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CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

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**FREEDOM FROM THE SLAVERY OF SIN ACCORDING
TO ROMANS. 6:22-23:**

**A Mutual Enrichment Between Paul and Iraqw People
of Northern Tanzania**

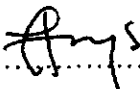
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**A Long Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies**

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

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This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college moderator.

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DEDICATION

To my beloved sister, who passed away from this life at the time I was doing my research on the first chapter of this long essay. May her dedication in Christian faith yield her freedom from her sin and attain eternal happiness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanking God for giving me an opportunity to study up to this level, for the health of body and mind, which enabled me complete my study and research work without any interference. Special thanks to all my lecturers at Tangaza College who offered their time in making me know what I did not know, or put straight what was hitherto been crooked pieces of knowledge in my mind.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the following for their contribution in seeing to it that this research work becomes a success. Firstly, to my moderator Rev. Msgr. Emanuel Mutabazi, senior lecturer at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, for his fatherly guidance and for the time he spent in reading and doing necessary adjustments to this work. For all your ideas and patience, I thank you. Secondly, to my confreres at St Bonaventure Formation House, Lang'ata, for their contribution, each one in his own way. Lastly but not the least, to all who in one way or another found themselves part and parcel of this research work. I thank you brothers and sisters, may God bless you and reward you for being good to me in time of need

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The concept of sin and reconciliation is a reality in our African societies. Being community minded people; different levels of understanding, quarrel and then enmity among members of ethnic group mark the order of the day. This is where the common rule for all finds its proper place. To go against it, means being not in communion with the rest, a person cuts himself off from the rest of the community. Such a person is referred to as “having sinned” against the community.

Since sin is forgivable, once a person realizes his/her wrongdoing, has to go through a process which will restore him/her back into the community. In this vein, sin and reconciliation are two elements which an African has to bear in mind to keep going communal spirit of African societies.

It is from this reality that Christianity sees in African societies some elements similar to its reconciliation rituals. The Church through its Vatican II document wants to inculturate Christianity by bringing into it all those elements which are not contrary to her faith.¹ This approach of the Church interested me.

Iraqw people of the Northern Tanzania are my tribe in focus. I got a push to write this paper due to a comment once passed by one of the elderly of this tribe that Christianity eased their laws and regulation particularly those which are concerned with punishment and reconciliation. Personally I find harmony than separation in most of the things on the topic. It was with this spirit I sat down and decided on writing something about it.

This paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the understanding of Iraqw people on sin and reconciliation. I will discuss this with

¹ Vatican Council II, SC 37.

the help of some Iraqw academicians who wrote their theses and other research works based on this people. Despite the fact that they were writing on something different from mine, they shed some light on what actually I wanted to find out. The rest of the chapter's material is from my own effort through interview with some elders and religious leaders. I am grateful to their openness to discussion and their zeal to spare some time for me.

The content of chapter two is biblical. Most of the ideas in this chapter are from commentaries and dictionaries on the biblical concept of sin and reconciliation. The point of focus is St Paul's letter to the Romans. Apart from commentaries and dictionaries, there are some other authors who discussed one element or the other to make the ideas in chapter two be the way I wanted it come up. To this, I owe a lot to libraries of Tangaza, Marist International and Hekima; the constituent colleges of the Catholic University of the Eastern Africa.

The last chapter deals with mutual enrichment between Iraqw people and Christianity in dealing with the question of sin and reconciliation. The material for this chapter is a result of my own reflection on the first two chapters. This is where we find the similarities and differences between them and how can Christianity enrich Iraqw idea of reconciliation and sin, and the vice versa.

The combined idea, "*Freedom from the Slavery of Sin According to Rom. 6:22-23; A Mutual Enrichment between Iraqw and Paul*", finds its fulfillment in the three chapters of this work. It is my hope to those who will read this work that they benefit from it for their pastoral work among the Iraqw people, and help them for more research in this topic in the future.

Chapter One

Understanding of Sin and Reconciliation According to Iraqw

Introduction

It is not easy to talk about sin unless one understands what it is and to whom it is directed. There is no one universal answer to this issue. Different cultures react differently, depending on people's relation with the deity and with each other. In this chapter we shall see Iraqw people and challenges they face towards understanding and conceiving the problem of sin. The chapter studies closely their notion of sin and reconciliation in relation to the community and the Supreme Being. Having done this, we shall find out too what sin can do to humanity.

1. The Iraqw People

It is Northern Tanzania in a newly established Manyara region (after dividing the larger Arusha region) that one finds a small tribe called the Iraqw.² Though a small tribe with a population close to half a million,³ this ethnic group is significant for its culture and tradition though as the time went by submitted itself to modification. This is due to interaction with other ethnic groups. Popularly known as Wambulu by the outsiders due to their concentration in Mbulu district, the Iraqw are

² Look at the map-appendix I

³ Lawi, Y.Q., *May the Spider Web Blind Witches and Wild Animals: Local knowledge and the Political Ecology of Natural Resource Used in the Iraqwland, Tanzania, 1900-1985*, Boston, 1999, 48.

also found in large number in Babati, Karatu and Hanang districts of Arusha and Manyara regions.

The story of Iraqw's origin is quite puzzling, as different people would prefer one theory to another about their origin. Here are some theories concerning Iraqw's origin. Mardock⁴ in his book states that Iraqw came from North Ethiopia. From there they migrated into Kenya and pushed southward on their way to Tanzania. According to Mardock this took place around 1000 AD.

Another theory locates Iraqw's origin in the Middle East, namely, the country known today as Iraq. From there they migrated southward, crossing a big sea (probably Mediterranean Sea) then along mountain ranges (most likely Ethiopia-Habesh Mountains). Some of them remained there but the rest crossed and found themselves in central Tanzania in Kondoa-Dodoma region where they settled in a place called *Maangwatay*.⁵

The theory that deserves more consideration is that which maintains that Iraqw tribe is a collection of different ethnic groups. Dr. Lawi says in his thesis⁶ that out of almost 100 clans which form the Iraqw, only three can trace their origin to the tribe founder known as Haymu Tiper. The rest seemed to have joined them in person or at family level and the only way they could survive was to adapt the culture of their host. Among the ethnic groups who joined Cushites Iraqw, where the Bantu speaking like the Mbugwe, the Rangi, the Isanzu and, the Nilotic speaking groups such as the Maasai and the Alawa people. The trace of these ethnic groups is found in Iraqw clans such as Matiya(from the Maasai), Naman(from the Barbaig), Fissoo(from the Rangi), and Etlawe(from the Gorowa)⁷.

Despite these proposals, some elderly people would still insist that their ancestors came from the north. This is due to the wordings in their harvest ritual rite called '*slufaay*,' where one finds a line '*ayare iikwi difiti*' that literary translates 'may our land expand to the north.' Some take this as a prophesy and longings of these people that one day they would wish to go back to their ancestral land in the

⁴Mardock, G.P., *Africa, Its People and Their Cultural History*, New York, 1959,193.

⁵ From here Iraqw spread westward covering the broad area of the Mbulu and the other districts as it is know today.

⁶ Lawi, Y.Q., op.cit. 47.

⁷ Hemed, M.R., *Mapokeo ya Historia ya Wairaqw*, Dar es Salaam, 1962, 13.

north, though this cannot be historically proven.⁸ Being such a prayerful people, there is a need to look at Iraqw spiritual life to find out who God is for them.

2. Iraqw Concept of God

The Iraqw's concept of God, referred to as *Loo'aa*, cannot be treated in isolation from the Satan, referred to as *Neetlang'w*. These are two supernatural beings who are custodians of the land and creatures that dwell in it. Despite being supernatural beings, *Loo'aa* and *Neetlang'w* are approached by Iraqw people though differently, depending on how they relate to them.

