
Economic Liberation of the Poor: The Creation Narrative as the Basis for Eradicating Poverty in Africa

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ABSTRACT

This essay argues that the creation narrative offers the basis for eradicating poverty in Africa. This argument is predicated by the fact that in creation, God made man in His image, put everything he created under his management, gave the land to be cultivated and cared-for by man and then enjoy the proceeds of his activity. This therefore, becomes the bases for all economic activities in the world and Africa in particular. This paper however underlines that the fall of man brought about poverty as a result of mismanagement of the economic resources, inequality, conflict over economic resources, corruption of the work etc. through the use of a creation theological approach the writer reveals that poverty ultimately came as a result of deviation from the creation mandate given by God and the way of liberating the poor economically in Africa is through returning to this mandate by restoring human dignity, human equality and unity. It is hence believed that when Africa returns to the creation mandate, there will be equal access and usage of the natural resources by all Africans, equal access to work and fair sharing of the product of work and because of the dignity of all Africans every African will work towards the flourishing of all and this will therefore bring about God's desired economic liberation of the poor in Africa to the glory of God the creator of Africa and Africans.

Key words: economic liberation; the poor; creation narrative; eradicating poverty; Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 1 presents us with the account of God's act of creation. He began with the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything therein, and after each act of creation, God made a qualitative statement saying, "it was good." He then made man in his own image and likeness with the resolution to "let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground (Gen. 1:26). The purpose for which God made man among other things was to make him manage other creatures. The expression "and let them have dominion," does not suggest an exploitative rule over the other creations or creatures of God, rather it refers to a supervisory management of the universe and everything in it. This idea of management initiates the notion for economics.

Still in the Genesis narrative, just a chapter between the creation activity of God and his willful submission of the creatures to mankind for management came disobedience by the same people whom God placed as ambassadors and stewards of his creation. This rebellion resulted in distorting everything including the managerial role of humanity towards the universe. This distortion disfigured the economic¹²² system of the universe such that mismanagement came into the scene which also brought about poverty in all ramifications of life. Poverty and the poor are found in every part of the world (depending on the parameters of one's definition),¹²³ and poverty in any case reduces the quality of life and so becomes an enemy to human flourishing. However, in view of how

¹²² I see Economics as the act/art of managing the wealth of a family, country or the world in a way that it is rightly and fairly distributed to the citizens for a collective flourishing of humanity.

¹²³ Collium Banda agrees with A. E Orobator that there is no single, precise standardized or usable definition of poverty" this means that what one considers poverty, to another it is not. And whom one considers poor to another he/she is not. See: Collium Banda, "Poverty" in *African Public Theology* Sunday B. Agang, ed. (Bukuru: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2020), 113.

poverty diminishes life to almost meaningless in some parts of the world, many writers in both secular and theological fields found it stimulating to delve into discussing these important phenomena with an attempt to bring possible ways out of this present reality. In an attempt to do this, some discuss economics,¹²⁴ work,¹²⁵ and education¹²⁶ among others as subjects which when taken seriously will help in curbing or reducing the rate of poverty in any African country.

Furthermore, among the African theologians who took the concepts of poverty and the poor seriously is Je'adayibe Dogara Gwamna who devoted a chapter in his book "Perspectives in African Theology." Gwamna discussed this subject with a great concern in mind considering how the African continent is plagued with this pandemic. Another African legend, a New Testament theologian is Bitrus A. Sarma whose concern for the poor in the African continent made him to dedicate a space in most of his publications to addressing the plight of the poor and the concept of poverty. To this end, this work is written with the aim of taking the concerns of these theological legends and many others further for a more meaningful contribution to the world of scholarship and for the betterment of life in Africa. In doing this, this paper implements a creation theological approach. As would be argued in this work, the creation narrative would serve as a mirror through which the economic life of Africa would be appraised and possible ways of eradicating/reducing poverty in Africa would be proffered.

ECONOMICS IN THE CREATION NARRATIVE

For us to grasp the line of the Genesis creation story, below is the story that highlights the major points of focus as regards

¹²⁴ Piet Naude, "Economics" in *African Public Theology* Sunday B. Agang, ed. (Bukuru: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2020), 97-112.

¹²⁵ Sunday BobaiAgang, "Work" in *African Public Theology* Sunday B. Agang, ed. (Bukuru: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2020), 81.

¹²⁶ Ernest Conradie, "Education" in *African Public Theology* Sunday B. Agang, ed. (Bukuru: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2020), 157.

