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Christ for the world: lessons from the infancy narratives in Mathew and Luke for Africans and African Biblical Scholars.

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Abstract

The infancy narrative, by Matthew and Luke, goes beyond the rich history to deep theologies that must be appreciated by Africans and African biblical scholars. Over the years, Africans seem to read the Bible as a borrowed book written for the whites (Jews) with the story of Jesus as something far from their history. Owing to the quest of Africans for liberation, Africans are in a deep search of who Jesus really is to them. Is he a white man or a black man? Is the Bible really for Africans or for the Jews and the whites? Where is the place of Africa in the infancy narrative of Jesus and his ministry? This work attempts to respond to these questions by drawing great lessons from the infancy narratives for Africans. The researcher adopted comparative phenomenological method of research. The findings reveal in a nutshell the universal perspective of the infancy narrative.

Keywords: Christ for the World, Infancy Narrative, Africans, Mathew, Luke

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Introduction:

At the heart of Christian faith is the person of Jesus Christ.¹ The story behind the birth of such a figure remains paramount to any

formulation of Christian theology. In fact, to be precise, theology is not Christian at all when it does not offer Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the answer to the human quest.²

¹ Diane B. Stinton, *Jesus of Africa: voices of contemporary African christologies*. (New York: Orbis book, 2004), 3

² J.N.K Mugambi and Laurenti Magesa, *Introduction of Jesus in Africa Christianity: Experimentation and*

diversity in African Christology, ed. J.N.K Mugambi and Laurenti Magesa (Nairobi: initiatives., Ltd., 1989), x.

Scholars agree that “the first Christians became interested in Jesus’ origins only because they had already found significance in his life and death”³. Therefore, the virgin birth of Jesus must form an integral part in any account of the early Christian theology.⁴ Hence, this work seeks to critically examine the theologies behind the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke and draw lessons from them for Africans and African biblical scholars. Audrey observes that “The Imagery and symbolism of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2 is strange to us. These chapters are trying to express what cannot be easily conveyed in ordinary language; the belief that the power of God was uniquely present in the life of Christ. When we read of the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and of the angel messengers and of wise men led by a star, we must allow these symbolic languages to convey its truth in its own way.”⁵ Most Scholars in their inability to understand these symbolic languages and the difference in the accounts of Matthew and Luke have concluded wrongly that they are all myths. The words of John Spong give an accurate response to such scholars: ‘to assign the birth

narratives to mythology is not to dismiss them as untrue. It is rather to force us to see truth in dimensions larger than literal truth’.⁶ Allan Richardson affirms that the birth of Christ is an eschatological event ushering in the New Age, and is itself a manifestation of the expected outgoing activity of the Spirit in the latter days.⁷ Therefore in this work, in order to move from context to the text, we shall first analyze voices of African scholars in relation to Jesus and the infancy narrative then summarize the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke, and critically analyse the arising theologies. Finally we shall draw lessons for Africans and African biblical scholars.

Voices of African scholars in relation to Jesus (Christology) and the infancy narrative:

I stumbled into an argument where Africans in an attempt to trace Jesus’ lineage to Africa were arguing that “Judah, son of Israel, had an affair with Tamar, a Canaanite woman, who gave birth to two boys (Perez and Zarah) and Perez was an ancestor of Jesus”. This argument was disproved by a western writer

³ Sister Audrey. *Jesus Christ in the Synoptic Gospels* (London: SCM Press, 1972), 132

⁴ Donald Guthrie. *New Testament Theology* (England: Intervarsity Press, 1981), 366

⁵ Sister Audrey. *Jesus Christ in the Synoptic Gospels*. 133

⁶ Spong, John Shelby. *Born of a Woman* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), 45

⁷ *Ibid.* 175

by saying that Tamar was not a Canaanite as recorded in Gen 38:6 and that Jesus must be from a complete Hebraic lineage. Over the years, owing to the quest of Africans for liberation, Africans are in a deep search of who Jesus really is to them. Is he a white man or a black man? Is the bible really for Africans or for the Jews and the whites? Where is the place of Africa in the infancy narrative of Jesus and his ministry? In an attempt to answer these questions, African scholars in 1969 came up with “a picture of a kinky- haired, broad-noised black Christ on the cover of Ebony magazine”.⁸ From the political to the religious arena, these freedom fighters demanded new symbols that would be uncompromising representations of a contagious spirit of black identity.⁹ Black biblical scholar Cain Hope Felder has sharply pointed out that “the sweet little Jesus boy of the Negro spiritual was, in fact, quite Black”.¹⁰ This argument of Felder was sustained by Garvey who said that as a Jew from the line of Jesse, Jesus had ‘Negro Blood’ running through his veins.¹¹ How true are these claims and how can they better the faith of Africans?

