Land could not be disposed of permanently. Before the Jubilee, land could be bought or sold. But what the seller "is really selling you is the number of crops."[22]

This arrangement was an institutionalized structure that placed everyone on an equal footing at regular intervals. "It was a dependence freeing not dependence creating, as a programme of ongoing charity would have been."[23] Returning of the land therefore was mandatory, not optional. Since land in that agrarian society was the basic

[21]Lev. 19:9-10; cf. Deut. 24:19-22. Ruth 2 is an application of this law of gleaning.

[22] Lev. 25:16 NIV.

[23] S.V. Monsma, "Poverty in the United States: An Evangelical Response," a paper prepared for the Consultation on Evangelicals and American Public Life (May 4-6, 1989), 13.

source of wealth, possession of land gave the possessor the productive capacity to create wealth.

The Sabbatical Model

In every seven years the land was to lie fallow. This had the ecological effect of returning fertility into the land. The main reason for this provision, however, was humanitarian, "so that the poor of your people may eat."[24] In the seventh year, the landless poor were free to gather for themselves whatever grew naturally in the fields and vineyards.

In addition the Hebrew slaves were to be set free with a gratuity to take home:

> And when you release him, do not send him away empty-handed. Supply him liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to him as the LORD has blessed you.[25]

Also with the Sabbatical Year came the cancellation of all debts. The able were warned by Yahweh against an attitude of refusal to grant loans to the needy during the sixth year before the Sabbatical Year for fear of losing their money in twelve months.[26]

Again, here we see that Yahweh had an ultimate concern that the poor person should, at all costs, be helped in such a way that he would be self-reliant and also have his/her ongoing needs met. The Sabbatical Year was an institutionalized mechanism for the prevention of an ever growing gap between the rich and the poor.

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[24]Ex. 23:10-11; cf. Lev. 25:2-7.

[25]Deut. 15:12-14 NIV; cf. Lev. 25:39; Ex. 21:2-6.

[26]Deut. 15:9-10.

Summary of Relief Models

The poverty relief models enshrined in the Pentateuch may be summarized as follows:

1. A zero interest loan for the poor and the needy was to be made by the well-to-do members of the community. If the principal had not been repaid by the sixth year, the balance was to be cancelled at the Sabbatical Year. Related to this was the regulation on the price of food sold to the poor.[27]
2. An Israelite committed to slavery because of debt was to be set free with a gratuity at the Sabbatical Year.[28]
3. An Israelite who was forced to sell his land for debt repayment would have the balance (if any) written off and the land returned to him or his successors at the Year of Jubilee.[29]
4. The fallen crop (leket), the corners of the fields (Peah) and the forgotten crop (Shichecha) were to be left for the poor, the widows, orphans and sojourners.[30]
5. Any field left fallow at the Sabbatical Year became the field for the able bodied poor and the needy. The

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[27]Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35-38; Deut. 1:1-11; 23:19-20.

[28]Deut. 15:12-18; cf. Lev. 25:47-53; Ex. 21:1-11; Lev. 25:39-43.

[29]Lev. 25: 8-28.

[30]Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut. 24.19-22.

natural growth of these fields were available to whomever would come and harvest it.[31]

6. The third year's tithe was to be made available for the dependent poor, the widows, orphans, sojourners.[32]

From the foregoing, we could essentially summarize the relief provisions under two main categories: a regular source of supply and permanent means for production which would encourage self-reliance and self-dependence.

The Regular Source of Supply

The supply from the tithing system, the gleanings, the zero interest loans, which were available through the "protection association of the extended families," met ongoing needs in two ways: by simple grants and by gleaning, which involved hard work on the part of the able-bodied poor.

The Permanent Structural Mechanism

The cancellation of debts, the release from slavery and the gratuity that went with the release, and the return of the ancestral land, were all permanent structural arrangements to restore and maintain societal equilibrium. With this kind of temporary and permanent material support, the debilitating situation of poverty should not have been possible within the community if the rules were systematically adhered to. The prophetic diatribe gives us a clue as to whether these provisions were systematically followed or not.

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[31]Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7.

[32]Deut. 14:28-29; 26:12.

From the legal documents, one sees with clarity and certainty that God has a great concern for the poor and the needy; hence adequate economic arrangements were enshrined in the codes for their benefit.

The relief institutions were meant to be administered within a specific cultural framework. An examination of the social structure of the Israelites is therefore necessary.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ISRAELITE SOCIETY

The social history of Israel suggests that the Israelite society was "...an egalitarian extended family segmentary tribal society with an agricultural economic base."[33] The basic social unit for that society was the family called beth'ab (father's house) or just bayit (house). This was composed of the husband/father or the elder and his wife (wives), children, male and female slaves, as well as the married sons and their dependent relatives.

Economically, the large family was an independent productive base. After the beth'ab came the mispahah (the clan) which was a group of families who claimed common ancestral descent. This unit had a legal function like land ownership, the institution of redemption, and cultic responsibilities. Finally, we have the shebet/matte (tribe)

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[33]Norman Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 359.

which was the biggest social unit composed of several clans.[34]

Productive assets were controlled by the extended family units, with specific social obligations to the entire family.[35]

Before we proceed further, we would like to make an excursus of an article published in Transformation which suggests that land in Israel was not the basic source of wealth, and that the Jubilee was not the provision in favour of an agrarian society. Since this article tends to contradict the thrust of this thesis, we have deemed it necessary to interact with it here before we continue our discussion.

EXCURSUS: EVALUATION OF UDO MIDDELMAN'S THESES IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS CHAPTER[36]

Responding to Mott's article, Udo Middelman reiterates that the Exodus is a history, not a paradigm. He rejects the assertion that the land was the "principal and permanent basis for economic life" of the Israelites. Middelman states

[34]Rolf Rendtorff, The Old Testament: an Introduction (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 80f.

[35]J.D. Mason, "Assisting the Poor," Transformation 4, no.2 (April-June, 1987): 2.

[36]Udo Middelman is a consultant to Food for the Hungary in Geneva. His article was a response to Stephen Mott's article on "The Contribution of the Bible to Economic Thought." Both articles were published in Transformation 4 nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987): 25-34 and 36-40.

further that he does not see "access to productive power" as the central thrust of the Jubilee.[37]

Middelman accuses Mott of reductionism and misapplication of the biblical data. He writes:

> The Bible is frequently quoted, but always in bits and pieces without respect to the context of the passage or the source as a whole. It is used like a quarry from which to chisel those statements which lend support to a deeply felt moralistic prescription, without evaluating that prescription in light of the Scriptures.[39]

Our critique will mainly be centered on his assertion that:

> There is also no indication in the OT that land was mysteriously seen as the economic base of the people. The Jubilee was not a provision in favour of an agrarian society. They had become rich in Egypt without any land of their own. In Genesis 26 we read of the envy provoked by the success of Isaac's nomadic life and greater skill. Neither possession of the land nor return of the land to the original family meant automatic wealth or poverty. Some, in fact, might find it more advantageous to lease their land all of the time in order to be blessed by the Lord `in their going out and their coming in', according to the pictures of trade and commerce in Deuteronomy 28:6. No one was tied to an agricultural life-style when his skill would be put to better use by investing the lease money. In larger families, that must have been a necessity.[40]

Interestingly, a careful reading of the texts Middelman has referred to in his article will reveal that, he falls guilty of the very mistake he purports to be pointing out. With a kind of an evangelical naivety, he posits a one-way hermeneutical proposition when he states

[37]Middelman, "A Response to Stephen Mott," Transfomation 4 nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987) :38.

[39]Ibid., 36.

[40]Ibid.

> If the context of the present human situation becomes the text for our action, the Bible can only furnish us with paradigms, symbols, parallels of activism. I suggest we need more than that... namely, God's deliberate information. His text, not the human context, must inform us.[41]

Every evangelical Christian will accept that the Bible is the final arbiter. But to assert that God's text alone must inform us is another way of saying that the Bible was not "born" within a particular cultural context in response to the needs of the original receptors. If we say, God's text alone must inform us, what about the case in which the problem being dealt with is not specifically addressed in the Bible?

A valid hermeneutical task demands a dynamic interplay between text and context. That is to say, a valid interpretation demands taking into account both the text and context. The reason for this has been well stated by Padilla.

> On the other hand the better our understanding of the real issues in our context, the better will be the questions which we address to Scripture. This makes possible new readings of Scripture in which the implications of its message for our situation will be more fully uncovered. If it is true that Scripture illuminates life, it is also true that life illuminates Scripture.[42]

Exegetes do not have the freedom to impose their culture on the biblical text and compel it to say whatever they want to say. Instead, they have the task of letting the text be its own arbiter.

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[41]Ibid., 37(emphasis mine).

[42]C. Rene Padilla, "Hermeneutics and Culture - A Theological Perspective," in Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture, eds. John R.W. Stott and Robert Coote (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 76.

The understanding of the cultural and textual contexts of Scripture as well as the firm understanding of the context within which the Scripture is to be "incarnated" is a practical necessity. To achieve this, the need for the application of the faculties of the social sciences and linguistic, textual, and historical studies cannot be too strongly emphasized. Padilla, writing along this line, states:

> Thus, the hermeneutical task requires an understanding of the current concrete situation as much as an understanding of Scripture. No transposition of the biblical message is possible unless the interpreters are familiar with the frame of reference within which the message is to become meaningful. There is, therefore, a place for auxiliary sciences such as sociology to define more precisely the horizons of their situation, even as linguistic, textual, and historical studies can help them in their comprehension of the text and its original context. The deeper and richer their understandings of the contemporary situation, the deeper and richer will be the questions they ask of the Bible and the answers they find in it.[43]

Middelman fails to address himself to the foregoing hermeneutical issues. Indicating that God's text alone should inform us suggests that without bridging the gap between the biblical writers' world and the world of the interpreter/reader, we can come to a meaningful understanding of God's text. We will do well here to acquaint ourselves with a portion of Willowbank's report on this issue:

> Today's readers cannot come to the text in a personal vacuum, and should not try to. Instead, they should come with an awareness of concerns stemming from their cultural background, personal situation, and responsibility to others. What is received back, however, will not be answers only,

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[43]Ibid., 69f.

> but more questions. As we address Scripture, Scripture addresses us. We find that our culturally conditioned presuppositions are being challenged and our questions are corrected. In fact, we are compelled to reformulate our previous questions and ask fresh ones. So the living interaction proceeds.[44]

The Land as the Basic Source of Wealth

The failure of Middelman to observe these crucial hermeneutical principles has led to some serious flaws in his paper. We will only discuss a few of these flaws here.

Middelman makes an emotive statement that "there is no indication in the OT that land was mysteriously seen as the economic base of the people."[45] Unfortunately he failed to prove his case. His quotation of the evidence in Gen. 26 rather reveals that he misread the text as we will see presently. His argument that the Israelite "had become rich in Egypt without any land of their own" has no textual and historical foundation.

Mr. Middelman will do well to familiarize himself with the socio-economic history of the ANE. It will suffice here to state that the evidence we have from the Bible and extra-biblical sources indicate conclusively that the Israelite society was "an egalitarian extended family segmentary society with an agricultural economic base."[46]

In every agrarian society, the totality of one's existence is embodied in the land. Both cultic and economic life are associated with the land. If you take a farmer's

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[44]The Willowbank Report, Gospel and Culture (Willowbank, Bermuda: L.C.W.E, 1978), 11.

[45]Middelman, "A Response to Mott," 38.

[46]Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh, 359.

land from him, you have destroyed his economic nerve centre. He cannot grow his crops or rear his animals. Any investment in an agrarian society has its rootage ultimately connected with the land.

We admit that "No one was tied to an agricultural lifestyle when his skill could be put to better use by investing the lease money."[47] But we want to point out that when the Israelites settled in Palestine, they gave up their nomadic way of life and became stationary. The different tribes were given an allotted portion of land. So in addition to breeding their livestock, they also started to till the soil. But all this was to be done on one's allotted parcel of land. Inasmuch as they could invest the lease money, they were limited to the kind of investment they could make. For example they could have invested the lease money in breeding, but upon whose land and under what conditions?

Von Waldow, discussing the issue of the allotment of the land and the social order in Ancient Israel observes, that

> There is little doubt that the former semi-nomads continued to breed small cattle. The variation was only that they did so now on a stationary basis. This, however, did not necessarily imply a change in the sociological structure of the society but only that in addition to breeding small cattle they started to till the soil. The big innovation, which was automatically connected with this new way of making a living was the existence of landed property and the resulting problems. Landed property comprising fields and vineyards was not the only economic basis, but without doubt, it was the most important and must

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[47]Middelman, "A Response to Mott," 38.

> have endangered the ancient nomadic moral code or traditional ethical rules.[48]

The examination of the Mosaic legislation will reveal that all the poverty relief institutions were associated with the land. The fruits and tithes (Deut. 26:1ff.); the leket, shichecha, peah (Deut 15:12-18; 24:19-22; Lev. 25:39-53; 19:9-10; 23:22; Ex. 21:1-11) were all related to the land. It was the natural growth of the field left fallow during the Sabbatical year that became one of the sources of food for the poor and needy (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7).

The Jubilee

Middelman states:

> I do not find in the provisions of the Jubilee (Lev. 25) what Dr. Mott labels `equality permanently institutionalized.' Even a modern rendition of desirable equality as `access to productive power' does not alter that fact.[49]

If Middelman does not find in the Jubilee provision the access to the productive power motif, that does not mean it is not there. In a settled segmentary agrarian life-style with landed property comprising fields and vineyards, access to the land meant access to productive assets. The structural mechanism here is that at periodic intervals everyone had access to capital, i.e land (an asset used to create wealth). The equality here does not necessarily mean the possession of equal amounts of capital. Rather, it means equal access to a means of creating wealth. It is true that "Neither possession of the land nor the return of it to the original family meant automatic wealth or

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[48]E. von Waldow, "Soocial Respponsibility in Israel," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 32 (April 1970): 190.

[49]Middelman, "A Response to Mott," 38.

poverty."[50] But this is a simplistic statement. No one should think that the possession of land without work would result in automatic wealth! God's intention as expressed in the Jubilee provision is what Prof. Rosner has clearly expressed, to "maintain a healthy and peaceful society, where all people are equal and have equal opportunities in their economic life, by protecting and securing the rights of the owner on his land."[51]

Now let us turn to the Genesis account which Middelman quotes as a proof-text to support his opinion. The record states:

> Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundred fold, because the LORD blessed him. The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him.[52]

A careful reading of the above text reveals that the wealth Isaac acquired was not acquired in the process of a nomadic life style. The text clearly indicates that all his wealth was acquired at one particular place, when Abimelech gave him access to land. It was upon this land that Isaac planted his crops and reared his flocks and herds. The Lord blessed his labours on this land and he became wealthy. This generated the envy.

If Middelman still does not believe that land was the

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[50]Ibid.

[51]Dov Rosner, "Economic Security and Income," in Affluence Poverty and the Word of God,(Durban: Lutheran Pub. House, 1978), 138.

[52]Gen. 26:12-14 NIV.

basic source of wealth for the Israelites in Canaan the following account in Nehemiah will be of help.

> " We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain." Others were saying "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine."
> Still others were saying, "We have had to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. Although we are of the same flesh and blood as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our vineyards belong to others" (Nehemiah 5:1-5).

From the foregoing evidence, if land was not the productive asset of the Israelites and the restoration of it did not mean restoration of economic power to them, then Middelman has to prove his case.

He started his article by accusing Mott of using a proof-text technique; one would have expected him to do justice to the texts he used in his article. Unfortunately one sees his disregard for serious exegesis. Almost all the texts he quoted were either misunderstood, misapplied, or quoted out of context. His emotive arguments are more of opinion than facts. He states, "When resources are discussed in the modern world (and where justice is seen as equal distribution or access), our concerns are reduced to material resources."[53] What will he make of the diatribe of the 8th century prophets, Luke, James, Paul, John the Baptist, and Jesus, to name but a few, who were very much concerned about poverty and wealth?

We will now direct our attention back to the main subject of this chapter.

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[53]Middelman," A Response to Mott," 39.

Comparable Particulars and Dynamic Equivalence

Since we are dealing with different time settings and with different cultural particulars, the crucial hermeneutical issue, therefore, is how to apply the legislation in Africa today. Much of the details of the legislation may not be applicable in modern Africa. However, they provide us with some principles, objectives, and paradigms for the life and conduct of the Church. This works with the assumption that the God who revealed Himself to Israel and gave them these specific codes is still revealing Himself and His will today to people in different cultural settings. The specific provisions were based on principles which have universal validity. The implication of this is that much as we cannot transpose, en bloc, the Mosaic Legislation and apply it in our present day setting, we are able to bring our respective present-day African societies nearer to conformity with consideration to the sensitivities, principles, and objectives that undergirded the legislation. On this issue, Mason's observation is pertinent:

> It is unlikely therefore that the actual institutions for assisting the poor in early Israel could be transported unchanged to the twentieth century to serve the same ends! And so we need to look instead at the intentions or sensitivities that characterized the earlier institutions, so that changed institutions today might be able to capture these same intentions.[54]

The application of the sensitivities, objectives and intentions as a paradigm in applying OT ethics in our Ypresent cultural settings, forces us to wrestle with the OT corpus as the valid Word of God for today. We are pressed

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[54]Mason, "Assisting the Poor," 1.

to work out the continuity and discontinuity between the Testaments. The relief models we see in the OT work through the clan machinery which was the bridge between the beth'ab (the father's house) and the shebet/matte (the tribe). Likewise, the God-Man, the servant of Yahweh, formed a community as a bridge between the nations. We will now direct our attention to the discussion of the major relief models found in the NT.

THE NT MODELS

JESUS MODEL

Jesus took up the major Jubilee themes as well as the Sabbatical concept of rest and applied them to His ministry and mission. The sociologically and spiritually poor had their dreams fulfilled in Jesus -- the total embodiment of the mission of Israel. The Church, which is the Messianic Community, "stood in spiritually organic continuity with OT Israel."[55]

Jesus, following the pattern of the OT tradition, chose the twelve as the NT beth'ab, his tools in bringing justice to the nations. They owned a common treasury from which their needs were met. When the treasury was depleted, the Master demonstrated His power over creation to offset the situation. However, Jesus made it abundantly clear to those who were only seeking material benefits that man not only needed the bread of "now." Man's life is more than that.

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[55]Wright, Living as the People of God, 29; cf. Luke. 4:18: Matt.11:28.

He needs the "bread of life" and the "living waters," too. These are absolutely essential for his eternal existence.

The Communal Model

The early Church took the teachings of Jesus seriously. They implemented a relief system that made the utopian ideal of the OT (Dt. 15:4) a reality in an obedient community.

The model we see here is that of collective responsibility and accountability and spontaneous obedience. Because of their obedience, there was an ideal community and communion to the extent that the relentless economic forces that lead to the downward spiral of debt, poverty, dispossession and bondage were eradicated.[56] They maintained a common pool of rations from which daily issues were made to the needy. The treasury was maintained through spontaneous voluntary donations. The system was administered by welfare officers chosen from the community.[57] Evidence from the NT documents suggests that the early Church did not insist on economic equality. Private property ownership was not discontinued. However, such individual property rights were held in subordination to the needs of the entire community. The key Gk words in Acts 2:45 (epipraskon and diemerizon) and in 4:34 (epheron) are in the imperfect tense. The Gk imperfect always suggests linear action. Thus the NIV renders Acts 4:34..."For from time to time those who owned lands or

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[56]Acts. 2:42 ff; 4:32 ff.

[57]Acts 6:1-6.

houses sold them, brought the money from the sales... and it was distributed to anyone as he had need."

In their commentary on Acts, Carter and Earle, discussing Acts 4:34, pointing to the key words used here observe that:

> There are here two imperfects, as well as two present participles. For as many as were (hyperchon) possessors of fields or houses, selling (Polounters) were bringing (epheron) the prices of the things that were being sold (Pipraskomenon). All this suggests property and putting everything in a common treasury. The latter idea was expressed by aorist tense[58].

There are three imperfects in Acts 4:35: etithoun (were placing), diedideto (being distributed) and eichen (having). This suggests that as property was sold, the proceeds were given to the apostles who, in their authority and wisdom, carried out the distribution to the needy ones. Later on in chapter 6, we see that such distribution was entrusted to the care of deacons.

In Acts 2:45 and 4:35, the words "had need" are preceded by the Gk particle, an which makes the idea indefinite--this indicates that the distribution of the proceeds thereof were effected when and if the need arose.[59]

This practice evidently went on over a period of time and the believers did not, at one point in time, convert all their assets into one communal holding. This and other references suggest that private property was still held.

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[58]Charles Carter and Ralph Earle, The Acts of the Apostles (Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishing Company, 1959), 66.

[59]Ibid., 68.

Economic Koinonia(Pauline Model)

As the Church expanded and the number of believers increased, another model had to be developed. Paul, applying the basic principle of the Jubilee, developed the inter-church and intra-church aid system around the concept of koinonia.

The Gk word, koinonia,translated "fellowship," is one of the key concepts in Pauline theology. The spiritual unity between Christ and believers, through the believers shared experience of the Holy Spirit, has both spiritual and economic implications.

The related words that belong to the Gk root koinon in the NT are used in the context of actual economic and social relationships among Christians.

In Acts 2:42, we read that the spiritual fellowship (te koinonia) led to sharing of all things (ha panta koina). The communion they had in the realm of the Spirit translated their economic holdings into communal rights and sharing. The result was that there was no needy person among them.

The well-to-do believers were told to share their possessions with the needy. The word used here is koinonountes. The writer of Hebrews uses the same word group (Koinonias) to emphasize the practical necessity of sharing of economic goods with the needy.[60] The material contribution made by the Gentile Churches to the Jewish poor in the Jerusalem Church was referred to as an act of fellowship (koinonian tina).

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[60]Heb.13:16; Rom. 12:13; Rom.15:26.

Paul, arguing on the principle of interdependency-- "a two way relationship between Churches within the Body which expresses equality and at the same time a state of mutual dependency, sharing, giving, receiving the unique gifts different members of the global Church possess"[61] taught that the Gentiles had an economic obligation to the Jews inasmuch as the Jews had shared (ekoinonesan) spiritual blessings with them. With the Corinthians, he argues on the basis of interdependency which will bring equality."It is only appropriate that you should help those who are in need. Then, when you are in need and they have plenty, they will also help you. In this way both are given equal treatment.[62]

Sharing of economic goods with the saints is a privilege and also part of Christian obedience. "...they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing..."; "... for the obedience that accompanies your confession and your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else." Again here he uses the same word group (ten koinonian; tes koinonias).[63]

In the area of the believers' economic obligation towards the ministers of the Gospel, Paul uses the word (koinoneito).[64] He also applies the same concept of economic koinonia elsewhere.[65]

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[61]C.L. Ulrich, "Aid Between Churches," in Affluence, Poverty and Word of God, 247.

[62]2 Cor. 8: 14 (My free translation).

[63]Cor. 8:4; 9:13. Heb. 13:16; Rom. 12:13.

[64]Gal. 6:6.

[65]Gal. 2:9; Ph. 1:5,7; 4:15.

Koinonia and its related word group occurs 29 times in the NT; 14 of these times appear in the Pauline corpus. In the various forms in which they appear, they either signify, or are used in the context which relate to, concrete economic sharing as a result of the believers' oneness in Christ.[66]

The evidence we have here gives credence to the fact that God wills His people to live together in community, in the state of interdependency in such a way that the extremes of wealth and poverty should be eliminated. That the poor and the needy find help always, "...that is the point of legislation concerning the Jubilee and the Sabbatical Year. That is the point of legislation on tithing, gleaning and loans. Jesus, our only perfect model, shared a common purse with the new community of his disciples."[67]

Spirituality-Contentment Model

(Mt.6:25-34; Lk.12:22-34;
1 Tim.6:6-10; Ph.4 10-13;
Lk.3:11-14)

The excellent model we see here is that of biblical spirituality. The believer, knowing that she/he is in filial relationship with the good and gracious Father, the source of all life, cultivates the attitude of trust, faith and dependence. This disposition leads to godly contentment. She/he knows that El Shaddai is in control and that He will never fail. In the midst of difficulties she/he, in

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[66]Wright, Living as the People of God, 98.

[67]R.Sider, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1978), 109.

humility, is drawn closer to God the Father in the name of His Son who has taught us to pray and ask for our daily bread. Psalm 34 is the OT parallel of this theme: "the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry" (v.15).

The spirituality-contentment model also demands modesty, generosity, and moral probity. This matter will be fully developed in a later chapter of this thesis.

The Prophetic-Critical Model

This model acts as a maintenance mechanism to check and denounce oppression and injustice. Its purpose is to teach, correct, rebuke, and train in things related to justice/ righteousness (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16). This is not limited to the community of God's people. Like the OT prophets, it is also directed towards those who are outside the new covenant believers. It focuses on the dual aspect of the prophetic ministry: fore-telling and forth-telling.

How this model would work in practical situations will be taken up in the last chapter of this thesis.

SUMMARY

The Jesus Model, the Spontaneous Communal/ Jerusalem Model, the Economic Koinonia Model and the Spirituality-Contentment Model are the main economic relief models we see in the NT. Jesus stood in direct continuity with the OT tradition. The expectations of the Messianic reign were fulfilled in Him as He re-inaugurated the OT Jubilee, bringing both physical and spiritual hope to the needy, the despondent, the hopeless and the helpless, the rich and

the poor. He shared a common purse with the twelve. The twelve were a type of the OT beth'ab. Beyond this were the crowd (ochlos). Jesus maintained a balance between material needs and spiritual needs as He ministered to the people through the twelve. Though He was deeply concerned with material deprivations of man, He challenged His followers to place a premium on spiritual/eternal realities.

The Jerusalem/Communal Model was a relief system maintained through voluntary spontaneous donations. This was administered by men of integrity and full of the Spirit. They maintained a balance between the ministry of the Word and prayer and relief work. Relief work was not done at the expense of the "ministry of the word and prayer" and vice versa. The principles of specialization and delegation seem to have been the idea here, but not necessarily the order of priority.

Paul's economic koinonia model was that of interdependency which amounts to equality in the sense of reciprocity. We see both intra-church assistance (which was assistance within one local church) and inter-church assistance (sharing among all the scattered congregations) in the Pauline koinonia model. We conclude that the early believers, in obedience to Christ, followed the OT tradition as taught or exemplified by Him.

We will now discuss the African condition and critically examine the causes and consequences of poverty on the continent. This will help us to relate the biblical injunctions to the African condition and see the practical and missiological implications for the Church today.

CHAPTER 6

THE AFRICAN PREDICAMENT

OVERVIEW

Professor Ali Mazrui, presenting six fundamental paradoxes of the African predicament in his Reith lectures, laments:

> Africa was the earliest habitat and yet is the last to become truly habitable. Africans are certainly not the most brutalised of peoples and yet they are the most humiliated in modern history. African societies are not the closest culturally to the western world and yet they are undergoing the most rapid westernization. Africa is by no means the smallest continent and yet it is almost certainly the most fragmented politically. Africa is not the poorest of the regions of the world but it is technically the most retarded. And the basic paradox is that, though Africa is the most centrally located continent it is the most peripheral in political terms.[1]

Philip Ndegwa, a one-time governor of the central bank of Kenya, writing on the issue of survival of African people and countries, laments:

> First and foremost, it must be recognized that the African challenge is about the actual survival of the African people and their countries. There is no doubt that lack of development in the past, the prevailing problems and the projected economic situation in future, constitute a direct threat to the actual survival of many thousands, if not millions, of Africans! ...economic performance in Africa over the last twenty years or so has been so poor that in a number of countries per capita incomes are now lower than at the time of their countries' political independence. Other indicators of development show the same reality of stagnation or worse. For example, in some countries the volume of exports is now lower than

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[1]Ali Mazrui, The African Condition. (London: Heinemann, 1980), back cover. Mazrui is a Kenyan national. He is a research professor of political science at the University of Jos, Nigeria and professor of political science and Afro-American and African studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

> 20 years ago, ...severe drought has led to the death of many thousands, reduced life expectancy for many more and has caused retarded physical growth of millions of children. Furthermore, the prevailing economic problems, the drought, political circumstances resulting from those hardships together with other factors such as ethnic conflicts have led to political instability in many countries and for the continent as a whole. This in turn has been one of the main forces responsible for a tremendous increase in the number of refugees in the continent....[2]

The foregoing are the complexities of the issues we are going to attempt to grapple with in this chapter. One will not fully appreciate the problem until he understands that Africans are suffering in the midst of plenty. We will therefore direct our attention to the consideration of Africa's resources.

AFRICA'S RESOURCES

No adequate survey of African's natural resources has been done. Yet the present surveys indicate that the continent has immense untapped wealth. Ndegwa gives the following data: Africa has 97 per cent of the world's chrome; 85 per cent of its platinum; about 70-80 per cent of its manganese. And it has plenty of other minerals such as copper, cobalt and uranium. In addition, Africa has substantial oil and natural gas resources and tremendous hydro-power potential (at least 25 per cent of the world potential).[3]

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[2]Philip Ndegwa, The African Challenge (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1986), 1.

[3]Ibid., 4.

Professor Mazrui also provides the following estimates: Africa has 96 per cent of non-Communist world's diamonds, 60 per cent of its gold; 34 per cent of its bauxite, and 28 per cent of its uranium. Africa's iron reserves are probably twice those of the USA, and its reserve of chrome are the most important by far outside the Soviet Union.[4]

In 1974, the year following the oil embargo, the US balance of payment deficit with Nigeria stood at $3 billion. It rose to $5 billion two years later.[5]

Despite this wealth that God has endowed on the continent, the disconcerting fact is that Africa has some of the least developed countries in the world. The majority of the countries the UN regards as the "poorest" in the world are in Africa; they range from Upper Volta to Rwanda and Burundi, and from Somalia to Tanzania. Whereas the continent itself is well endowed with an abundance of resources, a disproportionate number of Africans are undernourished and pauperized. "A situation where a continent is well-endowed but the people are poor is a situation of anomalous underdevelopment."[6]

How these resources could be developed by Africans for the benefit of Africans is yet to be discovered.

Nkrumah, lamenting on the same issue several years before, sighs:

> Africa is a paradox which illustrates and highlights new-colonialism. Her earth is rich, yet the products that come from above and below her soil continue to enrich, not Africans predominantly, but groups and individuals who operate to African's impoverishment.
>
> If Africa's multiple resources were used in her own development, they could place her among the modernized continents of the world. But her resources have been, and still are being used for the greater development of overseas interests. Africa provided to Britain in 1957 the following proportions of basic materials used in her industries:
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> | | |
> |---|---|
> | tin ore and concentrates | 19% |
> | iron ore | 29% |
> | manganese | 80% |
> | copper | 46% |
> | bauxite | 47% |
> | chrome ore | 50% |
> | asbestos | 66% |
> | cobalt | 82% |
> | antimony | 91% |
>
> French imports from Africa include:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | cotton | 32% |
> | iron ore | 36% |
> | zinc ore | 51% |
> | lead | 85% |
> | phosphates | 100% |
>
> To Germany, Africa provided
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | cooper imports | 8% |
> | iron ore | 10% |
> | lead ore | 12% |
> | manganese ore | 20% |
> | chrome ore | 22% |
> | phosphorites | 71% |
>
> Yet in none of the new African countries is there a single integrated industry based upon any one of these resources. Although possessing fifty-three of the world's most important basic industrial minerals and metals, the African continent tails far behind all others in industrial development.[7]

This information here dates back to 1957 but the most significant point here is that, there is no single integrated industry based on any of the above resources.

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[4]Mazrui, The African Condition, 71.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., 72.

[7]Kwame Nkrumah, Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism (London, England: Panaf, 1970), 1f.

This appalling situation is almost the same on the continent today!

With that preliminary survey, we will now examine the major causes of Africa's pauperization. We will however want to point out here that this is a delicate issue. Proper consideration of all the facts is therefore crucial. We will do this by dividing the causes of poverty in Africa into five main models, namely, the ecological, social, political, economic, and self-alienation models.

MODELS OF PAUPERIZATION

1. ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Nature has not always been favourable to Africa. Changes in the global weather pattern resulting in declining rainfall, has had serious effects on the land's yield. The ecological variant causes desertification and deforestation.

A changing pattern of natural resource use and increased pressure on the environment through population growth, are the two main causes which underscore the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) environmental problems. This makes it even more inhospitable to ecologically balanced agricultural development. Most of SSA suffers from either too much rain or too little rain. These variations in rainfall have serious effects on agricultural production as Hitchen's committee summarizes for us:

> Most of SSA suffers from rain insufficiency even without the exceptional periods of successive years of drought, and less than 5 per cent of SSA's cultivable land is currently under irrigation. As crop failures are more frequent and overall yields lower where less rain falls, the apparent decline in rainfall over time will reduce even further the productive capacity of the land.

> The results of these pressures are land over use and misuse, deforestation and, especially in arid and semi-arid areas, desertification.[8]

The UN's data released in 1984 suggests that in the arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones which cover most of Africa, and also contain most of the population, over 80 per cent of range lands, 80 per cent of crop lands, and thirty per cent of irrigated lands have already lost a significant proportion of their production capacity.[9]

> The continent's 700 million hectares of viable pasture lands have shrunk by a quarter since 1968. Over cultivation of marginal and vulnerable soils has led to a drop in yields: in 24 of the most seriously affected countries in Africa, grain yields per hectare have dropped by one-third since the early 1970s. With population increasing, pressures to cultivate even more vulnerable soils increase; population migration becomes more widespread, with further risks resulting from applying inappropriate farming techniques. Land scarcity and the ever-increasing demand for wood-fuel (the single most important energy source) lead to deforestation. This has proceeded at a truly alarming rate. For example, in West Africa the deforestation rate is currently 4-6 per cent a year, far more rapid than in Brazil where the adverse ecological effects have long been recognized. In the tropical regions of Africa, deforestation currently denudes some 3.5 million hectares of land a year. Trees are not being replaced as quickly as they are being cut down, and in the arid and semi-arid areas the combined effect of deforestation, cultivating on vulnerable soils and over-grazing is to encourage the advance of the deserts. Some estimates judge that the Sahara is advancing southward by some six kilometers a year, others that the land lost in Africa each year through desertification and severe land deterioration now amounts to 6 million hectares, an area larger than that of Belgium.[10]

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[8]Anthony Hitchen, Africa's Crisis and the Church in Britain (London: CAFOD/CTS, 1987), 30.