God's gift of creation for man's ambassadorial management to the glory of God.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . and God said, "let there be light," and there was light. . . and God said, "let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water. . . and God said, "let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear." And it was so. . . then God said, "let the land produce vegetation: seed bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. God made two great lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. And God said, "let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky. So, God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every bird according to its kind. And God said, "let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so . . . so God made man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female. . . God said to them, "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground. I give you EVERY seed-bearing plant and every tree that has seed in it for food ... all the beast of the earth and all birds of the air and all the creature that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food .. the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (Genesis 1:1-2:15).

The creation narrative in Genesis 1 and 2 has given us the ideal situation upon which all economic activities and ethics could be derived. In this account, it is clear that the earth belongs to God, it is valued by God, and He gives the man He created in His own image the delegated responsibility of dominion (Gen. 1:26, 28). Thus, man becomes a creature among creatures, and a creature above all creatures while subject to God, the human race has a God-given task.¹²⁷ The task given to man is to multiply, fill the earth and subdue it and rule the rest of the creatures with all justice and care that replicates God's pattern of kingship. Man was given everything God created to be under his control, so that through man, God would control, rule and care for the world. In other words, all the resources God placed in the earth during creation were and are for man's responsible use to the glory of God. The following realities could be gleaned from the creation narrative as regards to economics which would unequivocally declare that it was not God's plan that man becomes poor in any way.

a. Equal Access and Usage of Natural Resources by All People

The truth that God created man (Adam and Eve)¹²⁸ in His own image enlightens us that man and woman are equal before God. Therefore, since the earth was given to them to subdue and care for, it then means that its resources were meant to be accessed, shared and be available to both of them and subsequently to all their descendants regardless of age, gender, tribe and race.¹²⁹ Wright expressing this in audible terms declares that “. . . access to, and use of, the resources of the whole planet

¹²⁷ Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Norton Street, Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 146.

¹²⁸ This is for emphasis, which would help us note that both man and woman were created by God in His own image and likeness. This brings about equality; the woman is equal with the man in all dimensions, even though their roles and responsibilities as determined by God differ.

¹²⁹ Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 147.

constitute the legacy bequeathed to the whole human race.¹³⁰ Ideally speaking, every human being based on God's purpose for creation should be able to access and use the resources given by God according to his/her needs as envisioned by God in creation.

Equal access to the natural resources God bestowed in the world means that everyone male and female, young and old should be able to have equal opportunity to use the wealth God deposited in the world for his/her own flourishing. This now suggests that it is very wrong and inhumane for some few people to accumulate in large quantity God's given resources while others are left with barely nothing to use for their survival. This is based on the fact that the creation narrative does not give anyone a ground to monopolize God's given resources for his/her own private and selfish use that benefits only himself and the few people around him. It is with this concern in mind that Wright further explains that, "the creation narrative cannot be used to justify privatized, individually exclusive claims of ownership, since it is to humanity as a whole that the earth is entrusted."¹³¹ God owns everything and entrusted it to humanity as a whole as established above, but it is still noteworthy that this does not discard the reality that there can be a rightful and legitimate private ownership of material goods, because even in the ancient Israel there was right to private ownership of materials. But this was done with the knowledge and acknowledgement of God as the owner of everything. Therefore, even in terms of privatization of material goods, they are to be used for the benefit and flourishing of all to the glory of the person who gives the resources—God.

Additionally, in creation, God established equality in access to natural resources. But as noted earlier, the Fall in Genesis 3 destabilized this order and so inequality sets in. Yet, God in His infinite mercy chose Israel as a people and made them a nation

¹³⁰ Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 147.

¹³¹ Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 147.

through which He would reach the entire world with His blessings of equality as modeled in creation. He chose Israel so that through her instrumentality, he could manifest to the world a paradigm of how His world ought to be. So, He gave them rules and regulations on how to live in their land without having poor people. These rules and regulations were meant to help them return to the order established in creation.

b. Equal Access to Work and Fair Sharing of the Product of Work

The creation narrative depicted God as a worker, he engaged himself in the activities of creation for six days. Hence, God as a worker, He created man to be a worker like Him since man is in the image of God. Gen. 2:5 informs us that God did not send rain to the ground because there was no man to work it, and in verse 15 we are further informed that He created and put man there in order to work it and take care of it. In other words, work itself is not a result of the fall, though it was certainly affected by it.¹³²

Man was given the responsibility to subdue and care for the resources given by God, he is also saddled with the responsibility of working the Garden. Sunday Bobai Agang in his chapter on “*Work*” argues that, “the garden was not a place where Adam and Eve could relax and do nothing at all. There was work to be done!”¹³³ Indeed man was meant to do something, but everything he does must be through the use of what God has already given. This work, however is given to all people, not only one class of people, but to all human beings. It is in the nature of human beings to work because they were configured by their maker to work. Therefore, any attempt to deprive man from working, is an attempt to rob him from being truly human. Work in whatever form, should be allowed by all

¹³² Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 148.