⁸ Kelly Brown. *The black Christ*. (New York: orbis books, 1994), 9.

⁹ Kelly Brown. *The black Christ*. 9

¹⁰ Ibid. 1.

¹¹ Ibid. 32.

Recent reflections on African Christianity often identify a “Christological crisis” with various explanations for why African believers struggle to appropriate Jesus Christ authentically.¹² Elaborating on the implication of Christianity being perceived as a white man’s religion, John V. Taylor pinpointed the heart of the problem in a most penetrating way:

Christ has been presented as the answer to the questions a white man would ask, the solution to the need that a western man would feel, the saviour of the world of the European world view, the object of adoration and prayer of historic Christendom. But if Christ were to attend the questions that Africans are asking, what would he look like? If he came into the world of African cosmology to redeem man as Africans understand him, would he be recognizable to the rest of the church universal? And if Africa offered him the praises and petitions of her total, uninhibited humanity, would they be acceptable?¹³

Summary of the Infancy Narrative in

Mathew:

The infancy narrative in Mathew runs from Chapter one to chapter two verse twenty three. Mathew started his narrative with the

¹² Diane B. Stinton, *Jesus of Africa: voices of contemporary African christologies*. (New York: orbis book, 2004),

¹³ John V. Taylor, *the primal vision: Christian presence amid African Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 7

genealogy of Jesus, tracing His identity first as “the Son of David” before “the Son of Abraham”. The genealogy is arranged in three segments of 14 generations each, bringing it to a total of 42 generations. They were arranged thus: from Abraham to David, from David to Babylonian exile and from exile to the Messiah. Matthew observed that after Joseph’s engagement with Mary, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph being a righteous man planned to secretly divorce her. An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying: “Joseph son of David don’t be afraid to accept Mary your wife because what is conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit.” The angel gave a name which the child must be called: ‘Jesus’. When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel had commanded. The child Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod. Next on the narrative was the visit of the wise men, then the flight of Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus into Egypt, a point worthy of note by African scholars. When Herod discovered that the wise men did not return, he ordered the massacre of innocent children. After the death of Herod, they returned back to Israel, specifically to Nazareth.

Summary of the Infancy Narrative in

Luke:

Luke started his narrative by first stating his reasons for documenting the account of Jesus. He observed that it was during the reign of king Herod of Judea that Angel Gabriel appeared to Zachariah promising him that his wife Elizabeth shall conceive and bear a child whom he shall name John. On the sixth month, the Angel Gabriel was again sent to a city of Galilee called Nazareth to a Virgin Mary with a message that she shall give birth to a child and His name would be called Jesus. Luke went on to narrate the visit of Mary to Elizabeth which gave rise to the Christian devotion called Magnificat. Next on the narrative was the birth and naming of John which saw the fulfilment of Zachariah’s prophesy. It is in chapter Two that Luke, after narrating the details of John’s birth, relayed the story of the humble birth of Jesus. According to Luke, Joseph moved from Nazareth to Judea for registration. There she delivered Jesus and they were visited by shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks. In the writer’s view, the presentation and circumcision of Jesus brings the infancy narrative of Luke to an end.

Theologies behind the Infancy Narrative in Mathew:

It is better to see chapters one and two of Matthew as a theological prologue to his Gospel than as a historical narrative. This interpretation does not imply that there is no factual history in the infancy narrative, but rather that such history is not Matthew's primary intention. The history contained therein is not intentional history. His intention is to identify Jesus as the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the Son of God. Let us therefore look at some of Matthew's theological intent.

