

Exploring The Challenges, Remedies And Synergies Of Intergrating Rudolph Bultmanns Existential Hermeneutics To African Hermeneutics With Reference To Inerpreting 1 Samuel 28:1-28.A Term Paper Submitted In Partial Fulfilment Of The Requirements Of Advanced Hermeneutics.

Chesosi Bonface Kimutai

Part time Lecturer, Kabarak University, Department of Theology and Biblical studies and an Anglican Church of Kenya priest.

*Corresponding Author: Chesosi Bonface Kimutai

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ABSTRACT	Article History
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Western conception of theology and hermeneutics has either been uncritically accepted or unreasonably repudiated in the contemporary African Theological discourse. This truth pervades and permeates every field of study related to theology and Biblical studies. Rudolph Bultmann's existential Hermeneutics is not an exceptional to this reality. The term existentialism

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II. THE DEFINATION AND BASIC PRESUPPOSITION OF RUDOLPH BULTMANN'S EXISTENTIALISM IN THE LIGHT ON BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS IN THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

It should be crystal clear that existentialism "is descriptive of a certain type of philosophical thinking rather than a name of a unified school of philosophical thought." This implies that there is a broad spectrum of theologians like Augustine, and Pascal and also novelist such as Dostoevsky and Kafka are branded as existentialists. The general characteristic of existentialists is that they have high premium on subjectivity and denounce the claim the objective truth. ¹We must comprehend the context in which the existentialism philosophy found fertile ground for it to sprout. Existentialism find root in the 19th century after the rationalism of the enlightenment and the disillusionment of scientific progress and enlightenment.

It is utterly impossible to fit the existentialism in one box. However, it is possible to identify the distinguishing features of existentialists. Existentialist thinkers are of different shades that include thinkers like Friedrich Nietzsche, Soren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jasper and Jean Paul Sartre among others. They have radically different perspectives on questions of metaphysics. Hence the divergence of Existentialists is very evident. ²

However, points of convergence are also crystal clear. As the eminent and erudite Anglican theologian John Macquarie asserts that "such motifs as freedom, decision and responsibility. These motifs were evident in all existentialists including Rudolph Bultmann and were the lenses in which they approached the Bible, Theology and Hermeneutics? It is man not the Bible or God that became the ultimate determinant of truth. There was a mishmash of both objective, scientific empirical authentications of truth and human subjectivity and relativity that denies objective truth. This apparent contradiction is evident in the elucidation of Rudolph Bultmann's existential hermeneutics hence we do need to clearly expound, succinctly pointing its inherent weaknesses harnessing

its strengths and synergizing it with African hermeneutics in the interpretation of I Samuel 28:3-28 that is relevant and practical to the African situation and context.

Rudolph Bultmann existential hermeneutics exposes an oscillation between existentialism and scientific objectivity, between subjectivity and rationalism. It is a labyrinth of post modernity which shuns objectivity, Meta narrative and authority and scientific rationalism that is based on empirical experimentation and proof.

Josh Reeves in his incisive article Rudolph Bultmann and demythologizing aptly observes that ³"Rudolph Bultmann is one of the most influential theologians and Biblical scholars of the twentieth century".⁴ He is distinguished for his erudite scholarship in both Theology and Biblical studies. He is foremost remembered for his call to demythologize the New Testament so that Christian gospel may be separated its mythological trappings.

We must categorically affirm that despite the rigorous Biblical scholarship orientation of demythologizing hermeneutics there was a deeply pastoral motivation for it. We must not throw both the baby and bath water in Rudolph Bultmann hermeneutic project. We must seek both areas of convergence and divergence in his Biblical hermeneutics in relation to contemporary hermeneutics in Africa.

The convergence is that Rudolph Bultmann was that he sought to speak to his world. He sought to contextualize and inculturate the Biblical message to be relevant to his audience. He proposed an interpretation of the New Testament that would be relevant and appropriate to the modern man. ⁵

Bultmann sought an interpretation of the Bible that would be able to speak to modern man who do not believe on a three tired universe or miraculous interventions in natural process that is nature cannot be interfered with or be impended it reigns supreme or personality take over by spirit (Holy or otherwise). ⁶ As a result Rudolph formulated a hermeneutical principle of demythologizing to make the gospel relevant to his context in a time where rationalism, enlightenment and significance of science reigned supreme. Bultmann was categorical, that "modern

¹ "Existentialism" James Richmond, Alan Richardson and John Brown, Eds. *A new Dictionary of Christian Theology*, (London, SMC press, 1983), p 201-203.