[9]Ibid., 30f.

[10]Ibid., 31.

The tropical weather is never moderate, always extreme. Apart from the fact that it suffers from annual cycles of drought alternating with floods, it also suffers from too much heat. Harrison has rightly stated that "the astronomical order is as unfair to the Third World as the economic order they so often rail against."[11]

The effect of heat on vegetable matter as well as biological activity is enormous. The tropical forest rains down three times as much weight of leaves as a temperate forest. Heat accelerates bacterial activities that break up decaying vegetation. The effect of heat on biological activity also leads to the flourishing of life forms that are hostile to man and his environment.[12] Harrison Writes:

> Mosquitoes, tsetse flies, sandflies, thrive, as do the disease they carry along with a million forms of parasites, microbes, and fungi, attacking, debilitating and killing men, wilting and blighting their plants, eating crops alive in the fields or quietly feasting on them in granaries and storerooms. In my pantry in Nigeria there was a different kind of insect living in practically every sack or packet. Hence the Third World farmer is a good deal more likely to lose his crops, and to avoid losses he needs to use a good deal more insecticide, than farmers in the more favoured temperature areas.[13]

Heat, disease, and hunger are the lot of the African. These in turn work against his productivity.

Man's alienation from his environment is more felt in the Third World, where droughts, floods, hurricanes and

[11]Paul Harrison, Inside the Third World (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1987), 22. In this book one finds a vivid description of the causes and effects of the worldwide pattern of climate.

[12]Ibid., 23f.

[13]Ibid., 24.

earthquakes are the major destroyers, than anywhere else as Harrison has sarcastically painted here: "The four horsemen of the Apocalypse ride preferentially in the skies of the Third World. The tropics have been cursed with an overwhelming share of natural (and unnatural) disasters."[14]

Food and Agricultural Failures

The ecological hazards contribute greatly to SSA's food and agricultural problems and directly affect Africa's economic development and the majority of the population.

> With over 80 per cent of SSA's population directly dependent upon agriculture and with insufficient foreign exchange to purchase food from abroad, agriculture development in general and food production in particular are central to overall development. They hold the key to improvements in living standards for the vast majority of people. Yet the long-term performance of agriculture in SSA has been deeply disturbing. Even without the recent drought, SSA has become increasingly incapable of feeding itself. Food production levels per head of population have been falling for over 20 years, at an accelerated rate in the decade to 1984, and at a time when these levels have been increasing in Asia and Latin America.[15]

Mr. Ndegwa has rightly pointed out that Africa's development crisis is also a challenge to existing knowledge. Current ignorance, due partly to the lack of comprehensive and systematic agricultural research program in different regions of different countries, stands out as one reason for Africa's crisis. The following are other related factors. The majority of those people with land have not been able to raise the productivity of the land because of insufficient and low quality of inputs, including

[14]Ibid., 29.

[15]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 32.

farm equipment (and the fact that services are often provided at the wrong time), inadequate storage facilities, vulnerability to pests and disease and poor extension facilities. Our governments and donor agencies need to highlight the importance of increasing food production. Sufficient resources are needed to address the complex factors underlying low productivity.[16]

Our planners need to devote a higher percentage of their budget to research into the ways and means of improving the fertility of the land; better farming methods, irrigation and better storage facilities.

The ecological variant is not the only problem threatening the existence of the continent. Wars and internal ethnic conflicts, migration and immigration, population explosion are all dominant factors that have pauperized Africa. We will consider all these factors under the social model.

THE SOCIAL MODEL

WARS

War is one of the dominant causes of backwardness, hunger, and starvation in Africa.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, more than 47 wars have been fought in Africa (see the attached table 2). Wars are still going on in many parts of Africa--Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Africa, Sudan and Western Sahara. These wars have affected not only the

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[16]Ibid., 34.

fighting nations but also the surroundings nations as well. For example, the war in South Africa has an effect on the economy of the Front Line States. Shifts in the war in the "Horn of Africa" are reflected in the military spending not only of Egypt, Somalia, and Kenya but also Libya, Algeria, Mali, and Chad. The war in Western Sahara involves Mauritania, Morocco, and Algeria.[17]

The Horn of Africa: A Case Study

The Horn of Africa has been the scene of many wars. Its history has been tarnished by incessant conflicts, revolutions, and endless territorial disputes. Within the last twenty years, Somalia has laid claims to the territory of all her neighbors--Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti. Ethiopia's military campaign to suppress Eritrean, Tigrean, and Oromo liberation movements in the north, Kenya's conflict against Somalia in the 1960s and thereafter, and Ethiopia's war against Somalia in the Ogaden are all too familiar.[18]

On the situation of Ethiopia and her militarization, Donders laments:

> In Ethiopia, by the year 1977, seven separate resistance movements had formed, bringing 59,000 men under arms. Estimates of those forces currently operating in Eritrea alone range from 20,000 to 50,000 and there are significant numbers in Tigrean and Oromo armies as well. To offset their fighting power, the government armed forces in Ethiopia grew from 50,000 in 1957 to 250,0000 proper in 1980, a fivefold increase, and they are now in excess of 300,000. If one considers also police and paramilitary units, the figure rises to 320,000. Together with the security intelligence

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[17]J. Donders, War and Rumours of War (Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba, 1986), 8.

[18]Ibid.

> forces, more than 400,000 people have been engaged in armed pursuits. Thus, Ethiopia has the second largest standing army in Africa after Egypt. With the country's estimated total population (1985) of 41,000,000 people and a GNP per capita of less than US$100.00, Ethiopia is one of the most militarized states in the world. It is also one of the hungriest, as we all know.[19]

The war in Eritrea is said to be one of the most protracted conflicts on the continent--it has lasted for more then twenty-five years.[20] This prolonged conflict is not without cost. At the end of the day, it is the innocent who suffer from rootlessness and loss of property and life.

On the historical background of the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict, Donders again furnishes us with the following data

> Eritrea has an area of 50,000 square miles and population of about 3,500,000 people. It has been controlled in turn by Turkey and Egypt, and up to the end of World War II, by Italy. After that war, the territory was entrusted to the four winning powers: the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and the United Kingdom, with the last-mentioned as the temporary administering power.
>
> Unable to agree on the future of the colony, the four powers turned the matter over to the General Assembly of the United Nations, which agreed, in 1950, to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia in September 1952. The arrangement permitted to Eritrea a great degree of autonomy. In 1962, however, Emperor Haile Selassie undid the federation and annexed Eritrea as an integral part of Ethiopia. The direct response to this Ethiopian move was the organization of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.[21]

There can be no wars in Africa without the involvement of the West (especially America) and the Soviet Union.

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[19]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 8.

[20]Ibid., 9.

[21]Ibid.

..."external powers have intervened increasingly in conflicts within Africa, while Africa itself has become more involved in the rivalries of the East-West power blocs."[22]

The spread of complicated networks of military defence lines have their primary aim in protecting trade routes and other vested interests. Commenting on the conflict in the Horn of Africa, Donders observes that:

> The local struggles in the Horn of Africa have been aggravated by the involvement of foreign powers in regional affairs. As long as the USA supported the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie, the USSR assisted Somalia. From 1953 to 1976, more than 50 percent of U.S. military aid to black Africa went to Ethiopia alone. When after the fall of Haile Selassie the USSR started to support the Mengistu regime , mounting the largest and longest-lasting airlift in their history to assist Ethiopia's military government in suppressing national resistance movements and the Somali aggression, the USA began to support Somalia.
>
> The reason for all this is the strategic location of the Horn of Africa. It is alongside the Horn that the main oil transport routes and commercial sea lanes lead through the Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. Nearly 90 percent of the oil supply for Japan, 20 percent for the United States, and 60 percent for Western Europe passes through this region. From the Western point of view even a country like Kenya belongs to the middle East....![23]

Reasons for War in Africa

Colonial Heritage

Donders summarizes the facts for us thus:

> The present existing fifty-one African independent states date their struggle for independence from the 1884 Berlin Conference, when the Western countries represented at the conference arbitrarily portioned the African Continent and divided it among themselves without any regard for its demographic composition. Peoples who had never belonged together, or who in fact had been

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[22]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 49.

[23]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 10.

> adversaries for centuries, were put together into one and the same state with a simple stroke of an alien pen. The homelands of the other very large and widely distributed peoples with common cherished traditions were cut up and the peoples divided into several states. In more recent times, in 1951 and 1975, in Ethiopia and Western Sahara the same kind of thing happened, although this time the colonising powers were African states.[24]

After independence the fragmented states have found it difficult to see themselves as one people. Political and economic federations and communities were set up. But they have collapsed. In their fragmented state, and their economic powerlessness, they are always divided against each other.

The East-West Conflict

> Since their confrontation in 1961, when the U.S.A. and the USSR faced each other in Cuba, the superpowers have been very careful to avoid head-on clashes. Instead, they compete by letting others fight their wars by proxy. They supply arms, support subversives and try to topple governments which do not fit their ideologies. This struggle is not a simple fiction such as to be found in best-selling war novels and spy thrillers. It is a brute fact.[25]

Professor Ungar, writing to the Washington Post observed the same thing when he wrote

> The Soviet Union and the United States during the past years have often treated Africa as a strategic battleground: a place to recruit surrogates and, grisly as it sounds, to field test weapons.
> The greatest danger in U.S. policy toward friendly African regimes is the growing assumption that somehow military establishments are the only ones that can be counted upon to protect U.S. interests there.[26]

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[24]Ibid., 33.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ungar, Washington Post, 22 September 1986, quoted by Donders, War and Rumours of War, 35.

African countries gravitate around the two super powers. For example, if the ruling party is pro-West, the opposition party will be pro-East, and vice versa.

Insightfully, Donders again writes that

> When the communist bloc supports, favours and arms a group in one African region, the Western bloc will often do the same for another group in the same region. This involvement is not in view of the interests of the Africans themselves. In fact the Africans are being used, and often, against each other. The scramble among the powers of the West and East for the enormous unexploited riches of Africa is not yet over.[27]

A Call for Peace

Pathetically, one wonders why our people cannot think of unity instead of allowing themselves to be used against one another. The need for unity in Africa cannot be too strongly emphasized. First and foremost, the Church ought to unite, for there is too much quarreling going on among God's people all because of greed and the desire to be "greater than thou." When the Church is united, then she can pray and join her voice with our forebears who said "Africa must unite!" Meanwhile, may we join our voices with the Sudanese bishop who said:

> The Old Testament condemned war (Isa. 2:2-5). It reminds us that if we wish to obtain peace, the sword must be changed into a plough and the spear into a hoe. I appeal now that guns should be turned into hoes. Life is God's greatest gift to us. Guns remove this gift cheaply. The land is God's other gift to us. The hoe and the plough help us to develop this gift. I appeal to the First World to stop giving guns to our country. I pray to our people to buy hoes instead of guns. I appeal to our friends in Africa, Europe and Russia to give our people food and hoes. There are many problems in Sudan, but guns will not solve them. They only increase injustice. With a gun in his

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[27]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 34.

> hands, man cannot till the land; hoes must be held in two hands. This was my experience in the civil war (1955-72) in the Sudan.[28]

And may the "badly educated, the unattended sick, be aware of all this when, on the independence anniversaries of their country, the planes fly over, the tanks roll by and the soldiers cheer...nations which are devoting increasingly large amounts of resources to the military, cannot use these resources to meet the basic needs of their people."[29]

"That a precipitate increase in global expenditure on armaments is almost inevitably accompanied by economic setbacks and social damage--even if the great powers may sometimes manage to hang their own millstone around other necks."[30]

A close examination of the data on military spending will reveal that military spending has a serious down stream effect on Africa's development.

Hitchen's Committee tells us that

> Total military spending in SSA increased by 50 per cent in real terms in the 1970s, reaching $8.5 billion in 1980. Although in aggregate such spending has fallen in real terms since then, by 1984 it nevertheless amounted to some $21 per head, the same as is spent on education and twice what is spent on health care. Official figures show that in the 1970s arms imports into Africa rose faster than in any other region of the world, and that in the early 1980s they constituted some 10 per cent of all imports in SSA and up to one third of all imports of machinery and equipment. From the early 1960s to the late 1970s arms imports to SSA increased tenfold from $62 million

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[28]Quoted by Donders, War and Rumours of War, 27.

[29]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 31.

[30]Willy Brandt, World Armament and World Hunger (London, England: Victor Gollan CA, 1986), 24.

> a year to $633 million a year at constant (1975) prices.[31]

Wars have multiple effects on the socio-economic life of the people. The conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia for example has created a large number of displaced people. During war time young men are drafted from an already precarious agricultural economy to fight, fields become battle zones. The owners are routed out of their land or they abandon them for fear of assailant's bullet. Crops are destroyed or cannot be harvested, the physical environment is damaged, modern sector production and service facilities are destroyed or abandoned. Transport and communication systems are paralysed; there is constant fear and insecurity; foreign investment is hampered.[32]

In summary, we want to state that war causes rootlessness, famine, poverty, death, and shortage of money for more essential social services as the following illustrates

> Angola, blessed as it is with vast oil reserves, a treasure in diamond deposits, and much fertile land, should be an African powerhouse, Instead, the country's 8.6 million people are among its poorest. As in every African war zone famine is an ever threatening reality. Famine at the moment of writing this book is striking Angola's Huambo and Bie regions, once its bread baskets. The regions are the scene of ferocious fighting between the army, backed by Cubans and the USSR, and the rebels, supported by South Africa and the U.S.A. It is an eleven-year old war.[33]

Migration

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[31]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 47.

[32]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 48; cf. Donders, War and Rumours of War, 27.

[33]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 13.

We have already mentioned in passing the refugee issue due to political and military conflicts. Here our intention is to discuss migration and dislocation in general, their causes and effects on the socio-economic life of Africa.

Causes and Consequences

Migration and immigration on the continent are caused by different factors and they manifest themselves in two different models--intra and inter-continental migration (migration within the continent and migration out of the continent).

The following are some of the factors that generate the inter-continental movements.

1. Struggle for Independence

The colonial powers did not always find it convenient or necessary to grant self-rule to their colonies. The nationals, in almost all of the cases had to struggle for it. This caused population dislocation.

2. Ethnic Conflict.

This has two models, i.e. conflicts with autonomous and separatist regions (for example, Eritrea, Tigre, and Ogaden in Ethiopia), and internal ethnic conflicts unrelated to separatist/ autonomous structure, for example, the Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda and Burundi.

3. Oppressive Governments

African governments have not always seen themselves as the custodians of justice. Most of them, instead of ensuring justice for their people, become dictators and tyrants. They use the arms and the police to perpetrate

injustice. Uganda, under Idi Amin, and Central African Republic, under Bokasa, are our worst examples.

4. Religious Persecution

Several African countries have seen religious persecution. Christians, for example, have been persecuted in Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda, under different regimes. When this happened, many people sought asylum in other countries, where Christianity was tolerated.

5. Economic Motivations

This refers to "economic refugees" who, because of lack of food, high cost of living, low wage rates, lack of incentives for the practice of professional skills, inadequate rural facilities, deem it necessary to seek a vote with their feet, "demanding a seat at the table where the feasting is going on. It happens because development is uneven and the benefits of growth are so unevenly spread. It is a protest against inequality."[34]

Workers from the rural areas move to the cities for a better life. Figures given by the UN in 1960 estimated some 9.2 million people a year were flooding into Third World cities--some 25,000 people each day. By the early seventies, 12 million people a year, and 33,000 a day were arriving.[35]

All these are due to the fact that the urban incomes are higher than rural incomes. In addition, urban workers have access to basic amenities which are, in some cases,

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[34]Harrison, Third World, 149.

[35]Ibid., 145.

absolutely absent in the rural areas. Harrison sees this when he says:

> The unfair channelling of public investment into the cities reaches scandalous proportions in most developing countries. For example, the Ivory Coast's development plan for 1967-70 allocated 8,000 francs CFA per resident in Abidjan for roads, sewerage, water and electricity supply, primary schools and dispensaries. Other urban areas were allocated 6,000 francs per head. For rural areas, the allocation was only 400 francs. In all developing countries, four-fifths of the $980 million spent on water supply improvements in 1970 went to the urban areas, which had only just over a quarter of the population and were already much better provided for than rural areas.
> Electricity frees the peasant from the tyranny of early bedtime. It is the essential precondition for further progress to a fan, a fridge or a record player. But it can also help a village to develop small-scale industry. While all modern cities and most large towns are supplied with electricity in developing countries, only a small minority of villages are. In 1971, 23 per cent of Latin American villages were electrified, in Asia 15 per cent, in Africa only 4 per cent.[36]

6. Wars

War is the dominant reason why Africa is filled with refugees. The following shows the refugee situation in Africa today.[37]

Citizens who have fled

Ethiopia	1,286,500
Angola	385,000
Uganda	282,100

The chief countries receiving refugees are

Sudan	1,094,000
Somalia	550,000
Zaire	328,000
Tanzania	179,000

Several other groups have become displaced people <u>within</u> their countries of origin because of war and conflict. Because of the complexity of factors outlined above, the number of refugees in Africa is believed to be 5 million.

These are some of the factors that affect low productivity which in turn slows down the pace of development. Our national planners will do well to seriously consider these factors in their planning.

Many qualified African professionals are living in Western countries for their economic betterment. Some of them leave when they realize that their skills fetch nearly nothing in their home countries. Others leave when they are in conflict with the ideologies of the national leaders. This was the case in Ghana in the late seventies. All the professionals were seen as enemies of the government because they happened to challenge the authorities about injustice and oppression.

<u>Population</u>

Population growth is also one of the contributory factors of Africa's poverty. World Bank statistics show that in the period 1973-84

> the average annual growth of population was 2.0 per cent for all low-income countries, but 2.9 per cent for SSA; between 1980 and 2000 it is expected to fall to 1.8 per decent for all low--income countries, while rising to 3.1 per cent for countries in SSA. Similarly, for all middle-income countries in the period 1973-84, the annual average growth of population was 2.4 per cent but was 3.0 per cent in SSA; it is expected to fall to 2.1 per cent between 1980 and 2000, but rise to 3.3. per cent in SSA.[38]

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[36] Ibid., 147.

[37] Donders, <u>War and Rumours of War</u>, 29.

[38] Hitchen, <u>Africa's Crisis</u>, 52.

> [P]ast and present trends, together with medium-term projections into the future, reveal the way in which rapid population growth has contributed and will continue to contribute to Africa's environmental and development problems. Africa's population growth rates are not only higher than those of other developing areas of the world but in recent years they have gone up while rates in other regions have fallen; more importantly still, they are set to increase further in the next 10 to 15 years, while rates in other areas are projected to continue to fall. With population growth rates currently around 3 per cent a year, SSA's population is set to double in a little over 20 years.[39]

With African's vast area of land (11,706,166 square miles) it would seem that Africa has no population problem, and that there is room to accommodate many more people. But long-term projections show that not every part of the continent is fertile enough to accommodate all the 80 per cent of the rural dwellers. The coming population concentration in the fertile area will be greater than the land can bear. We will do well to observe that:

> A recent FAO (1982) survey of the potential carrying capacity of land states that, with low inputs, Africa could support 1.6 times its present population in the year 2000 and 34 times if high inputs were used. Most of Africa is now cultivated at the "low" level: the "high" level would involve massive investments in fertilizer, mechanization, infrastructure and land management. the survey makes it clear that land reserves are unevenly distributed and there is little spare land in the Sahelian region. FAO figures claim that, in 1973, 184 million people were living in areas which were only able to support 79 million people at the recommended calorie intake levels. In 2000, even with the high level of inputs, parts of Mali, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda would be unable to support their expected populations. However, with an equitable distribution of resources within countries, Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia would cease to be critical.[40]

[39]Ibid., 29.

[40]Ibid., 52.

The astronomical population growth accentuates Africa's poverty in several ways. Given the present low levels of development, lack of adequate investment sources, and limited states and foreign funds, rapid population growth will perpetuate poverty. Growth rates need to exceed population increase in order to raise living standards. But the fact is that SSA has been marked by both lower economic growth rates and higher population growth rates than other developing countries for 25 years.[41]

Rural poverty and rapid population growth have accelerated the rural to urban exodus. In the period 1970-82, urban population growth was twice the rate of natural increase in Africa and higher than in all developing regions of the world. "Given the present scarce resources, this rapid urban migration leads in theory to a greater strain on already inadequate services and in practice to the extension of urban squalor and higher risk of diseases."[42]

African livelihood is greatly dependant on agriculture. We have already pointed out the eco-crisis in our previous discussion. A high population growth will accentuate these problems, which will in-turn affect human and animal life.

Population Growth and Family Life

Over population at this level means all the family income goes into immediate consumption. Investment in fertilizers, and other inputs that could boost productivity

[41]Ibid., 29.

[42]Ibid., 30.

suffer. Also no money is left to provide adequate education that will enhance the welfare of the children. There is inadequate parental contact as the parents have more domestic commitments. The little time that is left is spread thinly over all the children. There is greater stress in the homes of families with large numbers of children than families with few children. The possibility of frequent sickness is high. This in turn affects the productivity of the family. The limited financial resources that are available will again have to be spent on medication. Malnutrition and other forms of deprivation are usually the lot of the children from large families. This in turn affects their mental abilities. This affects their future earning power. A study in the 1950s proved that children with six or more siblings scored an average of thirteen points less on an intelligence test than those with fewer siblings.[43]

POLITICAL MODEL

Preview

The African continent has known all forms of oppression and subjugation, such as the well-known Atlantic slave trade (which is said to be the worst form of humiliation), colonialism (said to be the worst type of dehumanization), economic and cultural exploitation as well as domination by local "elites."

During the period of the black "diaspora," many able-bodied men were hauled over the seas to South and Central

[43]Harrison, Third World, 252.

America and North America. This depleted Africa of her human resources: as beasts of burden, they provided cheap labour to the emerging capitalist systems of the Western Hemisphere.

Colonialism

Writing under the subject of the historical origins of the Africa's socio-economic crisis, the Hitchen committee states that "if one can show that the causes of Africa's present crisis have been building up during the two and a half decades since political independence was achieved, one can equally insist that the previous 70 or 80 years of colonial rule created distinct structures that have weakened development efforts in modern times and also established linkages of adverse dependence with the outside world."[44]

The Berlin Conference of 1884-85 saw European partitioning of Africa into spheres of influence. This fragmentation of Africa into 53 separate states owed more to an "Imperialist bargaining than to the existence of natural borders, and to the population groupings, traditions, languages, and religions of those divided."[45]

The continent was polarized and its people began to look to the European cities of London, Paris, Brussels, Lisbon, Berlin, Madrid and Rome.[46] This fragmentation has raised artificial territorial barriers. For example Luo speaking tribes are found not only in Kenya but also in

[44]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 27.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Kwesi Dickson, Theology in Africa, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984), 75.

Tanzania and Uganda! And in West Africa, Ewes are found in Ghana, Togo, and the Benin Republic.

During the colonial rule, chiefs and henchmen were either forcibly removed or manipulated. The French preferred the system of direct rule, putting in their own district leaders, whereas the British applied indirect rule, using what Harrison calls Sahelian emirs to create a buffer between them and the native masses, and traditional rulers who became puppets and mere ceremonial figure Heads, and collaborators of foreign overlords.[47] Those kingdoms that resisted the attempt of foreign domination were met with conquest and subjugation through superior armament.

The Colonial Economics

Trade is the oldest of the different areas of economic interaction with Europe; foreign investment is of recent origin. In general, Europeans' economic decisions were made more with an eye to the demands of the metropolitan economy than concern for the welfare of the indigenous population. The dominant preoccupation was exploiting the advantage of cash crops and other primary resources. Economic policies therefore "overlooked the need to create viable and nationally integrated economic base within the borders of the colonial territories."[48]

The indigenous agriculture upon which the majority of the population depended for their livelihood was also neglected, "not uncommonly accompanied by the destruction of traditional agricultural systems, even those that produced a

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[47]Harrison, Third World, 44f.

[48]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 28.

surplus over and above subsistence requirements."[49] The colonies were devoted to the production of such export commodities as cocoa in Ghana, coffee in Uganda, groundnuts in Senegal and Gambia, pyrethrum in Tanzania (then called Tanganyika) and tea in Kenya. The principle of developing African agriculture to serve European needs was quite well entrenched. The war had helped to consolidate it.[50]

The function of the colonies therefore was to supply cheap raw materials on the one hand, and on the other, to purchase the manufactured goods at exorbitant prices.

> Often this function was quite explicit. As the French political ruler Ferry remarked in 1885: `The foundation of a colony is the creation of a market.' Another Frenchman, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, summed it up in 1874 when he wrote: The most useful function which colonies perform ... is to supply the mother country's trade with a ready-made market to get its industry going and maintain it, and to supply the inhabitants of the mother country - whether as industrialists, workers or consumers - with increased profits, wages or commodities.' Once the economic life of the colony had been forcibly harnessed to the needs of the colonial power, political control became an unnecessary expense: the system perpetuated itself. The ex-colonies still had their mines, their plantations and outgrowers, on which they depended to earn foreign exchange. They could not easily develop alternatives. They still had their sad little colonial transport systems, with all railways and major roads leading to the main port--a visible symbol that their economies' purpose was not to provide for its own needs, but to serve foreign interests. They still had the branches of the old colonial trading companies monopolizing their trade. The links of economic subjection had been forged to last.[51]

Urban Bias

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[49]Ibid.

[50]Mazuri, The African Condition, 76.

[51]Harrison, Third World, 337f.

The development of the countryside was subordinated to the needs of the urban areas. The result was rural to urban migration. City slums, were created in consequence. And since the mobility of the people was restricted in most cases, the population in the slums swelled up.

Sub Regional Distortion

Areas controlled or dominated by whites were given priority in the development process. For example in 1938, the spread of 1,222 million pounds sterling investment in Africa by the West was as follows: £555 million was invested in South Africa; 102 million in Rhodesia, and the rest of Africa had 565 million.[52]

Discrimination in African Wage labour.

Writing about capital and African wage labour, Professor Walter Rodney pointed out that

> Colonial Africa fell within that part of the international capitalist economy from which surplus was drawn to feed the metropolitan sector. As seen earlier, exploitation of land and labour is essential for human social advance, but only on the assumption that the product is made available within the area where the exploitation takes place. Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called 'mother country. From an African view-point, that amounted to consistent expatriation of surplus produced by African labour out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the same dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped.
> By any standards, labour was cheap in Africa, and the amount of surplus extracted from the African labourer was great. The employer under colonialism paid an extremely small wage--a wage usually insufficient to keep the worker physically alive--and, therefore, he had to grow food to survive. This applied in particular to farm

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[52]Mazrui, The African Condition, 79.

> labour of the plantation type, to work in mines, and to certain forms of urban employment.[53]

On the subject of labour exploitation, a white settler in Kenya, Colonel Grogan, said of the Kikuyu: "We have stolen his land. Now we must steal his limbs. Compulsory labour is the corollary of our occupation of the country."[54]

Rodney continues that due to the ethnocentric bias, the Europeans offered the lowest possible wages and relied on legislation, backed by force to do the rest.[55]

Citing some evidences to support his assertion, Rodney, inter alia, said the Nigerian coal miner at Enugu earned 1/- a day for underground work, and 0/9d a day for jobs on the surface. "Such a miserable wage would be beyond the comprehension of a Scottish or German coal miner who could virtually earn in an hour what the Enugu miner was paid for a six-day week."[56]

The records of Farewell Lines, a large American shipping company, shows that in 1955 "of the total amount spent on loading and discharging cargo moving between Africa and America, five-sixths were to American workers and one-sixth to Africans. Yet it was the same amount of cargo loaded and unloaded at both ends."[57]

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[53]Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (London: Bolgle L'Ouverture Publications, 1983), 162f.

[54]Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, 180.

[55]Ibid., 163.

[56]Ibid., 163f.

[57]Ibid., 164.

The apologists of colonialism usually point out that the cost of living was higher in the capitalist countries than in the colonies. To this, Rodney's response is appropriate.

> The fact is that the higher standard was made possible by the exploitation of colonies, and there was no justification for keeping African living standards so depressed in an age where better was possible and in a situation where a higher standard was possible because of the work output of Africans themselves.[58]

It was not only the unskilled labourers who were discriminated against but also the senior officers. For example, the European civil servants in the Gold Coast (Ghana) received an average of £40 a month with housing facilities and other fringe benefits, whereas Africans got an average salary of £4 for doing the same kind of work.[59]

In 1934, 41 Africans were killed in a gold mine disaster in the Gold Coast. The compensation the capitalist company gave to the descendants of each of these men was £3. "It was exploitation without responsibility and without redress."[60]

Through Lebanese and Indian intermediaries the European trading companies further exploited the peasants. The African peasant had no control over freight rates. He paid more than citizens of other lands. Again Rodney documents for us here.

> African peasants had absolutely no control over the freight rates which were charged, and actually paid more than citizens in other lands. The rate

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[58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid.

> for flour from Liverpool to West Africa was 35/- per ton as compared with only 7/6d from Liverpool to New York (a roughly equivalent distance). Freight rates normally varied with the volume of cargo carried, but the rate for cocoa was established at 50/- per ton when amounts exported were small at the beginning of this century, and the same high figure remained when exports increased. Coffee carried from Kenya to New York in the 1950s earned the shippers $40 (about 280/-) per ton. Theoretically, it was the merchant who paid the shipper the freight charges, but in practical terms it meant that peasant production was bearing all the costs, since the merchants paid out of profits made by buying cheaply from the peasants. Alternatively, white settler planters paid the costs as in Kenya, and then regained their profits through exploitation of rural wage labour.[61]

Colonial Administration

The colonial administration itself was an instrument of injustice. The taxes extracted from the people were not for their benefit, rather, it was meant to perpetuate their unjust rule, as Rodney tells us:

> In addition to private companies, the colonial state also engaged directly in the economic exploitation and impoverishment of Africa. The equivalent of the colonial office in each colonizing country worked hand in hand with their governors in Africa to carry out a number of functions; the principal ones being as follows:
>
> (a) To protect national interests against competition from other capitalists.
>
> (b) To arbitrate the conflicts between their own capitalists.
>
> (c) To guarantee optimum conditions under which private companies could exploit Africans.
>
> The last mentioned objective was the most crucial. That is why colonial governments were repeatedly speaking about the maintenance of 'law and order', by which they meant the maintenance of conditions most favorable to the expansion of capitalism and the plunder of Africa. This led the colonial governments to impose taxes.

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[61]Ibid., 176.

> One of the main purposes of the colonial taxation system was to provide requisite funds for administering the colony as a field of exploitation. European colonizers ensured that Africans paid for the upkeep of the governors and police who oppressed them and served as watchdogs for private capitalists. Indeed, taxes and customs duties were levied in the 19th century with the aim of allowing the colonial powers to recover the costs of the armed forces which they despatched to conquer Africa. In effect, therefore, the colonial governments never put a penny into the colonies. All expense of maintaining the colonial government machinery was a form of the products of African labour. The French colonies were especially victimized in this respect. Particularly since 1921, the local revenue raised from taxation had to meet all expenses as well as to build up a reserve.[62]

Benefits of Colonial Rule

Professor Rodney carefully examines the supposed socio-economic benefits (such as railroads, schools, hospitals, and the like) to the colonies, and concludes that "the sum total of these services was amazingly small... Colonialism had only one hand--it was a one-armed bandit." [63]

He reiterates that "for the first three decades of colonialism, hardly anything was done that could remotely be termed service to the African people. It was in fact after the last war that social services were built as a matter of policy. How little they amounted to does not really need illustrating."[64]

We would, however, like to take an exception and agree with the Hitchen committee which points out that

> It would, however, be a misreading of history either to place all Africa's present ills at the door of colonialism or to argue that colonial rule

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[62]Ibid., 179.

[63]Ibid, 223.

[64]Ibid, 224.

> was wholly disadvantageous: the colonial period did bring with it skills, research and modern farming techniques, even if their application was limited, as well as improved health facilities, transport, and communication networks. [65]

We may not all agree as to the ulterior motive behind some of the supposed services but in the final analysis, at the end of colonialism, the facilities became the bona fide property of Africans.

THE POST COLONIAL ERA

Preview

Writing under this heading, Professor Dickson painfully states that "Europe may have underdeveloped Africa, but the momentum of underdevelopment is in our time being kept up, to a large extent, by Africans themselves.[66] Dickson could not have said it better. Many greedy Africans have taken public offices, only to turn public funds into private accounts. It is now an open secret that our politicians have not always performed creditably. Talk about corruption, incompetence, nepotism, tribalism, extravagance display of the "people's money," gross injustice, misuse of the state machinery, and you find ample records everywhere on the continent. Our national leaders have not always seen themselves as the custodians of justice, instead, they use the state power to generate and perpetuate gross inequalities.

It is all too familiar that the self-acclaimed messiahs have more often than not proved to be "wolves in sheep's

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[65]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 28.

[66]Dickson, Theology in Africa, 75.

clothing." "... the injustices committed against the people by foreign colonisers have been replaced by injustices perpetuated by fellow countrymen... the abuse of power by local and national leaders, continue to make the lives of many citizens of new African nations a difficult existence."[67]

A Ghanaian journalist, Baffour, writing in New African, rightly asks, "Are the First World and the IMF the only devils that have supervised Africa's economic subjugation?[68]"

We will now take a walk across the continent and examine some few case studies.

The Men at the Top

Zaire: Mobutu Sese Seko

Mobutu became the president of Zaire in 1965, and

> Like most African presidents, he rules as half-chieftain, combining the techniques of twentieth century communication with ancient tribal symbolism. By his own decree he has become the embodiment of a homespun philosophy and national symbol above criticism. He has caused his people great suffering, but at his command they turn out by the tens of thousands to line the parade routes and fill the stadiums and sing his praises. Mobutu is more than a president. He is a cult. His teachings, ... have by his order, become the national philosophy.[69]

About the excesses of Mobutu and his peers, Lamb writes:

> the man himself is not an aberration among his presidential peers. He is but one in a fraternity whose members command respect by words, not deeds.