1. The theology in Matthew was influenced by the Christian community for which he wrote. It consisted primarily of the Jews. "In contrast, Luke's Gospel was written primarily for Gentiles. According to Matthew, Jesus directed His ministry to Israel (10:5-6; 15:24), but the risen Lord sent his disciples to the Gentiles (28:18). This missionary emphasis reflects Matthew's ecclesial and pastoral situation."¹⁴ The effort to appeal to both Jewish and Gentile Christians is reflected in the first

verse of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus, the Christ, is both son of David (which ties Jesus into Jewish history) and son of Abraham (which ties Jesus into an even broader plan of salvation).

2. The Jewish picture of Joseph: Though the first Evangelist does mention Mary in the genealogy, it is Joseph and his dreams that link together the various narratives in Matthew 1-2. This might explain Mathew's Jewish patriarchal background. Also, it is no accident that, apart from Jesus, only Joseph is called "son of David" in these stories. He is seen as the typical patriarch who will guide and protect Mary and Jesus as God directs. Note the term "righteous man" for Joseph (Matt. 1:19). "The intention of Matthew was to paint a picture of a devout Jewish man who is willing to give up what was often perceived to be a Jewish father's greatest privilege (siring his firstborn son) in order to obey God's will (Matt. 1:24). The silence of Mary may suggest that the author reaffirms the traditional Jewish roles of male headship and female subordination, perhaps

¹⁴ Raymond Brown. *The Birth of the Messiah*, 47, 90.

because he has a Christian's Jewish audience."¹⁵

3. Christological titles for Jesus: Prominent among the titles which Matthew uses for Jesus are those which point to his royal, messianic dignity. Chief of these is "Christ"; Jesus fulfils the Jewish expectation that God will send an anointed leader to deliver and lead Israel. "The messiah was usually conceived by Israel as a human leader of unique goodness and power. Matthew means more than this by the term; Jesus is the son of God."¹⁶ Other Christological titles used by Matthew include Messiah, Son of David and Immanuel.
4. In continuation of Jesus' fulfilment of the hopes of the Israelites, we can see that in chapter two there is a geographical motif (Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth) as well as further theological development. Matthew has presented Jesus in chapter one as Messiah, son of David, and Immanuel. This theme continues within the geography of chapter two. Jesus was born in Bethlehem and thus

fulfilled messianic expectation. For Matthew the problem is to get Jesus to Nazareth, which he accomplishes by the flight into Egypt. For Luke the problem is to get Jesus to Bethlehem. The flight into Egypt further identifies Jesus with the history of the Jews.

5. Another important theological aspect of the infancy narrative is its perception of "the Christological moment." At what point in time did Jesus become the Christ, the Messiah? The understanding and response of the early church to this question was the moment of the resurrection. Later reflection then maintained that the Christological moment was at the time of the baptism. Further reflection understood the moment to be Jesus' conception. This is the opinion of the infancy narratives. Thus, there was no time in His life when Jesus was not already the Messiah. This means that the Church grew in its awareness that Jesus had already been what they (His followers) came to perceive only after

¹⁵ *IVP Dictionary of the New Testament*. Ed. Daniel G. Reid. (England: Intervarsity press, 2004), 120

¹⁶ Floyd. V. Filson. *The gospel according to st. Matthew, second edition*. (London: A&C Black, 1960)

the resurrection. Raymond Brown describes it thus:

What is involved here is the growing understanding of the early church about the identity of Jesus. Though at first such titles as Son of God became attached to him primarily as of the resurrection (besides Rom. 1:4, see Acts 13:33), the time came when early Christians began to realize that he had to have been such even earlier in his career, even though it had not been recognized. It is not so much that the 'Christological moment' ... was pushed back as that there was a growth in awareness as time passed among early Christians that what Jesus was recognized to be after the resurrection he must have been still earlier.¹⁷

Theologies in Luke:

1. Just Like in the case of Mathew, the theologies of Luke were influenced by the audience he had in mind. Like every other writer, Luke had an obvious purpose. Joseph Fitzmyer has this to say: "Luke's obvious purpose is to introduce and identify these two children [John and Jesus], especially Jesus, as agents of God's salvation-history: both come from

God."¹⁸ Indeed, the salvation history of God which can be traced to the time of Adam can be seen in Luke's ability to trace his genealogy back to Adam. Luke used John and Jesus to show the fulfilment of God's supreme agenda for the entire human race (not only the fulfilment of the Jewish hopes). For Luke, the mission to the Gentiles is as determinative of his theology as Matthew's audience was for his. The "revelation to the Gentiles" was part of God's plan from the beginning. Luke's audience, however, seems to have been primarily gentile Christians. So Luke declares through his Gospel that Jesus is the divine agent in God's salvation history to the world.