2.1 *Loo'aa*

Loo'aa is of a female gender. Another name of the goddess is *Lanta*, that is, the one who is full of mercy, loving and protecting, the way a mother would do regarding her children. For the Iraqw, *Loo'aa* has all the motherly qualities. The Iraqw are prayerful⁹ and the first thing person does when he rises up in the morning is to stand outside the house, faces eastward (where sun rises), spits towards the sun and starts his prayer by "*ayir 'ee Loo'aa*".... that is, 'my mother *Loo'aa*.' Then s/he thanks her for letting him/her live to see another day.

2.1.1 *Primary Duty of Loo'aa*

The Iraqw consider *Loo'aa* as the supreme of all supernatural beings to whom wishes, prayers and curses are addressed.

a) Granting Wishes and Prayers

For an Iraqw the Sun (day light) is associated with blessing, that is, the goodness of *Loo'aa* to her people. An Iraqw entrusts to *Loo'aa* his daily activity and the worries of the day. This idea comes strongly clear in the following Morning Prayer:

⁸ Ibid, 8.

⁹ Interview with *Patrice Matle*, Mbulu, May 28th, 2004.

“Loo’aa Ayir ’ee.. an king ii slufis asma aning iga tles ne iga qatui gexerika. Muru gwarhhayen nadir’ enimet a tsar; a dawa ne afar. An king ii firim dakwe’e slaqwtar ’ee ni ilaanq gar tlakw mingiwa tleh, afkwe’e slaqwtar ee ni kiisang’ gar tlaakw mingiwa ’oo....

Literary translated.

“My mother *Loo’aa*, I praise You for having wakened me up, for not choosing to leave me at sleep (i.e. to let die). With me still are two dangerous limbs namely hand and mouth.¹⁰ I ask You to keep my hand close to my body that it may not do evil deeds. Keep my mouth close to my body that it may not utter evil words....

b) Avenging righteousness

Loo’aa too is the one who avenges the righteous. An Iraqw petitions her to punish an offender¹¹ on his behalf. In case the righteous one intervenes, She is ready to forgive. The following is a continuation of the above prayer of an Iraqw person in the morning:

... He gar’ee ga tlakwes bir der, do’o da ng’u dirogi hanis, kuar uwai dat ,an bira iwaydin an king ii har hhehhees daqani do’o da ng’u iis”

Literary translates as

...If there is anyone who has wronged me, I will surrender him to You, take him with You as You set on the west (i.e. punish him). In case he asks me for reconciliation, I in turn will plead with You to have him forgiven.”

2.1.2 Other Duties of *Loo’aa*

In prayer not only the well being of people is the object, but also the well being of the land and animals too. As we shall see later on, the animals are a means by which sacrifice is offered to *Loo’aa* in case one breaks a relationship with her by sinning.

¹⁰ According to Patrice, two parts of the body, namely, the hand and the mouth are so dangerous for an Iraqw to the point of leading one into sinning against *Loo’aa*, that is why he prays for them.

¹¹ A term used for a curse is ‘*loo*’. The act itself is called ‘*loo huuwa*’. The Iraqw believe that a curse can have no effect on a person unless *Loo’aa* intervenes. This is why an Iraqw asks *Loo’aa* to curse a person who has wronged him/her

2.2 *Neetlang'w*

Closely associated with Loo'aa, the Supreme Being is *Neetlang'w* (i.e. Satan). *Neetlang'w* is of male gender and his address start with the words '*Tata e Neetlang'w...*' that is, 'my Father *Neetlang'w*.' In opposition to the female quality of *Loo'aa*, the male *Neetlang'w* is cruel, unforgiving and stubborn. Iraqw are so terrified by *Neetlaangw* that women are not allowed to travel far from their homes. Unknown visitor is kept in the middle of the farm in the small hut called *Islaang'w*, used for guarding crops against wild animals and birds. Here he feeds on roasted maize from the farm, lest he comes close to his host's house and brings misfortune.

How do the Iraqw confront such a fierce figure of *Neetlaang'w*, do they sacrifice to Him? According to Sabida,¹² prayers and petitions are offered only to supreme being-Loo'aa, but with Satan the appeasement ritual suffices. It looks as if these rituals are made to Him, but in actual fact the words used say it all: '*Waqwer Tata Neetlaang'w do'ok ii watlee*' which literary translates '*my great Father Neetlaang'w return back to your home.*' Such rituals take place on anthills, along rivers and usually under the unusually huge trees which are believed to be His dwelling place. Iraqw believe that *Neetlaang'w* is sent by Loo'aa to punish the wrongdoers, for, by Himself *Neetlaang'w* cannot do anything unless permitted by the *Loo'aa*.

Therefore, due to the fact that animal is killed and offered to both, nevertheless the venue, words and the purpose of offering differ. While the sacrifice is offered to *Loo'aa* for worship and petition, the offering made to *Neetlaang'w* is meant to 'keep him busy so that he forgets about people and the misfortune he brings to them.'¹³

We could talk a lot about these supreme beings, but since the purpose of this chapter is to show the relationship between a person and God, I now discuss about how the Iraqw consider sin in relationship to *Loo'aa*.

¹² Interview with *Samuel Sabida*, Mbulu, June 6th, 2004.

¹³ Interview with *Rev. Fr. Damasi Wema*, Dareda, May 29th, 2004.

3. Iraqw Concept of Sin

3.1 Terms Used for Sin

There is ambiguity in use of the terms that describe sin. The most used terms and at times interchangeably are *irangee* and *tlakweemah*. For some people these two terms are the same despite the fact that they differ. *Irangee* is a shameful act which is punishable here on earth. It includes acts such as incest. We shall look at this in detail later on. *Tlakweemah* is a bad act such as not caring for others, denying help to a person in need or in trouble. According to Reverend Justo Madangi,¹⁴ the Greek term '*hamartia*' that is, '*miss the mark*,' correspond more to *tlakweemah* than *irangee*.

There are some other terms which are used to mean sin, and that correspond to either of the above. Among them are *dakuus*, translated into English as a mistake; *hhasam*, something hidden. The last one is *xarxar* that refers to an act done in the past which will continue to haunt the society unless declared publicly.

To some extent *meeta*, despite being a far-fetched term to be related to sin, is also taken as a sinful atmosphere.¹⁵ It is an outcome of doing what is prohibited by the society. *Meeta* is considered sin because it separates individual from the society or the society from *Loo'aa*. For our study case *irangee* and *meeta* will be used as examples to demonstrate the concept of sin among the Iraqw and how to atone for it.

3.2 The Notion of Sin

It is difficult to say what sin is according to Iraqw people.¹⁶ This difficulty is brought about by the fact that the society is organized in such a way that laws enacted by the society itself are fully observed. Iraqw community is organized according to age groups. Each of these groups has a role to play in the society. One who goes against the norms deserves ex-communication from the rest of the society.

¹⁴ Reverend Justo Madangi is a member of the Bible translation Department of KKKT, Diocese of Mbulu.

¹⁵ Interview with Rev. Fr. John Gadiye, Dareda, May 29th, 2004.

¹⁶ Interview with Rev. Fr. Mathias Bura, Mbulu, June 8th, 2004.

This ex-communication goes with tough measures which scare many people even to not think of breaking the norms, as my grandfather would say; '*to atone for wrong done is difficult, better don't wrong at all.*'¹⁷

Being so deep inculcated into the mind of Iraqw people, this notion of sin has brought peace and harmony of living together as children of the same parent. This harmony is due to the fact that moral norms are stressed at all levels of their relationship both with *Loo'aa* and neighbour.