² -----Existentialism and Bible Interpretation. <https://nitaeskak.Wordpress.com> retrieved on 15 March 2017 at 1545GMT.

³ Josh Reeves, Rudolph Bultmann and Demythologization. *The Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia of modern Western Theology* people.bu.edu/retrieved on 9/02/2017

⁴ "Rudolph Bultmann" R.C Roberts, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, David J Atickson and David H Field, eds (Leicester, England; Intervarsity Press, 1995) 205

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

people thinking in terms of modern science or scientific Philosophy, no longer belief in “three story universe” or apocalyptic eschatology or in miracles. Therefore, the ultimate duty of the interpreters is to take the insight of the Bible which are expressed in mythical language which is the language of the ancient cosmology and reinterpret them into a language relevant to the contemporary world. In a nutshell Bultmann sought to make the Bible relevant by disregarding anything they deemed as pre-scientific such as primitive cosmology, myths and miracles.⁷ While it is plausible that Bultmann sought to make Biblical message relevant by the contemporary hermeneutic principle of demythologizing. It must be critically ascertained that the principle of making the Bible relevant to a particular context is a cardinal principle to an African Biblical exegete. However, relevancy should be tempered with fidelity to the Biblical message without which the relevancy can be a euphemism for personal opinion. It goes without say that that the truth is that the correct Biblical interpretation should consider the text world, the author’s world and the audience world.⁸

The Bultmanns existential interpretation acknowledged and affirmed the significance of the audience world which is the contemporary world. However, the truth is that if that truth is not based on the author’s world and the text world then the interpretation is subjective and may not be based on the fidelity of the Biblical witness. Secondly, this interpretation begins with doubt which is contrary to the African conception of scriptural interpretation, As Zablon Nthamburi and Douglas Waruta noted unlike the Eurocentric hermeneutics that were occupied with the questions of infallibility and relevancy of the Bible. The Africans approached the Biblical hermeneutics with faith and aspect without seeking to defend it or apologize for it.⁹ The African hermeneutics approached the Bible with faith while the Eurocentric approach of interpretation begin with doubt which necessitates that verify every document Vis avis their world view that is rationalistic and scientific. The mantra is that I doubt first then belief later that if my doubt is not contradicted by science. This interpretation has no root in the African society and hence it is not viable in doing African hermeneutics. African Hermeneutics unabashedly

accept spiritual realities without apology. The reality of demon possession, the interaction between the living and the dead in the spirit world, witchcraft and exorcism are approached with the assertion that they are real and they permeate and pervades the World that the African exist and that they have an impact on an individual’s health, wealth and total wellbeing. This is the point of departure from existential hermeneutics that doubts exorcism, miracles, Sorcery and interaction with the dead because they cannot be scientifically vetted or authenticated hence when we encounter Biblical texts with such references according to Rudolph Bultmanns existential hermeneutics it is deemed as mythological and without Historical veracity and authenticity and it doesn’t have correlation with contemporary occurrence.

The second truth is that whereas the Western hermeneutics that is existential is elitist and a preserve of the few intellectual. It is based on formal education and textual criticism. This hermeneutic is not very relevant to the African context that is oral hence the African interpreters are ordinary readers who have an oral world view and harness the residual oral hermeneutic in their readings and interpretation of the Bible.¹⁰ This implies that the African hermeneutics is for practical Christians living and is an enterprise of all Christians. While the Western hermeneutic is a preserve of the few and it is exclusively dependant on writing and documents which sometimes inhibits the operation of the Holy Spirit and individual perspective as it conditions people to the rules of western textual Criticism. The African hermeneutics is an enterprise of the entire Christian Church though sometimes they arm-twist the scripture to fit their whims and fancy but this doesn’t erase the fact that the Bible is perspicuous and it is self interpreting that with the illumination of the Holy Spirit any Christian can interpret the Bible.