¹³³ Sunday Bobai Agang, “Work” in *African Public Theology* edited by Sunday Bobai Agang *et al.* (Bukuru, Plateau State: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2020), 82.

humans to engage into so as not to abuse their humanness and to make them flourish and contribute in the dominion and care for the earth's natural resources. Equal opportunity to work is given to all humans by God according to the creation narrative such that when everyone engages into work, no one will be idle, and no one will lack any good thing to live a prosperous life as intended by God.

Nonetheless, God has given all humans equal access to natural resources and equal opportunity to work; he also has given everyone equal right to benefit from the products of the work he has given them. To this end, we are all accountable to God for how we work with the resources He gave us, how we use it and also how we share it with our fellow humans. Hence, justice is commanded by God in our social interactions with our fellows, justice in the market, and compassion towards those who are vulnerable.

AFRICA A WEALTHY CONTINENT WITH POOR ECONOMY: THE IRONIC AFRICAN SITUATION

Africa is a continent extravagantly blessed by God.¹³⁴ God has deposited everything the continent needs to prosper and flourish, this nation is blessed in all ramifications such that no African would be poor if the resources are fairly shared and utilized. Africa as one of the largest continents in the world is blessed with variety of resources, both renewable and nonrenewable, human and natural; some of which have not yet been efficiently tapped. Africa has no shortage of arable land, therefore all the food the citizens need for survival could be cultivated. There are nations in the continent that are blessed with large bodies of water, where fishing is possible. K. M. Buchanan and J.C Pugh affirm that, "fishing has assumed

¹³⁴ Bitrus A. Sarma, *Blessed New Humanity in Christ: A Theology of Hope for African Christianity from the Book of Ephesians* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Hippobooks, 2020), 33.

greater importance as a food source.”¹³⁵ This continent is exceedingly rich in sea or water resources as well as land resources. The nations of this continent are also blessed with crude oil in a large quantity. For instance, Oyeranti and Olayiwola speaking on Nigeria’s oil wealth exposed that “In Nigeria during the last three decades, the country earned over US\$300 billion from crude oil alone.”¹³⁶ Affirmatively, Nigeria is said to have produced between 1.8 and 2.0 million barrels of oil per day and the average price of crude oil in the world market as of May 2024 was around US\$80 per barrel.¹³⁷ This is also true with many African nations which therefore affirms beyond reasonable doubt that Africa is a wealthy continent and even though African currencies depreciates against dollar every now and then, but other wells of crude oil have also been discovered newly in the continent, such as the one discovered in Bauchi Nigeria

Seeing how wealthy the continent is, one believes that in the ideal situation, there should be equal access and usage of this wealth given to Africa as a continent. This is derived from the creation narrative of Genesis 1 &2 where God gave everything under man to manage. This act of management should not be withheld from others. The wealth of Africa should and ought to be distributed to every citizen to enjoy and thrive as a gift from God the creator of Africa. The farmlands should be given to people to cultivate without restriction, the oil wealth should be used for the benefit of all, regardless of class, religious or political affiliations. There ought to be equal access to education, health care services, good road networks, subsidized oil price, and equal access to basic life amenities. In sum, every African should be treated equally regardless of any social strata,

¹³⁵K. M. Buchanan and J.C Pugh, *Land and People in Africa* (England: University Press. 1955)

¹³⁶Oyeranti and Olayiwola, “Trend and Determinants of Multidimensional Poverty in Rural Africa” *Academic Journals* Vol. 6 no. 5 (2005): 40-65.