3.2.1 In Relation to *Loo'aa*

It has never crossed an Iraqw's mind that *Loo'aa*, Lanta as they would have Her called, punishes, is cruel or far from them whenever they invoked Her. She is not feared as somebody harmful. *Loo'aa's* female character has attracted Iraqw girls joining religious life because in this life they find that image of *Loo'aa*.¹⁸ No sooner however do they realize that image is not there than they leave. A broken relationship between *Loo'aa* and community calls for atonement¹⁹

3.2.2 In Relation to Neighbour

A relationship among individuals is something normal. The outcome of any relationship determines whether it is morally good or bad, according to the norms of the society. For example a boy can relate to a girl but once that relationship results into pregnancy that is when one has to face the consequence of it. Among the Iraqw a girl who becomes pregnant outside wedlock, commits an offense that is punishable by isolation. She is isolated to keep the omen far from people and their livestock. (Iraqw value livestock especially for religious purposes). This isolation as punishment takes no less than a year. Such a punishment scares young girls to death that they opt to keep their virtue until the time for marriage comes.

¹⁷ Interview with *Fiita Gattling*, Mbulu, June 9th, 2004.

¹⁸ Interview with *Rev. Fr. Mathias Bura*, op.cit.

¹⁹ Mainly between the society and the *Loo'aa*, since individual could only sin against another or society.

3.3 Origin of Sin

There are different opinions as to when sin found its way into human being. According to Iraqw people, *Loo'aa* did not create sin, but the heart of human person is responsible for it.²⁰ Another theory claims that sin is something inborn in the sense as one would say, 'nobody teaches a child to be angry.'

A popular myth states that a woman is the cause of sin. The myth goes back to times in memorial when there was resurrection of the dead, heaven the seat of *Loo'aa* being just above the human heads and it could move up and down at person's command. But then came a jealous second wife who out of anger as why children delayed when they went to water a growing reed on the tomb of their mother, she went and cut the reed. Blood bled and pushed the heavens up to where it is today. That is how sin originated.

3.4 Consequence/Effect of Sin

3.4.1 Alienation from God

Due to the sin of one woman, the whole society was affected, as Adeyemo Tokunboh²¹ puts it; "*the beginning of God alienated from his people.*" The woman was given a punishment of breaking a huge rock into pieces, the activity which she seems to have not achieved according to Iraqw as *Loo'aa* still remain far away from them.

3.4.2 Alienation from Each Other

Unpublicized bad act repeats itself. Iraqw call it *dawaa* (that is, an evil act done by hand).²² Unless the wrongdoer swallows his pride and speak it out, such evil will continue to affect the society. But once spoken out, then it is atoned for through

²⁰ The heart in Iraqw language is *muna* which has the same root with another word-*mune*(anger). The plural word for *muna* is *mune*. Hence the result of anger which is generated in the heart, - Dangat, L.D.L., *Christian Teaching and Iraqw Traditions on Sin and Suffering: A Case Study in ELCT/Mbulu Diocese*, Makumira, 1999, 26.

²¹ Tokunboh, A., *Salvation in African Tradition*, Nairobi, 1979, 56-57.

²² Remember at the beginning I said that in the morning praises an Iraqw prays to *Loo'aa* to take care of his hands(*dawaa*) and mouth(*afar*). These are the parts of the body which lead him to sin.

a ritual called “*dawaa hamatlaa*.” This ritual is part of reconciliation process in which the Iraqw people seek harmony with the wronged ones.

4. Iraqw Concept of Reconciliation

In normal circumstances the word reconciliation would be defined as “bringing together two estranged parties”. These two estranged parties could be two persons, person and society or person/society and God. In reconciliation the two parties concerned make a pact to the effect that the past differences come to an end and that there is a need to start afresh.

4.1 Initiators in Reconciliation

Among the Iraqw people, reconciliation is not a foreign idea, they call it ‘*wayda*’, the term which has a connotation of ‘let’s reconcile.’ The knowledge that there is sin; hence a need to reconcile is derived from two sources, namely the offender and the ‘*kahamusmo*’.

4.1.1 Offender

Among the Iraqw, the offender is the one who initiates the process of reconciliation first by admitting publicly that he was wrong and is ready to pay for *hhintaa*, that is, ‘*blood money*’²³ for the damage caused, and secondly by sending ‘*a/ko wayda*’ to negotiate the matter with the party that was wronged.

4.1.2 Kahamusmo

When it concerns a distorted relationship between Loo’aa and the *xooro* (community), Iraqw people recognized this through the events which affect them. This could be drought, diseases or other natural disasters. A prophet called ‘*kahamusmo*’, whose duty is to inquire from Loo’aa what has gone wrong, makes

²³ In case a person is killed, after having admitted the wrong doing, a person sends somebody-*ako wayda* i.e. an elderly person who will ask pardon on his behalf and arrangement for the payment. This is what is called *hhintaa*

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this known to the community. Having known this, it is up to the elders to find out the way that broken relationship could be restored.

4.2 Reconciliation Ritual

The main objective of reconciliation ritual is to restore a broken relationship between two estranged parties. A culprit acknowledges his/her fault, asks for pardon and promises to pay for the damage.

4.2.1 Participants

For the effectiveness of the ritual, participation plays a major role. The needed persons are the offender and the offended, the elders and the young men.

a) Elders

Iraqw respect elderly people and they accord them pre-eminence in religious matters. According to John Umbe,²⁴ the main reason why elderly people are favored above anyone else is due to the fact that they are closer to the ancestors that is, 'gii' who have a particular special role to play in the Iraqw society. A person who dies in old age is believed to be haunting the family especially when things are not going as they should. It is for this reason too, that Iraqw are afraid of a father's curse (*loo'r baba*) lest his spirit come back to haunt them after his death. The closeness to Loo'aa and to ancestors makes the elderly the most likely candidates for the role of intercession for the evil done by the society.

b) Young Men

It is not just any young man. The young men I am talking about here are those whom society takes as pure, and by pure I mean, those who had never experienced sexual intercourse,²⁵ nor do they have any physical defects. Their role

²⁴ Interview with John Umbe, Mbulu, July 20th, 2004.

²⁵ Iraqw have a very strong moral conduct where sexual intercourse is concerned; in fact one of them *meeta*-taboos which society highly consider as offense to do. In this case young men keep their virginity to a marriage age.

in reconciliation ritual is to slaughter the animal whose blood and meat is used in ritual.

c) The Offender and the Offended

These, two, have a part to play in reconciliation ritual. They are the focus of the ritual itself. The offender and the offended apply only when it concerns sins between individuals and not when it is about the sin committed to *Loo'aa* by the society.

4.2.2 *Sacrificial Victim*

a) Animals

Despite being an animal, the sacrificial victim is not always of the same quality. It ranges from a ram to an ox, depending on the nature of the sin committed. For example, shedding blood of a close relative, such as one's father, one needs an ox to atone for it. But when it is somebody outside one's relation, a ram is enough. The nature of sin therefore determines what sort of animal to offer.

b) Lawalamo²⁶

Since the role of the sacrificial animal is to take the curse away, human being, outside the tribe is used as a means of taking the curse away. This will be elaborated when it comes to deal with the ritual itself.

4.2.3 *Reconciliation Ritual - A Case Study*

A reconciliation ritual is what actually is performed at this point of bringing together the two estranged parties. There are specific places where the ritual is to be performed,²⁷ depending on the event that led to the sin. For example, if it were a

²⁶ A foreigner. A person who is not an Iraqw. Mostly from their protagonists.

