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EPH 2,11-16 AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: AN EXEGETICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT: Religion upholds the reality of an ultimate creator behind the actualization of everything that is in the world including human beings. In other words, the entire human race has a common origin from religious perspective. Even the Big Bang and Evolutionary Theories of Science do not negate this commonality. Racial discrimination is therefore man made. It is part of man's inhumanity to man not unconnected with mental cognition of colour differences, social status, development, religious belief and political affiliation. It is a regrettable malady that has not done humanity any good. Today, we hear of White Supremacy, Black Lives Matter, the Jewish Holocaust, The Xenophobia in South Africa, Hausa/Igbo divide, etc. Beyond the limitations and enmity imposed by racism, Christianity posits the equality of all races. Paul in his letters but especially in Ephesians 2,11-16 teaches the oneness of all in Christ. This paper adopting exegetical lens argues that all human beings are equal. Its hermeneutical application exposes racism as a problem even in Nigeria. The researcher at the end gives recommendations on the way forward.

KEY WORDS: *Christianity, Racism, Discrimination, Human being, Equality*

I. INTRODUCTION

Racism and supremacist belief have remained identical evils against the commonality of the human race. Racism is understood to mean the belief that people differ significantly and systematically, as in ability, intellect, etc., because of racial differences. It is a belief in or advocacy of the superiority or inferiority of a particular group on the basis of supposed racial differences and racial prejudice (Read, 1975). Racism though a social phenomenon goes beyond the limits of sociological to affect the entire human race. It is as old as man. It is witnessed in the western hemisphere and indeed the world over. There are possible reasons for this. Some passages of the bible tend to show that some races are superior to others, hence, the Israelites are regarded as the people of God. The Canaanites were to be exterminated in preference for the Jews who claimed Canaan as a promised land. On the other hand, a few biologists and social scientists have plugged lacunae in the vague theory of racial inferiority. Their most interesting hypotheses are that Negroid homo sapiens evolved much later, and from different sub-sapiens ancestors, than Causcasoids; and that the resulting differences in Negroid and Causcasoid brain morphology still determine such things as school achievement and crime rates. Colonialism with her servitude mentality are all offshoots of racism and supremacist mentality. In recent times, white supremacists have been less forthright about their intention to subjugate blacks (Thalberg, 1975). At a meeting shortly before his death, Malcolm was asked by a young white listener, "What contribution can youth, especially students who are disgusted with racism, make to the black struggle for freedom?". To this question, Malcolm replied, "Whites who are sincere should organize among themselves and figure out some strategy to break down prejudice that exists in white communities. ... this has never been done" (Breitman, 1966:221). Martin Luther King Junior's revolution is as a result of racism against blacks in the USA. Talking about racism in the USA, Pierre (2001) notes that the larger societal dynamic for African American males, then, is that they are expected to function within a culture that silences, abuses, and devalues their existences. Examples include the senseless beating of Rodney King by police officers, as well as the increasingly commonplace occurrence of unarmed Black males being shot dead by police officers (e.g. Amadu Diallo, Prince Jones, and Timothy Thomas). These stand as painful reminders to Black men that they are expendable and powerless within American culture. Kozol (1992) in his *Savage Inequalities* lamented the yawning gap between the schools attended by black children and those of the whites. He maintains that racial segregation has been and continues to be uncontested. Ornstein (2007) does not mince words in affirming that class and race warfare have existed since the beginning of Western civilization, with Greeks and Romans and since USA was founded. The infamous apartheid in South Africa and even her recent Xenophobia are all discriminatory and supremacist attitude not unconnected with racism. Very recently, Nigerians in Ghana were met with new policy hiking the tariff for any business they do in Ghana

leading to a diplomatic rift between Nigeria and Ghana. Down here in Nigeria, a South-easterner living in the North sleeps with one eye open. This is also the case for northerners domiciled in the Southeast. In a recent Marxian analysis of both race and racism, Balibar argues that racism has two dissymmetrical aspects. On the one hand, it constitutes a dominating community with practices, discursive and otherwise, that are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin colour, religious practices). It also constitutes, however, the way in which, as a mirror image, individuals and collectives that are prey to racism find themselves constrained to see themselves as a community (Balibar, 1991). The researcher in this paper is convinced that this unwelcoming and supremacist attitude is not natural. It is man-made. The paper seeks for a way out of this gruesome impasse. The New Testament but especially Pauline writings have provisions on the equality of all men. The researcher picks Eph 2,11-16 as a proven text to the Christian teaching on the equality of all human beings irrespective of race, colour or religion. The paper moves from the Old and New Testament teachings to an abstraction on the indubitable position of Paul that all are equal. It uses the prism of exegesis to show that racism is evil and must be repudiated by all as evidenced in Eph 2,11-16. The papers recourse to the OT demonstrates that the inequities – and worse – in Israeli political, economic, and social practice are not aberrations but inevitable consequences of the inappropriate importation of a form of discourse from one historical situation to another, a discourse of intimacy and resistance to the claims of others, from a situation in which Jews were a dominated minority to one in which they are a dominating majority and in which power, concern, freedom and resources have all to be aggregate (Boyarin, 1994).

