

TESTING THE THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF INCARNATION

AN EXTRACT FROM the MYTH OF GOD INCARNATE

General Introduction

This paper is out to criticize the second part of the book entitled: *The Myth of God Incarnate* edited by John Hick. There are four essays in this part of the contributed by Leslie Houlden, Canon of Christ, University of London; Don Cuilt, a University Lecturer in Divinity and Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; John Hick, is H.G. Wood Professor of Theology at Birmingham University. The epilogue was added by Dennis Ninesam of Wardon of Keble college, Oxford.

The other two contributors in the book are Michael Goulder, a staff Tutor in Theology in the Department of Extramural Studies at Birmingham University. The second person is Frances Young, a Lecturer in New Testament Studies at Birmingham University.

The book has ten chapters, two chapters were contributed each by Maurice Wiles, Frances Young and Micheal Goulder, while the rest contributed a chapter each. According to the back page note, *The Myth of God Incarnate* is important for two reasons:

1. It is to study “the nature of language of Christian doctrine which Christians profess in the creeds and the languages of worship.
2. It raises the question of how Christianity relates with other religious of the world...In the same back page note, evangelicals have described these theologians as ‘seven against Christ’ because of their destructive approach to a long standing Christology of biblical base.

Although these seven theologians do not have a unifying position about Jesus Christ as the incarnate of God, they however try to explain that the tradition belief that Jesus is God who became flesh is no longer intelligible to the modern mind and society. They believe that “the classical doctrine of the incarnation belongs not to the essence of Christianity, but only to a certain period of Church history, now ended..”¹ In their writings they claim to have tested the source and the development of the doctrine of God incarnate. They attribute the source of this doctrine to both a non-biblical, mystical and syncretistic world view as well as formulations by the Bible authors, especially those of

¹Van A. Harvey, A. Handbook of Theological Terms (New York: Collier Macmillan Pushing Company, 1964), 130.

the New Testament. The writers of *The Myth of God Incarnate* believe that the source of the doctrine of incarnation is heavily dependent on Graeco Roman religious rather than the teachings of Jesus himself. According to them, the doctrine evolved out of the power and political struggle prevalent at the time.

The writer of this paper opines without any rejection that the book is really an attack on Christ, and it reduces Him to a mere man, who cannot even save himself. The book despises the uniqueness of Christ, the eye-witness accounts of the apostle and the possibility of anything supernatural about Jesus of Nazareth and the Holy Scriptures. It is obvious that their premise is a total disbelief of the supernatural which has been the trend since the enlightenment age. The book is an expression of extreme modernism or liberalism in Christian Theology. It is calculated attempt to demolish the old foundations for the belief in God who became flesh as expressed by the Nicene and Chalcedonia Creeds, and as claimed by Jesus Christ of Nazareth. In sum, this paper takes a critical look at the second part of the book — *The Myth of God Incarnate*, which the editor calls “Testing the Theological Development,”

The Creed of Experience

This essay, which covers pages 125-132, was contributed by Dr. Leslie Houlden. His objective is to find out “the status of the accounts of the New Testament christologies which are offered to us.” (P. 126) He views the traditional use of the titles of Jesus as inadequate for expressing Christology today. He suggests that we should use each New Testament? And, if so why?

The method which Houlden proposes (which he admits has many limitations) is to identify and analysis each New Testament writer’s belief about Jesus. Houlden’s presupposition is that the New Testament has many Christologies, depending on each writer and authors like Paul sometimes have different christologies among their books. Using his presupposition, Houlden postulates two stages of theological creativity as experiential and creedal. Although he says that these two stages quickly follow or accompany each other and cannot be neatly divided, this paper writer has separated these for the sake of critical examination. One major weakness of Houlden’s theory is that he did not discuss, as he originally promised to do, how experiential and creedal modes affected the formation of Paul’s Christology.

Experiential Model of Christology

Houlden said that the experimental mode is liable to imprecation and inconsistency because of its use of descriptive and factual religious language. Houlden believes that in the experiential mode of theology Jesus was “the agent whereby experience of God enlarged and transformed. In this sense Christology is essentially parasitic upon theology... The titles of Jesus were then at the experiential stage, not labels attached to his person but oblique statements about God” (pp. 130e-131).