²⁷ I earlier talked of the reason why Iraqw people do offer sacrifice. It could be an offering to *Neetlaang'w* or *Loo'aa*. The purpose of the sacrifice will determine the venue.

person killed, the graveyard is the most likely place where to conduct reconciliation ritual.

Because of a limited space, I will refer myself to two incidences demonstrating how the Iraqw people perform reconciliation ritual. I will take one example from the *irangee* category of sin and the other from the *meeta* categories of sin.

a) In Case of Incest

Incest belongs to the *Irangee* category of sin. *Irangee* as earlier said, falls under the category of sin which according to Iraqw is punishable here on earth. Keeping it secret has a bad result to the culprit as well as the society at large. It brings misfortune to the people. This is why publicizing it makes things easier for the culprit, as the evil is atoned for, and thus the matter is solved, than keeping it to oneself and innocent people suffer its consequence. Example of incest case I will deal with here is that between a mother and son.²⁸

A person who sleeps with his mother needs to be cleansed by the ritual called '*irangee hamatlaa*' literary meaning, 'the cleansing of irangee.' The ritual cleansing takes place in a house. After young men have slaughtered a ram, the blood is drained into a clean calabash. A chosen young man goes up to the roof with a calabash and through an open place on the roof, pours the blood on the mother and the son seated between his mother's wide spread legs as both are covered with a wet skin of the ram that has just been slaughtered. At this point the son makes a cry like a newly born baby. Then the mother says aloud "*naay uu gar slwan, aa muk slaa*," literary translates 'we have got a newly born baby; a hunter, that is, a baby boy.

Then an elder takes a calabash of honey, '*danu ami*'.²⁹ He spit on them as a sign of blessing, saying, "*irangee ri i tsaur*" that is, "may this irangee which has been committed go away." Thus the ritual ushers in a new beginning. The effect of reconciliation is to start things afresh, as if nothing had happened.

²⁸ Iraqw people are polygamous. In this case it is not possibly one's own mother, but a younger wife of your father, probably of one's age.

²⁹ This is a kind of honey brought from the forest not a supermarket. They get it from a specific tree known to the elders and usually not ripe and uncontaminated. Such honey is considered still 'pure, untouched' as it was in the case of young men who perform the reconciliation ritual.

b) In Case of A Husband/Wife Mysterious Death

This is a kind of sin that falls under the category of *meeta*. I couldn't grasp a point as to why Iraqw should consider *meeta* a sin, until I went through the thesis of Dr Lawi. In it, Dr Lawi defines *meeta* as a kind of 'pollution', a scenario conducive for Neetlang'w attack.³⁰ It is because of this that Iraqw alienate the wrongdoer and perform a ritual at the end of his/her exile, lest misfortune befall upon their society. With regard to this case, a human being, a foreigner, 'lawalamo' as they call him, substitutes an animal

Such a man is brought in to sleep with a woman in case it was a husband who died, or a woman is brought in to sleep with the man in case it was a wife who died. A curse is passed from the woman/man to this foreigner through sexual intercourse. Then the old clothes are burnt, a heifer and new clothes are given him/her as a payment for the service s/he has rendered. Thus *lawalamo* is driven away as fast as possible outside their frontiers. After taking bath and changing clothes the culprit joins the elders in eating from the same dish. The ritual takes place after a year or so of a wrongdoer's isolation from the community. Thus marks the end of isolation of a culprit because of *meeta* and marks the beginning of his/her restoration back to the community.

Conclusion

Looking back through the chapter, we have seen Iraqw people in different aspects of their life in relation to the Creator. We have seen that they believe in the existence of two supernatural beings namely *Loo'aa* and *Neetlaang'w*. *Loo'aa* is more powerful than *Neetlaang'w*. The latter cannot do anything on earth unless permitted by the former to do so. Iraqw relate to these two supernatural powers at different levels.

Iraqw believe that if they sin, then *Loo'aa* will not be happy and will command *Neetlaang'w* to punish them. The result is lack of harmony in the community. For them sin is a kind of power generated from the human heart (*muna*).

³⁰ Lawi, Y. Q., op.cit. 142.

The outcome is jealousy (as it happened to the woman when sin first found its way into the humanity), violation of communal laws (as in *irangee*), and breaking of the good relationship that existed between *Loo'aa* and Iraqw community.

Lastly we have seen the way forward to restore the broken relationship. We saw that the reconciliation ritual is the means by which Iraqw people restore the broken relationship among themselves on one side, and with *Loo'aa* on another side, in order to avoid the wrath of *Neetlaang'w*.

Having studied this in a traditional Iraqw people setting, we now turn to chapter two, where the aim is to find out how the same theme of sin is dealt with in Christian way of life, according to the mind of St Paul.

Chapter Two

Paul's Understanding of Sin and Reconciliation According to Romans 6:22-23

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the Iraqw people's notion of sin and reconciliation. We learned from their understanding what sin means to them, its effect to an individual person and the society at large and a possible way out of it.

In this chapter I now turn to the Christian concept of sin and reconciliation. In particular, I will discuss Paul's understanding of sin and reconciliation, with special reference to his letter to the Romans.

1. Paul's Understanding of Sin

1.1 Paul's Terms for Sin

The principle term used by Paul to express sin is *hamartia*, literary translated to mean, "missing the mark" in attaining a goal³¹. Paul uses this term in two different senses, namely, in a singular and in a plural form. *Hamartia* in a singular form is used by Paul to express sin as power³². The use of the word "sin" referred to power occurs 42 times in Paul's letter to the Romans. Paul too uses the term *hamartia* in plural. Whenever *hamartia* occurs in this form (Rom. 4:25), Paul wants

³¹ J. L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, London, 1965, 817

³² H. Marshall, "Sins and Sin", in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 159 (Jan-March, 2000), 16.

to express the idea of sin as an individual act. *Hamartia* in this form appears five times³³ in the letter to the Romans.

Other terms used to express sin as individual sinful acts are like *parabasis*. It is literally translated to mean trespass or overstepping³⁴. Paul uses it in Romans (2:23) to mean going against the obligation which has a legal force. Adam's action in the Garden of Eden (Rom. 3:14) is an example of the violation of law. Among all Pauline letters *Parabasis* is found in Romans and Galatians only. Whenever it occurs in these letters, it is in connection with the law (Gal.3: 19, Rom.4: 15).

Anomia is another term in this category of sin referring to individual evil acts. It expresses lawlessness and wickedness³⁵. It is always found in plural form to mean offences or sinful acts. In Romans 4:7, Paul considers those people freed from *anomia* as blessed, because the people who live in *anomia* are in a group of those alienated from God (Rom. 6:19). Another term for sin is *adikia*³⁶. It is translated into English as unrighteousness, a reversal of proper relationship among humans (Rom. 1:24, 26). *Asebia* means ungodliness³⁷. It is another common term in Pauline usage to express lack of proper relationship of person to God (Rom. 1:21-23, 25).

What Paul wants to speak about by these terms for sin as treated above is, that, sin is both transgression and power. This paper however is limited to the treatment of sin as power represented by the term *hamartia* in its singular noun form.

1.2. Sin as Power

The statement of Paul in the letter to the Galatians (3:9), that "all men, meaning Jews and gentiles, are under sin" is something more than just individual sins represented by the Greek terms *paraptoma*, *anomia* etc., but sin as power. Sin as a personified thing – *hamartia* in Greek. Sin as power has all sort of ways to make its presence felt. Paul assigns some qualities to sin as power.

³³Ibid, 13

³⁴ W. Gunther, "παράβασις", in *NIDNTT*, 3(1978), 583.