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[67]Art Beals with Larry Libby, Beyond Hunger (Eastbourne, England: Kingsway Publications, 1985), 110.

[68]Baffour Ankomah, "The Way We Are," New African 250 (July 1988): 41.

[69]David Lamb, The Africans (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 43f.

> These men represent a curious mixture of European influence and African tradition, and their power is absolute. Their overseas bank accounts are stuffed with pilfered funds, and their loyalties and concerns are distinctly self-centered, often have little to do with national advancement.
> Mobutu is, in fact, more a creation of Western capitalism than he is of African custom. Like Africa's other second-generation presidents, he is the symbol of his country's sickness, not the sole cause of it. After independence the inherited European systems soon ceased to work and the substitute African systems broke down. Men like Mobutu were left to rule by experiment. They became, in effect, neocolonial governors, operating and living much in the style of their former white masters. The welfare of the African people is generally not much more important to them than it was to the colonial governors.[70]

On the wealth of Zaire and how it was grossly dissipated, Lamb tells us that

> When Mobutu came to power, Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo) was a country on the move. Rich copper mines stood ready for exporting, fertile fields for tilling. By the early 1970s, with copper bringing record prices on the world market, Mobutu, a former journalist and one-time army sergeant, found himself presiding over an unprecedented economic boom. His response was to go on a spending orgy that made economists' heads whirl. But his priorities were sadly confused; what he sought was not national development, but personal prestige and national grandeur.
> He built palaces, eleven in all, and linked some of them to the capital with four-lane highways. He dedicated monuments to himself and constructed stadiums in which to address his people. He visited New York, admired the World Trade Center and had a small scale duplication of the buildings constructed in Kinshasa. He bought off his enemies and turned his friends - most of them from his own Gbande tribe - into overnight millionaires. He redesigned the main street of Kinshasa and cut down the lovely old trees in the center divider so the boulevard could accommodate more military vehicles for a parade. He spent $15 million sponsoring the Muhammad Ali-George Foreman world championship fight in 1974. Said for himself-well, Mobutu was hardly the penniless army sergeant of a decade ago. He was now one of the world's wealthiest men, with assets conservatively estimated by Western intelligence sources at more than $3 billion. Mobutu incidentally did not have

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[70]Ibid., 44.

> enough faith in his country's economic future to invest at home; like other African presidents, his fortune was in European banks and European real estate.[71]

On corruption, we have the following data

> Of every dollar coming into Zaire, whether it was in the form of a foreign aid grant or a business contract, Zairian officials took twenty cents off the top for their personal cut. In 1977 Zaire's coffee crop was valued at $400 million. Because of smuggling and under-invoicing, only $120 million was returned to Zaire's treasury. The rest ended up in foreign bank accounts held by Mobutu and his Gbande colleagues. Everyone was on the take, and in Zaire you needed to know only two things to service or prosper: Whom do I see and how much will it cost.[72]

The latest information we have on his wealth reads as follows:

> He owns no less than 11 chateaux in Belgium and France as well as palatial estates and residences in Spain, Italy and Switzerland. He owns buildings in Paris and the Cote d'Ivoire, presidential mansions in each of Zaire's eight provinces and a palace in his home province. No one knows how much he has in Swiss banks, and he has exclusive use or ownership of numerous ships, jet planes (including a Boeing 747) and at least 51 Mercedes. He has shares in every major foreign company in the country, in the banks, and 5% commission of the country's minerals is paid into his overseas accounts. Thirty per cent of the country's operating budget flows through the presidential office with no further accounting. Additionally, Mobutu owns a 32-bedroom villa in Switzerland (permanently staffed with 26 servants), a Costa del Sol beachside villa and a 17th-century castle in Spain." This is the same Mobutu who turns round to blame others for his country's and Africa's "insoluble debts"- a man whose government has amassed a near $6 billion foreign debt.[73]

In March 1988 Mobutu was elected Chairman of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC). On

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[71]Ibid., 45.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Quoted by Baffour, New African 250, 41.

his election he told the world how he detested "the insoluble problems arising as well as the deterioration in terms of exchange which takes place." Such hypocrisy!

The result of all this squander, opulence, and wantonness is spelt out for us here

> Zaire paid a heavy price for Mobutu's short-sightedness. Copper prices plunged and the boom of the seventies quickly became the bust of the eighties. Zaire became an economic cripple and a social misfit, and by 1980 Mobutu was experiencing the ultimate humiliation for a black African leader: he turned the running of his country over to foreigners. He invited back the Belgian businessmen whose firms he had expropriated in the 1970s. He brought in Moroccan guards to provide his security. The International Monetary Fund was running the central bank, and Belgian specialists were operating the customs department. Other Europeans were moving into the finance ministry, the taxation office and the transportation system. Mobutu called this new experiment for economic recovery the Mobutu Plan. It was well named because it was an attempt to save Mobutu, not Zaire.[74]

> Zaire's debt to foreign banks and governments soared to $4 billion in 1980, and shortages of food and spare parts became critical. The government's news agency closed down for lack of paper, 360 abandoned buses stood rusting near the airport, and the national airline, Air Zaire, could afford only enough fuel to operate one of every four domestic flights each day. Its Boeing 747 and Douglas DC-10 were repossessed. Through it all, Mobutu kept insisting that Zaire and its people were doing fine; the problems Western journalists wrote about, he said, were illusionary ones that merely underscored the media's bias against Africa.[75]

How was America helping Mobotu and his comrades to perpetuate their nefarious deeds?

> In the U.S. Congress there were debates about Washington's cozy alliance with the Kinshasa government, but the official line was that Zaire was economically and strategically important, that

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[74]Lamb, The Africans, 46.

[75]Ibid., 47.

> it was a counterbalance to growing Soviet influence in Central Africa and that Mobutu, a staunch anti-Communist, should be supported regardless of his shortcomings. As a result, Zaire in the late 1970s was receiving nearly half of all the aid money the Carter Administration allocated for black Africa. But Washington wasn't helping a country develop; it was merely buying the loyalty of a chieftain, much in the same way Europe did during the colonial era. It was encouraging the very conditions that could lead to revolution and expanded Soviet influence.[76]

Can our brothers and sisters in the churches in America influence such a decision? Can they not speak up in condemnation of such support for oppressive, corrupt rulers? We don't know.

Now let's fly to West Africa, shall we? We go to Nigeria and briefly examine the evidence there.

Dr. Tajudeen: Nigeria

Oil-rich Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa has seen a lot of corrupt officials in her political history. Let us take one case study here.

Dr. Tajudeen Olawale Idris, the former commissioner of Education for Lagos State was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1985 for using his office to amass wealth illegally. We provide the following evidence on his ill-acquired wealth.

> Dr. Tajudeen Olawale Idris, sentenced to life in 1985 for amassing wealth under the colour of his office, admitted in court that Phillip Brothers of the US was paying commission into his foreign accounts for shady oil deals between him and the company - money that should have enriched the 100 million people of Nigeria.
>
> At the time of the trial, Dr. Idris's coded account in a Swiss bank had an initial deposit of $11.66m. His three accounts in London had a total credit balance of £1.04m. He had another $32m in two Swiss banks and landed property worth £380,000

[76]Ibid., 46.

> in London. Idris had other assets in Nigeria worth N1.087m.[77]

Other Examples

Umaru Biko's episode at the Heathrow Airport is still fresh. A man whose corrupt practices led him to a self-imposed political asylum in Britain. He was kidnapped by some Nigerian loyalists in conjuntion with some Israeli men. He was put in a box ready to be flown to Nigeria to face the full demands of the law. But for the intervention of the British security officers, this deal would have been sealed!

Because of all this corruption and other factors, Nigeria has sunk miserably into debt. The situation now in Nigeria is such that, even a Ph.D. holder and his wife, a masters degree holder and a teacher at one of the universities in Nigeria, can't afford to buy a loaf of bread on daily basis!

Other evidences abound on the continent. The case of Bokasa of Central African Republic, that of Acheampong of Ghana and many more others are all too familiar. But at this point we feel we should end this section by taking a cue from the observations of Dr. Joseph Karanja, the former Vice President of Kenya, who was also the former Vice Chancellor of Nairobi University, who said

> If Africa is to develop, the elite must re-examine their consciences and understand and accept the unique history and circumstances of the African people. "They must be honest and should realize that the African people did not fight for their independence so that they could become less free instead of freer, poorer instead of better off.

[77]Baffour, New African 250, 41.

> It's time that the African people had the right to choose."[78]

Can Africans of today really say that they are truly independent? This question is left for Africans to answer.

The world system is dominated by the powerful against the powerless. When the powerful within a country oppress the powerless, the powerful in the West help the oppressors to perpetuate their injustice. May God help us to resist the oppressors' rule in the power of His Spirit.

THE ECONOMIC MODEL

Preview

Harrison has observed, and rightly so, that "To the developing countries the great world market place must often seem like a casino where all the wheels, dice, decks are rigged, loaded and mated so that the bankers of the West always win. Lady luck reigns over their foreign exchange earnings."[79]

Because of our global interdependence, no country is self-sufficient in all the goods and services she requires. It exports the goods she can sell to foreign purchasers, and in turn, imports from other countries her domestic requirements.

In theory, it would seem that the most beneficial situation is one in which countries specialize in some goods and services they can produce more cheaply; in this case economy of scale will apply--everyone benefits by lower

[78]Quoted by Lamb, The Africans, 56.

[79]Harrison, Third World, 336.

prices. This is the liberal comparative advantage theory. But as Harrison has rightly indicated, "the present division of labour originated not in this comparative advantage, but in conquest by force and rule by, repression or with the non-colonies, in the premature imposition of free trade by gunboat diplomacy."[80]

The Global Economy and Africa's Primary Products

Africa's colonial past and its low level of development, have combined to create a situation in which the fragmented countries are grossly dependent upon primary cash crops and livestock originating in the agricultural sector, as well as basic minerals and metal ores.

Seventy percent of the export earnings of SSA is based on some six primary commodities, excluding oil. The foreign exchange requirements needed to finance or import needed items--fuel, lorries, cars, fertilizers, medicines, spare parts, and of course the military items too--all must come from the export of these six commodities.

Consider that, since 1977, deliveries of all arms exports to SSA have included 1,800 tanks and self-propelled guns, 4,400 artillery pieces, 3,800 armoured personnel carriers, 1,000 military aircraft, 150 naval craft, and 1,200 surface-to-air missiles.[81] And then consider that:

1. The amount which one modern tank costs could improve storage facilities for 100,000 tonnes of rice, so that annual wastage of 4,000

[80]Harrison, Third World, 338.

[81]Donders, War and Rumours of War, 13.

tonnes or more would be avoided--a day's ration for eight million people.

2. The same sum would be enough to provide 1,000 classrooms for 30,000 school children.
3. The price of a fighter plane would equip 40,000 village pharmacies
4. The price of a submarine is equivalent to the combined education budgets of 23 developing countries with 160 million children of school age.[82]

With this data, could we say that it is morally wrong for our governments to waste hard earned foreign exchange on armaments? Since the world recession that began in 1979, the relative purchasing power of exports to imports (the terms of trade), has been grossly unfavourable to SSA.

The effects of price fluctuations on Africa are alarming; they play havoc with planning and budgeting.

Primary products are not reliable to maintain a steady livelihood. The primary products of selected African nations in the mid-seventies was woefully appalling.

Let's take the case of Zambia to illustrate. Ninety per cent of Zambia's foreign exchange comes from copper. Between 1965 and 1969 it could have obtained US $4,565 a tonne (based on 1980 prices). In 1980-84 the price of copper had gone down to merely US $1820 a tonne. At the same time the price of manufactured goods (Zambia's imports) had trebled. That is to say, in the early 1980s

[82]Brandt, World Armament & World Hunger, 44.

Zambia had to export seven tonnes of Copper in a order to buy manufactured imports which one tonne had been able to buy in the latter half of the 1960s.[83] The UN World Economic Survey estimates that "the overall deterioration in terms of trade between 1980 and 1985 led to accumulated loss of $11 billion for SSA."[84] One result of this is the debt crisis.

SELF-ALIENATION MODEL

This model of pauperization covers areas like laziness, idleness, superstitious beliefs, drunkenness, disregard for instruction or refusal to learn from one's mistakes. Much as these factors need to be addressed at the personal and corporate levels, they are peripheral relative to the previous pauperization models discussed. This self-alienation model would lend itself to further study by sociologists.

CONCLUSION

We summarize that the models which seek to explain why Africans are pauperized are the ecological, the social, the political, the economic, and self-alienation models. Our poverty is caused by both natural and unnatural factors. However, we want to point out that the unnatural factors

[83]Hitchen, Africa's Crisis, 42.

[84]Ibid., 44f.

dominate. The paradox is that these unnatural factors are man made--the powerful oppress the powerless. Oppression is a fundamental structural category as evidenced by the vocabulary of oppression we studied in chapter two of this thesis. Their frequency of occurrence, and the context within which they occur, provide abundant data for the conclusion that, in biblical theology, oppression is viewed as the dominant cause of poverty.

The evidence from the biblical data and our consideration of the social, economic, and the political models of pauperization which we have discussed in this chapter, have led the present writer to reach the conclusion that, though there are intervening variables which are operative in the maintenance of poverty, oppression is the dominant cause. The powerful make the powerless poor so that the powerful will remain rich.

Africas inability to compete in the international trade system, the state corruption which creates elite wealth and pauperizes the majority of the people, the arms conflict and militarization are the principal mechanisms by which the poor get poor.

Because the rich can organize more easily to fight for their interests, they get richer, and because the poor cannot, they get poorer.

> Once the poor get poor, they tend to stay that way by the kind of circular mechanisms outlined in earlier parts of this book. The poor man has no capital, human or physical, to improve his lot. He is malnourished and therefore diseased, and so his labour is less productive - but he cannot make it more productive as he lacks money to invest in improving his land or his tools. Therefore he stays poor, and because he is poor, is less able to organize with others of his kind to improve

> their lot. And, if he finds himself in a situation of competition with the rich, he will probably get even poorer. Nations stay poor strangely enough, by exactly the same process ..... And the children of the poor also stay poor, because the environment of poverty is hereditary. Like their parents, the children of the poor are malnourished and unhealthy. Therefore they fail at school (if indeed they ever attend it), lose out in the employment race and remain in poverty.
>
> Poverty is self-perpetuating, and inequality is self-reinforcing. Competition between social groups is like running several Monopoly games at once so that the tokens you have won on one game can be used to enable you to win the other games more easily. As long as you are in a competitive situation, that kind of advantage can go for ever unless someone comes along and knocks the board over.[85]

The greatest tragedy of African poverty is the underdevelopment of man himself.

> The Poor people never reach their full human potential in physical strength, intelligence and well being. They are trapped in a pattern of overlapping vicious circles. Overpopulation begets poverty, which begets hunger. Hunger leads to sickness and sickness to malnutrition, in a spiral that can end in death or permanent disablement. Both result in brains starved of nutrients and of stimulation, and in educational failure. And that leads to low-paid work and more poverty. The place of women in most non-socialist developing countries aggravates all these handicaps. Women are the key agents in the procreation, nutrition, health care and education of children. Thus their excessive work burden and lack of education and practical knowledge - as well as being handicaps for themselves - seriously jeopardize their growing children, and reduce their own productivity and therefore the family income. Most tragic of all, the underdeveloped man and woman have underdeveloped offspring. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. Poverty becomes hereditary.[86]

This is our experience: the experience of oppressed

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[85]Harrison, Third World, 425f.

[86]Ibid., 212f.

people. This is the context from which we worship and serve God. How does this context challenge our action today?

> This context does not determine Christian faith, but rather presents it with a challenge, with a subject of confrontation. The challenge which the context presents to Christian faith today may be regarded as three fold: Death from hunger; Death from Nuclear War; Death from Nature. The "three enemies" threaten not only the human race, but the planet earth itself, but in different ways in different places. They challenge Christians to contradict them by prodding their faith in life and resurrection, their hope in the coming Reign of God and their loving concern, not only for all human beings, but for the whole of God's creation. In the contemporary situation, Christians are called to react to their context by working for justice in the world economic order. For a peaceful world forged on mutual trust; and for a life in harmony with nature.[87]

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[87]Jurgen Moltmann, God Means Freedom (Nairobi: Association of Theological Institutions of East Africa, n.d.), 56.

WARS IN AFRICA

Since the beginning of this century 47 wars have been fought in Africa, 32 in what is called Sub-Saharan Africa and 15 in the rest of Africa.

Table 2 AFRICAN WARS AND WAR RELATED DEATHS IN THE 20th CENTURY

Country	Year	War	Deaths civil	Death millt	Death total
Angola	1961-1975	Independence from Portugal	30000	25000	55000
Angola	1975-1958	Civil War	-	-	12000
Burundi	1972	Hutu vs.Tutsi Gvt.	80000	20000	100000
Cameroon	1955-1960	Independence from France	-	-	32000
Chad	1980	Civil war	-	1000	1000
Chad	1983	Rebels vs. Gvt.	1000	-	1000
Ethiopia	1935-1936	Italy invastion	-	20000	20000
Ethiopia	1974-1985	Eritrean revolt/famine	500000	45000	545000
Ethiopia	1976-1980	Oganden vs. Gvt.	15000	21000	36000
Ghana	1981	Konkomba vs. Nanumba	-	-	1000
Guinea-Biss	1962-1974	Independence from Portugal	5000	10000	15000
Kenya	1932-1963	Independence from UK	3000	12000	15000
Madagascar	1947-1948	Independance from France	3000	2000	5000
Mozambique	1965-1975	Independence from Portugal	-	-	30000
Mozambique	1981-1985	Civil war/famine	100000	-	100000
Namibia	1903-1908	War vs. Germans	80000	-	80000
Nigeria	1967-1970	Civil war/famine	1000000	1000000	2000000
Nigeria	1980-1981	Fund. Islam vs Gvt.	-	-	5000
Nigeria	1984	Fund Islam vs. Gvt.	-	-	1000
Rwanda	1956-1965	Tutsi vs. Butu Gvt.	105000	3000	108000
Sudan	1963-1972	South vs. Gvt.	50000	250000	300000
Sudan	1984	South vs. Gvt.	1000	-	1000
Tanzania	1905-1907	War vs. Germany	150000	-	150000
Uganda	1966	Buganda vs. Gvt.	1000	1000	2000
Uganda	1971-1978	Coup, civil war	300000	-	300000
Uganda	1978-1979	Tanzania vs. People.	-	3000	3000
Uganda	1981-1985	Army vs. People	1000000	2000	102000
West Sahara	1975-1985	Independence from Morocco	3000	7000	10000
Zaire	1960-1965	Katanga secession	-	-	100000
Zambia	1964	Civil strife	-	-	1000
Zimbabwe	1972-1979	Patriot Front vs. Col. Gvt.	-	-	12000
Zimbabwe	1983	Political violence	2000	-	2000

The above shows the wars that have been fought since the begining of this century in Sub-Saharan Africa (S.S.A) Fifteen others have been fought in other parts of African; it also excludes the August 1988 war between the Hutus and the Tutsi Government in which thousands of Hutus were killed by the Tutsi government.

Source: Ruth Leger Silvad, World Military and Social Expenditures 1985 (World Priorities, Washington, DC, 1985).
11. Quoted by J.G. Donders in War and Rumours of War (Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Pubs)

TABLE 3 AFRICAN MILITARY COMPARISON 1980

COUNTRY	ARMY SIZE	MIL.EXP.%	GNP MIL.EXP.%	GVT.ARMY PER 100
Algeria	101.000	2.2	7.6	5.4
Angola	53.000	NA	NA	8.2
Benin	7.000	2.2	15.3	2
Botswana	3.000	3.5	6.4	3.3
Burundi	8.000	2.6	22.2	1.9
Cameroon	14.000	1.5	9.9	1.6
CAR	5.000	1.8	8.9	2.2
Chad	NA	NA	NA	NA
Congo	14.000	4.1	14.4	8.8
Egypt	340.000	6	16.4	8.1
Equatorial Guinea	2.000	NA	NA	1.0
Ethiopia	240.000	9.7	42.6	8.1
Gabon	2.000	0.4	1.1	3.3
Gambia	1.000	0	0	1.7
Ghana	20.000	0.4	3.7	1.7
Guinea	18.000	NA	NA	3.6
Guinea-Bassau	12.000	6.4	6.6	1.5
Ivory Coast	11.000	1.2	3.6	1.4
Kenya	16.000	3.8	12.9	1
Lesotho	3.000	0	0	2.3
Liberia	5.000	1.5	5.1	2.6
Libya	53.000	1.7	4.5	1.7
Madagascar	28.000	4.1	13.5	3.3
Malawi	6.000	1.8	6	1
Mali	8.000	2.5	20.5	1.2
Mauritania	11.000	15.8	25.9	7.3
Morocco	117.000	6.11	17.8	5.6
Mozambique	27.000	NA	NA	2.2
Niger	6.000	1	4.8	1.1
Nigeria	222.000	2.6	9.3	2.9
Rwanda	6.000	2	15.3	1.2
Senegal	14.000	2.6	11.4	2.5
Sierra Leone	4.000	1.1	3.8	1.2
Somalia	54.000	6.2	18.4	1.0
South Africa	78.000	3.2	13.9	3.2
Sudan	68.000	3	12.2	3.6
Swaziland	3.000	2.5	6.2	5
Tanzania	57.000	5	16.3	3.1
Togo	8.000	3.4	7	3.1
Tunisia	29.000	1.4	4.5	4.5
Uganda	6.000	1.8	20.6	0.5
Burkina Fasso	8.000	3.1	18.2	1.4
Zaire	42.000	3.1	12.4	1.5
Zambia	15.000	3.8	8.6	2.6
Zimbabwe	24.000	8.4	25.9	3.2

Source: Donders, 21f.

TABLE 4: ARMIES OF SIX COUNTRIES 1985

Country	Armed Forces	Paramilitary	Total Population
Ethiopia	306,000	169,000	41,000,000
Sudan	62,000	29,500	5,000,000
Somalia	58,000	3,500	21,000,000
Nigeria	133,000	NA	94,000,000
Kenya	13,650	1,800	19,000,000
Tanzania	40,350	3,000	21,000,000

Source: Gerald J.Bender, James S. Coleman, and Richard L. Sklar, African Crisis Areas and U.S. Foreign Policy. (Berkeley Calit: Univ. of Califonia Press, (Berkeley, 1985), 239-257.cf. Donders, 10.

TABLE 5: MILITARIZATION AND DEFENCE FIGURES: SELECTED COUNTRIES

Country	1974	1978	1980	1982
Ethiopia	13.9	20.6	35.6	16.8
Somalia	11.5	21.21	18.4	20.0
Sudan	16.2	14.1	14.2	17.1
Nigeria	13.7	11.3	9.3	5.6
Kenya	6.7	14.4	15.3	12.4
Tanzania	12.1	14.7	7.5	6.7

Table 5: Defence expenditure at % of Central Government Spending.

Source: World Military Expenditure and Arms Transfers, 1971-1980 (U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Washington, Dc, 1983);cf. Donders, 20.

Table 6 indicates how much the countries indicated spent on arms import (US$).

Country	1974	1978	1980	1982
Ethiopia	10,000,000	1,100,000,000	625,000,000	290,000,000
Somalia	90,000,000	240,000,000	200,000,000	140,000,000
Sudan	90,000,000	120,000,000	100,000,000	130,000,000
Nigeria	20,000,000	50,000,000	110,000,000	230,000,000
Kenya	20,000,000	50,000,000	90,000,000	70,000,000
Tanzania	5,000,000	80,000,000	80,000,000	20,000,000

Source: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency cf. Donders, 20.

TABLE 7: Arms Transfers by Major Supplies in millons of US$ 1979-1983

Country	Total	USSR	USA	E.EUROPE	W.Europe	China	Others
Ethiopia	1,900	1,800	0	10	20	0	70
Somalia	530	0	30	10	420	50	70
Sudan	640	0	110	60	300	70	100
Nigeria	1,125	100	20	5	800	0	200
Kenya	450	0	60	0	270	0	120
Tanzania	390	270	0	0	10	40	70

Table 7: The source of the arms delivered to Africa 1979-1983.

TABLE 8: SUMMARY PROFILE OF 1986 UNMENT EMMERGENCY NEEDS (in millions)

Country	Population	Affected	Food	Logistics	Health	Water	Relief	Agric.	Tota
Angola	9	1	10	13	4	2	12	10	
Botswana	1	1		1	1	1		3	
Burkina Faso	7	0		0	3	5	0	5	
Chad	5	0	5	3	3	3	1	7	
Ethiopia	43	6	272	62	17	26	22	91	5
Lesotho	2	1		1	3	5		4	
Mali	8	0	5	0	1	4		10	
Mauritania	2	1		3	1	4		3	
Mozambique	14	2	26	7	2	7	3	6	
Niger	6	0	5	1	2	1	1	5	
Somalia	5		8						
Sudan	22	5	51	8	14			14	

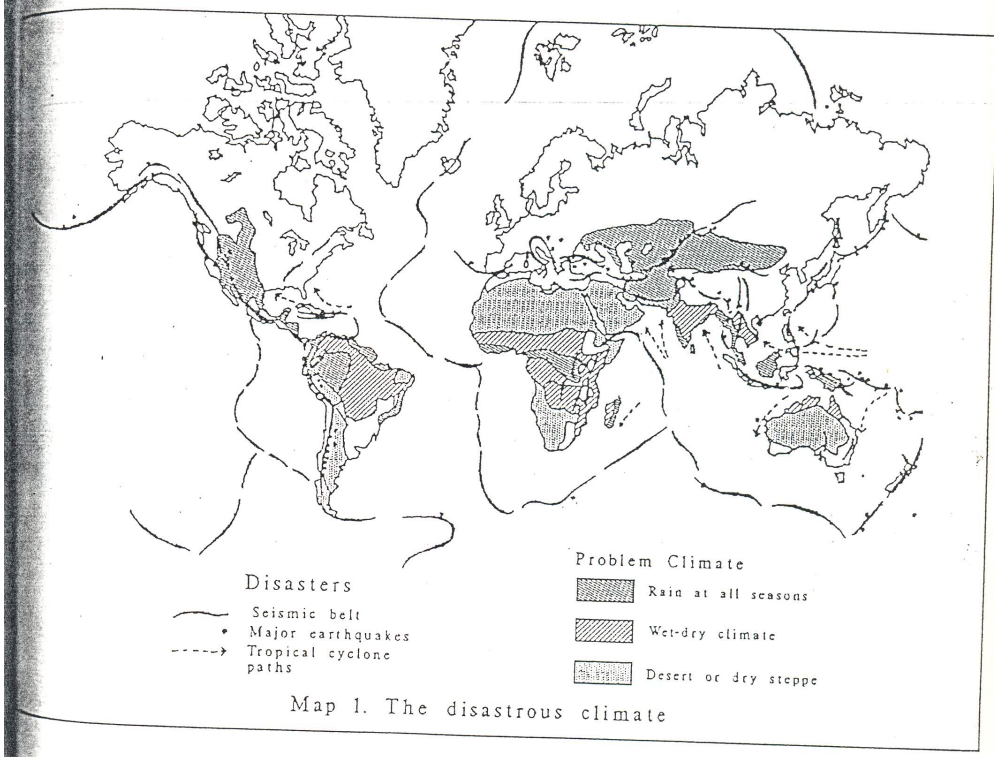
Source: Donders, 29.

TABLE 9: PUBLIC SPENDING DEFENSE AND SOCIAL SERVICES 1982

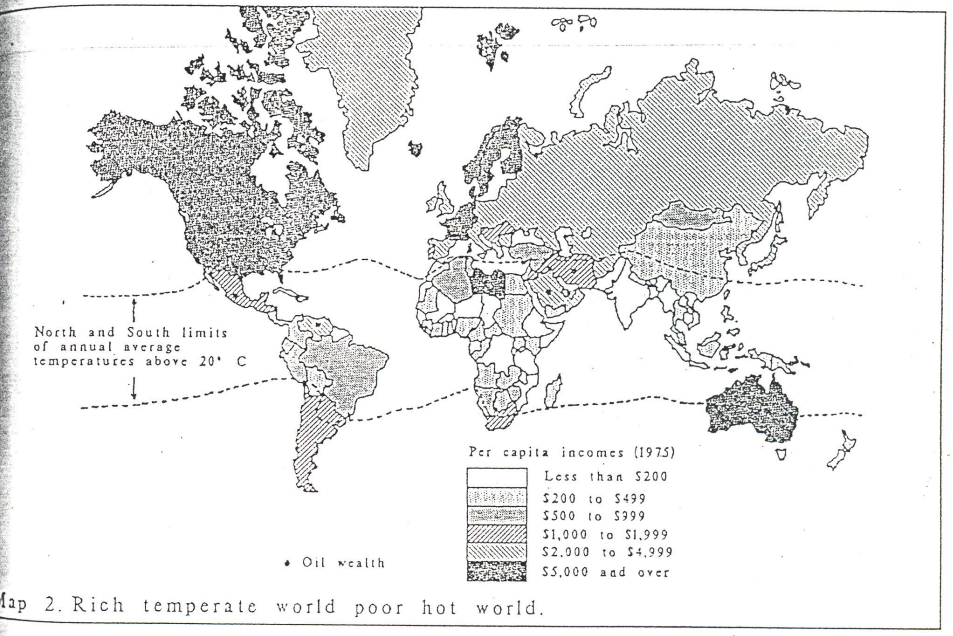
Country	Mil. Expe.	Education	Health	Armed Forces	Physicians	Teachers
Ethiopia	411,000,000	152,000,000	65,000,000	250,000	400	55,000
Somalia	121,000,000	30,000,000	12,000,000	63,000	300	10,000
Sudan	299,000,000	427,000,000	28,000,000	58,000	2,200	65,000
Nigeria	1,807,000,000	308,000,000	463,000,000	138,000	8,600	597,000
Kenya	299,000,000	460,000,000	163,000,000	17,000	2,300	132,000
Tanzania	325,000,000	283,000,000	94,000,000	40,000	600	91,000

Table 9: The relation between military spending and money spent on social services

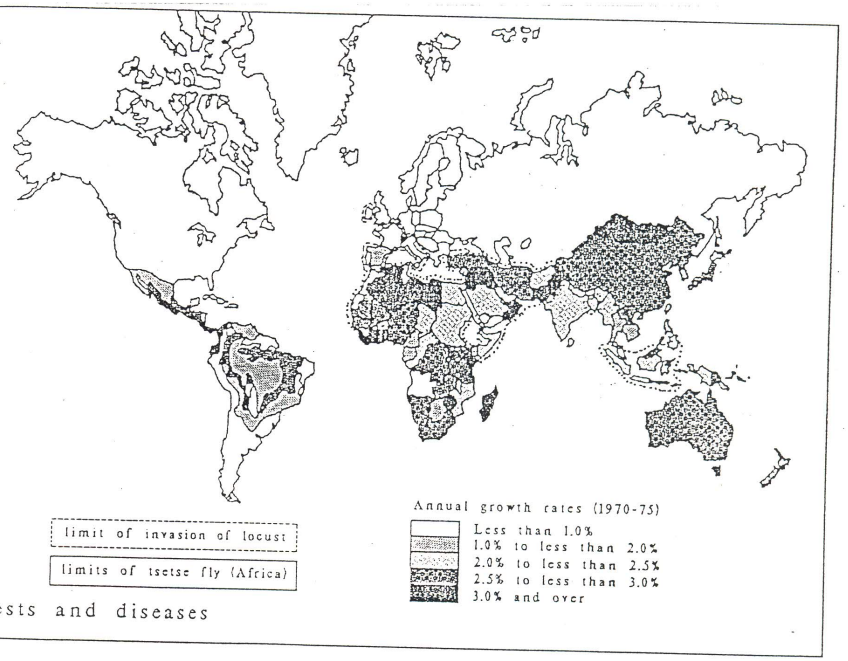
Source: Donders, 30; quoted from Ruth Leges Silrard,
World Military and Social Expenditures
(World Priorities, Washington, DC, 1985), 37.



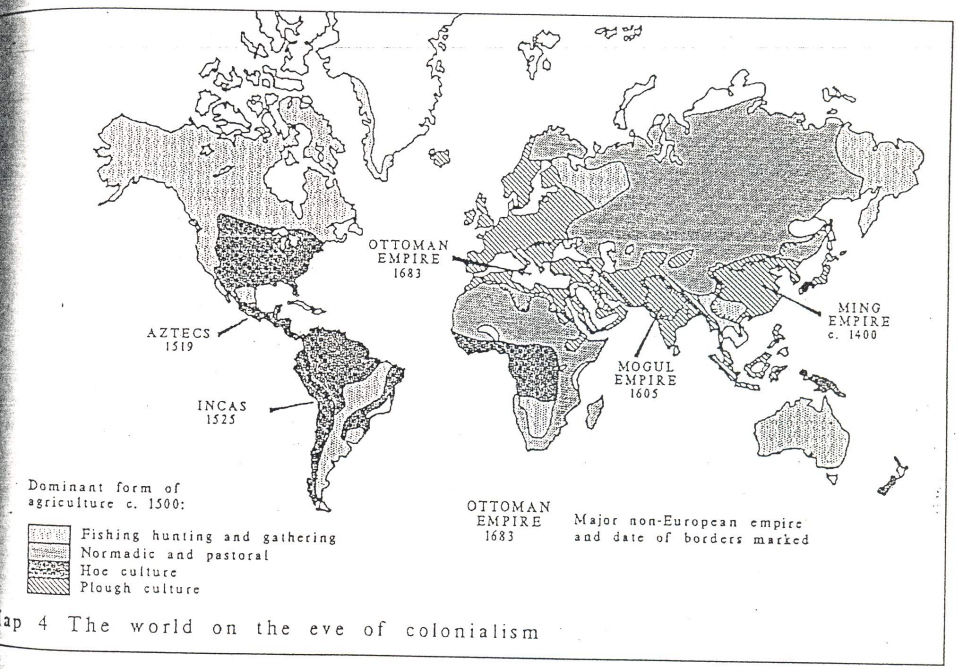
Map 1. The disastrous climate



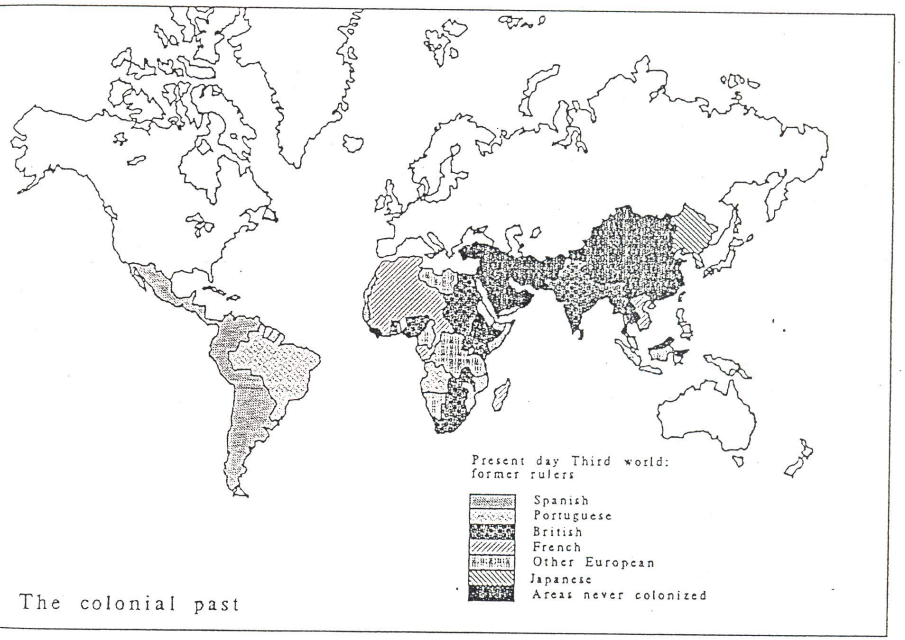
Map 2. Rich temperate world poor hot world.