The African hermeneutic is emic not etic interpretation. The Western interpretation seeks to have an interpretation that fit to all situations and relevant to all cultures. African hermeneutics is a reaction against Western missionaries and missionary initiated cultures that have Western biblical intellectual context and is important in dealing with real context and situation.¹¹ As a result African hermeneutics is intensely practical it seeks to answer real questions, to

⁸ W Rudolph Tate, *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*: (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991),2.

⁹ Zablon Nthamburi and Douglas Waruta, “*Biblical Hermeneutics in African instituted churches in the Bible in African Christianity*”. Hannah Runoh and John Mwalgo,eds. (Nairobi:Action Publishers, 1997), p 4057

¹⁰ Jonathan Draper, Confessional Western Text centered Bible interpretation and Oral Residual Text”, Semeia,73

<https://www.researchgate.net/Publication/276227400> retrieved on 15 March 2017 at 1422 GMT.

¹¹ David Tuesday Adamo, “The task and distinctiveness of African Biblical Hermeneutic(s)” OTE 281, (2015): p 31-52.

address real issues and to address certain concerns and not only for intellectual assent and for speculation as the Bultmanns existential hermeneutics. African hermeneutics seeks to develop an interpretation that is both relevant and practical. African hermeneutics is aptly defined as the rereading of the Christian scriptural text from a premeditatively Africentric perspective. This implies a prospective of African world view and culture.¹² This Interpretation from the African perspective seeks diverse insights from scripture not one infallible interpretation that is considered authoritative and the rest are considered untenable. Existentialism thrives on subjectivity and diversity this fact is captured in African interpretation which is accepts different interpretation and seeks to glean the different insights in each perspective to enrich the interpretation of a particular text.

This is the motivation of trying to blend the Bultmann existential hermeneutics and integrate into African hermeneutics. The need for dynamic integration which seeks synergy between both global and glocal perspective of hermeneutics, to have an interpretation of the Bible that is both with Biblical fidelity and relevant to the African situation, this will also check the excesses and over subjectivity of African hermeneutics until it becomes a euphemism for personal opinions and whims. There is the need to be objective without being mechanical and losing relevance and an African world views.

The author distinction of African hermeneutics that can even be gleaned from existential philosophy is that it is existential. The African hermeneutics does not claim to be a hundred percent objective but rather it is anchored and dependent on a particular cultural code, World view thought pattern and social location of the location of the interpreter. This implies of necessity that African becomes the center in which the enterprise of interpretation rotates.¹³

Just as Europe was the center in which the interpretation of Bultmann Existentialism interpretation rotated. It seeks relevancy in a particular context. The African interpreters' interest is life question and they bring this life, questions the African interpreters bring them to the text. This is unlike the European-American interpreters who brings

interpretive question into the text. The life question pertain questions of healing protection and success in life while initial interpretive questions that the West bring to the text are question regarding the historical, social and literal dimensions of the text.¹⁴ The African hermeneutics is more focused on the audience world while the Euro-American interpretation is focused on the textual and authors world. The Africans approach the Bible with faith while the European-American interpreters approach the scripture with doubt. The African interpretation is existential and seeks to answer life questions. The European interpretation is abstract and for intellectual accent while the African hermeneutics is intensely pragmatic with ramifications in real life. It does not deny miracles, demon possessions, and interaction between the living and the dead as Bultmann and the West orientations of hermeneutics that discounts anything that cannot be scientifically verified. As a result there is need to synergize the best of both Bultmann existential hermeneutics and African Exegesis in the African Context if the Bible has to make sense in the global audience and African audience without obfuscating the meaning and losing the relevancy.

African hermeneutics seeks to identify Africans and Africa's place in the Bible debunking the myth that the Bible is exclusively a Jewish document but the Bible is also an African document. It is discovered that Africans and Africa is mentioned 1700 times in the Bible and they conclude that it is utterly impossible to exclude Africans for the redemption history of the Bible. It disregards the fabrication that the Bible is prejudiced against Africa and Africans as inventions and fertile imaginations of the modern Western biblical interpreters without social Biblical hermeneutics.¹⁵ While the Bultmanns existential interpretation sought to Europeanize the Bible African hermeneutics seeks to Africanize the Bible. This is the convergence the divergence is that African Hermeneutics Africanizes the Bible by organic exegesis of finding what is African in the Bible and affirming it without obfuscating the fidelity of the Bible witness and message. It asserts the inherent connection between the African culture and the Bible.