¹³⁷ Macrotrends “Crude Oil Prices Today”
<https://www.macrotrends.net/2566/crude-oil-prices-today-live-chart> accessed 29th May, 2024.

every African needs to enjoy God's gift to the continent in the ideal situation as designed by God in creation. But the question is, why are majority of Africans poor even amidst the great and unquantifiable wealth God deposited in the continent? The following points are a response to this pertinent question.

a. Conflict over Economic resources

The creation story is a good pointer to the glaring fact that it was not God's agenda that any man (Africans inclusive) to become economically disabled, hence in His divine plan, there was no room for scarcity of resources if/when everyone engages into the work God has given and so multiplication of the natural resources takes place until equilibrium is reached in the circulation of the products of work. However, the economic effects of sin, such as greed, dispossession, political displacement, coupled with natural disaster, warfare, and others, resulted in large numbers of the people living without land of their own. Such people would survive by selling themselves into the service of landed households.¹³⁸

Therefore, we could say that the real situation in Africa as a continent though wealthy is the reality that Africa found herself in an undesired state against God's divine plan in creation where equal access to natural resources is no longer obtainable. Instead of equitable access to the blessings God deposited in the continent, some resources are amassed by few individuals and deprived others access to it. Some resources that are meant to be used by all Africans for their flourishing are squandered, some polluted, while others abused. Possession of resources, instead of being used as an opportunity for mutual sharing, as a gift from God has become a matter of subjugation and confiscation, a tool of oppression, greed and power. Out of greed and quest for more, people even kill their fellows in order to amass wealth for themselves. Nonetheless, this problem has made some few individuals accumulate the wealth of Africa

¹³⁸ Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 157.

beyond what they need at the detriment of the masses who inevitably become poor against the plans and will of God. This conflict over resources has been the mastermind behind most, if not all the conflicts and wars that have existed in history and even in the present-day Africa.

b. Corruption of Work

Work according to the plan of God in the beginning was meant to be enjoyed not endured. When God gave humanity the ability and mandate to work and sustain the process of creation, it was not a burden but a pleasing task. Yet, along the storyline, the fall distorted the ideal situation instilled in creation and brought a reality that we have to grapple with all our lives. Joan M. Martin argues that as a result of the fall, "tension [erupted] between work as creative production and work as exploitation based on the sinful misappropriation of power."¹³⁹ In other words, sin corrupted the work God gave man. This is seen in God's declaration to Adam after the fall saying, ". . . because you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree . . . cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. . . ." (Gen. 3:17). As a consequence of this elocution, "work is no longer simply part of the joy and privilege of our human nature, but has become a bondage and necessity . . . what was given as a means of *subduing* the earth has now become for most people merely the agonizing struggle of *surviving* in the earth."¹⁴⁰ Interestingly, the fall did not destroy the intrinsic value of work, but distorted the world so that work may seem hard and meaningless. We no longer find fulfillment in our work, and we struggle to associate it with the service of God [to the extent that] some idolize work and seek their personal meaning in work rather than in God.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Joan M. Martin, *More than Chains and Toil: A Christian Work Ethic of Enslaved Women* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2000), 144.

¹⁴⁰Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 151.

¹⁴¹Agang, "Work," 83.

Remarkably, as generations come and go, enlightenment came and to a greater extent, changed the nature of work. It is now seen as a burden, not a blessing. Work is seen as something that the government supposed to provide. However, people think that their value is found in the works they do, and so, many people think that good work must be a white-collar job that provides a regular salary. Work has lost its dignity and hence some works are seen superior to others, some become employers while others are employees. Inasmuch as this is not evil in itself, the corruption of work has made it in such a way that some people are reduced to objects of work, while others are competing with God as people who provide work for others. Work is now seen as what brings, dignity, value and respect to man.

c. Unjust Distribution of Economic Resources

Another reality that Africa is battling with now which came as a result of the fall is “unjust distribution of the economic resources.” On the one hand, we have established previously that in the ideal situation based on the creation narrative, everyone was given equal access to work and equal access to fair sharing of the product of work. On the other hand, the reality here and now with regards to the economic resources God has given us is that in Africa, there is “injustice.” Work is corrupted, as such, it lost its dignity. People attached their value to work and the product of work, and as such corruption sets in. The words of Agang expressed this clearly, thus, “we tend to assume that the only way to cover our social, political, and economic nakedness is to amass material wealth.”¹⁴² This thought of amassing wealth for oneself at the detriment of others brings about corruption that inevitably leads to injustice. It is ideal that economic resources should be equally shared and distributed to all people regardless of class and social status, but in reality, this is not obtainable. And the result of this unjust distribution of the economic products make majority of

¹⁴²Agang, “Work,” 88.