Map 3. Pests and diseases

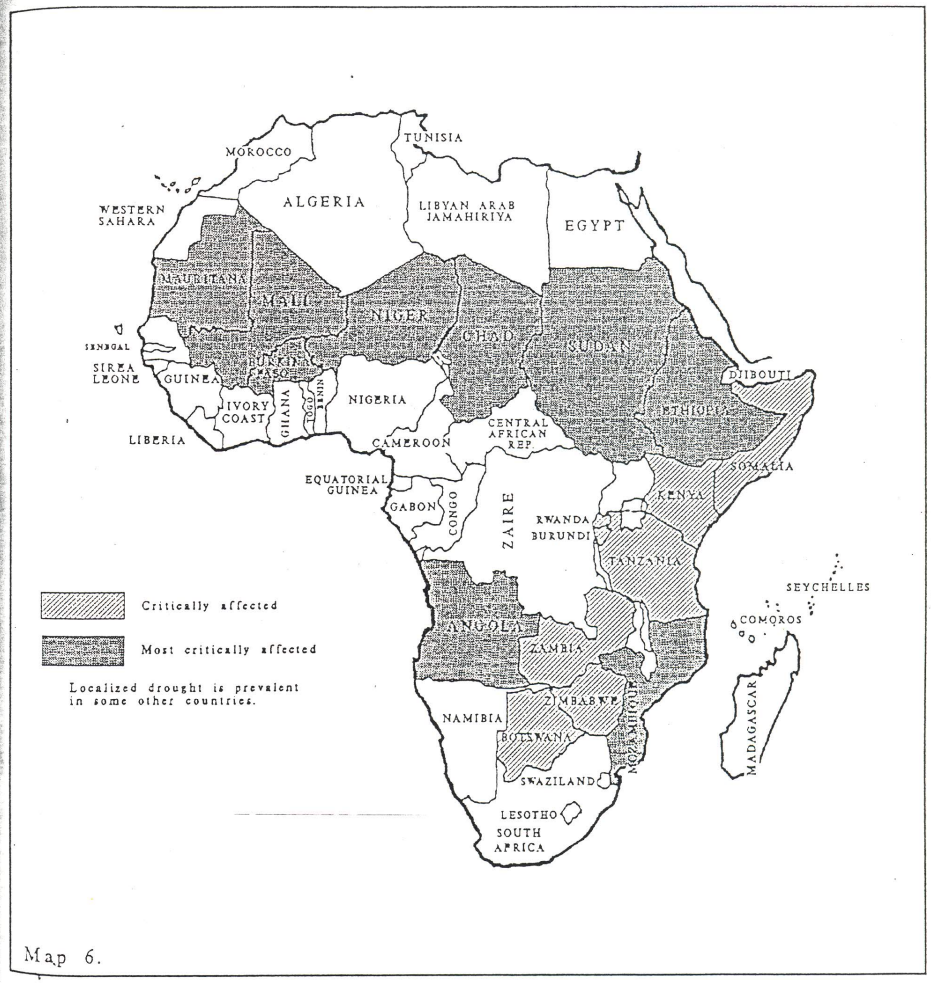


ap 4 The world on the eve of colonialism



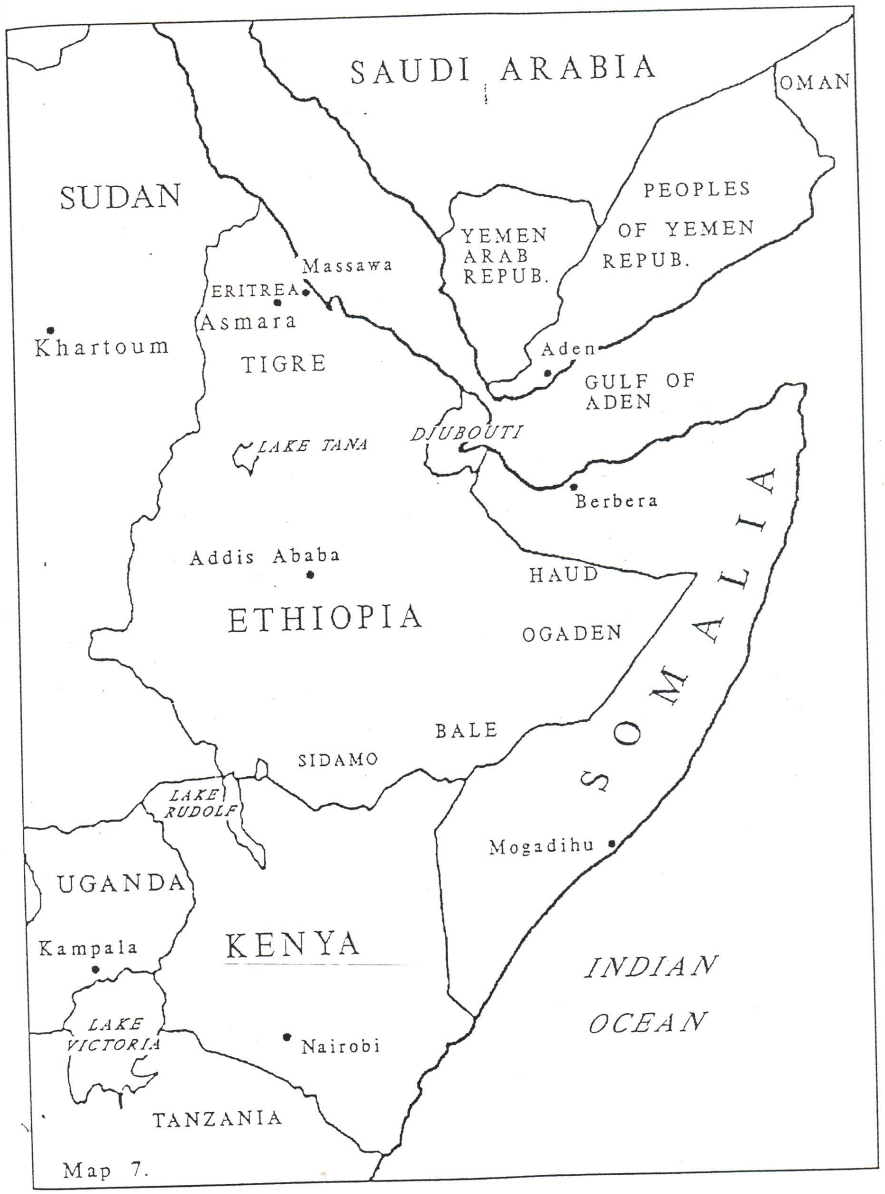
Map 5. The colonial past

African Emergency Map.



Map 6.

The Horn of Africa.



Map 7.

WESTERN SAHARA



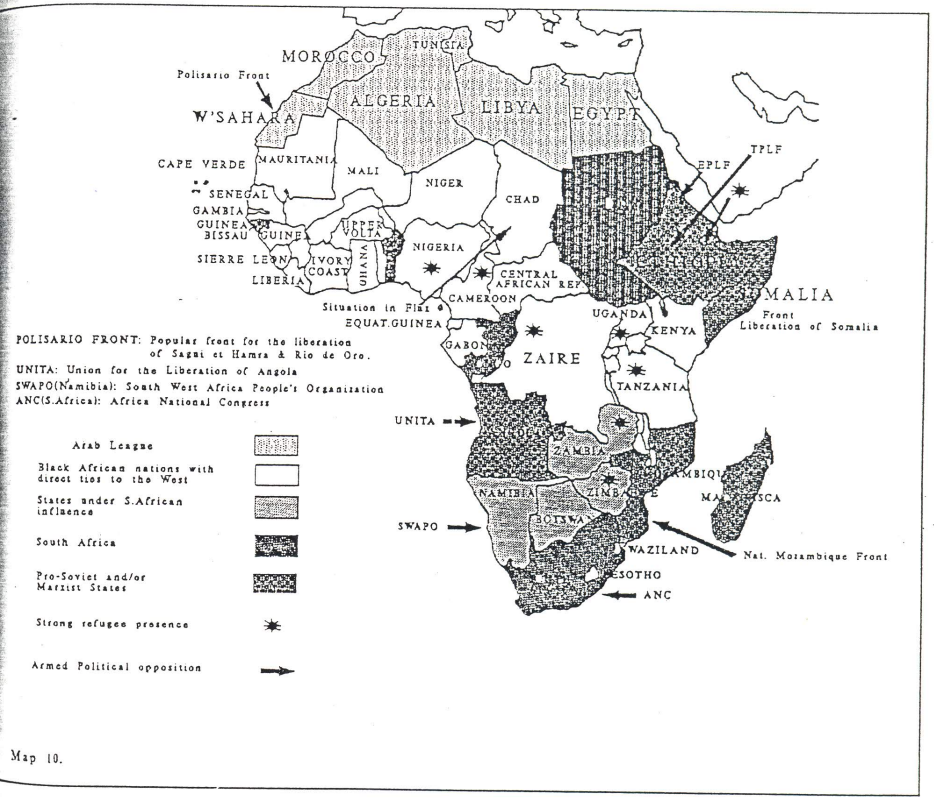
Map 8.

SOUTHERN AFRICA



Map 9.

Influences and Armed Conflicts in Africa



Map 10.

THE CHURCH: GOD'S AGENT FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Introduction

The biblical God who revealed His love for humankind in Jesus Christ is the God who throughout the Scriptures shows a preferential option for the poor. His children are to reflect His character by taking up the cause of the needy. For the God of the OT who became incarnate in the human realm loves justice (Ps. 99:4) and therefore "upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry...sets the prisoners free... gives sight to the blind... lifts up those who are bowed down...loves the righteous... watches over the alien...sustains the fatherless and the widow... frustrates the way of the wicked (Ps. 146:6-9; cf. Lk. 4:18; 7:22).

The African condition today is such that an urgent surgical operation is required to save her. But if there is any physician who can do the surgery, then it is the Church. The Church is therefore called upon to rise to the occasion, for

> Wherever people are in need of food, water, clothing, housing, medical care, education, work and freedom, there is for us God's call to heroic material sacrifice. Because of God's love in Jesus Christ, their needs become our duty, and the fulfillment of this duty must have priority over our own comforts, pleasures and luxuries. The satisfaction of their needs is their God-given right and our God-given responsibility.[1]

We have delineated the complexity and multiplicity of causes of poverty on the continent and have stressed the

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[1]C.Rene Padilla, "A Meditation on 1 John 3:16-8," Transformation 6 (Jan.- Mar. 1989): 15-18.

dominance of oppression as the basic cause. An appropriate Christian strategy against poverty must therefore take into account all these factors. We made the relevant application in the previous chapter. Our intention here is to single out the role of the Church in this matter. We will look at the practical and missiological implications of the relief models we discussed previously.

PRACTICAL AND MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Jubilee legislation will find its relevance in situations where mistreatment of widows, vast movements of refugees, unemployment, and land tenure abuses are crucial issues of social and political concern. Among the Akan of Ghana, for instance, sometimes when one's husband dies, the relatives of the deceased take possession of the land and the property of the deceased, thereby leaving the wife and the children without any means of support. The wife of the deceased in this situation would have to find other means of livelihood in order to support herself and the children.

We have documented in the previous chapter the case of the fatherless, the widows, the economic and political refugees, and other marginalized people who abound on the continent of Africa today as a result of political upheavals, wars, and drought. We mentioned the Ugandan situation, the situation in the horn of Africa and other parts of Africa. The fact that it is geared principally to urban life has also been pointed out. The foregoing are just some of the many cases of socio-economic problems on

the continent which the Church should feel morally bound to help alleviate.

The Jubilee model, and other models, warrant some kind of justice in the whole economic sphere. Justice here includes freedom to obtain assets necessary to the earning of a basic living. There should be an institutionalized mechanism to ensure that every citizen, in every generation, has access to the assets necessary for him/her to develop and be self-reliant and self-sufficient.

Development education and training in basic or marketable skills are, I believe, the closest parallel to the relief models in the Mosaic legislation. When we take both the OT and the NT relief institutions into consideration, the conclusion we draw is that no dependency system was fostered except in the case of physical disability. Rather we see the restoration of productive power to the powerless. In the relief programme of the Church, it should therefore be noted that to make a person dependent upon gifts/handouts as a permanent means of survival (except when this is absolutely necessary) is to regard him/her as less than God's image bearer. Empowering the poor to be self-reliant and self-supporting should be the objective of the Church's relief programme.

Knowing that education is the key to development, our education system should be broad based. The present educational system greatly discriminates against the rural folks because it principally prepares people for the cities.

Our villages need the kind of education that will enable them to take care of their nutrition, their families,

their legal rights, the organization of themselves into cooperatives and trade unions, and their productive potential. The kind of education that drains the villages of their young ones and creates a gap between rural people and the city dwellers should be discontinued.

The causes of poverty and powerlessness in Africa are numerous and complex, as chapter six of this thesis illustrates. The Church has a missiological mandate to honestly and prayerfully work with the appropriate agencies to seek for lasting solutions by attacking both the immediate and remote causes of poverty and hunger on the continent.

The Church, inter alia, should address herself to the following areas. Firstly, to compensate for the considerable limitations nature has placed on agriculture, irrigation projects and water schemes for drought stricken areas should be given priority. Secondly, the Church should establish vocational centers to provide the necessary training in basic skills which will make the jobless and landless self-reliant. In addition we need education on better farming methods. Related to this is the need to provide profitable market outlets for the farmers. This will encourage farming and make possible a national agricultural surplus which is urgently needed for economic development. Such marketing co-ops have proven most effective and free from corruption when farmer-owed and managed, rather than government-run.

There should be both intermediate and advanced technological institutions which will train and promote the

productive capacity of the rural poor who otherwise and most often become the urban poor.[2]

Smallholder farmers are operating at the subsistence level, well below their productive potential. The provision of the appropriate technology--the one that lies between "the sickle and the combine harvester"--should be given serious consideration. An example of this is the recent development of disease and drought resistant hybrids.

The development of rural farm settlements with a plant pool system where everybody will benefit from the tools and equipment available is a necessity. The communal spirit of the village needs to be channelled into co-operative forms of land ownership. The present owners should be given a reasonable payment for the use of their land. This will greatly contribute to the well being of the landless. It will also help to commercialize farming beyond the traditional subsistence level

There is an urgent need for social education programmes where the dignity of work, the need to support the weak and the spirit of communion and commonality, all social values based on traditional ethics, could be taught. This rural adult education should also teach people family planning and responsible parenthood to effect a cutback in population growth which, we pointed out in chapter six, is one of the causes of poverty. The reason people go in for larger families is the need for security in time of old age. So if the rural people are helped to establish a solid

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[2]Paul Harrison, Inside the Third World (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England.: Penguin, 1987), 75.

foundation for the future, there will be no need for them to insist on large families.

Community health services directed towards preventive medicine, good roads, electricity and bank credit systems should also be made available to the people.

The Church also has the responsibility of working with the government to ensure that foundations for sustained economy are established; redistribution policies relating to land, capital, the "national cake," when properly designed, would protect citizens in case of economic loss, redundancy, or natural disasters which "attack their continued economic viability."[3]

One of the most cherished and basic African values is the joy of living in the present. There is an immediate affirmation of viable life. The productivity and fertility of the land, peace, security and well-being of the family, clan, tribe, abundance of wealth and children are all areas of particular concern. Every effort is made to affirm life in the present existence.

The following cases, taken from different parts of Africa, describe for us the immediate cravings of the African:

KENYA

> You have seen the conditions of life here ... how we live on the edge of existence day by day. As Christian leaders, we want to be able to offer some hope of improvement for our families and communities, as well as a message of eternal salvation. But what kind of improvement can you offer? Our government talks about development but things get worse. Our young people who get

[3]John Mason, "Assisting the Poor," Transformation 4, no. 2 (April-June 1987): 1.

> education leave for the big cities, our crops bring low prices if we can sell them at all. We have few tools and no credit, even though we were returned to our land after independence. Food is still short, and sickness takes it all. What can we do?[4]

SUDAN

> How can I live here with my family without food? I will wait a little and if I do not get anything to do here, I will go back to my country and fight. If I die that is all! I will prefer to die in my country rather than to stay here with my wife and child with nothing to eat.[5]

BENIN

> Land in our home area was worn out and the yields tiny. If a man stays in such a situation he begins to lose his self-respect and to doubt his own ability. You work hard and get almost nothing for your labours. This in turn affects your Christian witness. How can you proclaim a loving, caring Father when your own family is suffering from lack of food?[6]

The experiences of the African are real. Vissicitudes and daily crises are his lot as he struggles with poverty and despair. In the midst of this situation, how can we proclaim the goodness of an Almighty and All Sufficient God when people are hungry and sick and some are even dying of hunger? This poverty seems inconsistent to the great majority of African Christians who believe that "a good Christian should have a better farm than his unbelieving neighbours."[7] This is due to the logical belief

[4]Christian Leader, "A Conversation with a Church leader in Western Kenya," interview by W.G. Bragg (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), The Church in response to Human Need: 20.

[5]Mark Longwa, Interview by Kingsley Larbi, (Nairobi) June 1989.

[6]Christian Leader, "A conversation with a Christian Leader in Benin (Dahomey) West Africa," interviewed by Peter Batchelor (Exeter, England: Paternoster 1984), People in Rural Development: 10.

[7]Ibid., 9.

that the Christian God is more powerful than the tribal fertility gods.

Yes, Jesus said that "man shall not live by bread alone" (Matt.4). But it seems to me that the "alone" in the statement assumes that man cannot live without bread at all. Scripture seems to support the idea that God wants all His image bearers to have their basic needs met. This is part of His goodness which places Him above man. Scripture teaches that those in filial relationship with Him stand as the objects of His special care.

The Matthean text (Ch. 6) and other texts like 1 Tim. 6:8, Phil. 4:19, 3 Jn. 2 seem to suggest that good health, clothing, shelter and food are the legitimate concerns of man; and this is exactly the essential content of the prayers of the African traditional people. An examination of the Kenya National Anthem, for example, will confirm this

> O God of all creation
> Bless this our land and nation.
> Justice be our shield and defender,
> May we dwell in unity,
> Peace and liberty;
> Plenty be found within our borders.

The different interviews quoted elsewhere in this chapter[8] are the expressions of anguish, fears, and anxieties of the majority of the African believers (not mentioning the non-believers). In a situation like this, energies of people are wasted instead of being deployed for creative purposes in the Lord's kingdom. Professor Monsma's observation is consonant with this assertion:

> When survival is a daily struggle, when all of one's time, energies, and ingenuity is absorbed in

[8]See above, page 236f.

> making it through the week, there is not time for dreaming and planning, and the actual opportunities to develop in certain directions, to reach for something are simply not there. Poverty is powerlessness; it is the absence of freedom and opportunity.[9]

Evidence from Scripture confirms that Jesus placed a high premium on human needs, be it spiritual or material. The need to satisfy someone's hunger, to deliver the oppressed from the fetters of the devil, to heal the sick, were all placed over the observance of the Sabbath. For Jesus, the sacredness of the Sabbath was subservient to the sanctity of life.[10] What He condemned was the excessive commitment to material goals without a proper concept of life and the eternal nature of the soul.[11]

Because of the African's holistic view of life, he is unable to think of salvation as some idealistic and safe hinterland between baptism and eternity. When the soul is saved now, what happens to the body? What does he do with the daily life that is constantly being threatened by the forces that are beyond him? On this Dr. Okorocha has perceptively remarked that

> It is only a Gnostic understanding of spirituality that fails to accept that when religion assumed a tangible focus and God had a human face in Jesus Christ he did so, not as Logos pneumatikos, but as Logos ensarkos (Jn.1.14). The Word became flesh, thus sanctifying all things. This to my mind is a central aspect of the contribution which the African experience must make to the fuller understanding and enrichment of the religious experience of mankind: To remind us that the

[9]S. V. Monsma, "Poverty in the United States: An Evangelical Response," a paper prepared for the Consultation on Evangelicals and American Public Life (May 4-6, 1989), 1.

[10]Jn. 5:1-18; Lk. 6:1 ff; and parallels.

[11]Jn. 6:26 f.

> secular is also spiritual because it is sanctified in and through the Word of God. Because God assumed human flesh in Christ the sacred and the secular, even though not confounded or confused, are fully united into one indivisible and sacrosanct whole. Therefore African prayers, and by inference African understanding of prayer including the Lord's Prayer, must include petitions for freedom from troubles which are often regarded as factors which vitiate life and indicate death.... Hunger and starvation are certainly factors which negate contentment and destroy happiness. In point of fact, their prolonged presence is indicative of death. Thus the African religious man must pray for their removal and would submit himself to the worship and adoration of any Being who removes these enemies from him in the present as the first step along the path to his ultimate salvation. So their prayer is
>
> Give us this day, Bread for today
> The [sic] (that) we may live
> To see tomorrow.[12]

The African finds no problem in believing and appropriating Scriptures like 2 Cor.8:9, 9:6-9-12, Ph. 4:19; 3 Jn.:2 which clearly speak about material rewards in the life here and now. The Christian farmer prays before he goes to the farm. On the farm, some people literally kneel and pray that God will increase the productivity and fertility of the land. One may not understand this unless he/she understands the African primal worldview where the gods are the source of viable life.

This does not suggest that the African Christian does not know suffering. He does. Tragedies strike often but when they do, he does not question the justice of God, unlike the westerner. He knows that God is good but the evil one is working against him. Misfortunes draw him

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[12]C. Okorocha, "God the Father and Hunger in Africa: Give us this day our Daily Bread," in The Living God, eds. D.M. Gitari and P. Benson (Nairobi : Uzima, ATF 1986), 200f.

nearer to God for power, protection and strength "knowing that these problems are only evidence of the lion's roar and not his rule."[13]

THE CHALLENGE OF THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL

The African Christian wants to believe that His God will meet him in the pew and also meet him on his farm when he goes out to till the land. This therefore forces the contemporary Church to re-examine its approach to the Gospel.

A few years ago in Ghana, the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches became a threat to the mainline churches. This came about when the younger generation realized that they could exercise a little bit of their African identity in these churches, and many of them started leaving the established Churches. To reverse this exodus, the leadership of the mainline churches had to introduce some authentic African cultural practices in their worship. In this instances, when people with the primal worldview realized that by submitting to God they could be protected from the attacks of the malevolent spirits, they embraced the Pentecostal tradition. This led to a mass exodus from the traditional religions to Christianity.

Today there is another phenomenon developing in Ghana--the emergence of the "prosperity gospel" churches. The emphasis on wealth by the leaders of these new churches has especially attracted the young people, men and women, who

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[13]Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, "God's Intention for the World" in Human Need (Grand Rapids, Mich.; 1987), 137.

are living in the cities. The fertility the gods brought to the land has now become the wealth and power that one can gain from the God of the Bible in the context of modern city life. Just as the mainline churches were forced to decide whether or not to introduce traditional values into their churches to stop the exodus of their members, the evangelical churches in Ghana today will have to decide whether or not to consider seriously the whole gospel in their proclamation, if they want to retain their members. Whether the churches like it or not, the "prosperity gospel" will continue to attract people to its circles unless the established churches are able to present a more holistic gospel. The situation in Ghana is such that everyone who wants to taste a worthwhile life finds the "prosperity gospel" an attraction.

The followers of this "gospel" may be wrong in their theology, or they may be presenting only a half-truth, but the fact is that :

> The Gospel is presented, whether the missionaries wish it or not, whether they know it or not, in accordance with what the hearer thinks, desires, believes. He may be very wrong; but the Gospel is in fact presented to him, at least at first, as he sees it.[14]

We will not understand the strong attraction of this new phenomenon (prosperity gospel) unless we understand the economic recession which Ghana has gone through and its effect on the social life of the people.

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[14]R.H. Codrington, "The Gospel as Presented to Savage People" (Wittering Lectures, 1902). Quoted by C. Okorocha, "God the Father and Hunger in Africa: Give us this day our Daily Bread." in The Living God, eds. D.M. Gitari and P. Benson (Nairobi: Uzima, ATF 1986). 202.

> The economic difficulties of the late 1970's and the early 1980s had serious consequences for the living standards of many Ghanaians - especially for their health and nutritional status and for access to education by lower income groups. The sacrifices involved were, in many cases, crushing.[15]

For about two years now, the Ghanaian economy has been showing some signs of recovery. Walking along the streets of the cities or towns of Ghana, one sees signs of flourishing business. All the "lost" items are now back into the stores. The black market currency business that had flourished for decades has virtually died. New songs are being played everywhere. However, life is not easy for everybody. All that one needs is in the market, but the unchanging reality is still there: you've got to have the money to buy and the cost of living vis-a-vis the average income is too high.

People are asking, "Where is the viable life, and how may we reach it?" In such a situation the biblical texts that deal with God's abundant provision take on new meaning.

"Ask and you will receive!" What about if you don't receive? "Well, you keep on asking! You need a bigger faith," some would say. Others would say, "Keep on trusting. It is not the amount of your faith that matters, but rather the object of your faith." Africa is a fertile ground for the prosperity gospel and the social gospel because of the deep need and desire for a better lifestyle in the present life. The mainline denominations are trying

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[15]Valeriana Kallab and Richard E. Feinberg, eds., Strengthening and Poor: What have we learned? U.S. - Third World Policy Perspectives, No. 10. Overseas Development Council (Oxford: Transaction Books, 1988), 169.

to catch the fire and flavour of Pentecostal/Charismatic fervency. The long established Pentecostal denominations are keeping up with their evangelistic zeal. "Hundreds of thousands" (the evangelists would say) are being won to the Lord. At this point, Dr Okorocha's perceptive insight takes on new meaning again:

> To think that we can proclaim the Gospel of the One who fed the five thousand, who taught us to address and relate to the Almighty as Father, to a hungry people without making a serious effort to reverse their situation for the better is simply double think.[16]

The "pie in the sky" Gospel may be accepted by some. But when we are faced with the realities of life--when our children are hungry for want of food, when the crops are dying for lack of rains, when our bodies are sick and the hospitals are without medicine--that is the point at which the "pie in the sky" Gospel loses its meaning and relevancy, and the primal worldview reminds us of our roots--"the rock from which we were hewn."

An interesting incident happened in Labadi, Accra, Ghana some years ago. An elder of one of the Pentecostal churches was visited by some members of the Jehovah's Witness sect. Their discussion concerned miracles and the possibility of God's healing power today. The discussion turned into an argument. Suddenly a certain woman in the same house dashed into the elder's apartment with a sick baby who was in a coma. (She did not realize that there was an argument going on, but she knew that the elder believed in prayer and the miraculous interventions of God). She

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[16]Okorocha, "Hunger in Africa," 202.

thrust the baby into the elder's hands with the cry of a desperate mother "Gbeke ngbo!" (meaning "The baby is dying," in the Ga language).

The argument stopped abruptly. The elder started praying "Ye Iesu gbe ame!" meaning "In Jesus name!." His visitors, without realizing what they were doing, started affirming : "amen! amen!! amen!!!," as the elder commanded the devil to loose his grip upon the baby. The baby was restored and they all started rejoicing. The argument was settled naturally! You see, when the Jehovah's Witness people were faced with the issues of life and death, they subconsciously realized that they were practicing a religion that was foreign to their nature and they had instinctively affirmed "amen, amen, amen" when the elder was praying. Professor Okorocha's comments here are crucial:

> It is what a people know, believe and expect from religion that determines their response to a new religious system. If African prayers are concerned as we have just seen with the provision and enhancement of life, by way of meeting of daily needs, is it conceivable that a Gospel that pays no attention to the day to day concerns of people could be believed by them?[17]

And I would restate the question posed by Dr.Okorocha this way: "...Is it not inevitable that a Gospel that does pay attention to the day to day concerns of the people should attract many people?"

The "seamless garment" nature of the primal worldview of the African people has been stressed elsewhere in this thesis. How can we tell people with a primal heritage that Christ has now supplanted the role of the ancestors and the

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[17]Okorocha, "Hunger in Africa," 201.

fertility gods? How can we help Christ to be both the de facto as well as the de jure ruler now in their lives and circumstances, in terms of the provision of their daily needs and "in response, present to this God, in Christ, their authentic and uninhibited being as they address him with a new filial affection... My Lord and my God."[18]

Evangelical churches are called upon to proclaim the holistic Gospel - a liberating Gospel under the power of the Holy Spirit knowing that life has not been worthwhile for the African because of the "vitiation of the force vitale."[19] At the same time may we remind our brothers and sisters who follow uncritically the so called "prosperity gospel" that they should include the suffering part of the Christian pilgrimage too, and that:

> godliness is not a means to financial gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and traps and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.[20]

The propagation of the Gospel on the continent needs a holistic approach. Anything less than this renders the Gospel deficient and irrelevant.

In Africa today, two main factors compel the Church to take sides with the poor and the needy: the very nature of God, and the missiological and social necessity. One does

[18]Ibid., 205.

[19]Ibid., 199.

[20]1 Tim. 6:6-10.

not finish reading the Bible before coming to a glaring realization that the God of the Bible is an ally of the poor and the needy. God, from the time of the Fall in Genesis, to the ultimate restoration of all things in Revelation, is portrayed as the champion of both the spiritually and socially poor. The Church cannot stay aloof in the matter of social involvement without falling under the judgment of God.

The missiological and social necessity of the Gospel is that the Gospel is presented to the people right where they are. And in the African context, people are searching for a viable life which their gods have failed to provide. The people are "shockingly, appallingly, scandalously, outrageously poor"[21] which calls for immediate consideration. This is where the holistic Gospel comes in.

INTER AND INTRA-CHURCH DEPENDENCY

Having argued for the necessity of a holistic Gospel in the African milieu, and that development needs of the people should be part and parcel of the Gospel, we will now direct our attention to discuss ways we can make this a reality.

These suggestions are by no means exhaustive. But it is suggested here that the only way of making the Gospel relevant and also halting the rural to urban influx with its attendant dehumanizing effects, and restoring viable life to the people, is to make a radical break from the

[21]David B. Barrett, "Silver and Gold Have I None : Church of Poor or Church of the Rich?" IBMR 7, no.4 (Oct. 1983) : 148.

urban bias mentality and extend development to the rural people and make them the subject of development.

By virtue of her very nature and constitution, the Church is supposed to operate inter-dependently. Isolationism is against the spirit of Scripture (1 Cor. 12:14f, 26). There is power in unity and co-operation. The experiences, talents, gifts, material and human resources of others could be effectively directed towards the mission of the Church.

Paul's theology of koinonia should be the operational philosophy undergirding the activities of the Church. Inter-dependency in every aspect is an urgent necessity if the Church universal is to fulfill her global responsibility.

This inter-dependency should in no way lead to the carnal and oppressive use of power--the situation where the giver develops a kind of "control and manipulate" syndrome and confuses money power with superiority and wisdom.

There are several instances where the recipients of overseas support are not allowed to make any major decision without, referring the matter to the donors. This should be discouraged. The exchange of ideas and subsidies should be monitored in such a way that local resources are fully tapped. In no way should subsidies be made the main source of income except in the case where local resources are not available. Self-reliance, stewardship, accountability, and respectability (mutual respect) should be the guiding principle. On this note, we will do well to observe the Reverend C.L. Ulrich's epitome:

> With inter-dependency the Church as the Body of Christ witnesses fully to the universality of the People of God yet it expresses itself in the manners and customs of its local setting. The equality of the members is mutually honoured. The different gifts and means express unity. The specific needs of the People of God in any particular locality can be met by mutual aid. In poverty-stricken areas of the world, e.g., self-help projects may be developed. All are able to join in the endeavours. The same is true for the sharing of particular insights and experiences. This new mutuality is increasingly being explored to replace paternalism and self-sufficiency![22]

The issue of inter- and intra-church aid, development and poverty relief could not be adequately discussed without due consideration to the facts about Christian resources. The following section is therefore devoted to an examination of this.

Dr. David Barrett, in his book, World Christian Encyclopedia uses the terms "global Christian resources" to refer to, inter alia, human resources, institutional organizations, literature, communication media, and finances.[23]

An examination of the data provided in this book reveals that a greater percentage of the Christian resources is held in the West than in other regions of the world.

Barrett does not include Christian finance in his global statistics. However, he takes this subject up in the October 1983 issue of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research (IBMR). The author, using UN and World Bank data, has come up with the total amount of money

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[22]Ulrich, Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God (Durban: Lutheran Pub. House, 1978), 249.

[23]David B. Barrett, World Christian Encyclopedia (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 8.

donated each year by the entire world Christian community. The figures he provides are startling and shattering. They reflect the same situation of imbalance.