¹² David Tuesday Adamo, *Explorations in African in African Biblical Studies* (Eugene, Oregon: WIPF and Stock and stock publishers, 2001), 6.

¹³ David .T. Adayemo "What is African Biblical Studies" in *Decolonization of Biblical interpretation in Africa*, Samuel O Abogunrin and J O Akao, eds (Ibadan: Nigeria: Nigeria association of Biblical Studies, 2005), p 17-31.

¹⁴ Gerald o West, *"Interrogating the comparative paradigm in African Biblical scholarship" in African and European Readers of the Bible in Dialogue* Hans de wit and Gerald o West, Eds, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2009), 37-64.

¹⁵ Vincent Wimbush, *"Scripture Strangers: the making of an Africanized Bible post colonial interventions"*, *Journal of Post Colonial Theory and Theology*, Tat Siong Benny Liew, ed (Sheffliled: Sheffliled Pheonic Press 2009). P 162-172.

This is unlike the Bultmanns existential hermeneutics that do mechanical eisegesis and impose Europe to the Bible which may compromise the fidelity to God's word in doing anachronism by interpolating twentieth century concepts to the Bible.

It is true that African hermeneutics may adopt a comparative mode and this methodology the Biblical text, religion and culture and with the African text, religion and culture. This comparison brings the dynamic relevance of the African culture to the study of the Old Testament and the New Testament to the Africans and African. ¹⁶This interpretation is of necessity a comparative approach where the bible is compared analogous with the African culture and tradition in order to vet elements of African tradition and culture to ascertain what is repudiated by the Bible to be shunned, what is acceptable to be affirmed for the African culture is a product of general revelation and is encapsulate with elements of truth from God. However it does not contain the whole truth that is found in the verbal plenary full revelation in the Bible that contains the absolute authority in Christian orthodoxy and praxis. The African interpretation does not only learn to compare the African Culture with the Bible but also contrast it with other interpretations from across the globe. This is in order to avoid the danger of becoming myopic, parochial and self serving. This is the interpretation that can be used to justify cultural practices against the Bible, oppressive regimes, and emasculation of women. Since hermeneutics is a human enterprise it can be misused and may be a guise to justify disobedience. Hence African exegesis should always be constant dialogue with other forms interpretations like the Bultmanns existential exegesis to learn from it, to check its excesses to enhance the Christian fellowship in seeking a better understanding of Scripture. However this is not a license to uncritically ape other hermeneutics at the expense of the African perspective. The African centered hermeneutics must of necessity be evaluatory. This is an approach that seeks to critically examine the African hermeneutics in light of other global hermeneutics. This implies of necessity that African hermeneutics is not only glocal but also it must have a global thrust. This approach seeks to evaluate the African hermeneutics along side with other global hermeneutics approach.¹⁷ In a nutshell the

African hermeneutics must have both a local flavor and global thrust for the interpretation to be authentic and truthful. As a result the researcher will seek to utilize the synergy between African Hermeneutics and Bultmanns existential Hermeneutics in interpreting 1 Samuel 28:3-28 in a way that will be relevant to the African Context, conscious of the Africanness in the Bible, in dialogue with other hermeneutics perspectives at the global level. This is the perspective that I will utilize in interpreting 1 Samuel 28:3-28 without forgetting the cardinal hermeneutical principles of the text world, the audience world and the author's world. As a result it will be appropriated with the perspicuous nature of the scripture principle of interpreting scripture which implies that scripture is revealed by divine initiative to be comprehended not to confound. The scripture interpret scripture principle coupled with the remote and total context of the scripture to get the message of the Bible on the intermediate state of death as taught in 1 Samuel 28:3-28 and the teaching of the same in the entire Bible. Therefore Hermeneutics will be augmented with Exegesis, Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology.