Although Houlden reinterpreted some titles of Jesus in order to save Christology parasitical upon theology, the correct understanding of those titles by Jesus’ contemporaries shows that the titles were not parasitical upon theology. For instance, it is generally both the Jews of Judaism and early Christians agreed that the son of Man is meant to be a specific Messiah.²

In theology it can be proven that the son of man, as used by Jesus equally means the Son of God and to be the same God to Jesus contemporaries. Furthermore, Jesus categorically says, “I and the father are one” (John 10:30). So, the deity of Jesus expressed in the Christological titles is precise, consistent and decisive. These titles are not in an experiential mode as far as the biblical records are concerned.

The Credal Mode of Christology

Once we are able to interpret the titles of Jesus as an experiential stage of theology, Houlden considers the Nicene and Chalcedonia creeds to be improper and incorrect language about God. But (as mentioned above), the Christological titles are precise, consistent, decisive and revelational, as set forth in the Bible, then the Nicene and Chalcedonia creeds are appropriate because they are based on biblical truth.

Again in the spirit of the definition of Chalcedon, historic Christology does not attempt to explain the mystery of the incarnation but to make assertions which protects its authenticity.³

Houlden suggests that we should abandon the Nicene and Chalcedon definitions because they pose some questions like: In what sense was Jesus unique? How was he both divine and human? How was he God incarnate? (p. 131). Houlder said what we should do is to

²Ibid

³Bernard L. Hans, *An Evangelical Christology: Ecumenic and Historical* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 87.

ask ourselves as individuals: “What must I say about Jesus when as a result of him, by innumerable routes, I have been brought to that experience of God which has been my lot and privileges?” (p. 131).

First, we must say that a lot has been written to explain how Christ was unique based on the Bible, and a lot has been written to prove the deity of Jesus. The problem is not that questions about God’s incarnation are not adequately treated but that the liberals refuse to believe the biblical records and the concerted efforts of biblical theologians. Concerning Houlden’s proposal for purely individual subjective interpretations of whom Jesus is to us, using the creed of experience and the general agreement of God’s involvement with the world, it would be very difficult if not almost impossible to formulate personal creeds that will make Christ less than what is stated in Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds if we are faithful to the biblical record of Jesus. The way to have a Jesus that is less than “the word of God incarnate” is to first deny that the biblical records concerning Jesus are historically true. This thesis writer believes that any person who denies the truth of the historical record concerning Jesus in the Bible is not a Christian because true Christianity is based on the authority, infallibility and inspiration of the Bible. So, we return to the Old and timeless as authoritative for our corporate and individual creeds and this authority indicates that Jesus is both fully divine and fully man, fully divine so that he may bring God to man and fully man that he may bring man to God- Hallelujah!

“The Christ of Christendom”

In this essay, Don Cupitt argues that “the classical doctrine of the incarnation belongs, not to the essence of Christianity, but only to a certain period of church history, now ended...” (p. 134). So as a preliminary to what he considers to be the rise and breakdown of the orthodox doctrine of Christ, he picked some churchmen’s error like the icons of John of Damascus (c. 675-749) and Theodore the Studite (759-826 AD). But Cupitt’s arguments are baseless because there has always been disagreement within Christendom between those who would like to be faithful to what the Bible teaches and those who want to influence the church with human theories. And the result has always ended in preserving the biblical truth. Like today, for example, where Don Cupitt’s interpretation of Jesus of Nazareth differs from that of C.F. Moule, the author of *the origin of Christology*, yet both claim to be Christians. The test therefore, for every Christian doctrine does not depend on who is propounding it but what the Bible (truly) says.