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The perspectivity of the Old Testament reserve two divisions for the human race: Israel, the people of God or of the Covenant/divine promises and the other nations. The Hebrew and Greek words have two distinct words for these different groups. The Hebrew word *'am* or *laos* in Greek is used in reference to the Israel as the people of God to whom were given the election, the covenant and promises. The other word *gōyīm* or *'ethnē* in Greek refers to other nations as distinguished from the people of the covenant. Thus, religiously, the nations evolved into two different camps, those who know Yahweh (Israel) and those who do not know Him (Gentiles or foreigners). Until Christ came to unite all men into a single new man (Eph 2,14), the dialectic at play between Israel and the nations remained a constant theme throughout the course of salvation and political history. At the beginning of the OT, the call of God rings out in a divided world where races, nations, and cultures face one another. However, it must be noted that the unity of the human race underlies the schematic representations of Genesis. A common principle underlies the creation of all men (Acts 17,26). There is a unity of blood as all are progenitors of common ancestors, Adam and Eve. After the flood, human traces its unity to Noah (Gen 9,18f). Despite this commonality, the instruction in Gen 1,28 that man must multiply and fill the earth draws a connotation of progressive diversification which the bible posits as God's will (Gen 10; Deut 32,8f). Further, the scattering of men into different languages after their reunification at Shinar to build a tower reaching the heavens (Gen 11,4) entails the diversification of human race. This diversification effected in a climate of sin results in bloody hatred (Gen 4,1-16) and loss of spiritual unity (Gen 11,7ff). Eventually, God called Abraham from among pagan nations (Josh 24,2) to make him the father of a new people which would be His own, and in order that in the end all families of the earth might be blessed in him (Gen 12,1ff).

Israel did not ignore her natural kinship with the neighbouring nations. It is this that underlies the patriarchal genealogies as we can see in the case of Ishmael (Gen 16) and Midian (Gen 25,1-6); Moab and the Ammonites (Gen 19,30-38); the Arameans in Gen 29,1-14 and the Edomites in Gen 36. Even in 1Macc 12,7-21, the Jews sought relationship of race with the Spartans. Noticeable in all these is that Israel was always motivated by the doctrine of covenant and the plan of salvation. Other than these, the dealings of Israel with the nations can only be established on a hostile plane because whereas they see themselves as people of God held together by a covenant, other nations were seen as pagans and so discriminated against. According to Deut 7,1-8, Israel must separate themselves from foreign nations lest it be contaminated by their paganism.

However, it is noteworthy to observe that the segregation of Israel from other nations is not unconnected with the salvific plan of God. The discrimination is not so much on the ground of Israelite superiority as a better race as a push for all nations to come under one God as the Father of all. It is on this ground that room was given for proselytism. Through a paradox explained by complementary exigencies of the Jewish faith, the community of Israel opened up to pagans for good will more so than it ever had before. An official statue is given to proselytes who wish to join themselves to Israel (Isa 56,1-8). Even before the prophetic times, some non-Jews were incorporated into the covenant people. Tamar (Gen 38); Rahab (Josh 6,25); and Ruth (Ruth 1,16), ancestors of Jesus (Matt 1,2-5); the clan of the Gibeonites (Josh 9,19-27); the resident strangers who underwent circumcision (Exod 12,48f; Num 15,15f). All these were prophetic of the universalism to which God would finally bring His people (Pierron and Grelot, 2004).

III. RACISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The prophets prepared the ground for Jesus to enter on the path of universalism at the beginning of his ministry since his advent inaugurated the final times (Mark 1,15). But quite to the contrary, he demonstrated particularistic behaviour. Even while located in the land of the gentiles, he limited his preaching and miracles to the pale of Judaism (Matt 15,24; Mark 7,27). In Matt 10,5ff, he instructed his disciples on mission not to go among the heathens. Despite his particularistic attitude however, he was not hypocritical in his admiration of the foreigners who listened to him. The cases of the Centurion in Capernaum (Matt 8,10); the Samaritan leper (Luke 17,17ff); the Canaanite woman (Matt 15,28) are perfect examples. In Luke 13,28f, Jesus' universalistic idea is more conspicuous. According to this text, people will come from all quarters to the eschatological banquet while the sons of the kingdom will be excluded. Matt 21,43 even teaches that the vineyard will be taken from Israel and entrusted to other vine dressers. According to Pierron and Grelot (2004), there is no contradiction between the particularism and the universalism of Jesus. Rather is it an adaptation to successive phases of an evolving situation to successive phases of an evolving situation. He sought to convert Israel in order to make of it the missionary of the kingdom, in a perspective of total universalism. Because of their hardness of heart, they did not hearken to his call. God still had to adapt His plan of salvation rejected by the Jews. Jesus would shed his blood as a ransom for many (Matt 26,28) and this sacrifice will open the door of the kingdom for many by setting the seal of eschatological covenant, leading to recovery the internal unity of all men. Thus, after his resurrection, he gave his apostles the great mandate to preach to all nations of the world (Matt 28,19-20; Mark 16,15). They would be witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1,8). With the resurrection of Jesus, and his *mandatum magnum*, Jewish particularism was superseded. Even in his sacerdotal prayer in John 17, Jesus expressed his desire for the unity and oneness of all without discrimination.

The Pentecost marked the birth of the new Church. The universalistic mode of the Church was made manifest with the first preaching in different tongues (Acts 2,8-11). The persecution of Christians sequent to the death of Stephen became a catalyst leading to the realization of the universalism of the gospel message. Philip evangelized Samaria (Act 8); Peter baptized the Centurion Cornelius and his household (Acts 10); Greeks were preached to and got converted in large numbers in Acts 11,20ff. The call of Paul catapulted the universalism to its logical conclusion (Acts 9,15; 22,15.21; 26,17) as prophesied in Isa 49,6 (cf. Acts 13,47). It is in this light of the equality of all that the Council of Jerusalem repudiated subjecting non-Jews to the shackles of Jewish culture – the circumcision (Acts 15,7-19). In the Church therefore, all nations attained a stature equal to Israel's and Paul sees his vocation as apostle to the gentiles (Gal 2,7).

Oneness of all from the backdrop of Eph 2,11-16: Exegetical Study

The mystery or secret revealed by God in Christ in Col 1,27 is explained as the union of Gentiles with Jews in the body of Christ (Eph 3,4-6). Burkett (2002) understands the letter to the Ephesians as revealing God's hidden purpose in Christ, namely, to unite all into one body in Christ (Eph 2,11-22) and Paul believes that he was appointed to make this secret known. This paper limits her purview to only Eph 2,11-16. The primary concern is to show that Christ, and indeed Christianity has destroyed the great divide between human beings of different races, colours and religion. She has united all as one and equal as purposed by God. The researcher deals with the exegesis of the textual unit from two bold moments: preliminary observations and then Syntactic/Semantic analysis.

IV. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

a. Textual problems

The text of Eph 2,11-16 posits some noticeable textual issues. In v. 11, Nestle-Aland has *Dio* as the word beginning the sentence. Some manuscripts (mss) like F G 104 d MVictAmbst give *diatouto* as an alternative reading. The paucity and recent nature of the mss with the alternative reading make it more likely to be a correction of the original text. Again also, on the principle of *lectio difficilior*, it is clear that the alternative reading makes for easier reading and so probably different from the original text. In v. 13, *tou Christou* is omitted by $\hat{1}^{46}$ B (0278). Also in v. 15, *endogmasin* is omitted by $\hat{1}^{46}$ Vg^{ms}, while \aleph^2 D G $\hat{U}Y$ latt; Mcion^TEpiph have *eau* as an alternative reading to *autōeishena* witnessed in the text being studied. The texts with the alternative reading are more recent and corrected texts and so most they are not probably not the original.

b. Background

Some scholars decipher interface between Colossians and Ephesians (Burkett, 2002). This does not mean that there are no remarkable differences. Brown (1997) observes that there is little in the letter to tell us the background of the recipients and so this paper will focus on the writer's ideas. Apart from its confluence with Colossians like exalted Christology and subjection of principalities, the powers and the devil, Ephesians lays emphasis on the Church; cosmic unity; dualism of light over darkness (Eph 5,8-10) and the ascension of Christ above the heavens (Eph 4,8-10). Some scholars see gnostic influence on the author of Ephesians. They suggest that perhaps the author of Ephesians developed Christian Gnosticism as the best way to explain Christ's role in the world. In this sense, they interpret the Jesus of Ephesians as breaking down the dividing wall between

Israel and other nations (Eph 2,14-16) instead of that between the heavenly and earthly realms. The scholars conclude that in Ephesians, incorporation into Christ is compared to gnostic theme of incorporation into the cosmic body of the heavenly man. Brown (1997) criticises this gnostic reading. He argues that there are themes in Ephesians that would not be acceptable to Gnosticism. He gives examples with Eph 3,9; 1,7-10 which teaches that God created the world and planned to redeem it through Christ's blood; and that marriage between man and woman is sacred and intended by God (Eph 5,21-33). Despite these criticisms, elements woven into Gnosticism are still discernible in Ephesians.