³⁵ W. Gutbrod, "ἀνομία", in *TDNT*, 4(1967), 1086.

³⁶ E.P. Sanders., "Sin, Sinner" (NT) in *ABD*, VI, 1992, 41.

³⁷ Ibid

1.2.1 Sin Is in the World

Sin was in the world prior to law (Rom.5: 13b) but dead (Rom. 7:9). It only came into life when law was introduced, in order to measure humans' behaviour. Take for instance Kenyan new traffic regulation. Prior to this new regulation, drivers knew that over speeding is dangerous, however, there was no specific rule that could hold them responsible. Now the law says nobody should drive beyond 80Kms/hr. Whoever drives beyond this limit breaks the law. It is because of the law therefore, that over speeding has become sin³⁸. In Adam's case, he was potentially a sinner but could not be imputed on him until there was a law to break. In his case, sin came with God's commandment "thou shall not eat the fruits of the tree at the middle of the garden (Gen. 3:1ff)". We could say of the law, therefore, as that which identifies sin³⁹. Despite the fact that they help us identify sin, laws yet don't give us power as how to overcome it. The more the laws, the more the power of sin establishing itself in the world.

1.2.2 Sin Rules in People

Due to the fact that sin is in the world, humanity lies prey to its dominion. Byrne⁴⁰ refers to sin as virus which is transmitted from one person to the other. When Paul talks of sin as reigning in people (Rom. 6:12), he has in mind death as its outcome (cf.Gen.2: 17). Earlier on (Rom. 5:20), Paul talks about the reign of grace whose objective is to reunite humanity to God. His intention is to contrast two reigns, that is, the reign of God in Christ, which is everlasting, and the reign of sin that is passing. Paul urges his readers to shun from the latter's reign whose outcome is bodily passion, manifesting itself in dominating others and fulfillment of bodily lust.⁴¹

³⁸ H. Marshall, op.cit. 15

³⁹ J. Zieslar, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, Philadelphia, 1989,148.

⁴⁰ B. Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina, 6, Collegeville, 1996, 175.

⁴¹ D. Moo, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans*, Grand Rapids, 1996,384.

1.2.3. Sin Enslaves People

Paul likens a person under the power of sin to the relationship that exists between a slave and a slave-owner (Rom. 6:16b). A slave belongs to a person to whom s/he has submitted himself/herself freely. One reason as to why a person submits himself/herself to another person is to meet ones' necessary needs such as shelter, food and clothing. It is because of this that the slave owes his/her master loyalty and dedication in his/her work. The same thing has befallen a person under the power of sin. He/she sticks to sin because sin offers him/her something to satisfy bodily desire.⁴²

1.2.4. People Can Serve Sin

The letter to the Romans (6:6) describes a slave of sin as a person who clings to the "old man". According to Moo⁴³ the old man is the old relationship humanity had with Adam (Rom. 5:12). According to this relation, humanity is under the tyranny of sin and death. What Paul is trying to put across is the solidarity humanity has with their head, namely the old man (Rom. 5:12) and the new man (Rom5: 15). Those who are under the tyranny of the old man have placed all their faculties to the power of sin (6:6c) and offer it a service. For Paul, such people need dominion of the new man to set them free from surrendering their bodily parts to the slavery of sin.

2. Death, as the Consequence of Sin

According to Paul, death is not God's punishment to those who have sinned as it is thought of in the Old Testament (Gen. 3:17-19). Rather, death is a total separation from God⁴⁴freely chosen by a person. Sin like a master of servants pays wages. The wage that it rewards to those obedient to its demands is death (Rom. 6:23).

⁴² P. F. Ellis, *Seven Pauline Letters*, Collegeville, 1982,229.

⁴³ Ibid, 373.

⁴⁴ B. Byrne, op.cit. 176.

Every person who has submitted himself/herself to the power of sin has set a destiny for himself/herself. This destiny is death, the last and worst effect of sin. Paul looks at death as a curse into which humanity so far as it has sinned is sentenced.⁴⁵ Afterwards, he realized that Christ too died, though for him the reason for death is different from the person under the power of sin⁴⁶.

A person who has fallen under the power of sin and death is enslaved to the point that s/he needs another power to free him/her. This is why Paul cries out in (Rom.7: 24), “wretched I, who can save me from this body of death”. Then he gives answer to his own out- cry, “thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 8:1-4).

3. Paul’s Understanding of Reconciliation

3.1 Freedom from the Slavery of Sin

In line with what we have just discussed, that is, humanity under the power of sin, the next favorite theme of Paul is the reconciliation of humanity to God. God himself through the action of Jesus Christ makes this reconciliation possible. Jesus poured his blood in order to reconcile people to God (Rom. 3: 25ff). This pouring out of blood is what Paul refers to as a redemptive act of Jesus Christ. Ehrman calls them models for salvation⁴⁷. There are two of them namely juridical model and the participationist model.

3.1.1 Juridical Model

In juridical model, God is presented as a judge and humans as lawbreakers. God passes judgment on the lawbreakers. The role of Jesus’ salvific act according to this model is to pay a penalty by dying for the people who have broken the law and condemned to die. In this way Christ has paid a price due to sin on behalf of humanity. The role of the humanity is to accept the redemptive action of Jesus

⁴⁵ B. Werner, “θανάτος”, in *EDNT*, 2(1994), 130.

⁴⁶ A. G. Joseph, “Christ’s Death and Ours in Pauline Theology”, in *CBQ* 28(1990), 135.

⁴⁷ B. D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, Oxford, 1997, 304.

Christ through faith. Due to the direction, which this paper follows, I am only limiting myself to the participationist model.

3.1.2 Participationist Model

Unlike the juridical model, the problem with humanity in participationist model is no longer breaking of the law (transgression), but 'enslavement' to the power from which it is not easy to break away. The only solution that could set humanity free from this enslaving power was to come from God through the death and resurrection of Jesus. These are two aspects of Christ event; Christ's redeeming acts in which humanity is called to participate.

a) Death of Christ

Under the participationist model, the death of Christ is not a substitution (what takes place under juridical model where Christ replaces the lawbreaker), but vicarious. Whiteley describes vicarious death of Christ as 'taking the suffering of a sinner upon himself, though not a sinner, and through his innocent suffering a sinner is reformed'⁴⁸.

For Paul then, the death that Christ has undergone was in order to free men from the powers of sin and death. By being subjected to death, Christ condemned sin in the flesh. Dunn's notion of the death of Christ is, that, with the death of Christ, 'there is no answer to the power of sin working in and through flesh, except its destruction in death'⁴⁹. As such, Christ's death is not simply a sacrifice, an act that cancels guilt, but a means of releasing men from the powers of this world, death being one of them.⁵⁰

b) The Resurrection of Christ

Resurrection of Christ is a Paschal mystery. The two aspects of Christ event, namely death and resurrection go together, that is, the one who died is the one who

⁴⁸ Ibid, 131.

⁴⁹ J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Edinburgh, 1998, 211.

⁵⁰ E.P. Sanders, op.cit. 465-466.

is raised (Rom. 4:24-25). The death and resurrection of Jesus are not independent from each other because resurrection is the vindication of his death, which occurred for our sins.

In 1Cor. 15:17 Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." Resurrection then, is the manifestation of Jesus' victory over the power of death. Had Christ not been raised, death would have become victorious over him and humanity would have remained in the slavery of sin.

3.2 Participation in Christ's Death and Resurrection

Since the death and resurrection of Christ marked his victory over the power of sin and death, the same applies to his followers. What happened to Christ is now carried over to those who would follow him. This is to say everything said about Christ may be said of his followers too. For Christ's followers to overcome the power of sin and death they have to participate in the death and resurrection of Christ. According to Paul this is possible through baptism and new life (Rom. 6:1-4).