2. More so, in an attempt to reveal Christ as God's agent in salvation history, Luke introduces us to some Christological titles. This can be seen in Luke 2:11: "For to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." The background for this is Isaiah 9:6: "To

¹⁷ Raymond Brown, "Gospel Infancy Narrative Research From 1976 to 1986: Part II (Luke)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 48 (1986), 677-78.

¹⁸ Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, Anchor Bible 28 (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1981), 309.

us a child is born; to us a son is given.” In Isaiah further royal titles follow: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Luke carefully substitutes three Christian titles: Saviour, Christ (Messiah), and Lord. So Luke reminds us that Jesus was Divine from the beginning.

3. Luke drew upon Jewish Christian sources for his narrative. Brown maintains that some traditions were pre-Lucan, e.g., the names of John the Baptist’s parents, the tendency to compare the conception of Jesus to the conception of previous salvific figures by use of the annunciation pattern, and a virginal conception which took place while Mary was betrothed to Joseph but had not yet come to live with him. Luke combined and developed these traditions, incorporated portraits of John the Baptist and Mary, and constructed an annunciation of John’s conception to parallel the annunciation of Jesus. Later, Luke added four canticles and the story of

Jesus in the Temple in a second stage of composition drawing upon Jewish Christian sources for the canticles (the Magnificat, *Benedictus*, *Gloria*, and *Nunc Dimittis*).¹⁹

4. That Elizabeth was barren however reflects Lucan theology more than history. The motif of barrenness is common in biblical annunciations of birth, and Luke is placing the parents of John within this history. The parallelism with Elkanah and Hannah (Samuel’s parents) and Abraham and Sarah is present and links Zechariah and Elizabeth to God’s acts in Israel. The appearance of the angel Gabriel links Luke’s message to the prophet Daniel (Dan. 8:16 ff. and 9:21 ff.). In Daniel 9:20-21, Gabriel appears at a time of liturgical prayer, in 10:12 he tells the visionary not to fear, and in 10:15 the visionary is struck mute.
5. Luke portrays John as an ascetic, a Nazareth from his infancy (1:15). “Being filled with the Holy Spirit” (1:15) indicates his prophetic vocation, and specifically a vocation like Elijah’s (1:17).²⁰ What Luke says

¹⁹ Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 244-53

²⁰ The Elijah role in Luke is not clear. In the infancy narrative, and perhaps in 7:27, it is associated with

John. Yet such association seems lacking elsewhere in the Gospel. Brown suggests (274-75) the possibility of two different Christian views of the Elijah role, one

here of John is consonant with what he says of him later in 3:1-20 and 7:18-35. The reason for introducing John is to provide a contrast with Jesus, not only to provide the background for the ministry of Jesus. The miracle of Jesus' birth (virginal conception) is also greater than that of John's birth (barren parents). Further, when Elizabeth and Mary met, Elizabeth praised Mary. Yet the virginal conception in Luke plays a different role where it completes the contrast between Jesus and John and the emphasis on the superiority of Jesus. According to Brown, "the entire annunciation including the virginal conception was composed by Luke who gave it the stamp of his theology."²¹

Lessons African Biblical Scholars Can Draw From The Above Theologies:

From the above discussed theologies, African biblical scholars can deduce the following Lessons

1. The name given to the Mother of Jesus or the God bearer has an African link or origin. "The Hebrew form of her name is Miryam, denoting in the Old Testament only the sister of Moses."²² God must have chosen for Mary a name suitable to her high dignity. What has been said about the name Mary shows that for its meaning we must investigate the meaning of the Hebrew form "miryam". Fr Von. Mentions the possibility that "miryam" might be of Egyptian origin. "Moses, Aaron and their sister were born in Egypt; the daughter of pharaoh imposed the name Moses on the child she had saved, hence it is possible that their sister's name was also of Egyptian Origin."²³ This becomes more probable when we consider that that name was not used by any Old Testament woman. But the big question that looms is what made the parents of Mary to choose that name for her if it was of Egyptian origin?

associating it with Jesus and another with John. The Gospel of John, 1:21, does not associate it with the Baptizer. Mark and Matthew do. Perhaps the earlier stage of Luke identified Jesus and Elijah and the later stage attributed the Elijah role to John after stressing Jesus as God's Son. See Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, 318-20 and note on verse 15 on pp. 325-26.