Barrett computes the world level average income at around US$2,400 per person each year. Because of the high concentration of Christians in the West, their average income stands high at $4,500. Non-Christians' global average stands only at $1350. He concludes that "since lifestyle depends on income, Christians across the world can be seen to live on average at a level over three times higher than non-Christians."[24] Barrett computes further that income distribution is disproportionate and that whereas 52 percent of all Christians live in affluence, and a further 35 percent are comparatively well off, 13 percent live in abject poverty! The author laments:

> The degradation and agony of absolute poverty are thus shared by millions of our fellow Christians. Some 109 million Christians live in the world's 26 poorest countries. In all developing countries, Christians living in absolute poverty number 195 m. This is 24 percent of the world's 800 million absolutely poor as well as 13 percent of all Christians. Of these, half live in Latin America, a third in Africa, the rest in South and Southeast Asia. This is what we usually mean by the "Church of the Poor."
> How "poor" is the Church of the Poor? Here we meet a strange paradox. On the one hand, the answer is shockingly, appallingly, scandalously, outrageously poor. It is surely outrageous that 750 million affluent Christians can continue to allow 195 million brethren in Christ to exist in abject poverty year after year. But from another point of view, the answer, surprisingly, is that this Church is largely financially self-

[24]David B. Barrett, "Silver and Gold Have I None: Church of the Poor or Church of the Rich?," 147. The average income for the West is obtained by dividing no.5 by no.4. Non-Christian average of $1,350 is obtained by deducting no.5 from no.2, then divide by the sum of no.1 minus no.4. See table on page 280.

> supporting, and that it has a huge potential financial resources right there amid its membership.[25]

From the analysis of the world Christian financial resources, Dr. Barrett comes to three challenging conclusions: firstly, these resources polarize the body of Christ in the world into the "Church of the Poor" and the "Church of the Rich", terms with "many complementary and overlapping meanings." There are sizeable pockets of the poor in the rich camp and enclaves of the rich in the camps of the poor. Barrett uses the designation "rich" to refer to the affluent West, and "poor" to the rest of the world. He sees the "Church of the Poor" as paradoxically rich in charisma and charismata, and the "Church of the Rich" as being paradoxically poor spiritually.

Barrett's second conclusion is that "there is plenty of money available globally to meet all reasonable Christian global goals and obligations. There is even enough to enable the "Church of the Poor" to break out of its vicious environment and bring out the rest of humanity with it [out of poverty?] It is simply a question of vision, determination, challenge, mobilization, redistribution, management, internal control, and sharing."[26]

Finally, he points out (and let the African Church hear his voice!) that

> the responsibility to act is not confined to Western Christians in their Church of the Rich. ...In the Church of the Poor, there is a combination of 20 million relatively affluent Christians on top of 195 million who live in

[25]Ibid., 147f.

[26]Ibid., 151.

> absolute poverty. This means that if these nouveaux-rich elites, including leadership hierarchies, redistributed their income and their wealth, they would solve much of the imbalance without outside interference or charity from the West.[27]

Considering all the global resources in the hands of Christians, Professor Barrett is convinced that:

> To a large extent, the global sharing by Christians of money, wealth, property, and goals could solve most of these problems including those of famine, poverty, disease, unemployment, dangerous water supply and so on. Because this is so, there is a sense in which Christians are to blame for the persistence of the present disastrous state of affairs ... At least, each should consider donating 10 percent of his or her income to Third-World missions or charities, or to studying, preaching, writing, teaching, or researching about the situation. Every Christian who ignores this obligation lies under the solemn judgement of God on this issue.[28]

This call for action does not exclude: "...the sizeable enclaves of the Church of the Rich [the rich elites in the poor countries] prospering within it oblivious of the plight of their neighbors."[29]

If there was a time when the communal lifestyle of the early Church was relevant beyond the biblical writers' world, then it is now! More than ever before, advanced information systems are revealing to us the awful conditions of our observable world. But what about our hearts--the real world where all plunder, selfishness, greed, exploitation, revelry and wantonness are conceived before they become evident in the observable world? We need another type of perception: we need non-empirical,

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

extrasensory perception--the Spirit and the Word of God (Heb. 4:12 and others). We need transformed hearts which will enable us to be obedient to God's Will. This is foundational to every social transformation. True Christian brother/sisterhood does not become complete unless it operates within the parameters of Pauline philosophy of koinonia which knows no economic and spiritual limitations.

Should the Church's holistic mission suffer for want of resources? I believe not, if only we can put into practice the biblical principle of intra-and inter-Church sharing of resources. If only Christians will design and institute appropriate structures "...that can effectively eliminate indigence among believers, and drastically reduce the scandalous extremes of wealth and poverty between the rich and the poor members of the one body of the risen Jesus."[30]

The eucharist symbolizes the fellowship which the believers have with the risen Saviour and also the fellowship they have with one another. The actual participation in the body of Christ means an unreserved adherence to the "Body philosophy" which means unlimited availability and liability to the members of the Body. This is why Paul was outraged about the kind of "holy communion" that was operating along class lines in Corinth. Theirs was a "selective communion." No wonder Paul angrily denied that they were eating the Lord's supper. It was their own supper organized along class lines not the Lord's supper![31]

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[30]Ronald Sider, Rich Christians in Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study. (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 1977). 95.

[31]See for example, 1 Cor.10:16-17; 11:20-22; 27-29.

For His is that of communion and commonality. Because of their unbiblical behaviour, Paul put it to them that they were profaning the Lord's body and blood. Since the Lord died for the Church, lack of care and concern for all the members of the Body (failure to discern the corporate needs of the Body) affects not only the Body corporate (the Church) but also her Spiritual Head--Jesus the Christ! Dr Sider's observation here is relevant:

> Discernment of that one body is totally incompatible with feasting while other members of the body go hungry. Those who live a practical denial of their unity and fellowship in Christ, Paul insists, drink judgement on themselves when they go to the Lord's table. In fact they do not really partake of the Lord's Supper at all.
> Once we understand the implication of Paul's teaching on discerning the body in the Lord's Supper, we dare not rest content until the scandal of starving Christians is removed. As long as any Christian anywhere in the world is hungry, the eucharistic celebration of all Christians everywhere in the world is imperfect.[32]

For the Church to be able to model herself as the Community of the King, it should structure herself into what Dr Sider calls the communities of loving defiance instead of its present constitution largely as "comfortable clubs of conformity."[33]

Sociological Perspective

Life lived in a "complicated network of fellowships" is a practical necessity if we are to practice the Christian ideals of "unconditional availability to and unlimited

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[32]Sider, Rich Christians, 106.

[33]Ibid., 189.

liability for other sisters and brothers--emotionally, financially and spiritually".[34]

The Church today is such that we have what I will call a depersonalized mass of worshippers. The benediction closes the chapter until the next meeting. In the Church the "underdogs" are really crying for help but because they are lost in the crowd, their predicaments are not known by the ecclesiastical machinery.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized, therefore, that the Church needs to rediscover the tiny "house church" system which developed in the early Church,[35] and recaptured by the Wesleyan movement which had weekly home meetings "united in order to pray together to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation".[36]

The OT relief models were practiced within a community. The communal inculcation of covenant values was necessary for them to be able to sustain their belief system which was constantly under Canaanite onslaught. Likewise in the NT, we see the believers in a close-knit community (later developed into several communities). Their faith in the risen Christ was lived within the purview of the ecclesiastical community where they all benefited from their significant others.

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[34]Ibid., 190; 1 Cor.12:26; Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. Gal. 6:1-3.

[35]See Appendix D.

[36]The Works of John Wesley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, n.d.), viii, 269. Quoted by Sider, Rich Christians, 191.

To enable believers to practice the biblical models, there is the need for small ecclesiastical communities ("base communities") where a solid biblical base for God's preferential option for the poor would be constantly discussed and critically evaluated. This would help the various Christian communities work towards biblical ideals.

In an era where the values of traditional African communities are rapidly being traded for modern individualism it would seem that the new ecclesiastical communities that would propagate and practice the biblical ideals caring for the poor would obviously be in the minority. But the command from our Lord to be the light and salt of the world should constantly act as stimulus for our practice of Kingdom ethics.

For the Church to maintain her witness in an alien society, a strong solidarity among the faithful through the maintenance of a small cluster of Christian communities is crucial. Life lived in such a community by the power of the Holy Spirit will give the inner fortitude the believers need as members of a "cognitive minority." Berger's comments here are helpful:

> Unless our theologian has the inner fortitude of a desert saint, he has only one effective remedy against the threat of a cognitive collapse in face of these pressures. He must huddle together with like-minded fellow deviants--and huddle very closely indeed. Only in a counter community of a considerable strength does cognitive deviance have a chance to maintain itself. The counter community provides continuing therapy against the creeping doubt as to whether, after all, one may not be wrong and the majority right. To fulfill its function of providing social support for the deviant body of "knowledge", the counter community must provide a strong sense of solidarity among its members.[37]

A discussion I had with a church leader in Nairobi revealed that it has been difficult for the churches in Nairobi to implement this "house church" system. His reason was that the allegiance of the believers to the extended family members is given priority over allegiance to the house church which is composed of non-family members. If this is true, then why can't we use the extended family institution as the structure of the house church? I believe using the extended family institution for the foundation of the house church is a sure antidote to the present large-church depersonalization problem. In the NT, we note with interest that the house churches (see appendix D) were established in family houses (the house of a particular pater familias) who were the heads of extended families, or in the homes of ladies who were members of the particular families. If the NT churches were based on the traditional institutions of their society, we see no reason why we should not do the same.

CONTEMPORARY RELIEF MODELS

> The Church is the most universal body in the world today. It has the opportunity to live a new model of sharing at a crucial moment in world history. Because of its concern for the poor, the Church in the past pioneered in developing schools and hospitals. Later, secular governments institutionalized the new models. In the late twentieth century a dangerously divided, global village awaits a new model of economic sharing. The Bible clearly teaches that God wills fundamentally transformed economic relationships among His people.

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[37]Peter Berger, A Rumor of Angels (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1970), 17.

> Do we have the faith and obedience to start the biblical vision?[38]

With that quotation, we will proceed to examine two contemporary relief models.

THE "KOINONIA MODEL" OF THE UNITED LIBERIA INLAND CHURCH NIMBA COUNTY - LIBERIA, WEST AFRICA

The United Liberia Inland Church (ULIC) has branches all over Liberia but this case study is based on the one located in the Nimba County of Liberia, West Africa.[39] It has a total membership of about 500 strong believers. The denomination has high schools and a clinic. It is self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing. The mother and the daughter churches meet once a month to discuss and reflect on evangelism and social needs of the church and also to participate in the Lord's supper. In addition to this, there is the yearly general conference wherein the entire membership gathers together for fellowship, reflection and action. Evangelism rests with the respective local churches.

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[38]Sider, Rich Christians, 111f.

[39]This data was gathered from Mr Sei-Goyor Bour, an Assistant Director of the United Liberia Inland Church, Nimba County. Information as to when and how this church came to be established in Nimba county, the exact number of daughter churches, exact number of members in the mother church, which would have been of interest to this study could not be immediately provided.

POVERTY RELIEF PROGRAMMES[40]

Sickness, accidents, fire outbreak, death of the bread winner and other acts of nature are some of the causes of poverty among the believers here.

Register of Widows

Both the mother and the daughter churches maintain registers for the believing widows, orphans and the indigent. Some of these people are physically incapacitated by reason of old age and sickness.

There are some cases where a widow who has no children to take care of her and could not return to her unbelieving relatives because of her Christian faith, is put on the poverty list. The needs of these widows are adequately taken care of through the administrative machinery of the Church. Through the register, their whereabouts are always known by the believers. Because of this, they do not feel deserted. They are happy and content even without any family connections.

Spontaneous and Directed Relief

At their monthly meetings, the members of the mother and daughter churches bring with them all kinds of goods: clothing, food, and other items. They are put in a common stock. The leaders of the mother and daughter churches will then discuss the cases of the needy and the items are distributed according to the needs expressed.

The churches, though, do not keep records of the unemployed, yet through the close-knit system embedded in

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[40]This refers to the Churches located in the Saclepea Maa District.

the community, all the needy among them are known. The believers voluntarily take upon themselves in a spontaneous way to supply food and other items to the needy. So the needy always have two sources of support--through the Church's administrative mechanism and also through spontaneous giving by individual members.

Church farms

The local churches operate various farming ventures on the church's property. Voluntary labour is provided by the believers. The necessary seeds/plants are donated by the ladies. The produce from these farms are not for sale but are used by the needy believers.

Rehabilitation Programme

A fire outbreak could claim all the farm produce of an individual. When this happens, the believers will co-operatively help the victim to clear and start fresh farms. Meanwhile, through the support of the entire church, individually and corporately, the victim has something to eat. I am told that at times the fire victims get more supplies from the believers than they could have ordinarily got from their own produce.

The believers also operate a traditional co-operative system called "Cou" or "Kuu". This is a joint labour force to clear and cultivate the land for individuals and families. Both men and women are involved in this exercise.

The traditional African values of communality and commonality are still cherished here. For example, the wealthy among the people here pay bride's wealth for the needy ones.

EVALUATION OF ULIC RELIEF SYSTEM

It seems this kind of system would thrive well in agro-oriented societies. Director Sei Bour tells me this system of sharing is not found in the cities, and that this communal spirit seems to be part of the traditional values here.

I believe the city churches could as well implement the model here. This could be done through a system of well structured house churches within every denomination. The believers in the cities may not have agriculture products to contribute but they can give their money, or give away some other items which could be used or converted into cash.

ULIC seems to limit her relief system to believers only. I think the church's witness within the community will be strengthened if the leaders explore the possibilities of helping their unbelieving neighbours. We admit however that this could lead to the so called "rice Christian" mentality.

Finally, the church needs dedicated men and women who will really ensure that the items that are meant for the needy are actually passed on to them. I suppose this last would not be a problem in a traditional community with a strong belief in the law of retribution.

THE "REDEEMED MODEL" OF THE

THE REDEEMED GOSPEL CHURCH, NAIROBI

PREAMBLE

Nairobi has been called the crossroads of Africa. It is one of the 240 largest cities in the world. Almost all

the world's international agencies have their African regional offices here. The World Bank, the United Nations agencies (WHO, UNDP, UNHCR, UNESCO); the Ford Foundation, Rockfeller Foundation, and many other foundations have their regional offices here. This applies not only to the secular organizations, but also the ecclesiastical bodies. World Vision International, the Navigators, Youth for Christ, Youth With a Mission, Campus Crusade for Christ, TEAR Fund, Christian Aid, All African Conference of Churches, Compassion International, Wycliffe, United Bible Societies and of course, the indefatigable AEAM, the umbrella of African evangelicalism, all have their regional offices here!

Nairobi's Kenyatta International Airport has unsurpassed international connections. It handless an average of 55 international arrivals and departures daily. There are a total of about 100,000 expatriates and 73 consulates here.[41]

Nairobi has a population of about two million. The hustle and bustle of the city deafen the ears of the rural visitor. A cross-strata of the wealthy here have both horses and hounds (cars), not mentioning their multi-million shilling investments in various sectors of the nation. Some of the rich here even claim the right to inhabit certain parts of the city to the exclusion of all others!

There are modern sky-scrapers strategically located.

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[41]T. Adeyemo, G. Okoronkwo, and E. Ayee, eds., Following Jesus in a Rich-Poor Society (Nairobi : AEAM, 1988), 13.

Jomo Kenyatta International Conference Centre, with its modern architecture, tops them all!

The Mathare Enigma

It does not, however, take long for the visitor to Nairobi to come in contact with contrasts to the downtown skyline--"large sprawling shanties and slums that house the majority of the urban population."[42] On the eastern slopes of the city lies the Mathare Valley, one of the largest, filthiest and the most crowded slums in the city with a population of about 150,000 people.[43]

Mathare is the home of the destitute, illiterates, unemployed, widows, orphans, the poverty-stricken and the hopeless. Disease, crime and despair are easily observable as one walks through the slums. "Nairobi, like many African cities, has glaring contrasts of injustices inbuilt in modern economies. With the means of production wrestled out of their hands through modernization, the people have been so to speak condemned to a cycle of poverty."[44]

A former executive director of World Concern a relief organisation, described Mathare in the following words,

> It is a place of brokenness, of mind-staggering poverty, of physical and spiritual ruin. Dreadful paper shacks crowd each other for space on the valley's steep slopes. Narrow, muddy streets lined with open sewers wind through small openings beside endless rows of shanties. In all the world, I cannot remember seeing men and women as incredibly impoverished or emotionally depressed.[45]

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[42]J.M. M'Ikunyua, "Development and Justice, in The Living God, 250 f.

[43]Adeyomo, Rich-Poor Society, 13.

[44]Adeyemo, Rich - Poor Society, 14 f.

[45]Beals, Beyond Hunger, 190.

Mathare Valley derived its name from the Mathare river. The river has now become a soggy pathway, filled with discarded refuse. The Mathare slum is said to have had its origin in the colonial era:

> According to research carried out in the Valley, its poverty dates back to colonial times. Many of the families had husbands either in detention or killed during the Mau Mau rebellion. Other poor families that could not afford to stay in other areas of the city due to high rents moved into the Valley. With no employment and no source of income, the people were driven by necessity to look for alternative ways to survive. The women resorted to prostitution and brewing and selling of alcohol. Their daughters followed in their footsteps, and hence there was a common saying, "Like mother like daughter." Likewise, the boys who have had no form of education felt that they would never be employed. They organized themselves into gangs which indulged in thuggery and other forms of violence. Alcohol became their refuge. Therefore, as is the case for daughter, for the boys--"Like father like son."[46]

After independence from colonial rule and oppression, bans on movement of people were lifted. Tens of thousands of people migrated from various rural habitats to Nairobi, in search of the benefits of city life. Mathare received them into her bosom. This kind of rural to urban migration has continued ever since. Now the circumstances which continue to cause this movement are varied ranging from the frustration of landlessness to migration motivated by youthful idealism.

The inhabitants of Mathare are engaged in all kinds of menial work when they can get it, including manual labour at construction sites and at the industrial area. Some of the men also engage in petty trading--selling of vegetable,

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[46]Morompi Ole-Ronkei, "The Redeemed Gospel Church," in The Church, ed. B. Nicholls, (Exeter, England: Paternoster for WEF, 1986), 183.

paraffin, charcoal, second-hand clothing. The brewing of the local gin, popularly called chang'aa (a prohibited intoxicant) also thrives. Mathare is also a place of creativity. Lanterns are made right there from discarded tins. Some of the men do steel works, carpentry, and upholstery. (This is popularly called the "jua kali" (or hot sun) trade.

Drug trafficking, prostitution, burglary, rape and child vagrancy are reported here. This issue of prostitution is a difficult one. If this is her only available source of income, what should a woman do when she is converted to Christ? Has the Messianic community got the answer?

Housing, Water Supply and Sanitation

Houses are generally made of mud walls with corrugated iron sheets or polythene material roofing systems. Several people usually live in a small single room. Landlords exploit these settlers; the smallest muddy hut fetches a rent of 100 shillings and some even charge much more. The houses are poorly constructed and some suffer leakages during rainy seasons, and become dusty during dry seasons.

The houses here are fire hazards, as they are joined closely together. Constant fire outbreaks are reported here, thereby rendering several people homeless. The causes of such outbreaks are not always immediately known.

The water supply system here is not at all adequate. A few taps serve several hundred people, and they are not always located in one's immediate vicinity. Some of the few taps available often break down during rainy seasons.

Few public toilets are available here, and they are poorly maintained. There are some few pit latrines here also. In a situation like this can the liberative Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ be of any relevance? Has the Church got the answer?

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Evangelistic activities began in the Valley in the 1970's. In 1974, Evangelist Bwana Kitonga and his team of men, under the umbrella of the Redeemed Gospel Church, an independent pentecostal church, took up the challenge! They staged a series of evangelistic activities there but always met with hostility, including sometimes beatings. However, these aggressive evangelists were not deterred. By the power of the Holy Spirit, they intensified and diversified their outreach programme. It soon became obvious to them that social action and evangelism should be integrated if they were to make any headway. This they did and the power of resistance was broken.

Food and clothing were distributed to the poor and many people flocked to the precincts of the church; some left the church when the food supply dwindled for lack of funds. Evangelist Kitonga and his men kept on preaching and teaching and many people again returned to the church.

In the process of time the following have become an ongoing programme of the Church:

Nutrition and Public Health Education

The church, through her social workers, runs a nutritional public health education programme in the

community here. Fifty mothers participate in this programme at all times. A recent interview held with the Head of this department, Mrs. Ana Nyambura, indicated that an average of 20 shillings is spent to feed 10 children per meal at the nutrition and public health center. There is also a feeding programme for 800 children. This programme is located at two different places in the Mathare area. Also, once a month, the Church distributes different food items to 200 parents located in the slums. One can well imagine the problems involved in selecting 200 women out of the thousands of women who are equally needy.

Housing

With the consent of the local chief, semi-permanent buildings are constructed for some of the families who live in carton-paper houses. Blankets, clothings, and household utensils are also supplied to the needy.

Health

A new clinic located at Korogocho, a suburb of Mathare, was dedicated 29th October, 1988. It was funded by the Federal State of Baden Wuternberg, in the Republic of Germany. The building cost DM 110,000. This clinic is to serve the squatters. In addition, the Redeemed Gospel Church has one ambulance car and one mini-bus located at Mathare to take care of emergencies.

Education

The church operates one nursery school; this takes care of the educational needs of about 250 children whose parents are very poor. The church sponsors the school fees of 50 of these children. The church also sponsors some

children in primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities. Special training programmes are provided for children who are too old to go through the regular nursery/primary school system.

Vocational Training

Currently, vocational training programmes are offered in tailoring, welding, carpentry, and leather work. The training lasts for one year. The trainees are able to then sit exams and obtain the government certificate. About 120 students are enrolled in these programmes. Part of the church's long term programme is to also provide training in mechanics, engineering, bookkeeping, secretarial skills and home economics.

Small Business Loan Scheme

Some of the squatters, mainly women, organized into groups of five are supported with interest free loans (up to 5,000 shillings) to undertake some petty trading: selling of fresh vegetables, charcoal, food stuffs, clothes, paraffin, and operating small kiosks. Through this assistance, many families are able to support themselves financially through this income generating business. To qualify for this type of loan, a group registration is required with the Ministry of Local Services, and also with the District Officer (D.O.).

Financing

Part of the finances needed to run these various projects of the church are raised locally. The major part of the sponsorship, however, comes from Tear Fund (Holland) and World Vision International. This I believe demonstrates

satisfactorily the intra-church financing we discussed earlier on.

The Church and Evangelism

The Redeemed Gospel Church has been operating since 1973. There are 3 churches established in the Valley. The Huruma branch is the largest, with two services every Sunday morning. This is where Evangelist Kitonga, now Bishop, ministers. Plans are underway to construct a sanctuary that can seat 10,000 worshippers near the present sanctuary at Huruma. In all, there are 156 branches in the whole country. There are branches also in Uganda and Tanzania.

Prayer is the backbone of the Redeemed Gospel Church. Forgiveness of sins, heaven and hell, sanctified living, the power of the blood, and the power of the name of Jesus to deliver one from sin and the powers of darkness, are emphasized in the preaching of the Bishop. Prayers for deliverance characterize the services of the church.

Seminars and Conferences

These are organized at regular intervals. Three such seminars are held yearly for different groups within the church, e.g. one for the church leaders, one for the Christian workers, and another for the youth workers. These seminars and conferences are directed to the enhancement of efficiency and spirituality of the believers.

Outreach

The outreach programme of the Redeemed Gospel Church involves the total mobilization of the laity. Door to door visitation and open air street meetings are held weekly. The Huruma Redeemed Gospel Church, for instance, holds

street services every Sunday afternoon. Massive open-air crusades are also held at regular intervals. These large crusades involve all the various branches of the Redeemed Gospel Church in a particular area, say Nairobi. It could go on for about five days. These crusades are normally preceded by a period of preparation in prayer and fasting. Follow-up and teaching on discipleship normally follow the crusades.

There are three singing groups in the church (Huruma Redeemed Gospel Church). These groups take the Gospel to the community through music. The group that leads the Sunday worship services at Huruma Church is highly talented.

Young Children

Every Saturday and Sunday the children in the church meet for games, music and Bible studies.

Film

The film department uses appropriate motion pictures for outreach. These shows always end with powerful evangelistic messages.

Counselling

Counselling on marriage, family life and Christian conduct within a perverse society is offered to both Christians and non-Christians.

EVALUATION

The way this church is growing has necessitated the need to devise an appropriate system that would enable the leadership to minister to all those in need.

A strong committee is needed to monitor the church's programme, especially the educational programmes. It would be helpful for the committee members to be the representatives of the various ethnic orientations. This would help to ensure justice in the system. In a place like Mathare where various ethnic origins are represented, the possibility of overlooking the needs a particular tribe is not remote. My interview with Miss Njeri Atieno, the Project Manager, indicates that the church has instituted a proper control system to prevent any such malpractice.

The greatest weakness of the "Redeemed Model" is its failure to consider the primary factor for evangelizing the urban poor. At the moment, apart from the inspiration one receives from attending the regular church meetings, the believers' daily existence has no communal support--the support that one gets from life lived in a community where individuals see themselves as members of a dynamic group, having common aims and aspirations; where possessions are shared, and commitment to each other and neighborhood is fostered.

The Thailand Report sees this when the committee affirms that:

> We believe the basic strategy for the evangelization of the urban poor is the creation or renewal of communities in which Christians live and share equally with others. These communities function as a holistic redemptive presence among the poor, operate under indigenous leadership, demonstrate God's love, and invite men, women and children to repentance, faith and participation in God's kingdom.[48]

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[48] Thailand Report, Urban Poor, (Wheaton, Ill.: LCWE, 1980), 16. This was the unanimous conclusion of the mini-consultation that grew from the contributions and debate of

It cannot be two strongly emphasized that this is the biblical pattern. In this way, the Servant of Yahweh becomes incarnated in such communities, and faith, hope and love are shared and experienced.[49]

The Mathare squatters have lost the motivation and support that are enjoyed in a rural traditional setting with communal sensibilities. This sense of lostness forces some of them to join gangs for anti-social practices. Christian base communities within Mathare will be a perfect alternative for the traditional communal life. The base communities will provide the structure for caring, healing, and integration. This will strengthen the faith of both the new and the old Christians.

In the base communities the believers can better discuss the issues that affect them and their environment. Issues about justice, exploitation, unemployment, public utilities, sanitation, birth control, nutrition, landlessness, causes of rural to urban migration, and other crucial matters could all be discussed within the base communities, using an indigenous leadership as a catalyst. This conscientization will create social awareness and a desire to bring change.

The redeemed model, apparently, does not make the squatters to identify their own problems. Development is imposed from outside using the power structure of the chief and the D.O. The squatters are not made to take charge of their own destiny. The planning and implementation of the

those engaged in evangelization of the urban poor.

[49]Ibid.,17.

programmes are done virtually by "outsiders." In this case it will be very difficult for the squatters to fully identify with the RGC development projects.

Base communities: Key to Evangelism

Contemporary evidence has established that evangelism is accelerated through Christian base communities. Brazil is said to have about 50,000 of such communities with about 2,000,000 people predominantly Roman Catholic. Through such communities, about 600 people belonging to the poorest class, have come to Christ within 10 years in Hong Kong. The small multi-ethnic, newly planted churches in the inner cities of Britain have been the source of renewal of church life in Britain.[50]

We would like to point out here that, for the RGC to effectively deal with the issues at Mathare, and at the same time maintain the evangelistic zeal of the church, there is the need for the leadership to seriously consider the need for the creation of authentic Christian base communities.

CONCLUSION

The two contemporary models we have examined lack the prophetic-critical model which is found in both testaments. We think the importance of this aspect of the church's ministry cannot be too strongly emphasized. This is because, as we have pointed out elsewhere in this thesis, poverty in Africa is partly due to "the sins of the fathers." Since this is so, the church's ministry should include the analysis of the social ills in order to deal

[50]Ibid., 16.

with the root causes of our deprivation, destitution and despoilment. Unless this is done, we believe the church will not fulfill its total ministry. We will discuss this issue further in the last section of this study. For now we would like to conclude by stating that in looking at the OT/NT relief models we may not have addressed all the related questions. However, as we have reiterated, the biblical relief models offer some principles, sensitivities, objectives which have universal validity. The discussion here is meant to inspire and challenge the Messianic Community (the Church of Jesus Christ), which stands in spiritually organic continuity with Israel, to action. She seeks to bring the message of the One who clothed the naked, visited the sick, comforted the mourners, buried the dead, and wept over a dead friend,[51]2 to a people whose experience has been that of deprivation, despair and despondency. The compelling message here is that:

> If there is one community in the world in which justice is secured for the oppressed, the poor are freed from the indignities of poverty, and physical need is abolished by the voluntary sharing of resources, that community is the new society of Jesus the Messiah.[52]

> If we see our neighbour stand in need of our succour before our eyes and fail, if we perceive he is likely to sustain loss and we remedy not the matter, having the means to do it, we be condemned of felony before God. It is a hard case; men may well dispute of it...but all replying must be laid

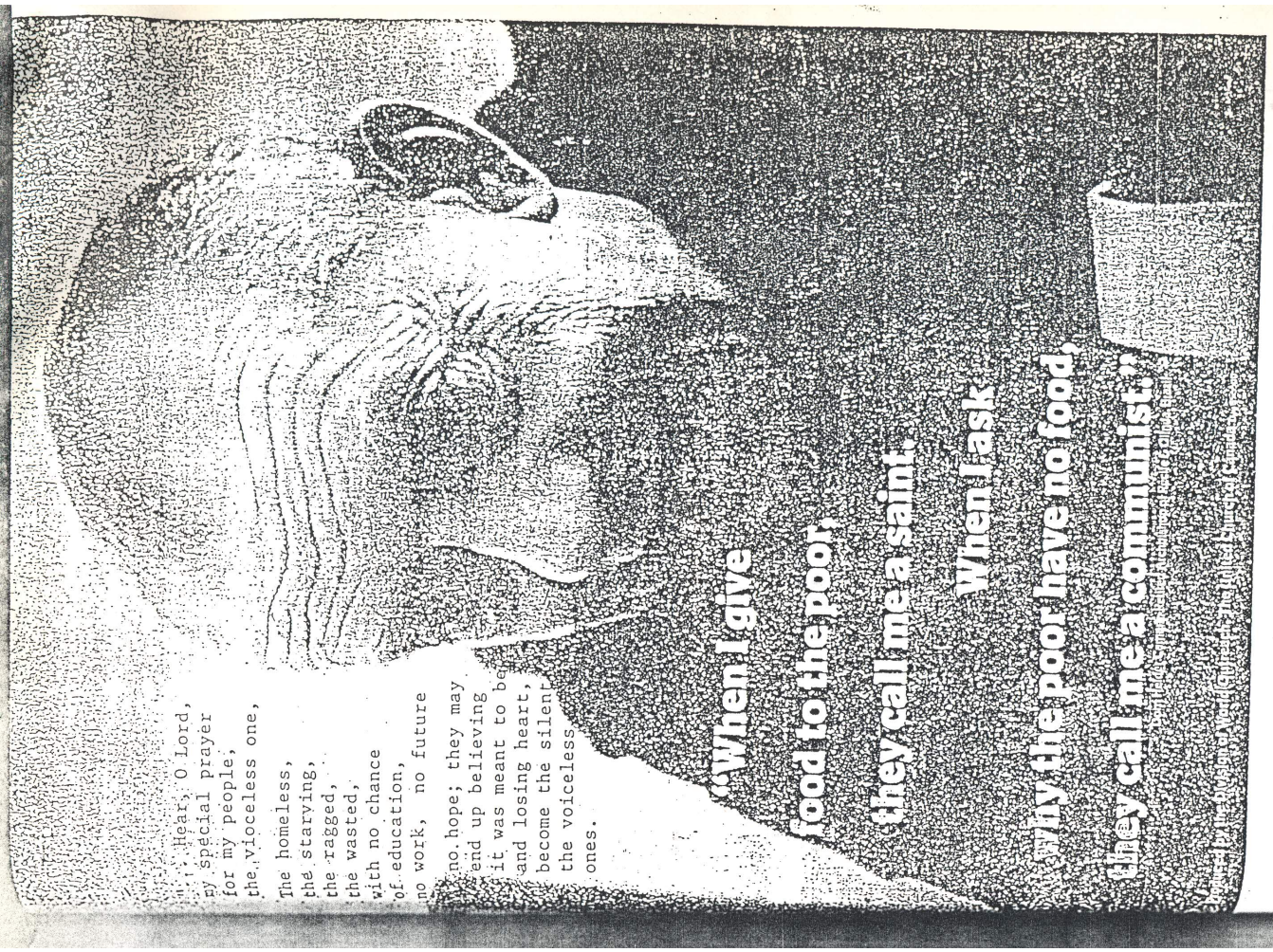
[51]Gen. 3:21; 18:1; 25:11; Deut. 34:6; Jn.11:35.

[52]John Stott, Issues Facing Christians Today (Hants, England.: Marshalls, 1984), 222.

> down, for as much as God has spoken of it, his saying is an irrevocable sentence.[53]

Blessed be the Servant of Yahweh from this time forth and for evermore. Let the obedient faithful hear His voice!

[53]John Calvin, Sermon on Deut. 22:1-4:. Quoted by C. Rene Padilla, "A Meditation on 1 John 3:16-18," Transformation 6, no.1 (Jan./Mar. 1989): 17.