III. AN INTERPRETATION 1 SAMUEL 28: 8-28 IN THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

The misconceptions on the intermediate state of death are diverse emanating from diverse emanating from both Africa culture and western orientation. However what is prophylactic is doing on intense, elaborate and concise exegesis. The exegesis normally vivifies the subject matter as Biblical theology crystallizes it. The two Biblical theology and exegesis supplements rather supplant each other in the study of theological subject. The dogma of the intermediate is not an exception to this maxim as a result would endeavor to examine 1 Samuel 28:8-28 to galvanize the teaching of the intermediate state of death. This is only possible by a conclusive, intensive and elaborate exegesis of 1 Samuel 28:8-28

The first and second book of Samuel were joined so as to make one book that was referred to as the book of Samuel which was more apt than the current form where the subject matter of second Samuel was subsequent to the demise of the eminent and resilient Judge Samuel. The book of Samuel in the vulgate and Septuagint translation of the Bible was referred to as the first and second kings. This title could be appropriate except that the first chapter of Samuel does not refer to any king but to judge Samuel's from his parentage. The classification of this book as one

¹⁶ Michael G Swanepoel, "An Encounter between Old Testament Theology and African Concepts of God," Theologica Viatorium 18(1990) P 20-30 .

¹⁷ David Tuesday Adayemo, "The task and Distinctiveness of African Biblical Hermeneutics."

www.scielo.org.za retrieved on 25 April 2017 at 1334 GMT.

among historical books in the Christian Bible and as among former prophets in the Jewish scripture are arbitrary, confounding and could be misleading. There are elements of both prophesy and history in the book, hence both is historic and prophetic and are researchers considered opinion is that the book of Samuel for both first and second Samuel is appropriate though not pragmatic. This book has a very pivotal role in the salvation history it is a book that heralds transition from the reign of Judges to Kingship. It also is the threshold of the commencement of the ministry of prophets. Samuel had the distinct honor of being both a Judge and a prophet. The book is instrumental in establishing the messianic hope through the Davidic covenant. As are suit the book of Samuel is of monumental significance in transition to kingship and in its anticipation of the messianic hope.

The African Bible commentary is categorical that Jewish tradition regards Samuel as the author of the book¹⁸. However it is implausible that Samuel authored his death and historical events after his death. We must hasten to say that certain sources of the book may have been authored by Samuel. These portions are ascribed to Nathan and Gad based on the influence from 1 chronicles 29:29. The Bible commentators have surmised from statements like that of 1 Samuel 2:26, 31 to justify and bulwark the position that it was either written by the judge Samuel or a contemporary. However other commentators after vetting 1 Samuel 6: 18, 12: 5 and 27:6 are persuaded that the book may refer to a later age it is probably that these supposed marks of an after period were interpolations of Ezra.¹⁹ The researchers considered opinion is that while the first portion of the book of Samuel may be ascribed as a transitional leader between the disorganized and anarchical loosely organized systems of judges and the emergency of Israel as state under a king²⁰ It is also clearly evident from 1 Chronicles 29:29 that the ancient editors at their disposal various sources that they could exhaust in their writing. The researcher is aware that there were many sources but to mention very succinctly the hypothetical sources that are not existent today is hyperactive speculation. It is true that the book is a product of an editor who exercised covert rather than overt influence from the sources. This is unlike the editor of Judges and 1 and 2 Kings. This is evident by the minimal interpretation, advising or exhortation. There is also remarkable vivid firsthand experience in the book. This makes us to conclude that apart from minor alteration that can be attributed to the

post exilic period the book of Samuel seems to date close to the end of David's reign.²¹ This may not be very accurate because of the editors theme of defending the legitimacy of Davidic kingship. The editor also had a pejorative bias to the Northern kingdom, this makes the research to concur with the eminent old testament scholar that the date and general compilation of the book of Samuel is uncertain but it may be that the anonymous editor or editors wrote Samuel with the aid of certain literature sources and cycles of tradition somewhat after the founding of the Northern kingdom somewhat about 920-900Bc. The general perspective of the work seems to favor Judah rather than then Israel as the home of the compiler or compilers through this fact cannot be structured with any degree of certainty.²² As we examine this book of Samuel we find that there is a striking similarity between the contemporary situation in Africa and situation of Saul. The propensity to lapse to traditional belief when confronted by a predicament is real. The reality of the spiritual world and the interaction between the dead and the living looms large. The inconsistency between orthodoxy and praxis is real Saul condemns the witches yet he unabashedly consults them. This fact is succinctly expressed apt remark of Tuborikoh Adayemo when he affirms the church in Africa is "one mile long and one inch deep".²³ The kind of divination in this text was common in Palestine and Middle East and is still prevalent in Africa. This is where the spirits of the ancestors are often invoked in times of trouble and difficulty or by those who sought to know what future portends for them.²⁴