Africans relinquishing in abject poverty, while few individuals are swimming in wealth, even beyond their needs.

RETURNING TO THE CREATION MANDATE: TOWARDS AN AFRICA GOD WANTS¹⁴³

The question this section seeks to address is; how can economic liberation be archived in Africa since we have already explored and agreed that the problem exists in the continent? In response to this question, it would be argued that the way to attaining economic liberation in Africa is through a radical, determined and focused return to the creation mandate. The following points are important to consider as ways through which the poor in Africa would be economically liberated as gleaned from the creation narrative.

Human Dignity Must be Restored in Africa

The creation narrative informs us that man made in the image of God is the starting point for every discourse on human dignity (note: human dignity and human rights are intertwined and sometimes used interchangeably). What then is human dignity? This concept is viewed from various dimensions by different people. For instance, “while the universal dimension of dignity generally refers to the intrinsic worth of all human beings, the cultural relative dimension relates to the external aspects of behavior [meaning, human dignity depends on one’s extrinsic behavior towards others in the society].¹⁴⁴ Yet Melissa Moschella says “to possess dignity is to have what philosophers

¹⁴³ This is derived from the African Union Agenda 2063 which is a drafted and ambitious agenda which advocates for far-reaching public policies to tackle the continent’s darkest demons—Bad governance, corruption, socio-economic injustice, religious competition, tribal and ethnic conflicts and political domination. Hence the Africa we want is an Africa that is free from these vices.

¹⁴⁴ Marcio Ricardo Staffen & Mher Arshkyan, “About the Principle of Dignity: Phiosophical Foundations and Lesgal Aspect” *Seqüência*, no. 75 (2017): 43-62 <http://dx.doi.org/10.5007/2177-7055.2017v38n75p43> accessed on 29th May, 2024.

call ‘moral status,’ or ‘membership in the moral community.’”¹⁴⁵ By this she meant that when one has moral status, others have an obligation to treat him with respect, to act in ways that give due consideration to one’s well-being or rights. In other words, human dignity means the respect and value a human being possesses as result of been created in the image of God. Meaning, man has an inbuilt quality and moral status that needs to be protected by all.

In view of the above understanding of human dignity, and the reality of the economic situation of Africa as highlighted above, one would have no option but to categorically agree that “[Africa] has suffered and still bleeds from the abuse of human dignity and rights.”¹⁴⁶ Having this reality in mind, it is important to note that since Africa has deviated from the creation narrative with regards to economics, which has thrown many people into abject poverty, the only way to emancipate and liberate the poor from poverty in Africa is then by returning to the creation mandate through the restoration of human dignity. This would inevitably inform us that since all people in Africa have moral value, respect and rights, then the governments of African nations have no choice but to uphold and accord everyone with all the dignity God accorded to him/her regardless of who he/she is. This then means that the African people in their various countries should not be treated based of tribe, religion, ethnic, political affiliation and so on. Rather people should be treated well because they are human beings and the lives of people should be protected, their needs provided for, their roads fixed to reduce accidents that frequently take peoples’ lives. In short, the governments of the various African nations should do anything possible to make Africans flourish and their lives easier because this is what God desires since the creation of Africa.

¹⁴⁵ Melissa Moschella, “What is Human Dignity?”
<https://www.mcgrath.nd.edu> accessed on 29th May, 2024.

¹⁴⁶ Kajit J. Bagu, “Human Rights” in *African Public Theology*. 205.

Equality Must be Restored in Africa

From the creation narrative, we are meant to understand that when God created man and woman, there was no any distinction. All men are and should be equal. Many nations of the world derived their declarations and principles of equality from this creation narrative, and any nation that prospers in the true sense of the word, that nation must have upheld the true equality as informed from the creation. Admittedly, differently scholars have various opinions concerning the meaning and parameters of equality which in common terminology could be seen as equal income, equal distribution of wealth and equal treatment with every individual.¹⁴⁷ While it is true that equal treatment with all is not possible because honest and dishonest men cannot be given equal treatment and hardworking men and lazy ones cannot get the same income and treatment, it is yet true that giving people space and avenue to enjoy the blessings of God as people in His image is possible. To this end therefore, we can come to terms with the fact that for the poor in African nations to be liberated economically, equality must be restored in Africa, where all Africans in their nations are given equal opportunity to use their God given gifts regardless of their affiliation to flourish. In Africa, equality must be restored in terms of the law of the lands, political participation, social engagements and access to economic resources as given by God in creation. Nonetheless, it should be put to mind that economic equality is considered as the basis of all equalities because where there are poor and rich, social, political and legal equality is not possible there.