The Rise of the Orthodox Doctrine of Christ

Cupitt believes that the classical doctrine of Christ developed during the emergence Christian art (iconoclasts) as a complex process by which the Christian faith was paganized because of political needs and pressures. The interaction of Christianity with the state under Constantine may be viewed either negatively or positively. However, Cupitt viewed it negatively. He points to Eusebius's political theology of Byzantium in which he indicates that, "as God is to cosmos, so the king is to the state." And that the divine logos indwells the kings, validating their authority. And finally Jesus was seen as the universal Cosmic Emperor, therefore, refocusing the entire imperial cult and ideology on Christ, while in return Christ crowned his earthly deputy so when the dogma of Christ developed, the Emperors saw it as a matter of high political importance so they enforced it. `

The refute Cupitt's speculation, we find that, what we have as creeds today were already implicit in the first century Christians' belief, in that they worshipped Jesus as Lord. This can be seen in what is considered to be an early church hymn in Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave the name that is above every name that at the name Jesus *every knee should bow*, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and *every tongue confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (NIV).

It is therefore obvious that the worship of Jesus as king was not systematically derived from reign of Constantine nor any of the succeeding emperors. Philippians 2:9-11 Harmonizes with Jesus' assertion after His resurrection. "Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Matt. 28:18 (NIV) Jesus had been the king of the cosmos from eternity. For Jesus to be worshipped he must be God, as Isaiah 45:21-23 says:

...Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no God apart from as a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: *Before me every knee will bow by me every tongue will swear.*

Paul's letter to the Philippians, which was written about twenty-five years after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, shows that he had already been recognized and worshiped as the Incarnated God.

However, the need to explicitly and officially declare that Jesus is God came when Arius, having been influenced by philosophy which held that Christians are scandalous in the worship of a created being, “suggested that Jesus, while no doubt the highest being under God, was not actually himself divine... was itself a creature...” This led to a theological controversy which incidentally also led to theological development.⁴ Arius was condemned, and the first ecumenical creed was enacted that affirmed the deity of Jesus. “But it cannot be said there was yet any precise and clear conception of personality.”⁵ It followed, therefore, that within the ranks of those who affirmed the deity of Jesus came Apollinarius, the first who attempted to define the two natures of the person of Jesus Christ. His suggested formula produced a confused Jesus who is neither God nor man. This gave rise to another stage of controversy which resulted in the enactment of the Chalcedonia creed.

Constantine, the Christian emperor, reigned during the Arius controversy, but he did not take an active part in the theological debates. Constantine’s contribution to the formation of the doctrine of Christ, in the opinion of this writer, was that, according to province of God, he supported the outcome of those debates.

What Constantine did was to reverse measures of persecution against Christians in his area of jurisdiction.⁶ He also gave full restitution for the church properties lost during persecution by his predecessors. In one way or the other he proclaimed “himself a potential liberator for persecuted Christians elsewhere.”⁷ Constantine, even after becoming a Christian, was only concerned for the outward appearance of the church on one hand “and on the other hand his inattention to its spiritual meaning.”⁸ This implies that, the church was able to adequately deal with spiritual matters without any interference by Constantine or by the other emperors that followed him. It is not true, therefore, that the Nicene and Chalcedon creeds were influenced by political situations, as Cuppit claims.

⁴Butler, “Jesus and Later Orthodoxy.” In the Truth of God Incarnate 22-97

⁵J.F Bethune- Baker, An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon (London: Nethuen & Co. Ltd.

⁶Ramsay MacMullen, Crosscurrents in World History: Constantine (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969), P. 103-104.

⁷ Timothy D. Barnes. Constantine and Eusebius (USA: Harvard University Press, 1981), P. 28.

⁸Ibid.,160.

The Breakdown of the Doctrine of Christ

Cuppit considers the interpretation of the Chalcedonia creed in the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries as the beginning of the collapse of Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. According to his analysis, it started with an orthodox believer, H. P. Liddon, who *The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (1865). And by the time of Liddon's successor, Charles Gore (1853-1932), the Chalcedonia creed has been reinterpreted. Without going into the technical ways in which Liddon and Gore interpreted the Chalcedon creed, we can clear say that Cuppit is wrong in claiming that the orthodoxy Chalcedon has broken down. Today, evangelicals still affirm the validity of the Chalcedonia creed. Christopher Butler, a reputable Christian scholar, still confesses that:

Our faith is in a person with a history that is uniquely his; we assent to the formula of Chalcedon because, if we deny its truth, we deny the very reasons why this person is indeed our Saviour, our Brother, and our Lord.⁹

The above statement is what any genuine Christian who knows the true essence of Christianity will confess. This thesis writer knows of no other confession that could do justice to the second Person of the Trine God, Jesus Christ. Failure to affirm this creed, in the opinion of this writer, is due to one or two reasons: (1) a lack of understanding of the purpose of the creed and (2) the effect of the enlightenment age on some (so called) orthodox Christian.