3.2.1 Baptism

a) Meaning of Baptism

The main purpose of Paul speaking of baptism in Romans (6:1-11) is to insist on what he has spoken about previously, namely, that humanity has undergone a change of dominion (Rom.5: 12-21). This change involves a move away from the dominion of sin and towards the dominion of the risen Lord, a change which comes about when person is baptized. For Paul, baptism marks the end of life without God and ushers in the beginning of life with God⁵¹. Therefore, the meaning of baptism according to Paul would be described as 'dying to sin and alive to God in Christ' (Rom.6:11).

⁵¹ G. R. Beasley-Murray, "Baptism" in *DPL*, 1993, 63.

b) Nature of Baptism

Among the symbolisms found in baptism only two are of paramount importance for our understanding of human participation in the salvific act of Christ. These symbolisms are the stripping off clothes of the candidate before baptism, and then replacing them with new ones after baptism. The second symbolism is that of immersing the candidate into the water and raising him/her out of the water. These two external symbolisms represent a reality, which is taking place within us for entering the fellowship of Christ.⁵²

The act of taking off old clothes symbolizes that now a candidate for baptism has decided to put off the old life without Christ and put on new life in Christ, or rather 'putting on Christ himself' (Gal. 3:27). It shows that one has died to the old self in imitating Christ who died naked on the cross in order to save humanity from the dominion of sin. In this way, one enters God's family (Gal. 3:26) through union with Christ (Gal. 3:27) who died and resurrected, thus conquering sin and death.

The same idea is inculcated into the minds of the early Christians (Acts 22:16). Submerging (*βαπτω*) the candidate beneath the water and rising out symbolizes sharing in Christ's burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4). Through immersing into the water a person has buried his old self with Christ and by rising from the water, s/he has begun new life.

c) Effect of Baptism

For Paul baptism makes one a follower of Christ (1Cor. 1:12) who breaks away from sin. In setting the grounds for this relationship, both God and a candidate for baptism are fully involved. While God offers a 'once-for-all' redemption effected through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ⁵³, the candidate for baptism pledges to accept Jesus who died for him. Through baptism, a person participates in Christ's salvific act. S/he owns Christ as the Lord and submits to his lordship. Christ on the other hand takes the baptized as his own. In this way then,

⁵² R. Schnackenburg, *Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul*, New York, 1964, 154.

⁵³ W.A. Bieder, *βαπτισμος* in *EDNT*, 1 (1994), 61.

baptism is a gateway in breaking away from the old age of the dominion of sin and into the new age of Christ's lordship.

3.2.2 New Life in Christ

The fruit of baptism is the participation into the death of Christ. The death of Christ is the death of the baptized person too. The outcome of this is victory over the power of sin, which enslaves us. Sin, determines life of an individual under its domain. Sin closes all the possibilities. It hypnotizes a person in such a way that s/he does not perceive possibilities. To escape from the dominion of sin one needs another power, which opens new possibilities for them.

Jesus' resurrection marks the beginning of new life, since the old one is condemned to death in his death. This too is the end of the power of sin that dominates the old regime. In this new life, unless there is a master over those who had been freed from the slavery of sin, the old master could resume the ownership (Rom. 6:12-23, Gal.6:15, 2Cor.5:17). Accordingly, resurrection begins the new dominion for the children of God redeemed by the death of Christ. His death and resurrection are in line with incorporating all humanity into these actions, and by it, new creation has come into being.⁵⁴

A person who receives Christ by faith and is baptized has become a new creation (Rom. 4:11). Baptism then is the beginning of the baptized undergoing decisive change of life which begun with faith (Rom. 4:11) and walk in newness of life in Christ (Rom. 6.4). In baptism, which symbolizes dying and rising with Christ, a person receives another power and puts an end to the former power that was working in him/her (Rom. 7:17). This new power now working in person is the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:24-25). Though the baptized still live in mortal body, s/he now live in Christ (Gal. 2:19-20), hence, no vacuum for the old power to enslave the baptized.

Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, one thing comes out very clearly in Paul understanding of sin, namely that sin is a power, an evil power. As a power it has

⁵⁴ G. R., Beasley-- Murray, "Dying and Rising with Christ" in *DPL*, 1993, 219.

forced humanity into its ways away from God. Those who have fallen prey to its power are enslaved and unable to come out of it by their own effort. However, there is a solution. Paul sees this solution in God's action through Jesus Christ.

Jesus came into the world and shared everything that humans are, except bowing down to the ways of the power of sin. By resurrecting from the dead, Jesus won battle over the power of sin and death. The only way possible to walk free from the slavery of sin is by participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus. For Paul, this is reconciliation. Reconciliation of humanity to God is possible by faith through baptism, which is the gateway to new life in Christ.

Chapter Three

Romans 6:22-23, A Mutual Enrichment between Iraqw People and Paul

Introduction

Iraqw people and Paul have a common understanding of sin and how they respond to the need of reconciliation. Both sin and reconciliation work together hand in hand. Where there is sin there is reconciliation and vice versa. While sin separates, reconciliation unites.

If these terms work in such way, there must be a shift of a person from one power to another in which these terms can fittingly apply. This shift is from the power of sin/*Neetlaqw* to the power of Christ/*Loo'aa*. Hence while Iraqw people speak about two Supernatural beings, *Loo'aa* and *Neetlaqw*, Paul talks of the 'life without Christ' and 'life with Christ', in other words, life under the power of sin and life under the power of Christ. It is the essence of this chapter therefore, to look at how Paul and Iraqw People enrich each other when it comes to the rule of sin in human life and a need to reconcile a person to God and to each other.

1. The Presence of Two Powers

Both Paul and the Iraqw agree about the presence of two “supernatural” powers, namely the power of good and the power of evil (Rom.6: 12-13)⁵⁵. These two powers are in opposition to each other. The Iraqw people and Paul refer to them using different terms.

1.1 *The Power of Good*

I will, by a way of passing, mention how both Paul and Iraqw people understand the power of good. This power is what Iraqw people call *Loo'aa*. For the Iraqw, *Loo'aa* is loving, merciful and gentle. This power of good possesses, guides and protects life of a person. That is why an Iraqw has to thank *Loo'aa* daily through prayers and offer her sacrifice as an act of worship and petition.

Paul calls this power of good “life in Christ.” For Paul a person who lives in Christ is free so far as the Spirit of Christ leads him or her (Rom. 8:1). Law of the Spirit is God’s free gift to humans and they in turn accept them freely. In this way, person is kept in constant communion with God.

1.2 *The Evil Power*

The power of evil is the main aspect of this work. It is discussed in length both in Paul and the Iraqw people as the main agent of separation not only amongst people, but also even between people and their creator.

⁵⁵ Paul talks of life in Christ as life lived under the power of good and life without Christ as life lived under the power of evil.

1.2.1 For the Iraqw

As I have explained, Iraqw people refer to the power of sin as *Neetlaqw*. Unlike Loo'aa whose feminine qualities attract the Iraqw to herself, *Neetlaqw*, who is of male gender, is cruel, unforgiving and stubborn. *Neetlaqw* coaxes people to his side in order to cause havoc and misunderstanding between them and Loo'aa, and amongst people themselves.