In this context Saul was facing a challenging time. The philistine had crossed the borders and came into Shorem at the center of the country (28:39). They had chased the elusive wily and the heir apparent David who had gained popularity and Saul was becoming more isolated and uncertain, As a result the desire to hear the word of God was overwhelming so that he could be certain of his predicament. He could not go to the priest who Doeg had killed the (22:7-19) as a result all the avenues for getting a word from the Lord had

²¹, William Sanford Lessor, David Allan Hubbard and Fredric WM Bush, Old Testament survey,(Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM Eerdmans publishers ,1982), 228- 282.

²² H Roland Kenneth; Introduction of Old Testament,(Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM Eerdsman,1969),223.

²³ Tukunboh Adeyemo, Salvation in African Traditional Religion (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1978),Pg 8

²⁴ Tukunboh Adeyemo, Ed, Africa Bible Commentary (Nairobi, Kenya: World Alive Publishers, 2006), P 372 .

¹⁸ Adeyemo, Ed: 2006,325

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid.

been blocked. This predicament catapulted the melancholic and erratic King Saul to seek help from a charlatan the witch at Endor.

A session with a medium of described as in 28:11-14 a familiar figure appears who may genuinely have been the spirit of Samuel, but who could equally had have been a demon taking an appearance. Sir Samuel George Frazier is categorical that through the exerting of the vocal talent the witch may have caused to issue apparently from the ground hollow and squeaky voice which the king mistook for the accents of the deceased sear.²⁵

Choop Sup Bae and P J van der Merwe in their very illuminating article Ancestor worship identified five representative interpretation of this text of I Samuel 28:3-24. The first being the psychological interpretation that uses ecstasy as means of conjuring the illusion of Samuel.²⁶ This interpretation is exclusively dependent on a word view that denies the spiritual world and makes this readily to be a product of the medium fertile imaginations that is based on the medium may have used her general knowledge and psychological insight to convey the purported Samuel's message. The interpretation is deficient in that it denies the spiritual world secondly it fails to acknowledge the plain meaning of the text that the medium was still shocked by what she saw with Samuel coming from the death. There seems to be an intelligible and coherent conversation between Saul and Samuel. Hence these salient reasons make the researcher to dispute the psychological interpretation. Secondly some scholars argue that this is purely a work of deception.²⁷ The underlying presupposition is that witches are masters of disguises, impersonation and mimicker. This position affirms that the vision was only witnessed by the witch not Saul. The identification was that of an old man which could be anybody. Therefore the purposed prophesy May have been the witch using generating statement and allusion based a prediction and to put it in the word of Samuel. This interpretation cannot explain the incontrovertible truth of the prophetic message of Samuel that came to pass. Secondly it was abundantly clear that the old man in question was the seer Samuel. Fourthly the conversation between Samuel and Saul seems to have been progressed naturally without the covert or overt

influence of the witch. Fifthly this position doubts the verbosity of scripture and the reliability of its witness. As a result this view is untenable and the researcher disputed it.

The third position is that is that of the satanic imposition. This is a view that has been held from the primitive church to the contemporary saints like erudite saint Augustine of Hippo and the Angelic doctor Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther the father of protestant Reformation and systematic Theologian John Calvin advocated for such a position; this view is categorical that the demon masquerades as Samuel. This view is not based on the clear exegesis of the text but on reading into the text. It has a western worldview that completely discounts the view that the relationship and interaction between those in the world and the dead.²⁸

The Intermediate State of Death is a mystery wrapped in an enigma. It is the time between death and resurrection the challenge, however, is whether it is a place or a state. Death and life after evokes intense fear, religious feelings and probing the unknown. This is compounded by the fact that there is no foolproof incontrovertible evidence of one mortal human who has reverted from death. As a result this subject matter is approached with superstition, desperation unparalleled and pseudo information. The researcher considered opinion is that the intermediate state of death generates a lot of interest yet it is not augmented with elaborate research and properly streamlined into biblical exegesis ,biblical theology and ,African contextualized Theology. Conventional systematic theology is much dichotomized into units that are remotely or superficially connected. Hence such teaching as that of the intermediate state of death is dealt with flippantly and in a western oriented fashion that is virtually irrelevant to the African world view. The literatures of the African theologians are reactive which delve into the African culture without attempting to integrate Biblical Exegesis, Biblical Theology and African contextualized Theology. This is the lacuna that the researcher has sought to fill in the study of this passage of scripture; it can be clearly deduced from the text.