²¹ Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 301-3

²² Maas, Anthony. "The name of Mary". *The catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 15. New York: Robert Appleton Company. 1912.24 Jul. 2015. <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15464a.htm>>.

²³ Fr. Von Hummelauer. In *Exod. Et Levit.* (Paris, 1897),161

And why did other New Testament Hebrew women choose that same name? This question will not eliminate our existing argument, but may suggest that the name must be viewed from both the Egyptian and the Hebraic etymologies. From the Egyptian etymology, the meaning of the word Mary is derived from the Egyptian words Mery or Meryt (cherished, beloved). From the Hebraic etymology, Mary might mean hope (miryam), bitterness (merum), and rebellious (marah) and well nourished (mara). From the above, it becomes clear that bitterness and rebellion cannot be connected to the name of a young girl. Therefore for “hope” (miyam) we can say Mary conceived the hope of Israel and the world at large. For “well nourished” or “perfect” we can say she was indeed the perfect choice for the assignment. For “Mery or Meryt” (cherished and beloved), it clearly agrees with the Angels words to Mary in Luke 1:28 “Hail, thou that art highly favoured”. What African biblical scholars should note is that

“mery or meryt” which to me best explains the true meaning of the name Mary is from an African (Egyptian) etymology. This goes a long way to explain that Africa as a continent has a place so strong in the salvation history of the world. If the Mother of Jesus Christ can be associated with an African name, I see no reason why many Africans will see our native names as inferior to western baptismal names. We should uphold with pride what is ours.

2. The names of John the Baptist’s parents suggest also a great deal of the fulfilment motif of both Matthew’s and Luke’s theologies. Zacharias is the Greek form of the Hebrew personal name Zachariah, meaning, “Yah remembered.” Elisabeth is a personal name meaning, “my God is good fortune” or “my God has sworn an oath.”²⁴ Drawing from the above, we can simply say that the barrenness of Elisabeth was divinely orchestrated by the oath of God to remember His own creatures via the birth of a forerunner (John) who would prepare the way for the coming

²⁴ Holman Bible Dictionary. (Epiphany soft ware: 1991)

of Christ. Hence the name Zacharias shows the remembrance of God brought in fullness by the birth of John and Jesus. Through them, salvation was restored to the human race. African biblical scholars must also note that Elisabeth descended from Aaron. Following the argument of Fr. Von raised above for Mary, the name not the person Aaron might have an Egyptian link. This if combined with the above meaning of Elizabeth, suggest that “God has sworn an oath” of salvation to the world and Africa remains part of that world.

3. As noted above, the theologies of both gospel writers were influenced by the community they were writing to. Notwithstanding, the evangelical character of their respective theologies brings the world (Africa inclusive) into the picture, what the Jews might see as exclusively theirs. Jesus was not only for the Jews but for the world. Each of the above writers had gentile interest. No wonder Matthew recorded that the first to pay homage to Jesus were Gentiles from the East. Therefore, in our attempt to develop our African theology, we

should not substitute the biblical history of Jesus Christ with any other history or see it as having a western concern because, it has Africa in mind. From all said above, we should always know that Africa has been in the very heart and agenda of God.