Concerning Gore's (1853-1932) inability to fully comprehend Chalcedonia creed, the problem is that he was seeking for a rationalistic intelligibility of that creed rather than its biblical proof. And the next logical step in this reductionistic reasoning is that by the contributors of *The Myth of God Incarnate* who did not just stop at tampering with the creed (as Gore did) but totally abandoned it, making the same claim of unintelligibility. And after attempting that, they tried to destroy the originality of biblical Christology by falsely attributing it to pagan source.

Myth in Theology

The chapter entitled "Myth in Theology," which covers pages 148-166 of *The Myth of God Incarnate*, is contributed by Maurice Wiles. The word "myth," which characterizes the title of the book, is especially discussed for the first time. Wiles agree that the word, 'myth' has "a loose and elusive character." "He, however, attempts in this essay to define the term "and the appropriateness of using it in a Christological context." (p. 148).

⁹Ibid

The Introduction of Myth in Nineteenth Century and its Recent Theological Uses

Wiles draw our attention to Keightley's first definition of the term "myth" in 1831 as: "The mythology of a people consists of the various popular traditions and legendary tales which are to be found among them." Strauss used the term in his book, *Life of Jesus*, which describes three types of myth as historical, philosophical, and poetical. However, Wiles says that "it seems to me reasonable to insist that myth maybe basically historical in origin but that their historical basis may be either very slight or entirely non-existent." (P. 150) Miles makes extensive reference to Strauss' assertion that the New Testament was consciously fabricated (myth) by the early Christian communities.

One important observation to make about Strauss' assertion is that it comes from the fact that he rejects the supernatural life, miracles, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ because there is no "scientific" proof for them. Born in the nineteenth century, Strauss is too far away to know what took place in the first century if he does not believe the historical record of Jesus in the Bible. The New Testament is the only book solely devoted to the life of Jesus and His impact on us.

Wile says that the early discussions about myth were not precise. He therefore makes a positive evaluation of myth. Wile's cites Baden Powell's definition of myth as:

'a doctrine expressed in a narrative form, an abstract moral or spiritual truth dramatized in action and personification, where the object is to enforce faith not in the parable but in the moral. "Thus, he concludes, every dogma is more or less a myth, as it is necessarily conveyed in analogical language and anthropomorphic action."¹⁰

One evaluation we can make of both Strauss's and Powell's definition of myth they relates to the Christian faith is that, while Strauss is very negative about Christian mysteries, Powell is subtle in describing the expression of Christian mysteries as "abstract," that is, in other words Christ's incarnation has no historical foundation. Both of them arrived at these definitions with Christian doctrine in the back of their minds, either to attack them as Strauss does or to reinterpret them as Powell does. Their definitions are therefore, in the opinion of this paper writer, not valid. To be exact, Keightley's definition of myth is more correct.

¹⁰Baden Powell, *The Order of Nature* (1889), pp. 275, 349, 341 cited by Maurice Wiles, "Myth in Theology" in the *Myth of God incarnate*, P. 154.

Moving to the second stage of the use of myth in recent theological writings, Wile alleges that the Old Testament contains a good deal of mythology. He, however, said that:

“Myth is not to be confused with legend or fairy-tale but myth is a pictorial way of expressing truths which cannot be expressed so readily or so forcefully in any other way.”¹¹

Wile says that there are four major myths in the Bible: (1) the creation, (2) the fall, (3) Christian incarnation and work of atonement, and (4) the resurrection of the dead and final judgment. In the opinion of this writer, to call these four doctrines myth is tantamount to denying the essence of Christianity. The Christian message has its essence in the restoration of a broken relationship between God and man. It follows that there must be an account of this relationship before the break down. The creation story gives that account which is hard for the reductionist to believe but yet it is a reasonable truth. Likewise, the story of the fall. It is not a matter of whether it is true or not but that is difficult to believe as long as they remain bound to anti-supernaturalistic presuppositions.