The term *Neetlaqw* for *Iraqw* means two different things. *Neetlaqw* can mean Satan, who is the “possessor of evil power”, or else, *Neetlaqw* can mean “evil power itself” which is a cause of separation amongst people.

a) *Neetlaqw*, Meaning the “Source of Evil Power”

Whenever a person finds himself/herself in conflicts against another, s/he says or is told, “*Neetlaqw gwi xutli*” meaning, “May this source of evil in me/you go away, *which causes misunderstanding between us* (stress is mine). In this way the blame is imputed not on a person but to the *Neetlaqw*, a power that works in him/her.

b) *Neetlaqw*, Meaning “Evil Power”

The second use of the word *Neetlaqw* coincides with *tlaakwemah*, a term used for sin. *Tlaakwemah* is a term used to refer to “Sin itself”. It causes person do wrong to another or to the community in general. A community too, can do wrong and distances itself from the creator. For the Iraqw, therefore, there should be a third party which puts itself between individual beings or between the community and

Loo'aa. This third party according to them is *tlaakwemah*, an evil power or sin. Its main objective is to separate rather than to unite two sides in relationship.

1.2.2 For Paul

On his part, Paul hesitates calling “Satan” this power of evil, but he affirms to be sin. Sin is a cause of separation between God and human beings. For Paul, as we have seen, sin can be taken in two senses, namely sin as transgression and sin as power. Sin as power has attributes⁵⁶ that make it exercise dominion and have followers. What Iraqw call as “Neetlaqw” that puts boundary between two people, Paul calls it power of sin. It has such power as to draw forcefully a person to its side.

1.2.3 Presence of Sin

In principle both Paul and the Iraqw people agree that the power of good is oriented to good relation among people themselves or to people in their relation to the Supreme Being. On the other hand the power of evil is a cause of misunderstanding which yields selfishness for its own glory. Instead of uniting, sin separates or as popular saying states, “it divides and rule”. This is a principle that sin has in order to put people apart. There arises therefore an inevitable need for reconciliation.

2. Reconciliation

As we have seen earlier the main objective of reconciliation is to restore the broken “good” relationship. I am saying “good” relationship in the sense that no one

⁵⁶ Sin as enslaving people, sin as being in the world, sin as having followers and so on. See page 18-19

can unite two sides into a “bad” relationship and say that s/he has perfectly reconciled them. Reconciliation necessarily means bringing back together two parties that have gone wrong. To achieve this something has to be done.

Apart from showing mutual enrichment between Iraqw traditional practice of reconciliation and Paul’s understanding of reconciliation, this topic is meant to suggest something to Iraqw people. When the Iraqw find their traditional practice of reconciliation in harmony with the Good News of Christ, they should keep on with their practice. This however does not mean that Iraqw way of reconciliation can replace that of Christ. Iraqw way of reconciliation is just a symbol of the true reconciliation carried out by Jesus through his sacrificial death for the sins of people (2Cor.5: 15).

2.1 Initiator

2.1.1 Iraqw

For the Iraqw, the offender is the one who initiates reconciliation. He/she is the one to make sure that the wrong done is reconciled at all cost. The offender does this by sending an elder to the offended party and by offering sacrificial animal. The animal may range from goat, sheep and ox, depending on the gravity of sin.

In order reconciliation to be effective, the offended party has to respond. In other words, effective reconciliation needs reciprocity. For this reason the offender and an elder have to convince the offended to respond positively that the work of the third party (animal or *lawalamo* in the case of the Iraqw people) might be properly performed.

2.1.2 Paul

According to Paul, God through the death of Jesus Christ takes initiative to reconcile the world to Himself. Reconciliation is a gift that man receives when one decides to go back to God after straying from him (Rom.5: 11). As a gift, it is something that no one earns by his/her own effort. Reconciliation in this sense has nothing to do with people's attitude toward God, but with God's attitude towards humanity. It is God's manifestation of love to his people while still sinners and in the state of hostility to him (Rom. 5:8). People ought to respond to God's gesture by the act of faith in Jesus Christ (Phil. 3: 9).

This acceptance of reconciliation (2Cor.5: 18-6:5) is the participation in the death of Christ made possible through the Spirit of Christ working in the heart of a believer. This inner power enables a person to make a genuine judgment when confronted by the power of sin. Hence reconciliation is not merely removal of guilty relationship between God and humanity, but a transfer of loyalty. In other words, reconciliation results into re-orientation of ones' loyalty from sin to God.

2.1.3 Mutuality

In Paul, God himself is the initiator of reconciliation but for the Iraqw, it is the offender himself. Both Paul and the Iraqw put a focus on the offering of sacrifice as a means of reconciliation. This, according to Iraqw, is made possible by the blood of an animal or in some cases, "*lawalamo*". But for Paul, God offered Jesus Christ to mediate reconciliation between himself and humanity (Gal.1: 3-4).

2.2 *The Third Party – Mediator*

2.2.1 *Iraqw*

a) Animal

The blood of an animal is the third party used to cleanse the sin of the offender. By pouring its blood, the offender's guilty is transferred into the sacrificed animal and the offender is considered clean. The animal's blood bridges the gap between the offender and the offended.

b) Lawalamo

A male or female foreigner is brought in purposely to effect reconciliation. She/he replaces animal's blood in offences that has to do with sexual intercourse. Through a sexual intercourse, guilt is transferred from offender to *lawalamo*. Iraqw people prefer a foreigner to a native because by laying the burden of sin on him/her who will have to go away the culprit is freed and the omen is out of their boundary. It is none of their concern whatever happens to the *lawalamo* because he/she has been paid for the work.

2.2.2 *Paul*

According to Paul, the third party that reconciles the world to God is Jesus Christ. Christ by his death (Rom. 5:8) has bridged the gap between God and humanity which sin has caused. Who is reconciled to whom between God and humanity? The nature of the situation itself shows that it was humanity which was reconciled to God and not vice versa. Humanity was under another dominion in such a way that it could not free itself (Rom. 6:20). This situation in which humanity is

unable to get out is actually the one which the death of Christ had to deal with. God made Christ to be sin, he who knew no sin, so that in Christ we might become the righteous of God. This is to say that God put Jesus Christ under the power of sin which killed him⁵⁷ so that humanity might be freed by it.

2.2.3 Point of Contention

Both Paul and Iraqw people focus on the aspect of giving up life for remission of sin. For Paul, this is made possible by the death of Christ and for Iraqw, the slaughter of an animal. However, there is a difference between Iraqw people and Paul on how this happens.

In the case of Christ, his death on the cross was a willing act (Gal.1:3-4). By this, he enables God's entry into sinful human condition. For the Iraqw people, death of an animal was an unaware act but still put humanity back in relationship with God and with the fellow person too. From this I conclude that the traditional reconciliation process of the Iraqw people is a good seed for the gospel. It prefigures the conscious and willing act of Jesus in Pauline theology.

2.3 Temporary versus Once-and-for-All Sacrifice

2.3.1 Iraqw

For the Iraqw sacrifices are temporary in the sense they are done repeatedly. The blood of an animal was poured to deal with a particular sin at a particular time. In short as far as a person might come to sin in the future, a new offering is required for that new sin and the new situation.

⁵⁷ see footnote on 2Cor. 5:2, in (NT – African Bible)

2.3.2 Paul

Christ died once –and- for all for the sins of the whole world. By his death he broke the power of death. He carried the sins of humanity in his body on the cross in order that humanity participating in Jesus Christ's paschal mystery might live to righteousness (Rom.6: 22-23).

2.3.3 Point of Contention

The sacrifice of Christ, which is not repeatable, surpasses all the victims of Iraqw people's mediators (animal and *lawalamo*) in reconciliation. This is true from the point of view that it is once and for all, therefore, *effective for eternity*.