CHRISTIAN FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Global and Continental Totals, 1980

	World	Africa	East Asia	Europe	Latin America	Northern America	Oceania	South Asia	USSR
WORLD									
1. Total population (millions of persons)	4,373.9	460.9	1,086.9	486.4	371.6	248.8	23.5	1,427.7	268.1
2. Total income (Gross National Product, per year, billion US$ per annum [pa])	10,448.0	323.0	1,572.0	3,288.0	624.0	2,612.0	164.0	782.0	1,083.0
3. Average income per person (GNP per capita per year, US $ pa)	2,389.0	700.0	1,446.0	6,760.0	1,680.0	10,500.0	7,000.0	548.0	4,040.0
GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY									
4. Christians of all kinds (millions of persons)	1,432.7	203.5	19.0	415.6	348.7	219.8	20.3	109.1	96.7
5. Personal income of all Christians (billion $ pa)	6,466.7	142.5	27.5	2,809.5	585.8	2,308.2	142.1	59.8	390.8
ACTUAL GIVING BY ALL KINDS OF CHRISTIANS									
6. Estimated giving by all Christians to all causes (billion $ pa)	181.5	4.3	1.1	56.2	5.9	96.0	5.7	0.6	11.7
GLOBAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP									
7. Affiliated church members (millions of persons)	1,323.4	164.6	16.1	403.2	341.0	178.9	16.2	106.7	96.7
8. Personal income of all church members (billion $ pa)	5,877.6	115.2	23.3	2,725.5	572.8	1,878.4	113.1	58.5	390.8
9. Roman Catholics (billion $ pa)	3,131.0	46.3	5.0	1,799.1	553.4	631.3	40.1	36.6	19.2
10. Protestants (billion $ pa)	1,528.4	26.6	8.6	553.5	31.4	828.5	34.1	14.3	31.4
11. Evangelicals (billion $ pa)	976.2	25.7	5.5	206.9	26.4	642.1	30.3	8.5	30.8
POTENTIAL CHRISTIAN GIVING BY CHURCH MEMBERS (TITHING, 10%)									
12. Potential giving by church members (billion $ pa)	587.8	11.5	2.3	272.6	57.3	187.8	11.3	5.9	39.1
13. Roman Catholics (billion $ pa)	313.1	4.6	0.5	179.9	55.3	63.1	4.0	3.7	1.9
14. Protestants (billion $ pa)	152.8	2.7	0.9	55.4	3.1	82.9	3.4	1.4	3.1
15. Evangelicals (billion $ pa)	97.7	2.6	0.6	20.7	2.6	64.2	3.0	0.9	3.1
ACTUAL CHRISTIAN GIVING BY CHURCH MEMBERS									
16. Estimated giving by church members to all causes (billion $ pa)	160.2	3.5	0.9	54.5	5.7	78.9	4.5	0.5	11.7
17. Estimated giving to secular or non-Christian causes	59.9	0.2	0.1	15.0	0.5	40.9	1.5	0.0	1.7
18. Estimated giving to Christian causes	100.3	3.3	0.8	39.5	5.2	38.0	3.0	0.5	10.0
ACTUAL CHRISTIAN GIVING TO CHRISTIAN CAUSES									
19. Estimated giving by church members to Christian causes:	100.3	3.3	0.8	39.5	5.2	38.0	3.0	0.5	10.0
20. (a) to churches and denominations (billion $ pa)	64.5	3.0	0.6	29.5	4.0	15.0	2.5	0.4	9.5
21. (b) to parachurch agencies (billion $ pa)	35.8	0.3	0.2	10.0	1.2	23.0	0.5	0.1	0.5
ACTUAL CHRISTIAN GIVING TO CHRISTIAN CAUSES BY CONFESSION									
22. Estimated giving by church members to Christian causes:	100.3	3.3	0.8	39.5	5.2	38.0	3.0	0.5	10.0
23. Roman Catholics (billion $ pa)	44.1	1.3	0.2	23.0	4.9	13.0	1.0	0.3	0.4
24. Protestants (billion $ pa)	42.5	1.0	0.3	14.0	0.3	25.0	1.1	0.2	0.6
25. Evangelicals (billion $ pa)	24.5	0.6	0.1	3.5	0.3	18.8	0.5	0.1	0.6
RATES OF GIVING BY CHURCH MEMBERS TO CHRISTIAN CAUSES									
26. Giving per congregation per year ($)	58,368.1	9,169.7	8,050.0	111,303.3	31,414.1	91,661.9	67,733.3	2,628.9	197,625.5
27. Giving per congregation per week ($)	1,122.5	176.3	154.8	2,140.4	604.1	1,762.7	1,302.5	50.6	3,800.5
28. Giving per full-time Christian worker per year ($)	34,254.2	7,650.9	17,371.5	37,273.2	20,208.9	48,921.9	46,557.1	2,126.7	165,645.2
29. Giving per full-time Christian worker per week ($)	658.7	147.1	332.1	716.8	388.6	940.8	895.3	40.9	3,185.5
30. Giving per church member per year ($)	75.8	20.0	49.7	98.0	15.2	212.4	185.2	4.7	103.4
31. Giving per church member per week ($)	1.46	0.39	0.96	1.88	0.29	4.08	3.56	0.09	1.99
GIVING TO GLOBAL FOREIGN MISSIONS									
32. Giving to Christian foreign missions (million $ pa)	5,021.5	19.8	9.9	2,400.0	307.5	2,100.0	119.6	54.4	10.3
33. Giving to missions per church member per year ($)	3.79	0.12	0.61	5.95	0.90	11.74	7.38	0.51	0.11
34. Giving to missions per church member per week ($)	0.073	0.002	0.012	0.114	0.017	0.226	0.142	0.010	0.002

Methodological Notes

a. Limits of the above table. This table deals, not with static wealth but with the annual movement of Christian financial resources by individual Christians. It refers only to the first, or initial, level of Christian finance, i.e., to live Christian stewardship, which means ongoing financial resources in the pockets of today's Christians and the amounts that they donate each year. The table excludes endowments, bequests, state support, political support, business support, and other forms of Christian income, and it excludes the secondary and subsequent levels of Christian finance such as the activities of funding bodies that circulate or otherwise spend the money donated by Christians.

b. Variables shown. The 34 variables shown are suggestive and selective rather than comprehensive. Three (nos. 18, 19, 22) are the same variable but repeated in different contexts. The full listing of all financial variables likely to be useful to mission strategists approaches 100 or more. The fuller computerized version of this table incorporates the second and subsequent levels of giving. *Definitions of financial variables.* These largely follow World Bank usage.

c. Continents. Our usage here follows that of United Nations agencies, which divide the world's 223 countries into 8 "major areas" (equivalent to continents) and 24 "regions." Our terms ("Africa," etc.) are therefore defined as in UN publications. Note that continental comparisons are immensely complicated by conflicting definitions: e.g., the World Bank defines Turkey as in Europe, and Indonesia with Oceania, whereas UN agencies define both countries as in Asia.

d. Amounts of money. All amounts are given either as billions of US dollars per year or as millions of US dollars per year or as dollars per year.

fessing, nominal, and affiliated). All remaining lines, where unindented, refer to the totals of or for all affiliated Christians (church members) of all confessions. Lines indented refer to subdivisions (e.g., Roman Catholics, Protestants). Note that these 2 subdivisions are not of course the only possible ones (e.g., in the USSR, there are 84 million Orthodox who are neither Protestants nor Catholics), hence they do not necessarily add up to the total for all Christians. A further indentation is shown for Evangelicals (Protestant and Anglican) as a subdivision of Protestants. All these categories are used as defined in *World Christian Encyclopedia* (1982), pp. 70–71.

f. Giving. This term refers here to "live giving," i.e., money given or donated per year or per week by living Christians (hence it excludes bequests). Christian giving to secular causes is included only in nos. 6, 16, and 17. In all other lines, Christian giving refers exclusively to giving to specifically Christian causes, which means to churches, denominations, parachurch agencies, or to individual Christian workers or groups or causes. Note that line no. 6 refers to giving by all Christians, both church members and nominal Christians, while line nos. 12–34 refer to giving by church members alone.

g. Tithing. "Potential" Christian giving (nos. 12–15) refers to what would be given if all Christians tithed (gave 10% of all personal income).

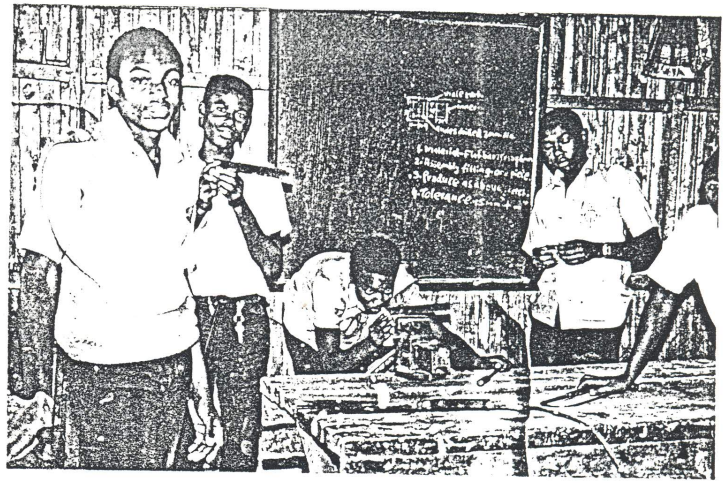
h. Past giving to missions. The global total of giving to Protestant and Anglican foreign missions in the year 1800 is estimated to have been US $ 75,000, and in the year 1900 to have been US $19,100,000 (both at 1900 values of the dollar). In terms of 1982 dollars (each worth only 9 cents of the 1900 dollar) these sums are respectively $833,000 and $212

ables for all countries are tabulated in "World Development Indicators," *WDR*, 1982: 99–159. These have been combined to give the continental totals shown.

j. Survey of giving. The most exact annual surveys of giving come from the USA. Total official or publicly recognized giving to charities there—secular and religious—has risen steadily each year from $6 billion in 1955 to $39.6 billion in 1978, of which 46.5% ($18.4 billion) was then classified as giving to "Religion" (*Giving USA: Annual Reports*, American Association of Fundraising Counsel, New York). In 1982 the total rose to $60 billion. Of all giving to charities, 81% is by individuals. These well-defined and thorough annual surveys do not, however, cover the total extent of Christian giving, omitting as they do much anonymous or private or secret or unheralded giving, or unofficial or spontaneous or unplanned or one-time acts of charity to individuals in need, beggars, family members, or acquaintances, et alia. *Polls.* The Princeton Religion Research Center (Gallup) and *Christianity Today* have recently published poll results covering percentage of income donated in the USA. Thus 16% of USA residents give 10% or more to all causes, 13% give between 5–9%, 33% less than 5%, and 26% give nothing. *Denominational giving.* Total donations from their own church members are published annually by many denominations.

k. Interpretation. When seeking to interpret particular figures, especially ratios, care must be taken to understand the exact definitions involved and the exact contexts. Thus the ratios given in the table under USSR for line nos. 26–29 are much higher than their counterparts on other continents. This does not, however, imply or mean that Soviet church members give far more generously than the rest of the world.

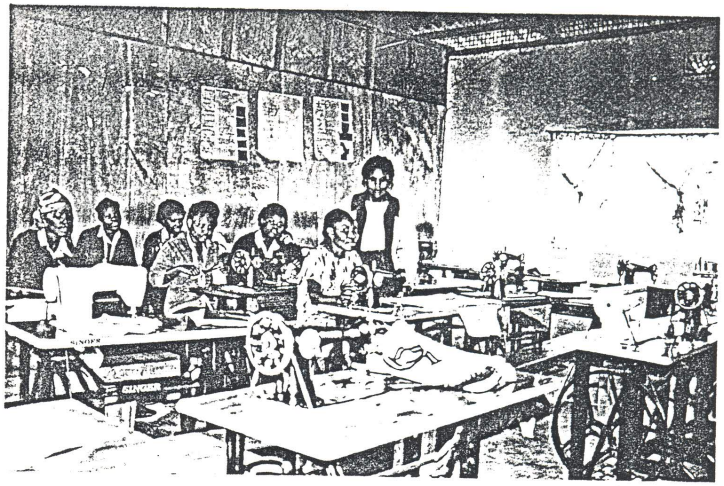
THE R.G.C. EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME.



Future Artisans at Work.



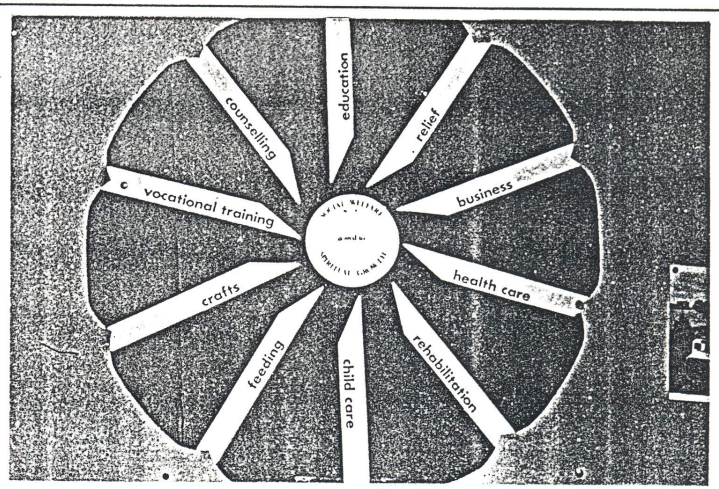
Future Artisans at Work.



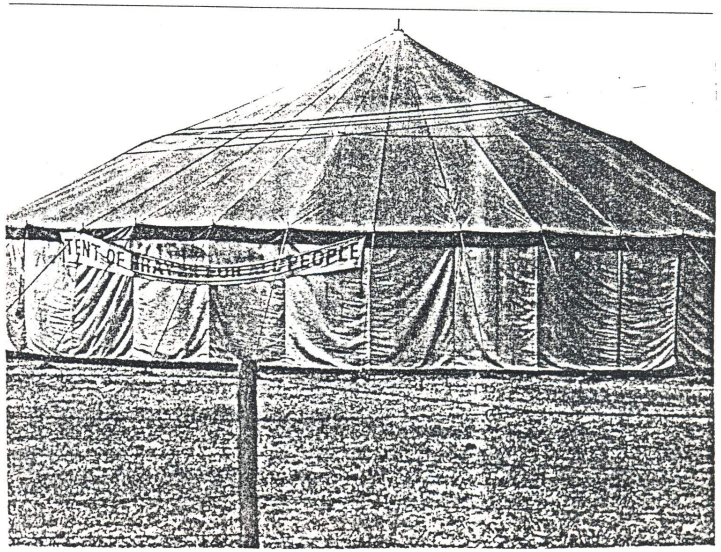
Empowering future mothers to be Self-reliant.



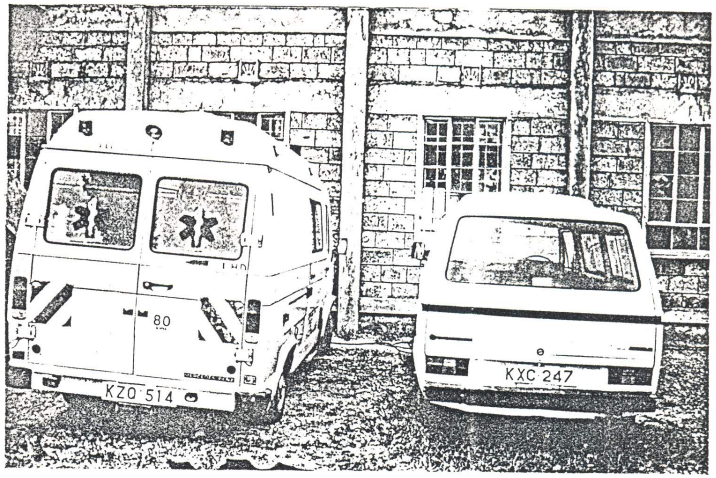
Researcher examines leather products at R.G.C. Vocational School.



The Redeemed Model.



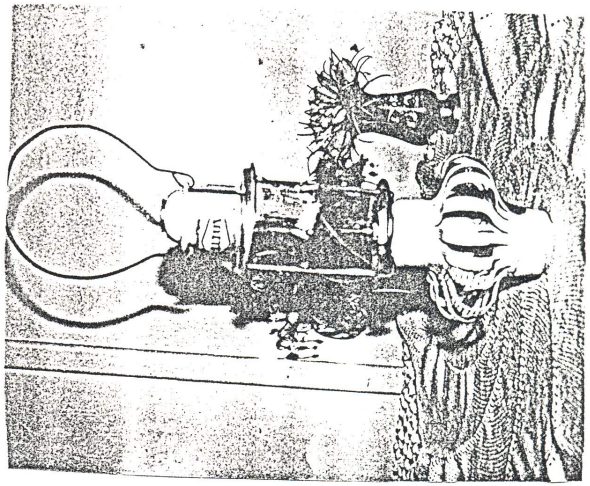
The Power House -- R.G.C.



R.G.C. Primary Health Care.



Educating the Whole Man:
Rev. D. White breaking the ground for the Nairobi Pentecostal Church Academy.



Lantern: Made in Mathare.



Housing the Poor-- A Project of R.G.C.

CHAPTER 8

THE EPILOGUE

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL EXPECTATIONS

The earnest expectation of the believer is "Amen. Come Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20). This desire becomes more acute the more one thinks of the fact that the universe was created to be a cosmos and not a chaos. But instead, we experience a cosmos in which harmony, unity, order, fellowship, communion, peace and justice and righteousness has been disturbed by sin. The more one observes the effects of this pollution--disunity, alienation, disorder, chaos, separation, and oppression, the more one longs to see the day when the Prince of Calvary will achieve full reconciliation and harmony for the cosmos. The believer longs to see the coming rule of his Master whose dominion and domain will be characterized by justice.

> He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
> The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the vipers nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.[1]

[1]Isa.11: 3-10.

THE COSMIC STRUGGLE

Before this glorious day dawns, the believer has a battle to fight, but not with carnal missiles or projectiles. His weapons are divine (2 Cor. 10:3-6). He is to fight against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this dark age. These include the powers of greed, jealousy, envy, oppression, exploitation, and wantonness. In essence, it is a fight against the forces that fight against the will of God for humanity. This is the thrust of the eugallion--a war against the powers that oppose God and His plans for humanity.

This demands our willingness to know the will of the Master, and our willingness to obey that revealed will. This calls for self-awareness--who we are, why we have been made members of the messianic community, and what we should do.

The who, why and what are summed up in the life of John the Baptist. He knew he was nothing but a "Voice." This awareness of nothingness led to a self-less life, to which he challenged his audience likewise: "The man with two tunics should share his with one who has none, and the one who has food should do the same," "...Don't exploit... Don't collect any more than you are required to; ...Don't extort money... be content with your pay." (Lk. 3:11-14). This is what he called "fruits of righteousness." John could not overlook the evils of his society. He denounced and rebuked the status quo. The end result was that he incurred the displeasure of the ruling class, and he got killed! John chose to obey God rather than men.

This is the prophetic model the church in Africa should emulate. As the Baptist was the heralder to the first advent of Christ, so the African church should be the heralder to the

second advent. This prophetic witness demands two things, namely, a simple life style and a prophetic voice. This has two facets: calling men and women back to God with a message of repentance, and reconciliation with both God and men. The other aspect is denouncing the evils of society, both personal and structural evils. We will develop these below.

THE THEOLOGY WE NEED

The issues that confront African societies in regard to poverty and wealth are more than anything else traceable to the all-pervasive issue of justice--the exploitation, distribution, and the use of the resources that God has endowed on us.[2]

In the African context where there is poverty and oppression can we think of a theology except the one that speaks to

> a hungry child crying for food, Ugandan refugees running away from Amin's tyranny, a coup d'etat in Ethiopia, a parent in Kenya with two young children who have failed their examinations, a villager without water and proper sanitation, a beggar [street boys and girls] in the streets of Nairobi, the forest of buildings in Lagos, hunger and death in the Sahel.[3]

A major part of present day seminary training is done outside the context of the real world where "Those who desire the life of the ages to come in the existential here and now, also need the bread of men to maintain their earthly body in working order as they pray and wait for That Day."[4] The courses that will conscientize the students to the problems of society are

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[2]M'Ikunyua, The Living God, D. M. Gitari and P. Benson, eds. (Nairobi): Uzima ATF, 1986), 256.

[3]Bishop Henry Okullu, Church and State (Nairobi: Uzima, 1984), xiii.

[4]Okorocha, "Hunger in Africa," 198.

optional. Courses like anthropology and sociology are taught only at the cognitive level without the necessary field experience. Courses related to the business world are entirely absent from our curriculum. Because of this, after our seminary or Bible college training, we are limited in our scope. At best we are able to do a first class exegesis without application for we don't yet fully know or understand our world. I was not surprised to hear that one of the first graduates of NEGST did not know anything about pastoral counselling until he went to the parish.

But the truth of the matter is that without a relevant theology, we will present to the people a God who remains aloof from the daily struggles of man, thereby making Christianity meaningless and the Bible irrelevant. The way our seminaries and bible colleges are run today, we will continue to have Christians in our pews who will ask

> Lord, is Your Kingdom as narrow and limited as Your Church? Is it your will that we have to lock ourselves up within the walls of the church? May we, apart from Bible, read only elementary little books on catechism, sentimental gospelling pamphlets and feeble church news letters? Have we as Christians nothing to say about issues like urbanization, political justice, corruption, economic policy, civil war, education and may [sic] (many) other issues? Seeing that there are not Christian books to offer guidance about these problems, I would like to write about what Christians think in my newspaper. But I have never yet found anybody who shares my thoughts. Or is every body afraid to raise a voice?[5]

[5]A journalist from the Central African Republic, quoted by J. Van der Walt, in "Relevant Christian Theological Education for Africa." The paper was read at the conference On Bible Schools for Leaders in Africa at the PU for CHE, from 9th to 12th August (year not given). The paper was made available to me through AEAM/ESD. Van der Walt is a Director of the Institute for Reformational Studies and Professor of Philosophy at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education.

We can't use religion as a form of escapism because that can't be an authentic Christian spirituality. Seeing the need for a balanced theological education for Africa, Adeyemo writes:

> Our theological institutions and programmes should be training grounds for the shapers of national destinies. The pastors, Christian teachers, evangelists, administrators, and all other Christian professionals in general.... To train and mobilize our laity, our existing colleges and churches can [are to] organize fora where Christians of all varied professional skills can come together and reason on major issues of the day...[6]

THE PROPHETIC VOICE

The messianic community should constantly recognize that it is dealing with the powers of evil. These are the powers who would like to perpetrate their dominance and rule over the souls and societies of men. This therefore makes an authentic proclamation of the good news risky. But whom should we obey, ourself, Satan or the Saviour? Of course we have to obey the Saviour.

Like John the Baptist, our message should touch every facet of the fabric of society. The Kingdom of Satan must always be under bombardment through our prayers and our proclamation of the Lordship of Christ. We must teach our people that the church and the state are not mutually exclusive entities. They can complement each other to serve the people. As the President of Zambia

[6]Tokunboh Adeyemo, "Development of Christian Leadership in Africa," a paper prepared for the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals Second Conference at Philadelphia, (May 4-6, 1989), 13.

once said, "The church is the custodian of moral supremacy in the state while the government is the custodian of justice."[7]

The matter becomes more delicate when the state organ violates its God-given role, and uses the state machinery to perpetrate injustice. The Church as "the custodian of moral supremacy in the state" should not remain aloof in this matter, for "to remain silent in the face of great social evil is to be an accessory to injustice"[8]

To bear witness of the truth is to subvert falsehood. And the father of falsehood will by all means attack. This was exactly the fate of John the Baptist and other contemporary saints. When our messages are attacked by the Devil <u>through the state</u> organ, we must constantly be assured that

> The Christian Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ Our Lord is subversive of all injustice and evil, oppression and exploitation, and that God is on the side of the oppressed and the downtrodden, that He is the liberator God of the Exodus, who leads His people out of every kind of bondage, spiritual, political, social and economic, and nothing will thwart Him from achieving the good of the liberation of all His people and the whole of his creation.[9]

The Church should use all her tools to educate society, including, the national rulers, that:

> In the pursuit of progress, total progress, anything must be rejected that is unworthy of the freedom and human rights of the individual and the people as a whole. Thus are rejected such elements as corruption, bribery, embezzlement of public funds, domination over

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[7]Kenneth Kaunda, quoted by Kodwo E. Ankrah, in <u>African Challenge,</u> ed. K.Y. Best (Nairobi: AACC, 1975), 35.

[8]Quoted by Ankrah, in <u>African Challenge</u>, 37.

[9]Desmond Tutu, <u>Hope and Suffering</u> (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984), 135f.

> the weak, callousness toward the poor and the handicapped....[10]

The messianic community, including

> church leaders and laity should not be afraid to speak out if society has gone wrong. Local church leaders and the laity must be the conscience of society in which they live. Institutionalized evils... the denials of basic human rights, open liberty and corruption. <u>These must be rooted out</u>.[11]

The Church should constantly remind the state leaders that God has put them there as His servants. They are to uphold justice and stand on the side of the oppressed. They should also be reminded that whatever money that is entrusted to them should be used for the purpose for which it was given. Their attitudes would be that of servant hood--service to the people.

The prophetic voice of the Church should also address the issue of simple lifestyle of the believers. This becomes more crucial as we see the proliferation of relief agencies and other para-church organizations. When one sees the money that is wasted by some of the para-church agencies through mismanagement, then one is forced to question some of the advertisements we read in some international Christian magazines soliciting funds. We feel the Church has a moral obligation to question whether the monies these organizations solicit are for self aggrandizement or to aid those they claim to be helping.

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[10]Pope John Paul II quoted by Okullu, <u>Church and State</u>, 3. This was contained in an address given by the Pope during his visit to Nigeria in Feb. 1982.

[11]President Arap Moi, address given at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Nairobi in July 1977. He was then the Vice-President of Kenya. Quoted by Okullu, <u>Church and State</u>, 3 (emphasis mine).

Writing on this issue of simple lifestyle, the Rev. John Mbiti, sighs:

> Whenever mission is accompanied by a life style which is above the majority of the people, it looses its thrust and objective and it carries the confusion as to whether mission is for the kingdom of men. I appeal for simpler life style among our church leaders.... We are, after all called to be servants, and not masters.... We waste a lot of money and effort inflating the glory of our leaders in the church as well as leaders of our nations. Instead we who presume to lead our people need to be deflated, so we can come to the level of the people we lead. There is no moral justification why the poorest and the simplest of our peoples should contribute money, time, goods, voices, sentiments and even lives in order to further inflate church and national leaders who already enjoy many and perhaps undeserved privileges simply because of the position they hold. In any case, mission in Africa must project the life style of humility, servanthood and being with the people and not above or beyond them.[12]

This call, I believe should go to all believers within the fellowship of the messianic community. It should also be addressed to our national leaders. If we think of the projects that are left undone because of lack of money, if we think of the fact that many people are not eating because we are eating too much or misusing public money then we will see the need to adopt a life style that is simple and honest.

Before we renovate our offices, we must ask whether those who clean them have decent places to sleep. Before we construct our additional houses we must ask whether we can improve the lot of the people God has placed under our care. Before we buy our second, third... cars we must ask whether the brother or sister who is in our fellowship has got money to board the public transport or not. As christians, our desired needs and social

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[12]John S. Mbiti, Bible and Theology in African Christianity (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 220 (my emphasis).

expectations should be regulated by the redemptive love of christ--taking the needs of others into consideration.

> The Church of God has to be the salt and light of the world. We must transfigure a situation of hate and suspicion, of brokenness and separation, of fear and bitterness. We have no option. We are servants of God who reigns and cares. He wants us to be the alternative society; where there is harshness and insensitivity, we must be compassionate and caring; where people are statistics, we must show they count as being of immense value to God, where there is grasping and selfishness, we must be a sharing community now. The church must be there in the poverty and squalor, to bring the love and compassion of God among the sick, the hungary, the lepers, the disabled and the naked.[13]

> But this special vocation should not become an alibi to let the majority of the congregation remain totally in different to the evangelistic calling of the mission of the church. The prayer `Your Kingdom Come' belongs to all, to each one of the members of the churches; we all are challenged to make of that prayer the motivation of our lives. We cannot pray for the kingdom to come without announcing to the world the knowledge of the King whose kingdom we hope for. We cannot pray for the coming of the kingdom without calling everybody, everywhere, to recognize this servant kingship of Jesus Christ and that belongs as a responsibility to every Christian community and to every aspect of our ministry - liturgical life, teaching ministries, proclamation of the Word - all belongs together as we try to announce the glories of him who has called us from darkness to his wonderful light.[14]

> And the Master in whose service we are declares:

> Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. "... The Spirit and the bride say "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" [15]

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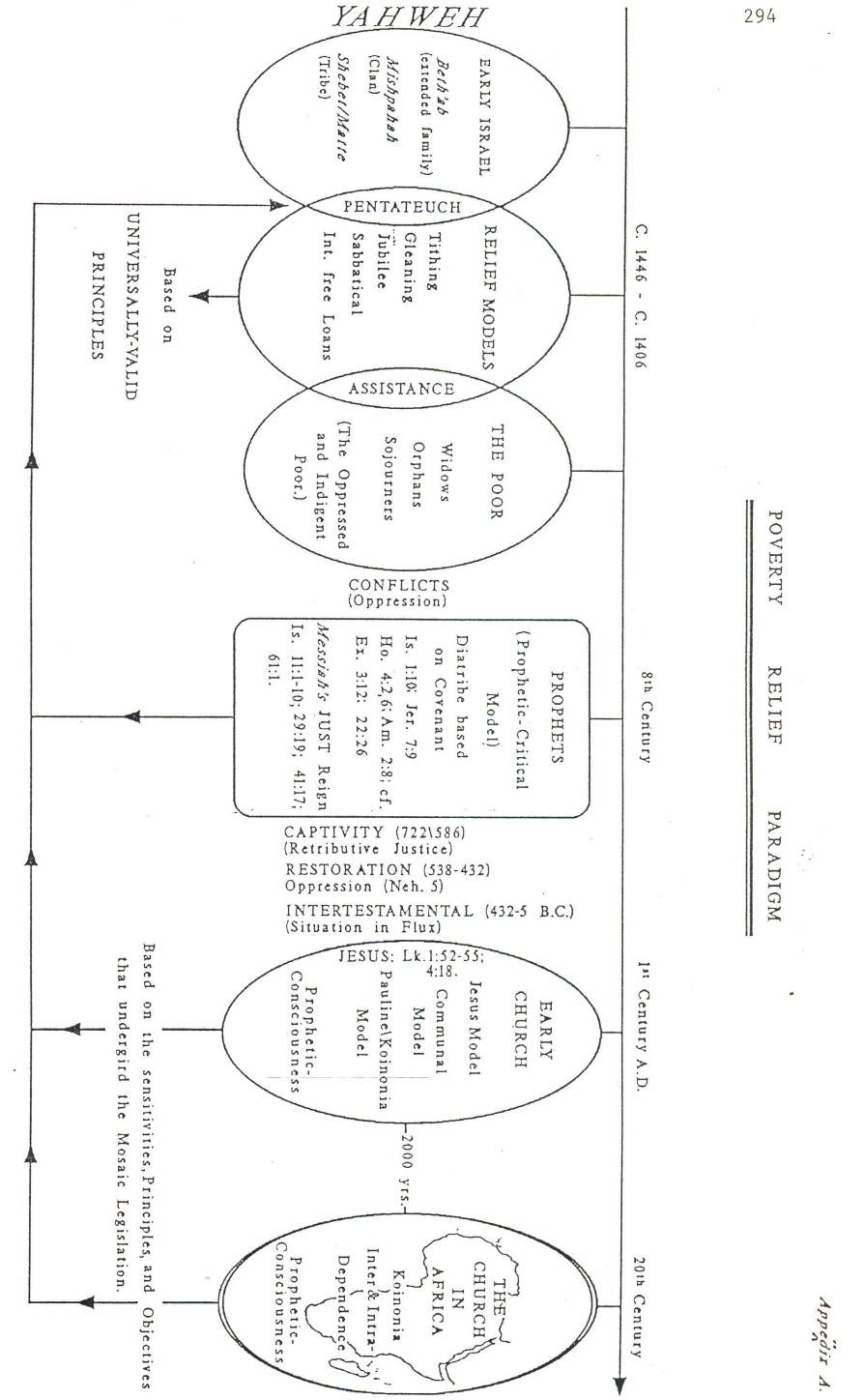
[13]Desmond Tutu, Crying in the Wilderness (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982), 31.

[14]Emilio Castro, Your Kingdom Come (Melbourne: WCC, 1980) quoted by Okulu, Church and State, 21.

[15]Rev. 22: 12-13,17.

APPENDIXES


YAHWEH
EARLY ISRAEL
Beth'ab (extended family)
Mishpahah (Clan)
Shebet/Matte (Tribe)
PENTATEUCH
RELIEF MODELS
Tithing
Gleaning
Jubilee
Sabbatical
Int. free Loans
ASSISTANCE
THE POOR
Widows
Orphans
Sojourners
(The Oppressed and Indigent Poor.)
C. 1446 - C. 1406
8th Century
1st Century A.D.
20th Century
Based on UNIVERSALLY-VALID PRINCIPLES
CONFLICTS (Oppression)
PROPHETS (Prophetic-Critical Model)
Diatribe based on Covenant
Is. 1:10; Jer. 7:9
Ho. 4:2,6; Am. 2:8; cf. Ex. 3:12; 22:26
Messiah's JUST Reign
Is. 11:1-10; 29:19; 41:17; 61:1.
CAPTIVITY (722\586) (Retributive Justice)
RESTORATION (538-432) Oppression (Neh. 5)
INTERTESTAMENTAL (432-5 B.C.) (Situation in Flux)
JESUS: Lk.1:52-55; 4:18.
EARLY CHURCH
Jesus Model
Communal Model
Pauline\Koinonia Model
Prophetic-Consciousness
2000 yrs.
THE CHURCH IN AFRICA
Koinonia
Inter & Intra-Dependence
Prophetic-Consciousness
Based on the sensitivities, Principles, and Objectives that undergird the Mosaic Legislation.

APPENDIX B

WHERE THE EVANGELICALS STAND

(the Evanelical's position on socio-political issues)

by Tokunboh Adeyemo

"Let justice run down like waters, righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24)

"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what the Lord requires of you: to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8)

"Let love be without hypocrisy ... Love works no evil to its neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 12:9 - 13:10)

INTRODUCTION

* In the preceding lectures we have both determined the theological boundaries of an Evangelical Christian and identified him by what he believes and practises. In the present lecture our task is to consider where an Evangelical Christian stands (or at least should stand) in socio-political issues. One interesting observation is the conspicuous lack of Evangelical materials on this subject. Before our exposition, certain preliminary notations are in place namely:

*1. Christian's dual citizenship. Though he is in this world, he is not of this world (Jn. 17:11,14). His decisions and actions must be interpreted against this background.