The Application of “Myth” to Christian Doctrines other than the Incarnation

In this section, Wiles asks the questions as to how Christian “myth” is to be treated. “Does affirming the myth involve making truth claims?” In his opinion, there is likely to be a good case to be made midway between truth and falsehood for Christian myth and the understanding of it may be true but not the most obvious or natural interpretation of it. He discussed various ways that truth can be derived from the myths of creation, the fall and resurrection. His conclusion about the truth of myth is that

There must be ontological truth corresponding to the central character of the structure of the myth. But such a criterion is not at all easy to apply. For one thing if the ontological truth were one that could be expressed with full clarity and precision there would be less need for the myth.

To him, therefore, the myths of creation and fall are ontological ways of explaining the transcendent creativity and that men fall below their highest expectation respectively.

First, to answer Wile’s interpretation, the narrative of creation and the fall as recorded in the Bible do not in any way appear to be myth. And when we move to the atonement, which Wiles also classifies as myth, we see that Paul knew that the human mind cannot comprehend the mystery that underlines the atonement when he says: “For the message

¹¹ Ibid.p.154

of cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (I Cor. 1:8). The Christian faith, with incarnation at its center, was never intended to be an ontological way of expressing the truth, with incarnation doctrine cannot be meet. For “we know that there is no example anywhere in...literature(s) of the myth been applied to any known and identifiable historical figure.”¹² We also know that ontological proof for the existence of God is allowed because God is an invisible reality. But when we come to the case of Jesus, it does not make sense to use ontological truth for him because all that he did is recorded in the Bible, a historical document. Since we can ascertain the literal meaning of the Nicene and Chalcedon Christological creeds, as an expression of what is historically true of Jesus Christ, they are no longer myth-as Wiles agrees in the above quotation that once a statement is literally true, there is no need for it to be myth.

“Jesus and the World Religions”

John Hick has contributed this essay which covers pages 167-185 of the book. He points out that Christian have various imagination of Jesus as they read various parts of the New Testament. This variety of Jesus’ imagery he said, is a reflection of “the variety of temperaments and ideas and above all the varying spiritual needs within the world of believers.”¹³ So believers produce Christ figure who meet their spiritual needs

Exaltation of Human Jesus to Pre-existent Logos as Human Gautana to Pre-existent Buddha

John Hick’s argument is that there is a question as to how the Galileans rabbi, Jesus, could be identified with the Christ-figure of developed dogma, particularly in the Nicene creed. Hick therefore views the dogma as a way of conceptualizing the Lordship of Jesus. He, therefore, finds it.

Natural and intelligible that Jesus should come to be hailed as Son of God and that later this poetry should have hardened into prose, and escalated from a metaphorical Son of God to a metaphysical God the Son (p. 176).

But an examination of the New Testament shows that Paul set forth in his first letter to Thessalonians a clear idea of the Trinity. In Chapter 1:1, Paul greeted the church “in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,” indicating an equality between God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son, And in 1 Corinthians. 8:6 says:

¹² Stephen Neill, “Jesus and Myth,” In the Truth of God Incarnate.,. 61.

¹³ Stephen Neill, “Jesus and Myth,” In the Truth of God Incarnate.,. 61.

Yet for us there is one God, the father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist

we can see very clearly that just as God the Father is referred to as the Creator so also is God the Son, Jesus Christ. In verse 4 of the same chapter, we read, “there is no God but one.” And we should also remember that in this passage, Paul said as idol has no existence, i.e., it is myth. Paul was not confirmed but was indicating that God the father and God the Son are one (and of course, one with God the Holy Spirit). This he says clearly at the close of 2 Cor. 13:14” The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” Therefore, “it is interesting to note, in passing that the concept of the Trinity, far from being a late invention, is firmly based in the New Testament itself.”¹⁴ The following also shows the Pauline concept of Trinity:

1 Cor. 12:4-9: “...the same spirit...same Lord... it is the same God...”

Ephesians 2:18: “For through his (Jesus) we both have access in one spirit to the Father.” Ephesians 2:14-17: “I bow my knee before the Father...grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit...and the Christ may dwell in your hearts.