The nature of reconciliation for the Iraqw people, that is, its repeatability and for specific situations only suggests their permanent *ineffectiveness*. Christ instead of offering an animal offered himself, thus opened new era and meaning to Iraqw notion of sacrifice.

Conclusion

It is beyond doubt that Iraqw people have something in common with Christianity as far as sin and reconciliation are concerned. Both agree that sin separate, hence a need of reconciliation. Both talk of sacrifice as means of reconciliation. While Iraqw offered an animal, God offered his son, Jesus Christ to mediate reconciliation. In this, Iraqw people need to look at the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered once and for all, over theirs, which is repeatable. It is not enough just to shake hands to symbolize the end of enmity, but a person need to go for confession where we meet Jesus, the mediator between human and God. In this

way not only is an Iraqw reconciled to God, but also his sacrifice of an animal, which reconciles him to another is made perfect.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The concept of sin and reconciliation comes up both in Iraqw people and St Paul. According to Iraqw, sin is referred to in terms of lack of harmony either between person and person, person and community or between persons and their deity. In both cases it is the relationship that suffers as the consequence of sin. In order for relationship to be restored, the Iraqw slaughter animals or bring in a foreigner in order to mediate between the offender and the offended. The role of a “go between” is to take away a wrong act done in place of the offender. Hence good relationship is restored.

St Paul, in this case Christianity, goes deeper to the root cause of this separation. Paul calls it power. This is a force that has come between a person and God. In front of this power, humanity is so weakened that it needs another power to save it. Such mediation according to Paul is seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ's death and resurrection broke this power and set humanity free, hence, reconciled to God. Participation in the death and resurrection of Christ through baptism makes one no longer slave to the power of sin.

As such, both Iraqw and Paul talk of the same thing, only that they differ in terminology they use. While Iraqw call sin *takweemah*, Paul refers to it as power, as what separates one from God. In this case both of them agree that there is no comfortable life lived in separation, hence a need for reconciliation. Due to these similarities I find that Iraqw people in every walk of their life can make good

Christians, only that they don't know it. This is a challenge for evangelizers at this age of inculturation, one area being, Iraqw approach to sin and reconciliation and how it can fit well in Christianity approach of it.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DICTIONARIES/COMMENTARIES

| | |
|--------|--|
| ABD | Anchor Bible Dictionary |
| TDNT | theological Dictionary of the New Testament |
| EDNT | Exegetical Dictionary of New Testament |
| NIDNTT | New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology |
| DPL | Dictionary of St Paul and His Letters |

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

| | |
|------|-------------|
| Cor | Corinthians |
| Gal | Galatians |
| Phil | Philippians |
| Rom | Romans |

TITLES

| | |
|------|-----------|
| Dr | Doctor |
| Msgr | Monsignor |
| Rev | Reverend |

TERMS

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| ed. | Edited by |
| Ibid. | Ibidem · in the aforementioned place |
| -al | alii -- other persons |
| SC | Sacrosanctum Concilium |

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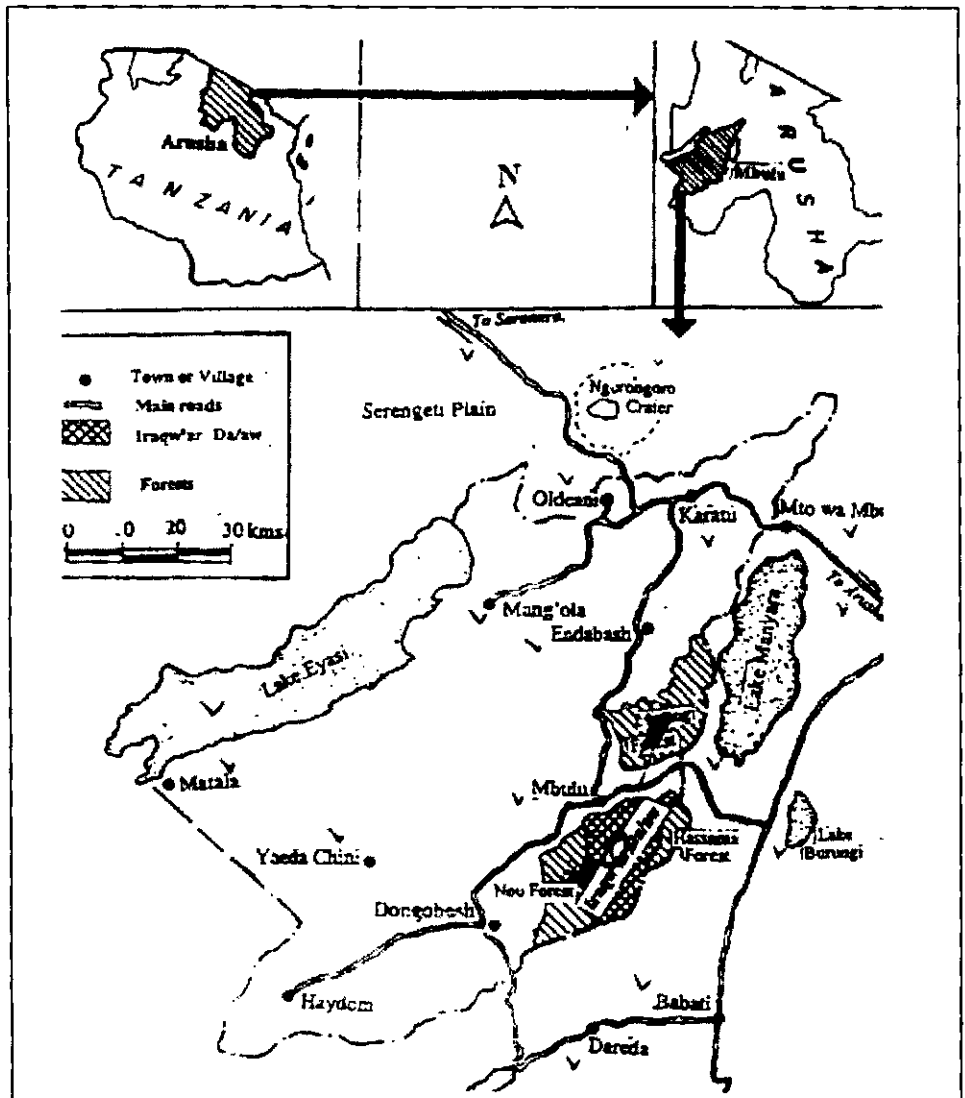
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APPENDIX I

The Location of Mbulu District, Northern Tanzania⁵⁸



⁵⁸ The map adapted from: Dr. Lawi, Y.Q., *May the Spider Web Blind Witches and Wild Animals: Local Knowledge and the Political Ecology of Natural Resource Used in the Iraqwland, Tanzania, 1900-1985*, Boston, 1999.

APPENDIX II

The List of Informants

| Name | Occupation | Place of Interview | Age | Date of Interview |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Rev.fr. Damas Wema | Chaplin, Dareda hospital | Dareda | 60s | 29.05.2004 |
| Rev.fr.Mathias Bura | Lecturer, Sanu minor seminary and Teachers' Training College | Mbulu | 50s | 08.06.2004 |
| Rev. fr. John Gadiye | Parish priest, Dareda Mission | Dareda | 40s | 29.05.2004 |
| Mr. Fiita Gattling | Member of the council of elders | Karatu | 75 | 09.06.2004 |
| Mr. Sabida Samuel | Retired politician, member of the council of elders | Mbulu | 78 | 06.06.2004 |
| Mr. Patrick Matle | Businessman, member of the council of elders | Mbulu | 59 | 28.05.2004 |
| Mr. John Umbe | Chairman of the council of elders | Mbulu | 85 | 20.07.2004 |