*2. Christian's view of history. History to him is "salvation or redemption history" (Heilsgeschichte) - holy history. When he is saved, a Christian is saved into God's eternal Kingdom which is and not yet. These two dimensions create tension. There are things he may not understand in the now, but he hopes and trust to know better in the not yet - the eschaton. Since God's Kingdom is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17), this becomes his preoccupation. He is to submit to and exhibit God's righteous rule.

*3. Christian's view of authority resides in God. He recognizes that civil authority is delegated to various human institutions. This is to be obeyed as long as it does not contradict that his decision is not arbitrary or situational.

*4. Christian's view of standard: A Christian is a non-conformist (Rom. 12:1 - 2). His moral and ethical values are higher than that of the world. The Word of God is his norm. He is to apply the principle of religious antithesis, making a critical analysis of human thought in the light of the Word of God. (Principle of religious antithesis simply means that all human life is driven by one of two opposing religious principles, love of God, or love of God-substitutes including self.

*5. Christian's view of salvation. He is to avoid two unbiblical assumptions:

*a). that salvation is strictly and solely individual. Yes, salvation is personal, but the person is saved within and inter personal contexts of family, relatives, neighbours and society.

*b). that there is a dichotomy between sacred and secular cosmos. God rules over both and salvation is holistic.

* Having said that, let us look at some of the issues.

SOCIAL ETHICS

Social ethics as a science deals with everyday mundane things that we do in the society - the ways we dress, talk, eat, entertain, interact etc. The first area to consider is that of social concern. Should a Christian be concerned about the social needs of others? The Bible says, Yes.

Social Concern

*A. The basis for it is 3-fold:

*1. It is explicitly commanded in the Scripture. The second great commandment is "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt. 22:39). Apostle Paul urges us to do good to all men as we have opportunity (Gal. 6:10).

*2. It is implicit in the dignity of man as God's image bearer. Out of His providence God makes his sun to rise on the evil and good, and send rain on the just and the unjust (Mt. 5:45). We cannot be less. We are to love even our enemies and bless them that curse us (Mt. 5:44).

*3. It was practised by Jesus Christ. Though his central thrust was the spiritual regeneration of man, Jesus never over looked to help the needy. He went about doing good (Lk. 4:38 - 39).

*B. The areas of concern will include:

*1. The poor, the hungry and the naked (James 2:15 - 16). James contends that faith that neglects concern for those destitute of daily needs is dead.

*2. Widows and orphans (James 1:27). James describes such a concern as a pure religion and undefiled before God.

*3. The slaves and the oppressed - the powerless. Those who are under-priviledged in our society are to be objects of our concern. Christian is to let justice run down like waters and righteousness like mighty stream. It was Lincoln who said: "As long as I won't like to be a slave, I won't be a master". During the 18th and 19th centuries the Puritan fathers exalted the law of God and made it honourable in lives, preaching and writing. As a result, the consciences of kings and their subjects were brought under the law of the Almighty God. The social effect included the abolition of the inhuman slave trade. "Do not oppress slaves" says the Lord (Deut. 23:16).

*4. The strangers, refugees and those without help in the society should be objects of our concern. In the New Testament times hospitality was a virtue (1 Pet. 4:9).

Race Equality

*The Evangelical Christian rejects the myth that one race is superior to another. He also rejects as unbiblical and false the notion that the curse on Ham's son was on the Black race. While the Black race descended from Ham, it was not the whole family that was cursed, but one son, Canaan. And the Black race did not descend from Canaan (Gen. 9:20 - 27). Strongly, the Evangelical Christian believes that all human races have common progenity or ancestor, Adam, were made equal (Gen.1:26,27; Acts 17:26). All forms of legislated racial discrimination are unbiblical. Man, regardless of his colour, is made in the image of God. The Evangelicals uphold this dignity.

Sexuality

1. Any form of sexual relationship outside marriage - whether premarital or extra-marital sex - is regarded as sin by the Evangelicals. The two terms used in the New Testament porneia and moicheia; fornication and adultery cover these sexual immoralities (1 Cor. 6:9).

2. Homosexuality and Lesbianism, both, a perversion of the rightful use of sex are sin (Rom. 1:26 - 32); 1 Cor. 6:9). Like any other sin forgiveness and restoration is available at the cross for any victim that truly repents.

Discrimination

Law and Grace

*Evident in the Bible is the fact that the foundation for personal and social ethics is the moral law of God, enshrined in the Ten Commandments. While we may say that we are no longer under law, but grace (which is right), it is a biblical fact that the spirit of the law is the basis of God's relationship with man in every age. Jesus says: "I do not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it" (Mt. 5:17). The law is a portrait of God's holy character, and the pattern for his people = both in personal conduct and social relationships. It stands forever as the ultimate basis of man's relationship with God, and the grounds of blessing and condemnation (Deut. 5:29; Psa. 19:7 - 11; 119:1 - 3; Rom. 2:9 - 14). We are not saved by keeping the law. What our flesh could not do in that it was weak through sin, God's Holy Spirit now enables us. God's law

is still valid to raise the moral standard of community life and relationships.

POLITICAL ETHICS

Church and State

*Civil authority is God's merciful provision for fallen human society. Power has been delegated to this authority for framing laws to restrain the wicked, to protect the weak, to promote uprightness, equity and justice, and mutual care in the community. Because of the fallen nature of man exercising this authority, there is inevitably the tendency to abuse it for selfishness and to misuse it for corrupt purposes. The Christian should recognize that no government is perfect though the fear of God may be felt in some than others. The role of the Church therefore is 3-fold:

*1. Prophetic: By the virtue of being part of God's creation, every human institution whether Christian or not stands under the law of God and the judgement of God. Thus the Church is obliged to condemn every form of wickedness and unrighteousness (Amos 5:24). The Church should warn the State of the wrath of God and call for repentance (Mt. 3:3 - 12). Where the government is good, the Church should praise it.

2. Evangelistic: As ambassadors for Christ, the word of reconciliation has been committed to the Church. This ministry must not be compromised. Where the government prohibits freedom of religion which may include the sharing or proclamation of the Gospel, the Church is to obey God and suffer the consequences (Acts 4:19 - 22).

3. Intercessory: We are commanded to pray for those in authority - Presidents and rulers so that we may live in peace (1 Tim. 2:1).

*In all these capacities, the Church educates the conscience of the community with the moral requirements of God's law; warns the ruler and the ruled alike of God's judgement on all unrighteousness and urges submission to God's authority and rule.

*Individual Christians should exemplify in fulfilling their civic duties - taxes to whom taxes are due; custom to whom custom is due; and honour to whom honour is due (Rom. 13:7). They should also seek active participation in politics whenever possible. Politics is not all together dirty; it is the players that make it dirty. Politics is simply the science of making decisions for and ruling the society. And Christians should

bring the righteousness of God to bear upon such a science. When conflict of loyalties arises between the civil power and God, the place of the Church must be faithfulness to God (Rom. 13:1 - 7; 1 Pet. 2:13 - 17; Acts 5:29, 40 - 42).

Nationalism

*Nationalism could be good and bad. As a love for one's country, demanding loyalty to it and defending its territorial integrity, this is good nationalism which the Christians should support. During the colonial regimes Christians actively supported the peaceful struggle for independence. Note the underlined word peaceful.

*On the other hand, when our country is violating other human rights through inordinate ambition by violence or aggression the Christians must reject such nationalism. The syndrome "my country - right or wrong" is a blind land unbiblical nationalism.

Liberation

*In a cultic sense, the Church engages actively in the liberation of man's soul from sin, self and Satan. Christ says: "If the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:26). But man is more than just the soul. His soul is housed in a body and an environment. The Church is to rid man of the ignorance that enslaves him. Christ's death is cosmic in nature. This implies an obligation to educate man about his environmental diseases, to care for society's causalities (like the handicap, orphans, refugees, alcoholics etc.), and to endeavour to change lawfully society's structures for the better (political action). Note the word lawfully. Christians are to respect and obey the law. We can and must seek for justice, equity and righteousness peacefully within the framework of the law. This is our constitutional right.

*Violence is always vengeance and this is outside of our right to exercise. "Avenge not yourselves but, rather, give place unto wrath; for God says, "vengeance is mine; I will repay" (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:21). God's sovereign intervention and judgement has often resulted in the violent removal of unjust and beastal structures and power (cf. Ex. 1:12; 1 Kings 15:25 - 16:7). However, the Kingdom principles given to guide the Church forbid her from planning and carrying out violent overthrow and removal of unjust and oppressive structures. The Bible says: Thou shall not kill. Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Ex. 20:12; Mt. 26:52; 6:44). "Though we live in the world", says Paul, "we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:3

- 6). These weapons include our prophetic, evangelistic and intercessory ministry already mentioned. They also include love, patience, kindness, forbearing and forgiving (1 Cor. 13:3; Col. 3:13; Rom. 12:21).

*History and Scripture agree that violent revolution is not real change, but superficiality. In some African independent countries for example, change has been from white oppressors to black oppressors. On the other hand, when the conscience is taken captive to submit to God's law, real change takes place. Even if the people concerned would not do the right out of love for God, they may do it out of fear of Him, or of their self-respect in the community.

Social Involvement

As far as our involvement in the society is concerned we are to remember that we are salt of the earth and light of the world (Mt. 5:13 - 16; Eph. 5:7 - 14; Phil. 2:14 - 16). The Encyclopaedia Britannica lists over 700 usages of salt. Major among these are preventative, preservative and seasoning. As citizens of the Kingdom of righteousness Christians are equipped to prevent moral decay in the society, preserve the godly virtues of love, justice and equity, and bring meaning, purpose and direction to the society lost in wonderland. Christian businessmen and civil servants should not give or take bribes. It is unethical for Christians to engage in smuggling, black market and profiteering. Price control must be observed wherever this operates and where not in force, the Christian should observe the principle of "fairness to all" and shun exploitation. By doing this, they do not only chase away darkness, but also transform the society.

*Africa as a whole is classified as "developing". Individually and corporately Christians must actively participate in national development programs. The story of the centurion recorded in Luke 7 gives an excellent incentive: "He loves our nation and has built us a synagogue" (v.5). Patriotism is a virtue and Christians are to excel in such. As creative minority, Christians belong to the Creator who makes good and noble things happen.

Culture, simply defined, is the overall way of life of a people. Naturally, culture changes from time to time partly through diffusion and partly through the shedding of new light. Speaking in general sociological terms one culture may be sophisticated while another is primitive or simple. But this is not to say that one is superior to the other. Basic to all cultures are the imprints of: (1) fallenness; (2) corruption and (3) evolution. The Yoruba people of Nigeria proverbially say: Etivi ipareku ko fi ole re sile" meaning, "The trap never kills a rat sparing

the foetus inside it". This aptly describes the culture of fallen mankind. Further, each culture is corrupted by the sinful acts of its people. For instance it is culturally fashionable for the rich to exploit the poor for the strong to oppress the weak, and for the privileged minority to dominate and suppress the underprivileged majority. Also, since all cultures are subject to change, they are relative and none could assume a normative status. In the light of the above, the attitude of Evangelical African Christians to culture must be:

*1. Judge each cultural component in the light of God's authoritative and unchanging word.

*2. Where a cultural element is in direct and specific conflict with the Scripture, such as worship of idols or ancestors, the former must give way to the latter. The Bible says: "Thou shall worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shall thou serve" (Ex. 20:3; Mt. 4:10).

*3. Where a given cultural practice is not in direct and specific conflict with the Scripture, such as a payment of dowry or bride-price, the general principles of the Scripture should be applied. In such a case, it is legitimate to adopt the good cultural elements or renew them in the light of Biblical principles.

*It may be profitable to consider a few specific cases at this juncture.

*Marriage and Family

*1. God's plan for marriage is one man, one wife expressed in the words: leaving, cleaving and oneness (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:5; Mk. 10:7; Eph. 5:31).

*2. Such a union has to be with someone of like precious faith (2 Cor. 6:14 - 16).

*3. Such a union also rules out polygamy, which is short of God's ideal. It equally rules out divorce. However, where divorce based on adultery or the departure of an unbelieving spouse occurs, remarriage is permitted (Mt. 19:3 - 9; 1 Cor. 7:10 - 17).

*4. Such a union must be based on unconditional love and commitment to each other and clear leading of God's Spirit. Hindrances placed in the way based on human legislation, racial or tribal prejudices are unbiblical and must be strongly rejected (see Ruth 1:16,17; 1 Cor. 13:4 - 8).

5. Childless marriage is as valid as the one blessed with children. Thus childlessness should not be an excuse for divorce or polygamy as is generally the case in many parts of Africa. In all the four Scriptural passages on marriage, the blessing of childbearing is divinely excluded (compare Gen.2:24 with Psa. 127:3 - 5).

*Traditional Rites

*1. Circumcision. The rite of male circumcision as practised by many African peoples coincide thoroughly with the Hebraic practice which was ordered by Yahweh and first executed by Abraham (Gen. 17:9 - 14). There is no Biblical support, however, to justify the removal of female child's clitoris as practised by many African peoples. Our people need not only to be taught of this Scriptural limitation, but also of the hygienic value of practice.

*2. Rites of adolescence and puberty. Passage from childhood to youth and from youth to adult involves undergoing some periods of training, usually away from home. During these periods the initiates are introduced to the new experiences to expect in the next state in life. For instance, a boy is taught how to make love to a girl. A girl becoming an adult is carefully taught the role of a wife and a mother. These rites do not carry religious contradiction to Scriptural principle. For example, sex before marriage. In a case like this that element of the culture must be transformed. Actually, the bible stipulates that the education of the children is first and foremost the responsibility of the parents (cf. Deut. 6:4 - 15; 2 Tim. 1:5). Where Christian parents instruct their young ones at home, they do not need to send them to the bush.

*3. Rite of Society. This is usually a secret oath binding people together for a common objective. It sometimes occurs along tribal lines and sometimes along socio-economic and class division. Christians are commanded never to have fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them (Eph. 5:11 - 12). The heroic examples of Chadian Christian martyrs who died for their faith rather than compromise under the reign of the late President Ngarta Tombalbaye should be emulated. We are the light of the world. As light makes all things manifest, we are to expose the works done in secret.

In conclusion, we are to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him (Col. 3:17). This should be the acid test in our social, political and cultural ethics. We must hold firm and forth the word of life, doing all things without murmurings and disputings that we may be blameless, harmless and without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation (Phil. 2:14 - 16).

Appendix C

WHAT IS "FAITH AND FARM"?

A DECLARATION OF PURPOSE AND METHOD OF ACTION

DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

1. Faith and Farm is a Project of C.O.C.I.N. (The Church of Christ in Nigeria.) It was founded in 1958 by Mr. Peter Batchelor.

2. We are making this declaration in order that the leaders of the Church, and other supporters will know what is the purpose of Faith and Farm.

3. The Hausa name for Faith and Farm is "Kyautata Zaman Kauye", which means "helping in village life".

4. Our purpose is the teaching of those in Rural areas, better methods of farming, so that they will feed themselves in a better way and help their families to be stronger. Then, that they will in turn "teach other also".

5. We realise that the wealth of Nigeria is in the soil, provided by God Himself for us, therefore if we sit down and do nothing it is sin. God's word says, "Laziness is not good" Proverbs 10 v4, and "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through" Eccle. c10 v18. This is happening in some of our rural areas of Nigeria today. Therefore, we need to encourage and teach them in God's ways.

6. We go to the local churches first, thus helping them, so that their improved farming will be a good Christian witness to those who live near tho them, who as yet are not Chrisit's saved ones.

7. We seek to make Faith and Farm financially self-supporting by selling chemicals, chickens, trees and other farming requirements. C.O.C.I.N. gives us a small grant each year, to assist with our staff salaries. From the beginning in 1958 we have received very much financial help from supporters overseas. We are grateful to God for all those that have helped us. In more recent years, 1980-82, this support has been much less and our income in Nigeria increased. There is still much need in many rural areas, and if we are to extend to meet some of this need, we shall need help with personnel, finance, and prayer.

METHOD OF ACTION

1. We work through a Central Team from Vom, our Headquarters in Plateau State. The Team consists of:

Director	Rev. Samuel Sati Dabot	C.O.C.I.N.

Agronomists	Mr Tim Gamber	M.C.C
	Mr Ringer Eringer	S.U.M.
Business and Accounts	Mr John Wilton	S.U.M.
Nutritionists	Mrs Clara Cishak	C.O.C.I.N.
	Mrs Audrey Wilton	S.U.M.
Secretary	Mrs Yop Jang	C.O.C.I.N.
Poultryman	Davou Mancha	C.O.C.I.N.

[A]lso we have casual labourers and a night guard.

There is a section of the work in Borno State, this work is co-ordinated by

Agriculturalist	Mr Brian Boddy	S.U.M.
Assisted by	Mr Mannaseh	C.O.C.I.N.

BORNO Team control their own business and accounts work, also.

2. Day by day working is discussed by the Teams, each Monday after prayers.

3. A larger Committee meets twice each year to discuss matters of Policy and hear reports of the work. This Committee consists of Senior team members and representatives of each Regional Church of C.O.C.I.N. and representatives of R.H.P. and C.T.C. Zamko. The Chairman of the committee is Rev. Joel Gukas of Panyam Regional Church Council.

4. A small Committee meets as necessary to discuss emergency matters. It consists of the Chairman, Senior Team members and two other representatives.

5. The Director has opportunity for Public Relations both within C.O.C.I.N. and in Plateau State Government Agriculture. Working as a member of The Board of Plateau Agricultural Development Corporation, and within C.O.C.I.N. on the Bible Schools Committee, the Management Committee of Christian Training Centre, Zamko, and the Board of Governors of the Rural Health Programme. He also has opportunity to act as an intermediary between the farmers and Plateau State Ministry of Agriculture.

6. The extension work to Rural Areas is carried out by the Team, working through agents in Local Church Areas, in Plateau, Bauchi, Kaduna, and Borno States. At present there are 35 of these agents in Plateau, Bauchi and Kaduna States, and 12 in Borno State. These men are appointed by their Churches, some are evangelists, and/or teachers. The agents attend an annual course each year for one week at Vom, or in Borno. The Agents also receive supplies of chemicals, seeds and other basic farming goods, at a reduced rate, enabling them to have a small commission.

7. The Agents in turn should teach local people as they sell

farming supplies to them. Some have arranged small local courses, under the guidance of the Agronomist, who will go to them to teach, demonstrate and advise.

8. The Agronomists make visits to Agents as often as possible, the ideal is a monthly visit except in July and August, when rains can prevent travel in very rural areas. Supplies are taken as required, and on the spot teaching and demonstrations are done.

9. The Agronomists also have opportunity to teach at the Church Bible Schools both at Regional and District levels. A syllabus has been prepared for these schools. Also they have opportunity to teach in courses for Health Post workers, of the C.O.C.I.N.

10. The Agronomists prepare teaching notes of courses for duplicating and also prepare notes of chemicals for distribution with the commodities, these notes need updating from time to time as products on the market change, and as research reveals new techniques.

11. The Nutrition Team are invited to Church Bible Schools, to teach Nutrition, Hygiene, and methods of cooking, improving the foods and health of the families of church workers. They have also been asked to assist with Rural Health post workers courses. it is hoped that they will be able to get openings to teach in some needy rural villages. Some of the leaflets for distribution need revising. During the past year, regular teaching has taken place for mothers of sick children in Vom hospital.

12. "Nigerianisation" is a word often on our lips, and very much in our minds at present. We would like to be training nationals in business management and accounts, and also as agriculturalists, to reach out and continue the work. So far we have not achieved that aim, but are sure that it will come in the Lord's good time.

13. We have written these notes so that you will know what Faith and Farm really is, and what it is seeking to do. As you read this will you think about and pray for those who are living in Rural Areas, who are needy, in Body, Mind, and Spirit. May OUr Loving Heavenly Father help each of us to do our part, for His Glory.

Rev. Samuel Sati Dabot,
Director, Faith and Farm.

September 1982.

Source: Peter J. Dominy, "Church and Change on the Jos Plateau, Nigeria." M. Litt. diss., University of Aberdeen, 1983.

Appendix D

CENTRES FOR EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP IN THE EARLY CHURCH

REFERENCE	EVENT
Acts 2:46	"they broke bread together in their homes, and the lord added those who were being saved."
5:42	"preaching and teaching in every home"
10:23	the home of Cornelius: friends and relatives were saved
11:14	a whole household converted
12:12	a prayer meeting in Mary's house
16:15	Lydia and her household in Phillippi
16:31	The Phillippian jailer and his whole household believed and were baptized
17:5	the house of Jason, who was host to Paul and Silas
18:1	Paul stayed and worked and taught at the home of Aquila and Priscilla
18:7	Crispus, ruler of the synagogue, was converted at the home of Titius Justus
20:20	Paul's style of ministry: publicly and house-to-house
21:8	The home of Philip of Caesarea, who had four daughters who prophesied
1 Cor. 16:15 and Romans 16:4-5	The church in the home of Aquila and Priscilla
1 Cor. 16:15	The home of Stephanus (dedicated to service)
Col. 4:15	The church in the home of Nympha
II Timothy 1:16	A blessing on the home of Onesiphorus, which is given to hospitality
Philemon 1:2	The church in Philemon's house

JESUS AND HOME MEETINGS

WHOSE HOME?	ACTIVITY	TEXT
Peter's	-healed mother-in-law	Matt. 8:14, Mk. 1:21, Luke 4:38
Mattew's	-entertained tax collectors	Matt. 9:10, Mk. 2:4, Luke 5:29
Jairus, ruler of the synagogue	-raised his daughter	Matt. 9:23, Mk. 5:35, Luke 8:41
(unknown)	-healed a blind man	Matt. 9:28
Simon the leper	-was anointed with oil	Matt. 26:6, Mk. 14:3
Peter's	-discussed taxes	Matt. 17:25
House in Jerusalem	-ate the Last Supper	Matt. 26:18, Mk. 14:14 Luke 22:11
Home in Capernaum	-lame man healed	Mk. 2:1, Luke 5:17
Home in Tyre/Sidon	-healed Syrophoenician woman	Luke 7:24
Home in Capernaum	-took a child on His lap	Luke 9:30
Zacchaeus	-parable of the talents	Luke 19:5
Mary, Martha, Lazarus	-taught, was anointed	Jn. 12:1, Luke 10:38
A Pharisees	-"highways & hedges" feast	Luke 14:1

* These and other references illustrate the point that the homes of believers were the most common place for both evangelism and discipleship in the early church.

Source: Adapted from a class handout.

Appendix E

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Pamphlets

Abegaz, Berhan, ed. The Economic Demography of Mass Poverty: Studies in Third World Societies. Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 1986.

Contains four articles on poverty, development, demography. Abegaz's article discusses, inter alia, the economics of poverty, international inequality and national poverty. He looks at the identity of the poor, the extent of poverty, the poor and the ultra poor.

Adeney, Miriam. God's Foreign Policy. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984.

The author, an anthropologist, furnishes us with some ways of helping the world's poor. Insists that aid programs must respect other cultural values. Points out the crucial factors that determine the success or failure of programs in health care, agriculture business and immigration.

Adeyemo, Tokunboh, G.Okoronkwo, and E. Ayee, eds. Following Jesus in a Rich - Poor Society. Nairobi: AEAM, 1988.

Looks at the implications of following Jesus in a rich/poor society. It also contains an excellent case study on the Redeemed Gospel Church, Nairobi, Kenya.

Barnet, Richard J., and Roland E. Miller. Global Reach: The Power of the Multinational Corporations. New York: Simon Schuster, 1974.

An exhaustive study of the character and activities of multinational corporations in the United States and the Third World.

Batchelor, Peter. People in Rural Development, Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1984.

Points out that Christians have a distinctive contribution to make in rural development, and that the key to development lies in working with people rather than relying on technology. Chapter 2 is on "the Church and the rural poor." Chapter 10 discusses God and development.

Beals, A. Beyond Hunger: A Biblical Mandate for Social Responsibility. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1985.

Discusses world hunger, the availability and plentifulness of God's given resources and calls for action in helping the poor.

Beals, Art with Larry Libby. Beyond Hunger. Eastbourne, England: Kingsway Publications, 1987.

Calls for a more responsible use and a realistic sharing of our God-given resources. He states "To do nothing positive with the resources we possess is to commit ourselves to the triumph of evil. To do nothing in the face of evil is to become part of that evil".

Chapter 5 discusses the social organization of the peasant poverty in biblical Israel.

Bobo, Kimberley A., ed. World Food/Hunger Studies. New York: Transnational University Program, Institute for World Order, 1977.

Bobo presents a collection of course outlines and syllabi for courses on world hunger presented from ethical, international agricultural development, nutritional, policy, political economic and generalist perspectives. The book contains a listing of books, periodicals, resource packets, multi media materials and organizations.

Bock, Paul. In Search of a Responsible World Society. Philadelphia: Westminister, 1974.

A comprehensive study of the social teachings of WCC.

Boerma, Conrad. Rich Man, the Poor Man and the Bible. Translated by J. Bowden. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979.

The author examines the Biblical references to wealth and poverty. Points out how the Bible always challenges the oppression of the poor. How God identifies with the poor and how the Church today has failed in her responsibility towards the poor. He argues that poverty emerged in Israel's history with the change from communal to private ownership, with the structure that developed around the monarchy, the springing up of a class of wealthy landowners, business men and court officials.

Brandt, Willy. North-South: A Program for Survival. Cambridge, Mass.: The Mitt Press, 1980.

Contains the Brandt Commission on the North-South economic disparity.

———. World Armament and World Hunger: A Call for Action. London, England: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1986.

The author, 1971 Nobel Peace Price winner and chairman of the North-South Commission, makes a personal assessment of the international situation and warns that world hunger, poverty and the massive arms race pose a moral challenge and a threat to world security. He reiterates the need to handle all world issues - population explosion, the world debt, conservation of natural resources - on a global basis for the mutual benefit of the rich and the poor.

Brown, Robert McA. Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.

Attempts to reinterpret the familiar biblical episodes from Third World perspective.

Byrne, Tony. The Church and the Development Dilemma. With an appendix by Samuel Rayan. Spearhead, no. 50. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, n.d.

Discusses the issues and implications of wholistic development from the African perspective. The issue of moratorium is also discussed.

Caplovitz, David. The Poor Pay More. With introduction by Esther Peterson. New York: The Free Press, 1967.

Looks at consumption practices and how they affected the poor in the 1960s.

Charles, Rodger with Drostan Maclaren. The Social Teaching of Vatican II. Herefordshire, England: Fowler Wright Books Ltd., 1982.

A comprehensive historical and comparative study of Catholic social ethics. Chapter 5 discusses the ethics of economic life. Among subjects treated here are international economics: the developed and underdeveloped countries; development and underdevelopment, aid trade and development; moral laws governing the ownership and use of private property.

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. World Hunger: Hope Amid Pain. Grand Rapids, Mich.: C.R.W.R.C., n.d.

This pamphlet published by the Christian Reform Church contains, inter alia, the biblical view of the poor, discusses the question "Who are the Poor?". Offers practical solutions for the problem of hunger, poverty, and population explosion.

Clouse, Robert G., ed. Wealth and Poverty: Four Christian Views of Economics. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1984.

Attempts to deal with the following crucial issues: (i) How Christians should respond to the poor, (ii) the economic system that best expresses the Biblical standards of justice (iii) what governments

should do for the poor (iv) the responsibility of individuals, churches, private organizations to the poor. Four different Christian views are offered:- (1) free market capitalism; (2) the guided market system; (3) decentralized economics; (4) centralized economics. It also discusses other relevant topics.

Coppeiger, Mark T. A Christian's View of Justice. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1983.

Constructs a theory of justice based on the Scriptures and shows how this theory applies to specific public issues.

Cosmao, Vincent. Changing the World:An Agenda for the Churches. Translated by John Drury. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984.

Presents 33 theses covering a number of subjects from a new international economic order to the role of the Church in social transformation.

Costas, Orlando E. Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1982.

Series of essays dealing with virtually every aspect of the contemporary missiological debate. Makes an exhaustive analysis of the missiological issues facing the Church today.

Croft, Steven J. L. The Identity of the Individual in the Psalms. Sheffield, England: Academic Press, 1987.

Chapter 2 discusses the meaning of the different terms for poor as they are used in the Psalms.

Davis, J. J. Your Wealth and God's World: Does the Bible Support the Free Market? Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1984.

Discusses the Bible and economic equality. The Government and the Church's role in alleviating poverty. Other items discussed are pollution and depletion of natural resources, stewardship, Capitalism and Socialism.

deGaspas, Diegos, et al. World Hunger: A Christian Reappraisal. Geneva: W.C.C., 1982.

A Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Economic Matters held in Washington D.C., U.S.A., on October 5-8, 1981. Discusses the problem of hunger in the world economic context and national food systems and proposes a food system for overcoming hunger. Gives suggested guidelines.

de Santa Ana, Julio, ed. Good News to the Poor: The Challenge of the Poor in the History of the Church.

Translated from Spanish by Helen Whittle. Geneva: WCC, 1977.

Looks at the poor and poverty in the OT and the Gospels.

———, ed. Separation without Hope? Geneva: WCC, 1978.

Contains essays on the relation between the Church and the poor during the Industrial Revolusion and the Western colonial expansion.

———, ed. Towards a Church of the Poor. Geneva: WCC, 1979.

Discusses the present challenges of the poor to the Church.

Dickinson, Richard D. N. To Set at Liberty the Oppressed: Towards an Understanding of Christian Responsibility of Development/ Liberation. Geneva: CCPD/WCC, 1975.

Details the responsibilities towards development and liberation.

Donders, J.G., ed. Bread Broken. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1984.

An action report on the food crisis in Africa. Analysis of the food problem and the responses of the government and the Church.

———. Refugees Are People. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1985.

Provides a heart breaking account of the refugee situation in Africa.

———. War and Rumours of War. Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1986.

Provides details of military spending in Africa

Dyrness, William A. Let the Earth Rejoice! A Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission. Westchester, Ill: Crossway Books, 1983.

Presents a thorough Biblical analysis of holistic mission from creation to the parousia. Attempts to answer the question: What is the biblical view of God's mission to the world?

Elliot, Charles. Inflation and the Compromised Church. Belfast: Christian Journals Ltd., 1975.

A professional economist from Oxford makes the attempt to relate international economic crisis to the Christian faith. The early chapters trace the causes

and courses of the international crisis as it exists in both rich and poor nations. He assess the real victims of the process. Possible actions that can be taken by individual Christians, the local church and the worldwide ecumenical body are examined.

Escobar, Samuel, and John Driver. "The Gospel and the Poor." In Christian Mission and Social Justice. Scottdale, Pennyslvania: Herald, 1978.

The article discusses the relationship between the Gospel and the poor. An excellent theological contribution.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Translated by Myra B. Ramos. New York: The Seabury Press, 1970.

Presents a creative transforming philosophy of education - a sure cure to ignorance and poverty.

Freudenberger, Dean C., and Paul M. Minus, Jr. Christian Responsibility in a Hungry World. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1976.

Uses Biblical understanding and sociological analysis to consider the seriousness of the world hunger crisis. The authors propose positive solutions that can provide bread and justice for all. Some of the topics covered are "causes of hunger," "structure and processes for rural development", "mobilizing Church resources," "developing responsible life styles."

Frundt, Henry, ed. Agribusiness Manual: Background Papers on Corporate Responsibility and Hunger Issues. New York: Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 1978.

Contains some of the best articles published on agribusiness and how it affects production and consumption of food in U. S. A. and the Third World.

Gelin, Albert. The Poor of Yahweh. Translated by Kathryn Sullivan. Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press, 1964.

Looks at OT thoughts on poverty. Surveys the Church of the "poor" from Zephaniah to the Psalmists, and in the last centuries of Judaism etc.

George, Susan. How the Other Half Dies: The Real Reason for World Hunger. Montclair, NJ: Allanheld, Osmun, 1977.

A critical study of the economic and political causes of world hunger. Agribusiness, food aid, support for economic elites in the Third World, and the World Bank are some of the areas discussed.

Gollwitzer, Helmut. The Rich Christians and Poor Lazarus. Translated by David Cains. Edinburgh: The St. Andrew Press, 1970.

Starts with the recommendation of the Uppsala Assembly of the W.C.C.; the author expresses the need for changes in economic structures in both the developed and the developing countries and international agencies.

Goulet, Denis. The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1971.

Excellent studies on development ethics. Questions the meaning of development, proposes ends toward which development in the developed and the developing nations should be directed.

Grant, George. In the Shadow of Plenty: Biblical Principles of Welfare and Poverty. Biblical Blueprints Series. Ft. Worth, Texas: Dominion Press, 1986.

Looks at the welfare system of America as a failure. Proposes 10 principles as the biblical blueprints for the cure of poverty. Also proposes three strategies to accomplish this.

Grassi, Joseph A. Broken Bread and Broken Bodies. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985.

Discusses the relationship between the Lord's table and empty tables of the needy.

Green, R. H., and Ann Seidman. Unity or Poverty?: The Economics of Pan Africanism. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1968.

Thesis: "The fragmented economies set clear limits to the prospects of economic growth and the wealth of the continent is distorted and divided by the dependence of its various political parts on foreign assistance". Suggests practical steps by which the divided states can come together for the purpose of continental planning, so as to achieve the economies of scale, which are extremely crucial for Africa's future.

Gremillion, Joseph, ed. The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching Since Pope John. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976.

Collection of the social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church from Pope John XXIII to Pope Paul VI.

_____. Food/Energy and the Major Faiths. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1978.

Theologians, social scientists, and technical experts survey the realities of the food/energy crisis.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973.

Explores the relationship between salvation and the historical process of salvation.

Hanks, Thomas D. God So Loved the Third World: The Bible, the Reformation, and Liberation Theologies. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1983.

Part I looks at oppression in the O. T. Part II focuses on oppression in the NT. Looks at the major causes of poverty. Has index on Hebrew words and roots for poverty/oppression.

Harrington, Michael. The Vast Majority: A Journey to the World's Poor. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977.