Eph 4:4-6 “...One Spirit...One Lord...One God...”

Paul had already written these things before the pre-critical acceptance of John’s gospels historical. And when we examine John’s gospel, we can conclude that:

The issues raised and debated at Chalcedon were not problems unique to the church in the fifth century; they are within the New Testament itself... More and more theologians and New Testament scholars are granting this... For example the deity of Christ is affirmed in John 1:1...and the incarnation affirmed in John 1:14. How do we understand how God the Son, of John 1:1, appears in history as the man Jesus Christ, of John 1:14ff?... Or what kind of person is One who is at the same time in the form of God and the form of a servant (Phi. 2:5-11)? Colossians

¹⁴Michael Green, “Jesus in the New Testament,” In the Truth of God Incarnate, 19.

2:9 affirms that God dwelt bodily in Jesus Christ....the kinds of issues Chalcedon spoke to are to be found already on the pages of the New Testament.¹⁵

To see Jesus as merely a Galilean rabbi is to repudiate His miraculous virgin birth, His miracles, His death and resurrection and all that Paul, through the hand of the Holy Spirit spoke of Him all of which establishes His deity prior to the formulation of dogma.

The Meaninglessness of the Two Natures in Jesus of Nazareth

To John Hick, Orthodoxy has failed to give meaning to the two natures of Jesus Christ. He said, "It remains a form of words without assignable meaning." (p. 178). But the problem is not that meaning has not given to the two natures of Jesus Christ but that liberal circles reject this phenomenon because it contains both natural and supernatural elements. Supernatural elements are not readily proved or satisfactorily demonstrated according to reductionistic thinking.

If a theologian believes that an incarnation is impossible or that it is dated mythology, then any defensive statements of Chalcedon will make no impression. If one accepts the incarnation of God in Christ then he already has the scriptural affirmation that it is a mystery (1 Tim. 3:15-16).¹⁶

The Revelation of Logos in Jesus and other Religions

One of the main purpose in denying that God was incarnated in Jesus is to destroy the uniqueness of Jesus and consequently the absoluteness of the Christian religion in relation to other religions. This motive has led the liberals to claim that Christ's incarnation is not literally true. Furthermore, Wiles in this final part of his essay says that the idea of logos is also found in other religions. According to him, logos is revealed in Hebrew prophets is the Buddha, in the Upanishads, in the Korm and so on.

We know that, while the Enlightenment served as a basis for unbelief in supernatural realities, the notion that no religion or culture is superior to another serves to destroy the uniqueness of Christianity. West, says: "It is this idea of the equality that led to the denial of satanic elements in them, even in the animism. John Mbiti was commend by a fellow pluralist for his book, *concepts of God in Africa*, as follows:

¹⁵ Bernard L., Ramm. *Evangelical Christology: Economic Historic* (New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 340.

¹⁶ Ramm, *An Evangelical Christology*..35

He succeeds in showing that the Africa concept can stand beside the western, or Muslim or Hindu or Buddhist. Dr. Mbiti has carried out a necessary exercise brilliantly. Theology¹⁷

Wiles final prediction it is that, while the liturgy of Jesus the Son of God, God-Man, Logos incarnate remains, “there will be a growing awareness of the mythological character of this language...” (p. 183) Wiles must realize that the more he and his colleagues poison the minds of Christians by changing the truth to myth, the more people will leave the church. And then there will be no need for this “mythological” Liturgy. The poison of liberalism is why the churches in the west are being deserted. It is the prayer of this paper writer that God will destroy the mythical churches of the liberals and reestablish that real church of the resurrected Jesus. Amen.

¹⁷ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa* (London: S.P.C.L., 1970) John S. Mbiti died Early November 2019. An Africa Theologian of our time, back cover.