4. Worthy of note also for African scholars is the geographical motif portrayed by Matthew. When baby Jesus was to be killed by Herod, the Angel appeared and instructed that they should go to Egypt for safety. Baby Jesus was secured in the African soil. One might ask why Egypt? The choice of Egypt by heaven remains a thing which Africans should always remember whenever they take certain actions that run contrary to the peaceful picture created by the infancy narrative. Peace should always be the hallmark of African Christianity and practice. Killings and destructive acts seen today in Africa should be resolved by the message of peace which the infancy narrative portrays for Africa. More so, Africa should be seen as the home for all. A soil that had housed the saviour, can house the world. We can house the world

through various ways and means. This biblical choice of Egypt (Africa) for the security of baby Jesus is today made manifest as Africa is now the new Christendom or the heartland of the Christian faith. Andrew Walls put it thus “the heartlands of the church are no longer in Europe, decreasingly in North America, but in Latin America, in certain parts of Asia, and most important for our present purposes, in Africa.”²⁵

5. Another Important Lesson which African biblical scholars should learn is the ability of appropriately deducing relevant Christological titles that will speak or give our people a better understanding of Jesus. Prominent amongst the Christological titles used by Matthew was “messiah”. This term messiah strikes a message of hope to the Jews to whom he was writing to. They were in serious need of a messiah. Therefore in Africa, which Christological title will be best? This answer can only be gotten by recollecting the voices of Africa scholars discussed above. Africa has

always needed a “liberator”. That was why the black liberation movement came up with the “black Jesus”. “Black goes beyond the colour to signify the commitment of the poor and marginalized who seek to realize their humanity through humble dependence on Jesus Christ and obedience to his radical demands for establishing humanity. Praxis is based on the birth, Life, death and resurrection of Jesus, as the Lord of history, Jesus continues to live in communities in solidarity with them, suffering in every way with them but also inspiring the victory of resurrection as oppressed people are empowered to become agents of their own history”²⁶. Therefore, considering the plight of Africans, I suggest Doctor (onye na gwor oria) and liberator (onye ne wepu madu na nsogbu) as worthy Christologies for Africans.

6. Finally, a baby whose mothers name has an Egyptian etymology and was secured in the African soil can no longer be “welcomed as a guest who

²⁵ A.F. Walls, “Towards understanding Africa’s place in Christian History” in *religion in a pluralistic society*, ed. J.S Pobee (leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976), 180.

²⁶ Diane B. Stinton. *Jesus of Africa: voices of contemporary African christologies*. (New York: orbis book, 2004), 13

will later be a kin.”²⁷ Agreeing with the assertion of Kwame Bediako, “Jesus Christ is not a stranger to our heritage; Jesus is the universal saviour and thus the saviour of the African world.”²⁸ Through faith in Jesus Christ African believers now share in all the promises made to the patriarchs and Israel and the good news “of Christ birth” becomes our story. Yes, this is our story this is our song, praising our saviour all that day long.

Conclusion

From all said above, we can vividly see that History, objective scientific knowledge and a personal experiential faith are necessary if we are to understand Jesus of Nazareth, the earthly Jesus, and the Jesus of history. From birth, this Jesus was also the Jesus of Faith. He was Divinity revealed through humanity. The prologues to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (the infancy narratives), make clear that Jesus was of God and from God from the moment of His conception. “Although we refer to these prologues as infancy narratives,

they do not actually give us information about Jesus’ infancy and childhood. Rather, they give an answer to the question, “Who is Jesus of Nazareth?” that he is the Son of God.”²⁹ The summary of the Christian Gospel and the birth narratives is that God has made himself known through Jesus Christ or that Jesus the son of Mary is the incarnate Son of God for the world.

From all we can see in the infancy narrative, Africa was divinely chosen to secure the messiah. Mary the name of the perfect choice for Jesus’ mother has an Egyptian etymology. Also, the evangelical character of the two Gospels shows that Christ is for all. Therefore, the struggle for the race or lineage of Jesus to Africa is not necessary. Africa has always had a special place in the Agenda of God. Therefore Africans and African biblical scholars should continue to contribute their quota to developing Christian theology for the world. We should never see ourselves as inferior to any other race. Christ is for the world and we are in that world.

²⁷ Udoh a Nigerian Presbyterian minister who suggested that “Jesus be viewed as a guest who when he is welcomed will gradually be perceived as kin view” in *Jesus of Africa: voices of contemporary African christologies*. By Diane B. Stinton (New York: orbis book,2004), 10

²⁸ Kwame Bediako. *Jesus in Africa culture: A ghanian perspective* (Accra: Assempra publishers, 1990),5

²⁹ Joseph Fitzmyer. *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, Anchor Bible 28, p309.

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