Excellent book on hunger and underdevelopment from the point of view of the socialist. Author's experience on his visit to India and Africa is vividly spelt out. There are chapters on the political and economic analysis of the problem.

Hartman, Robert H., ed. Poverty and Economic Justice. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

Among the questions probed are: Who are the poor and what is their identity in our society? How do we define our relationship to the poor? How do economic factors relate to the larger ethical and social issues? What are the possibilities of solving the problems of poverty? etc. Examines the subject from philosophical and theological perspectives. The three major theories of justice from contemporary minds are discussed. Concludes with a number of solutions that have been offered in recent years.

Haq, Mahabub. The Poverty Curtain: Choices for the Third World. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Discusses the issue of poverty both within and between nations. Points out the failure of traditional growth strategies. Proposes new development strategies for direct assault on poverty. Makes significant contribution to the current debate on the new economic order.

Hay, Donald. A Christian Critique of Capitalism. Bramcote, Nottingham, England: Grove Booklets, 1977.

Argues that the attitude right through the Bible is that consumption ought to be determined according to need and not according to the ability to produce.

Hengel, Martin. Property and Riches in the Early Church. London, England: SCM, 1974.

The author looks at the views of property and riches as found in the teachings of Jesus, the early church and the church fathers up to the fourth century. He compares Christian ideals with those in Judaism and ancient philosophy and examines what was taught with what was actually practiced.

Hesselgrave, David J., ed. New Horizons in World Mission. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1979.

Papers and responses prepared for the consultations on Theology and Mission, TEDS, March 19-22,1979. Parts 3 and 4 discuss Evangelicals and world economics as well as Evangelicals and community development.

Hodder, B. W. Africa Today. London, England: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1978.

Subjects treated include: The colonial impact and independence; the economic basis of national development; regional cooperation and African unity.

Honeywell, Martin, ed. The Poverty Brokers: The IMF and Latin America. London, England: Latin American Bureau, 1983.

Critical examination of the role of IMF, its functions and the beneficiaries of its operations. Shows why it is crucial for the Western nations to resolve the crisis. Examines proposals for reform of the IMF and the international financial system.

Jacques, Andre. The Stranger within Your Gates. Geneva: WCC, 1986.

In this book the author deals with the experiences of the uprooted people - the migrants, refugees, orphans, widows, hungry, thirsty, strangers. He attempts to highlight some of the human aspects of rootlessness, and to create a sense of responsibility among churches and Christians.

Johnson, Luke T. Sharing Possessions: Mandate and Symbol of Faith. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Examines biblical statements on wealth and links it with Christian identity and the consumption of wealth.

Kurien, C. T. Poverty and Development. Madras: C.L.S., 1974.

Lang, Bernhard, ed. Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament. London, England: SPCK, 1985.

Writing from an Indian background, the author, among other things, looks at the concept and content of development, the strategy for development, and trade and self-reliance. Applies economic theory and economist's tools of analysis to the Indian situation.

Lappe, Frances Moore, and Joseph Collins. Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity. Revised edition. New York: Ballantine, 1979.

A detailed study of the political and economic causes of today's world hunger.

Lappe, Frances Moore, Joseph Collins, and David Kinley. Aid as Obstacle: Twenty Questions About Our Foreign Aid and the Hungry. San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1980.

Sees USA's aid as a failure. Tries to answer some of the questions about United States foreign aid. Provides information on the various aid agencies.

Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Life-Style. Lausanne Occasional Papers, no. 20. Exposition and commentary by Alan Nicholas, with introduction by John Stott and Ronald J. Sider. Wheaton, Ill.: LCWE, 1980.

Contains the statement of the International Consultation on Simple Life-Style held at Hoddesdon, England, March 17-21, 1980.

Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. Christian Witness to the Urban Poor. Editor, Colin Merchant. Wheaton, Ill.: LCWE, 1980.

Contains worldwide overview of poverty, OT and NT attitude to poverty. Also contains strategy in witnessing to the urban poor. Has a chart on the Hebrew words for poor.

Leys, Colin. Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political economy of Neocolonialism. London, England: Heinemann Educ. Trust, 1975.

Has chapters on underdevelopment and neo-colonialism and African capitalism.

Lodger, Robert J. Hungry For Profits: US Food and Drug Multinationals in Latin America. New York: I.D.O.C./North America, 1975.

A brief study of the activities and effects of US food and pharmaceutical corporations in the Third World.

Marstin, Ronald. Beyond Our Tribal Gods:The Maturing of Faith. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979.

Deals with issues of faith and social justice.

Maynard-Reid, Pedrito U. Poverty and Wealth in James. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1987.

An excellent exegetical and sociological study of James.

Mazrui, Ali A. The African Condition. London, England: Heinemann, 1980.

Addresses himself to the six fundamental paradoxes of Africa's predicament, one of them being that "Africa is not the poorest of the regions of the world but it is technically the most retarded".

Mbiti, John S. Bible and Theology in African Christianity. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Chapter 7 has excellent material on the African Church and mission. Addresses the issue of moratorium, church finance, global inequalities, simple life-style among African churchmen, etc.

McGinis, James B. Bread and Justice: Toward a New International Economic Order. New York: Paulist Press, 1979.

Provides a summary of the root causes of world hunger.

Melady, T. P., and R. B. Suhartono. Development Lessons for the Future. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973.

Discusses development problems and raises ethical question as to whether the affluent nations can continue in conscience to accept the fact that much of their wealth has been subsidized by the poorer nations whose underdevelopment is often related to the expanding economies of the developed world.

Metz, Johannes B. Poverty of Spirit. Translated by John Drury. New York: Paulist Press, 1968.

Discusses the Scriptural meaning of poverty.

Millar, Jayne C. Focus on Global Poverty and Development: A Resource Book for Educators. Washington, D.C.: Overseas-Development Council, 1974.

Contains some good articles, charts, film resources and bibliography on the issue of development.

Millwood, David. The Poverty Makers. Geneva: W.C.C., 1977.

Discusses the causes of poverty and injustice, systems and mechanisms that perpetuate them and what can be done to challenge and change them.

Moi, Arap D. Kenya African Nationalism: Nyayo Philosophy and Principles. London, England: Macmillan, 1986.

The Book is centered on Kenya but it also makes some crucial observations about the African scene. It reviews the challenges to the O.A.U, the emergence of one party system in Africa and the realization of the peace formula for Kenya, Africa and the entire globe.

Mouw, R.J. Called to Holy Worldliness. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.

Discusses items like "Good News for the poor" (chapter.6); identifying with the poor (chapter7); has some thought-provoking questions and answers on the poor and ministry to the poor.

Mulhern, Philip. Dedicated Poverty. New York: Alba House, 1972.

Traces the history and theology of poverty from Scripture to Vatican II.

Mullin, Redmond. The Wealth of Christians. Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1983.

The author explores the sources of our current attitudes to the acquisition, possession and use of wealth. Looks at Greek, Roman, and Jewish Christian teachings on poverty and wealth. Maintains that the wealth of christians demonstrates the evils deriving from pre-reformation teachings on poverty and from post-reformation doctrines of stewardship. Looks at advertizing, charity, fundraising, the community trust, sumptuary laws and the Church/State relationship.

Nash, Ronald H. Social Justice and the Christian Church. Milford, Michigan: Mott Media, 1983.

Nash claims that those who are advocating that the developed world should pay higher prices for the commodities of the underdeveloped countries, have a duty to understand sound economics. Good intentions are not enough. Bad economic programs will actually make the poor poorer. That"theliberal/socialist/radical approach is not only bad economics. It is equally bad exegesis, and a gross misreading of what the Bible teaches."

————. Poverty and Wealth: The Christian Debate Over Capitalism. Westchester, Ill: Crossway Books, 1986.

Argues that the economic world operates on basic principles like scientific laws. If the principles are followed, result will be positive. If ignored, the result will be negative. Some of the issues discussed are (i) how a society can move from poverty to abundance, (ii) the best economic system that can produce abundance, (iii) the system that is incompatible with the Christian Faith. The author feels that the present economic predicament of the poor nations is not caused by the rich nations.

Ndegwa, Philip. Africa's Development Crisis and Related International Issues. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1985.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I, Urgent development issues facing Africa today. He suggests that African countries must increasingly cooperate and that more attention be given to trade rather than aid. Part II covers the international scene and stresses the urgent need to establish more efficient and equitable patterns of economic relations between the developed and the developing countries. The final part focuses on Kenya. The author feels other nations can learn from Kenya's experience.

————. The African Challenge: In search of Appropriate Development Strategies. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1986.

A sequel to Africa's Development Crisis.

Nelson, Jack A. Hunger for Justice: The Politics of Food and Faith. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1980.

A detailed study of how the United States has managed to drag the Third World into the international free market system and its effects on Third World poverty and hunger. The issue of military spending is related to the global hunger problem. Looks at the problem from biblical perspective.

Nicholls, Bruce J., ed. In Word and in Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility. Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1985.

Contains 9 papers delivered during the Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility held on June 16-23, 1982. Papers delivered include the historical roots of the social involvement of the Church from NT times to 1960, by Bong Rin Ro; the broadness of salvation in Scripture by Sider and J. Parker.; the different ways in which evangelicals have attempted to relate evangelism to social responsibility by Tokunboh Adeyemo.

————. The Church: God's Agent for Change. Foreword by D. J. Richard. Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1986.

Papers presented during this consultation include churches as God's agents for social transformation.

Nkrumah, Kwame. Africa Must Unite. London, England: Panaf, 1970.

Warns that unless Africa is politically united under All African Union Government, there can be no solution to Africa's economic and political problems. Has chapters on the African background, the Colonial imprints, the Colonial pattern of economics.

————. Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism. London, England: Panaf, 1971.

Analyzes the workings of international monopoly capitalism in Africa and shows how new-colonialism, insidious and complex, is even more dangerous than the old Colonialism. Warns that political freedom without economic freedom is meaningless. Points out that the solution for Africa lies in Socialism and an All African Union Government. Has chapters on (i) Africa's resources (ii) obstacles to economic progress (iii) Imperialist finance.

Nurnberger, Klaus, ed. Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God. Durban: Lutheran Publishing House, 1978.

An interdisciplinary study programme of the Missiological Institute of Mapumulo/Natal (S.A.), on affluence, poverty, and the Bible with special reference to the South African situation. It contains papers of experts from various social science and theological disciplines, the reaction of participants to these papers as well as concrete suggestions for action at various levels. Subjects discussed include: affluence vs. poverty and the Word of God; definitions of affluence and poverty; the balance of economic security and income according to the Mosaic Law; The message of 8th century B.C. OT prophets concerning affluence and poverty.

Okullu, Henry. Church and State in Nation Building and Human Development. Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1984.

States that the Church should be concerned when political and economic power is concentrated in the hands of very few people. This breeds social injustice, violence and lack of accountability by those in power. This makes the majority of the people of the world materially poor. Points out that for the people to participate in nation building, they must also participate in decision making.

Osthalithios, G. M. Theology of a Classless Society. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1979.

Argues that the doctrine of Trinity supports a classless community. Chapter 8 discusse the issue of poverty-the causes of poverty, the universality of poverty. That the rich must become poor voluntarily.

Paget-Wilkes, M. Poverty, Revolution and the Church. With a preface by Trener Huddleston. Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1981.

Traces how the Church has come to be identified with prosperity. He contrasts the present-day attitude of the Church with the biblical attitude towards the poor and the oppressed. Challenges Christians to re-examine the biblical meaning of salvation.

Pallaers, Jose C. A Poor Man Called Jesus: Reflections on the Gospel of Mark. Translated from the Spanish by Robert R. Barr. Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1986.

Presents an exegesis of Mark's Gospel. Portrays Jesus as a poor man, a friend of the poor who saw God as the champion of the poor. He thinks that Jesus' identification with the poor was seen as subversive by the secular and religious authorities of his day.

Payer, Cheryl. The Debt Trap. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974.

Presents a thorough study of the I.M.F., its structure, policies, and effect on the Third World.

Pilgrim, W. E. Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts. Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981.

Surveys the OT tradition on poverty and wealth. Has excellent material on poverty and wealth in the intertestmental period. Points out Luke's concern for the right use of possession in the Christian life.

Powers, Charles W. Social Responsibility and Investments. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1971.

Author covers such issues as investment and social justice. The role of the Church in the area of investment. Appendix A defines corporate responsibility. Appendix B contains some church documents on social investment.

Rodney, Walter. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. London, England: Boyle - L'Ouverture Publications, 1983.

Critically examines the past exploitation of Africa by the West.

Samuel, Vinay, and Christ Sugden, eds. Evangelism and the

Poor: A Third World Study Guide. Rvsd. ed. Oxford: Bocardo and Church Army Press Ltd, 1982.

Essays cover biblical studies on poverty and oppression, the religious experience of the poor and strategies for Christian witness and church planting among the urban poor. Summaries of discussions from international seminar. Contains briefly annotated bibliography.

Sandbrook, R. The Politics of Basic Needs: Urban Aspects of Assaulting Poverty in Africa. London, England: Heinemann, 1982.

Surveys the literature on the causes of African poverty and on various development strategies that are currently being pursued in Africa. Makes a comparative analysis of 8 cities in Africa. Stresses the need of the urban poor to initiate structural - political changes.

Sciopio (pseud.). Emergent Africa. Forward by P. E. Mosley. New York: Simon Schuster, 1967.

The author describes the problems that the newly independent nations face in building stable economies. Looks at the issue of selfhood and outside help and examines emergent Africa's colonial legacy, political structures, technical deficiencies, economic development, educational programs, foreign policy.

Shepherd, David. Bias to the Poor. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983.

Deals with the Gospel and social change. Challenges the church to redirect its attitudes, beliefs and priorities to reflect God's favour towards the poor.

Sider, Ronald J. Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 1977.

Part 1 sketches the setting with a brief overview of world poverty and the affluence of the Northern Hemisphere. Part 2 offers a biblical perspective on the poor and possessions. Concrete suggestions for the individual, the Church and society are detailed in chapter 3.

————, ed. Cry Justice: The Bible on Hunger and Poverty. New York: Paulist Press, 1980.

A consolidation of the Biblical texts pertaining to justice, hunger, and the poor.

————. Living More Simply: Biblical Principles and Practical Models. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 1980.

Contains papers presented during the US consultation on simple lifestyle. Articles range from OT/NT foundations to simple lifestyle to contemporary economics, professional ethics and evangelism.

————. Life Style in the Eighties: An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle. Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1982.

Contains a number of articles on the life of Christians from various perspectives. It also contains various testimonials and Bible studies on the same subject from various contributors/participants at the I.C.O.S.L.

Simon, Arthur. Bread of the World. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1975.

Declares that efforts by individuals to assist the hungry are not enough and illustrates how government policies can nullify all the efforts of individuals. Looks at the socio-politico economic sides of the issue by focussing on the neglected role of public policy.

Sinclair, Maurice. Green Finger of God. With a Forword by Samuel Escobar. Exeter, England: The Paternoster, 1980.

Gives a first hand account of a development project at Chaco (Argentina). Draws some general conclusion from this experience, and exposes the need for distinctively Christian thinking and offers a biblical theology of development based on experience.

Stegemann, W. The Gospel and the Poor. Translated by Dietlinde Elliott. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Outlines the plight of the poor at the times of Jesus and how that influenced the reception of the Gospel. Describes the ways in which the Gospel was "good news" to the marginalized. He also looks at the social situation of the disciples of Jesus in the Roman Empire and how that affected the reception of the message. He calls on those involved in theological reflection and Christian ministry to be sensitive to the scandal of world wide poverty. Discusses NT terms for poverty.

Stivers, Robert L. Hunger, Technology and Limits to Growth: Christian Responsibility for Three Ethical Issues. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984.

Explores three current social problems: poverty and malnutrition, side effects of modern technology, the limits to growth.

Stott, John, ed. The Year 2000 A.D. Basingstoke, Hants, England: Marshalls, 1983.

Chapter 3 contains Donald Hay's article on the North-South Economic debate.

———. Issues Facing Christians Today. Basingstoke, Hants, England: Marshalls, 1984.

Chapter 7 discusses the North-South Economic inequality. Chapter 12 focuses on poverty, wealth and simplicity. The first chapter treats Christians and social involvement.

Toton, Suzanne C. World Hunger and The Responsibility of Christian Education. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1982.

Examines the causes of world hunger, Third World poverty, the structure of world trade aid, multinational corporations and the effects on the Third World. Also looks at the public and political responsibility of Christians.

Vaughan, B. N. Y. The Expectation of the Poor: The Church and The Third World. London, England: SCM, 1972.

Discusses inflation, unemployment, social inequality leading to starvation, oppression and despair. Looks at the economic, political and cultural issues of the Third World.

Wogaman, Philip J. Christians and the Great Economic Debate. London, England: SCM, 1977.

The author begins by establishing what might be a Christian moral perspective on economic life today. Analyzes five different approaches to economic issues: marxism, laissez faire capitalism, social market or mixed economy capitalism, democratic socialism, and what he calls economic conservatism. The concluding chapter (9) singles out the most promising options.

Wren, Brian. Education for Justice: Pedagogical Principles. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1977.

Builds on Freire's pedagogy of education. Shows the relationship of education to social justice.

PERIODICALS

Adegbola, Adeolu. "Christian Responsibility in the Political Economy of Africa." The Ecumenical Review 37, no. 1 (Jan. 1985): 86-97.

Discusses the African Church's involvement in the on going economic revolution.

Alison, Michael. "World Poverty and Christian Responsibility: a critical Study of the Ronald Sider's

Ankomah, Baffour. "The Way We Are." New African, no. 250 (July, 1988): 41.

Baffour's thesis is that "we ought to condemn the poor heritage that the colonial powers left us with and be aware of exploitation that continues from the first world" and we also ought to be aware of corruption within the continent that has hindered development. He provides data on some of the corrupt practices.

Ball, N. "Understanding the Causes of African Famine." Journal of African Studies (1976): 517-522.

Outlines the causes of famine in Africa.

Barfel, Robert J. "A Response to Hill's, 'Analysis of the Market Economy: Strength, Weakness and the Future.'" Transformation 4, no.3 and 4 (June-Sept./October-Dec. 1987): 52-53.

A balanced evaluation of Hill's article. However, he points out that Hill did not give adequate attention to the conditions necessary for a market directed economy in order to develop and flourish.

Barrett, David B. "Silver and Gold Have I None!: Church of the Poor or Church of the Rich?" Internation Bulletin of Missionary Research 7, no. 4 (Oct. 1983): 146-151.

Deals with the global issue of resources and their utilization among Christians. Barett's thesis is that the global sharing of wealth,property and goods in the hands of Christians could solve most of the world's problems of famine,poverty, disease, unemployment, dangerous water supply, etc.

Brueggmann, Walter. "Reflections on Biblical Understanding of Poverty."International Review of Missions 64, no. 256 (Oct. 1975): 354-361.

Deals with the Biblical understanding of property, how it is secured and legitimated, how it is kept or lost, to what ends it may be used and enjoyed.

Capaque, George. "Jesus and the Disadvantaged: a Study from Luke's Gospel." Asian Challenge 19 (1988): 29-33.

A study of poverty and wealth in Luke's Gospel and its implications for the Church.

Catherwood, F. "Christian Faith and Economics." Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec., 1987): 1-10.

Relates Christian faith to economic life.

Chigbo, Oke. "In Defence of Corruption." New African, no. 253 (Oct.1988): 13.

Relates Christian faith to economic life.

Chigbo, Oke. "In Defence of Corruption." New African, no. 253 (Oct.1988): 13.

A Nigerian living in Canada refutes Ankoma's thesis that corruption hinders development. He says that corruption is not Africa's major problem but rather exploitation by the West.

de Santa Ana, Julio. "The Mission of the Church in a World Torn Between Poor and Rich." International Review of Mission 72, no. 285 (Jan. 83): 18-29.

Thesis: The growing gulf between rich and poor nations, rich and poor in the world poses a challenge to Christians and churches to recognize afresh that God is the defender and champion of the poor and the powerless.

Dussel, Enrique. "The Kingdom of God and the Poor." International Review of Mission, 68, no 270 (April 1979): 115-130.

His thesis is that the dialectical relationship between the Kingdom of God and the poor is one of the central themes of theological thinking and of church policy decisions.

Gaxiola, Manuel J. "The Pentecostal Ministry." International Review of Mission 66, no. 261 (Jan. 1977): 57-63.

Discusses the involvement of the Latin American Pentecostal Church in dealing with the issue of poverty and the poor.

Glynn, Laura. "Quinchuqui: A case study Rural Poverty in Ecuador." Transformation 1, no. 2 (April/June 1984): 13-15.

Discusses the rural poverty in Ecuador. Also speaks on some of the inhuman injustices in Latin America.

Goudzwaard, Robert."Centrally Planned Economies: Strengths, Weaknesses and the Future." Transformation 4, nos.3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987): 54-59.

A reflection on the workings of centrally planned economies.

Heide, Evert, VanDer. "Justice in the International Economic Relations with Less Developed Countries." Transformation, no. 2 (April-June 1984): 2-8.

Grapples with the constitution of justice in the realm of international economic relations and what this notion of justice would require in terms of behavior

for Christians in the wealthier nations. Examines the biblical principles for economic justice. Suggests some proposals that will restore justice in the international economic order.

Hill, Peter J. "Analysis of the Market Economy: Strengths, Weaknesses and the Future." Transformation 4, no. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec., 1987): 40-45.

Discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the market economy and evaluates the future of the market society as the legitimate social order.

Jones, David. "Who are the Poor?" Evangelical Review of Theology 2, no. 2 (Oct. 1978): 215-226.

Discusses the spiritual interpretation of the poor.

Kingdon, David. "Salvation and the Poor." Christian Arena 36, no. 4 (Dec. 1983): 10-12.

Treats the question: Who are the Poor according to Scripture? What is the relationship between poverty and salvation?

Kualbeing, Hans. "Jesus and the Poor: Two texts and a Tentative Conclusion." Themelios 12, no. 3 (April 1987): 80-87.

Discusses the Beatitudes of the Poor, (Matt. 5:3; Lk.6:20) and the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk.16:19-31) and suggests biblical guidelines for the question of evangelism and social responsibility.

Mason, John. "Assisting the poor: Assistance programme in the Bible." Transformation 4, no. 2 (April-June 1987): 1-13.

Draws biblical conclusions which are more directly relevant to welfare state. Advocates redistribution policies as necessary for economic growth.

Middelman, Udo. "A response to Stephen Mott." Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June - Sept./ Oct.- Dec. 1987): 36-40.

Critical of Mott's proposals that the Exodus is a paradigm for God's justice. He sees it rather as a history of God's action.

Mott, Stephen. "The Contribution of the Bible to Economic Thought." Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June -Sept./ Oct.-Dec. 1987): 25-33.

His thesis is that God the Redeemer is the same as God the Creator. God the Justifier is also God of justice. The Exodus motif is a paradigm for God's justice.

Okumu, Washington A. J. "A Response To Robert Goudzwaard." Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987): 64-65.

Padilla, Rene C. "The Fruit of Justice will be Peace." Transformation 2, no. 1 (Jan./Mar. 1985): 2-4.

His thesis is that where there is no justice there is no peace and that every injustice committed against the poor "carries with it the seed of subversion", that the most effective way of working for peace is to work against injustice.

Sapsezian, Ahron. "Ministry with the Poor." International Review of Mission 66, no. 261 (Jan.1977): 3-12.

Discusses Liberation Theology, dependence and poverty and the Pentecostal movement as the natural parameters of the Latin American context.

Schlossberg, Hebert. "A Response to Wolterstorfes's `The Bible and Economics: The Hermenentical Issues.'" Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June - Sept./ Oct.-Dec. 1987): 20-24.

Proposes an opposite thesis that hermenentical differences are at the core of many disagreements on economic issues among Christians.

Simon, Arthur. "Bread for the World." Transformation 1, no. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1984): 22-24.

Outlines the socio-politico activities of the organization since its inception.

Steare, Rachel. "Towards A More Just International Economic Order: The Case of Free Trade." A Response to Evert Van Der Heide. Transformation 1, no. 2 (April-June 1984): 8-12.

Adds honesty and reliability as the 4th dimension to Heide's proposal for the restoration of economic order. He defends free trade economy.

Volf, Miroslav. "A Response to Goudzwaard's `Market, Central Planning and Participating Economy.'" Transformation 4, nos. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct.-Dec. 1987): 60-63.

Agrees with Goudzwaard on a number of issues raised in his article but differs from him on his interpretation of Marx with respect to anthropological significance Marx ascribes to planning etc. Believes that the solution to present economic crisis calls for a combined operation of market, national and international policy.

Wan, Milton W. Y. "A Response to Mott's Contribution of the Bible to Economic Thought."Transformation 4, no. 3 and 4 (June-Sept./Oct-Dec. 1987): 34-35.

Questions some of Mott's proposals and suggests what he feels should be the theologians role in the field of economics.

Watson, Keith. "Rich World, Poor World". Spectrum 14, no. 13 (1982): 22-26.

Reflections on the Brandt report.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. "The Bible and Economics: The Hermenentical Issues." Transformation 4, no. 3 and 4 (June - Sept.\ Oct.- Dec. 1987): 11-19.

Discusses principles for interpreting those biblical passages relevant to economic matters.

UNPUBLISHED WORKS

Edmonds, Ennis B. "The New Testament Perspective On Material Possessions." M.A. Thesis, Western Evangelical Seminary, 1983.

Investigates and presents the NT perspective on material possession.

Elliot, Philip K. "The Doctrine of Wealth and Material Possessions in Pauline Theology." Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1984.

Analyses of the various passages in the Pauline letters related to wealth and material possession.

Hoyt, Thomas, Jr., "The Poor in Luke-Acts." Ph. D. diss., Duke University, 1974.

Makes an excellent exegetical study of Luke-Acts. Pages 14-15 provide linguistic data.

Lester, Anderson R. "An Examination of the Concept of Money in the Gospel of Luke." Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983.

Examines Luke's concept of money.

Samuel, Vinay, and Chris Sugden. "The Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility: A Biblical Study." Grand Rapids, Mich.: CRESR, 1982.

A paper prepared for the consultation on Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, 1982. Available from CRESR,1869 Robinson Road, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49506,USA.

Tabow, Robert R. "The Analysis of Believers' Attitude to Materialism." Th.M. Thesis, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1976.

Discusses how the battle against materialism can be won.

SOUND RECORDINGS

Perkins, John. The Quest for Social Justice. Cassette B2/3-2. The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC), 1986.

Discusses the issues of poverty and wealth.

Schluter, Michael. Christian Responses to Poverty. Cassette B2/4. The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, 1986.

Looks at the difficulties of Christian reform,the state, capital and land as structural causes.

Stott, John, ed. The Poor and the Rich. Cassette B2/1-8. The London Inst. for Contemporary Christianity, 1986.

————. Poverty and Wealth. Cassette A1/1. London Inst. for Contemporary Christianity, 1986.

Presents a case study from the present poverty and wealth.

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather some data for a Th.M thesis on Christian social ethics. Your time and effort devoted to it are deeply appreciated. Thank you for your co-operation.

Date.....

General Information

Name of the respondent

Address.....

.....Nationality.....

Occupation..... Position.....

Denomination/Institution.....Parish.....

If a foreign missionary, length of time in Africa.....Years

Permission to quote you in my research .....No.....Yes

PART 1: General

1. Those who fall within the category of the marginalized of our society include widows, orphans, refugees/aliens, and the "packing boys". In compliance with the biblical tradition, what do you think your organisation can do to help them?

.....

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(a) Do you have a record of widows/orphans/refugees in your congregation?

Yes..... No.....

(b) Do you have any systematic and ongoing programme that are directed towards the sociological, psychological, and economical needs of these people?

Yes..... No.....

If yes please explain the nature of the programme.....

.....

.....

(c) Do you think the so-called packing boys need help?

Yes..... No.....

(i) If yes, what kind of help do you think they need?

.....

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(ii) Since they bear God's image like any other person, do you think the Church has a moral and spiritual obligation towards them?

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(iii) Do you thin society should take full responsibility of them for their upkeep and development or do you think the Church has a moral and spiritual obligation towards them?

2. Poverty, disease and illiteracy are the major sociological problems facing the continent of Africa. It is on record that 98 percent of primary school leavers and 66 percent of high school leavers are jobless. A large number of university graduates are unemployed. The present educational system of many African countries prepare people for town jobs which are non-existent.

(a) Hoe do you think the Church can be involved to provide jobs for the unemployed, especially the believers in your congregation?

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(b) How can your Church/denomination/organization successfully help to improve the economic situation of the believers?

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(c) In what practical ways can the Christian be an effective witness to the materially poor?

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(d) Do you have a record of the jobless in your congregation?.....

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(e) How do the rich brethren relate to the poor brethren

(and vice versa) in your Church?

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(f) Do you think the well-to-do brothers/sisters have an obligation towards the poor brothers/sisters?

Yes..... No.....

Do you agree that our fellowship with one another is not complete in as much as some of the believers we fellowship with are hungry and destitute while we are well fed:

Yes..... No.....

Please explain.....

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3. How often do you bring to the attention of your congregation/institution the biblical mandate for social involvement and justice to the poor and the needy?

a. I don't remember.....b. Occasionally.....

c. Never addressed this issue.....d. I don't think this is crucial because it does not all in line with the Great Commission.....e. I have an ongoing systematic teaching/preaching programme in my Church dealing with this issue.....

4. How relevant do you think Acts 2:42 and 4:32-35 is in our Christian communities today?

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5. Can we conclude from 1 Cor. 11:20-22 that we fail to realize the significance of the "Lord's Supper" in as much as believers in our midst are hungry while others have surpluses. Please comment on this.....

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How often do you relate 1 Cor. 11:23 ff to 1 Cor 11;20-22 in officiating the "Lord's Supper"?

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6. Do you think there is the need to teach/preach on the necessity of simple life-style among believers so that there

will be enough money to aid the needy?

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7. On 2nd July 1989 (re: Daily Nation of July, 1989, President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya is reported to have said that the Churches should have five years development plan in line with his Government's policy. This, he said, will create job opportunities for the Church members and also non-members. What are your comments on this please?

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Does your Church have any type of development policy?

Yes..... No.....

8. What are your comments on Mathew 25:23-46?

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9. Is there any biblical base for social development? If so, please give specific reference.

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PART 2

(For Church/Denominational Leaders and Church Policy Makers)

What are your comments on the following:

Simple and inexpensive Church buildings can be very beautiful. A policy of building only convertible and functional structures which may be used to serve the community as well should be pursued. Single-purpose Church buildings are unproductive capital investment since an enormous amount of money is locked up in a structure which may be used for only a few hours a week.

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PART 3

(For Theological Educators)

Does your curriculum, among other things, expose your students to socio-economic issues of the society? Do you think this is relevant to your students if they are to make the biblical message relevant to the problems of their contexts?

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Do you think making guided study tours into slum areas, resettlement camps, orphanage homes, etc (including times of meditation, reflection and prayer at such areas), is vital in order to conscientize your students to the needs of society?

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(a) Is this part of your academic programme?

Yes..... No.....

(b) If no, could you give reasons?

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CURRICULUM VITAE

RE: E. KINGSLEY LARBI.

A. I. NAME: E. Kingsley Larbi.

II. DATE OF BIRTH: 21st July, 1952

III. NATIONALITY: Ghanaian

IV. MARITAL STATUS: Married with 3 Children

B. COLLEGES ATTENDED

i. School of Accountants and Secretaries, Accra, Ghana
ii. Pan Africa Christian College, Nairobi, Kenya
iii. Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, Nairobi, Kenya

C. ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

Association of Certified and Corporate Accountants (ACCA) PART A (June '76)

Principles of English law
Economics
Accounting

SCCA PARTS 1 & 2 (By exemption)

B.A. (Bible and Theology) PACC (1985)

M. Div. NEGST (1988)

M. Th. (Cand.)

D. OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Worked in both junior and senior capacities in the accounting profession in commerce and industry. The last three places of work were:

	ORGANIZATION	POSITION HELD/JOB DESCRIPTION
1.	MANAGEMENT DEV. & PROD. INST. (MDPI) P.O. Box 28, KUMASI.	AG. FINANCE OFFICER (1977-78) General Accounting & Administrative duties including Cash Book, ledger records, Bank transactions; Final Accounts (Income & Expenditure & Balance Sheet).

2.	CEMENTATION INTERNATIONAL LTD. (GHANA BRANCH) P.O. Box 975 ACCRA, GHANA.	OFFICE MANAGER (1979-81) In charge of site accounting & administration.
3.	COASTAL SERVICES (NIG) LTD. 42/44 WAREHOUSE RD. APAPA, LAGOS, NIGERIA.	ASSISTANT ACCOUNTS MANAGER (1981-1983) Foreign accounts, reconciliation and ledger records.
4.	AMSTERDAM '83 FOLLOW-UP OFFICE AMSTELVEEN, HOLLAND	In charge of mailing and maintenance for 7 weeks.

E. EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

i. Assistant Sunday School leader; Youth Secretary (The Church of Pentecost Labadi, Accra).

ii. Assistant Youth Leader (Church of Pentecost, Bawku, UR. GHANA).

iii. Sunday School General Secretary
Church News Editor
(The Four Square Gospel Church
Ketu, Lagos, Nigeria).

iv. Conference Assistant
Amsterdam '83 (BGEA) Conference

v. Vice Chairman
Varsity/College & Career Fellowship
NPC (Valley Road) April '86 - March '89

vi. Vice Chairman, Students' Council PACC (1984/85)

vii. Social Services Coordinator - NEGST (1986/87)

F. FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME:

To pursue a Ph.D program at University of Birmingham, Commencing 1st. October, 1990

G. VOCATIONAL GOALS:

Church Administration
Seminary Teaching
Evangelism and Church Planting
Social Work

DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Barrett, David B. World Christian Encyclopedia. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Botterweck, G. J., and Helmer Ringgren, eds. Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974. S.v. " ," by G.J. Botterweck.

————. 1978. S.v. " ," by H. J. Fabry.

Bromiley, Geofrey W., gen. ed. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986. S.v. "poor," by D.E. Holwerda. S.v. "Poverty," by A.D. Verhey.

Brown, Colin, ed. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (DNTT). Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1986. S.v. "Poor," by L. Coenen, H.H. Esser, and C. Brown.

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