IV. Conclusion and Personal Application

It goes without say that any intellectual study or research that lacks practical relevance is an exercise in futility. This is elaborate study of both the critical aspects of both Rudolph Bultmann existential hermeneutics contains germs of truths that can be integrated into the contemporary African

²⁵ James George Frazer, *Folk –Lore in the Old Testament* (London; Macmillan and Co Ltd, 1923), p 291 – 303.

²⁶ Choop Sup Bae, *Ancestor Worship and challenges it posses to Christian Mission and Ministry*. A PhD Thesis submitted to Pretoria University, 2006). P 131-136.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

hermeneutics. In the same breath there are concepts of Bultmanns existential hermeneutics that needs to be shunned and repudiated in the strongest terms possible for it manipulates to fit certain preconceived ideas and intentions of the exegete hence leading to relativism and subjectively and the expense of the objective truth of God's word.

There is very indispensable aspect of Bultmann existential hermeneutics is that it sought to make the Biblical message relevant to a particular context. The immutable word of God was made to address issues in the mutable word of God was made to address issues in the mutable contemporary word. This interpretation is that context sensitive. Second undeniable truth is that Bultmanns existential sought to address the life questions. It sought to be relevant to particular needs pastorally it is from this study that I have gleaned to be contextual in both homiletics and hermeneutics. As a result this study has impressed upon the researcher for the Biblical interpretation to be relevant to the context and appropriate in answering in three real life questions of the audience. This is prophylactic against ivory tower intellectual Exegesis that only seeks to answer Exegetical questions without relevancy practical realities of the audience. This implies that Exegesis should be intensely practical and completely relevant.

The second lesson we deduce from the study is the application of hermeneutics principles in real situation as we appropriated the principles gleaned in the study in the interpretation of 1 Samuel 28:3-28.

The ultimate hermeneutic lessons that we can deduce from Bultmann Existential hermeneutics, African hermeneutics and its application and appropriation in the 1 Samuel 28: 3-25 is that if any the effective it needs to be in fidelity with the truth of God word and the total context of scripture. Secondly, the interpretation should be applied to a particular context and be relevant to dynamics of the context. Thirdly, it must at all cost avoid Exegesis which is bringing other messages into the scriptures as Bultmanns Existential hermeneutics vainly attempt to do. Fourthly, the Bible must integrate the three worlds Bible interpretation which are the author's world, the context world and the audience world. The three world of Bible interpretation is equally important, none is to be supplanted but they should be supplementing each other. The three are inextricably intertwined. Fifthly, the Bible interpreter should be in constant dialogue with diverse views of particular interpretation to enrich his interpretation rather than being subjective, self-conceited and having personal opinion as a Euphemism for Exegesis. As a result African hermeneutics must learn from other

hermeneutics from the entire globe to enrich its findings and make them to be globally tenable.

The lessons that we learn from the critical study of 1 Samuel 28:3-28 is that the spiritual world is real in both the African context and the Biblical message. Secondly, the souls of those who have died are conscious in this intermediate state of death. Thirdly, those in the spiritual world are aware of the happening of this world. This can also be inferred from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus where the rich man was conscious and concerned about the living relatives. The Bible in Hebrews 12:1 is clear that we are surrounded by a large cloud of witnesses who are in the intermediate state of death. This argument is buttressed by Jesus interaction with Moses and Elijah during the transfiguration. It also seems that the death has a spiritual body that enable a person in the intermediate state not to be limited in space. This was a shadow of the resurrected body of Christ that would go through walls, not limited by body.

This study recommends that this observation cannot be taken dogmatically. There is need for further research on the interaction between the soul of the dead and the living in light of Biblical witness. Secondly, the Catholic doctrine of the intercession of the saints needs to be examined vis a vis its relation with entire Christian doctrines, ministry and missions of Church.