Since our focus is on economic liberation of the poor in Africa, it is good to note that we are not advocating for equal distribution of money, rather we are advocating that Africa should be a place where every person has equal chances to earn

¹⁴⁷ Sarath Mathilal de. Silva, "The Concept of Equality: Its Scope, Development and International Legal Regime" *Journal of the Royals Asiatic of Sri Lanka* Vol. 61. No. 2 (2026): 31-54.

his livelihood, man's fundamental needs should be filled and distribution of money should be fair for the nations of Africa. This means that "there must be sufficiency for all before there can be superfluity for a few."¹⁴⁸ Hence, from the creation narrative, for Africa to radically emancipate the poor economically there must be equal opportunities to earn a livelihood, equal wages for the same job done, fulfilments of basic needs, just distribution of wealth, provision of economic security, just ownership of the means of production and absence of human exploitation.¹⁴⁹ By so doing, the people in African nations will have no choice than to flourish and Africa will be a better place to be.

Unity Must be Restored in Africa

The creation narrative is central when talking about unity in economic liberation of the poor in Africa. We read in the creation account that God created man male and female. Man and woman were part and parcel of each other, for the two to succeed, they needed to join their hands collectively in unity to confront any obstacle they face. We also read that in unity they failed in disobedience to the commands of God. This is unfortunate rather! In the case of Africa, though unity is one of the things we claim we have in our various nations, but this is rather more theoretical than practical. Africa is divided into different groups depending on the angle one is coming from. In the independence of every African nation, emphasis on the unity amidst diversity took center stage in their respective narratives. But it is still sad to note that this unity has not been achieved as desired, the nations are still divided along ethnic, religious, cultural and political clusters where everyone identifies himself with one or another. Hence, instead of working for the progress of one united Africa through united

¹⁴⁸ Harold J. Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice* (New York: Viking press, 1935), 87.

¹⁴⁹ Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (Michigan: Yale University Press, 1989), 83.

African nations, people are rather working for their castes. This is not what God designed and desired from creation.

As a result of this disunity, many people in Africa are poor and even dying, many who supposed to care and even help do not bother since it is not from their caste. This kind of attitude has deprived the nation from growth from every angle. therefore, our argument here still remains that for Africa to be able to fight against poverty and liberate the poor economically, this lost unity must be restored to the nations. Unity in this case means that a collective effort must be exerted towards fighting the cause of the poor even as we join God in His mission of economic emancipation of the poor in Africa. It further means that both the rich and the poor must come together in agreement; the rich must be ready to help the poor in providing the avenues needed to be economically emancipated and the poor too must have the right mindset and be willing to be liberated. The government must put all hands-on deck to see to it that the policies they put in place do not deprive the poor from thriving regardless of their location.

CONCLUSION

The creation narrative gives the foundation of every economic activity in the world and Africa in particular. It begins with God creating heavens and earth and everything therein, and the creation of man (male and female) in the image of God, accompanied with the mandate of “working and taking care of the land and ruling over the fish of the sea and the bird of the air and all living creatures that move on the ground” Gen. 1:26-28; 2: 15. On the one hand, this account underscores that from the economic activities of working the land, caring and ruling other creations man would find fulfilment and satisfaction of his needs, such that poverty would never be a phenomenon to grapple with. While on the other hand, man’s disobedience tainted and thwarted his economic mandate and robbed him of his satisfaction in economic activities such that poverty came into existence in its various ramifications. Since then, the world

and Africa in particular have contended with this problem in many ways. With full acknowledgement of the fact that Africa is extravagantly blessed and yet poor because of her deviation from the creation mandate which brought about conflict over economic resources, corruption of work and unjust distribution of economic resources and the product of work; this paper using the creation theological approach underlined that there is need for economic liberation of the poor in Africa and the only way is to return to the creation mandate where there will be equal access and usage of the natural resources by all Africans and equal access to work and fair sharing of the product of work as given by God to all Africans from creation. The way of returning to this creation mandate as highlighted in this paper is by restoring human dignity, restoring equality and unity in Africa. God still desires that the poor in Africa are dignified through been economically emancipated from the poverty that dehumanizes their lives, He still remains the God that fights the cause of the poor and remains the God of the poor in Africa and beyond.

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