The Western oriented Rudolph Bultmann existential hermeneutics sought to make the Bible speak to its European audience. It is equally true that Bultmann existentialism dilutes the Biblical message and had the Biblical message condensed to fit the Western situation. The point of convergence between the existentialism hermeneutics and African Hermeneutics that the researcher sought is to make the Bible relevant to a particular context in this regard the African context. The divergence is that African hermeneutics seeks to maintain the immutability of the word of God the Bultmanns existentialism understood the Bible as mutable and its message could be changed to suit the context or the whims of the interpreter.

In the interpretation of 1 Samuel 28:3-23 we have deduced that the reality of the spiritual world. The souls of those who exist in the intermediate state are conscious and there is a possibility by divine enablement, either by memories of the living and dreams for the dead to communicate with living. The dead are not detached from the living as the Western Theologizing implies and that any association with the dead in remembrance, memorial service and in any relation is diabolic, unchristian and a doctrine emanating from the abyss.

The reality of 1 Samuel 28 can be aptly summed by the

assertion of the erudite Methodist Exegete Adams Clark in his illuminating commentary who clearly sums up the lesson from this Bible text the candidly affirms that:

I believe there is a supernatural and spiritual world, in which human Spirit, both good and bad, lives in a state of consciousness. I believe there is an invisible world, in which various orders of spirits, not human, live and act. I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God, in laws of their place of residence, have intercourse with this world, and become visible mortals. I believe that the woman of Enchor had no power over Samuel; and that no incantation can avail over any human disembodied spirit. I believe that Samuel did actually appear to Saul, and that he was sent by the mercies of God to warn the infatuated King of his approaching death, that he may have an opportunity to make peace with his God. I believe that the woman found, from the appearance that her real or pretended charms had no effect and that what now took place came from different disposition of things from which she was conversant. I believe that direct, circumstantial and unquiet vocable orders were not delivering things which neither humans nor diabolic wisdom can for see or penetrate: that the defeat of the Israelites and the death of Saul and his three sons on the following day, were matters which from their nature, would only be known of God himself; and that no demon or bad spirit could be employed in such a transaction.²⁹

This interpretation is consistent with the Biblical witness and the African world view. It is imperative that we accept that the interaction, intercourse between the living and the spirits in the spiritual world is possible though it should not be manipulated, used for selfish intentions and not to be by human initiative. This is consistent with the total context of the scripture where Jesus talked with Moses and Elijah during the transfiguration (Matthew 17 1-10) though they were in the intermediate state of death and they appeared in physical representation. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 is categorized that the soul of the departed and conscious in the intermediate state of death. They also have needs and desires. There are also boundaries and limits that the dead cannot pass in the intermediate state of death. The message purported to from those in the dead should not contradict the message of God's word. The souls of those who are in intermediate state may plead for those relation that are living but the pleadings are not affirmed in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. It is also illogical to assume that souls are conscious but doing nothing. The African context believes that those

in the spirit world are conscious and are interested in the living upholding Ethos and values of the community. The Biblical reference of being surrounded by the cloud of witnesses of Hebrews 12: 1 may buttress this concept. It is of necessity that we need to study the African traditional concept of life after death, the Roman Catholic concept of the intercession of saints and the Biblical review of the intermediate state of death in view of 1 Samuel 28:3-28.

This interpretation that is both Biblically authentic and relevant to the African context and situation has been deduced from amalgamating the synergy between relevancy in Bultmann's existential hermeneutics and the African sensitive hermeneutics. This is the hermeneutics that will make the Bible to be relevant to the African context without losing the inherent Biblical message. The message of the Bible should be incarnated into the African context just like Christ and Partake of the African nature without its sinfulness so as they effectively speak to the Africans situation. This is the truth that we derived from Bultmann's existential hermeneutics but not forgetting to capture the truth of the Biblical message that Bultmann's existential hermeneutics sought to minimize or compromise. It is true that no Biblical Exegete is a hundred percent object, we approach the Bible with presuppositions among them the belief in the spiritual world, the belief in life after death, the respect and trust in scripture, the belief in demonology the interaction of the living, the dead and the unborn, the communion of saints and life everlasting. This inextricably African belief must be incorporated in the African hermeneutics we need to blackenize and Africanize the Bible for it to be relevant to the Africans as the Bultmann's existential hermeneutics sought to westernize the Bible to make it relevant to the Western world without losing the fidelity to the Biblical message the immutable word must be interpreted correctly to be relevant to the mutable world.

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