Jewish background is also proposed for the writer of Ephesians's ideas. Some themes in and theological ideas in Ephesians are paralleled in the Qumran literature. Examples are the themes of mystery; the hymnic style; dualistic picture of the world dominated by light and darkness; and codes of behaviour comparable to the household code of Ephesians.

In overall picture, one can then infer that the outlook of Ephesians can be explained by the writer's drawing on the Scriptures, developments of Jewish thought in the Hellenistic world, and Christian beliefs, especially as vocalized in Pauline tradition.

c. Text Structure and Delimitation

Eph 2,11-16 appear to be part of the hymnic material making up Eph 2,11-22 as a whole. The entire text of Eph 2,11-22 show striking parallels in the sequence of thought with Col 1,21-23. Both texts have "then ... now" schema involving sequence alienation, reconciliation, and concern for believers' holiness. However, Ephesians though keeps to the "then ... now" schema, fills up the chapter with concepts it takes up and makes them part of larger concerns. For instance, it talks of separation but applies it to the Gentiles relationship to the Jews. It also adds cosmic hymn material to the notion of reconciliation; it also incorporates in its new temple imagery concern for holiness and norm of the apostolic gospel.

The overall structure of thought in Eph 2,11-16 could be seen from two moments. Verses 11-13 is the foundation, as the author draws a contrast between the gentile Christian past in relation to Israel and their present to remind them of the privilege of becoming Christians. Verses 14-18 provide further explanation of how this coming near was made possible through Christ's work. The terms "far" and "near" in v. 13 reminds the writer of Isa 57,19, which speaks of peace for two such groups. Lincoln (1990) avers that using the available tradition which speaks of Christ as the embodiment of peace and agent of reconciliation for divided cosmos, the writer prepares the ground before introducing this citation. Vv. 14-16 provides a reworking of this material in terms of overcoming the division between Jew and Gentile so that v. 17 can then introduce the Isa 57,19 quotation in combination with a further reference to the proclamation of peace from Isa 52,7.

d. Appreciation of text

The author must be appreciated for his tactfulness, logicity and sequence in arrangement of his thoughts. Eph 2,11-16 is generally a reminder to the gentiles of their religious-racial past and their eventual reconciliation as one with Israel through Christ. The flow of his thoughts is tactfully arranged in two (2) discourse units. Vv. 11-12 reminds the gentiles of their former relationship. V. 13-16 deals with the drawing of the Gentiles into unity with God from their condition of alienation from God, his covenant and promises and the broad contrast between their past and present condition. His use of synecdoche in his idea of Jesus' blood in v. 13 pleonasm in v. 14 mark the author as a good writer.

Syntactic/Semantic Analyses of the Text (the Church p.45)

The pericope begins with "Dio". It means "therefore" (Lenski, 1937); "for this reason" (Louw and Nida, 1988) or "then" (Foulkes, 1956). Hendriksen (1967) understands it as a linkage, a general connective indicating an exhortation based on Eph 2,1-10. Connected with *mnēmoneuete*, a present active imperative 2nd person plural of *mnēmoneuō* (I remember), the author invites his audience in the light of what he writes in Eph 2,1-10 about the change God has wrought in them, they are now to further reflect upon their pre-Christian state from another vantage point (Lincoln, 1990). The verb *mnēmoneuete* does not therefore imply a loss of memory. The author only asks that they think about and recall their former status. The reason for the invitation to a reflection is so that a sense of humility may arise within them for what God has done for them (Bruce, 1984).

Pote (formerly) refers to their former status as Gentiles relative to the religious privileges of the Israelites. The resumption of *hoti* together with the position of *pote* show that *ta ethnē* is in apposition with *humeis* (Abbot, 1897) and thus there is no ellipsed verb in the sentence. This means that, they were gentiles and still remain so in as much as they are not Jews but no longer on racial separation based on circumcision of the flesh. The underprivileged nature of the gentiles as a group is marked by the use of the definite article *ta* before *ethnē*. Its absence with *sarks* (flesh) unites the phrase *ensarki* closely with *ta ethnē* to make a predication about the gentiles, forming one idea, namely that the flesh is the ground for their distinction from the Jews. The phrase *ensarki* depicts the ground on which the gentiles were excluded from God's covenant with Israel and also the inadequacy of that covenant to meet human needs since it is based on the flesh. Schweizer (1976) abstract from this understanding to argue that since the distinction was based on the flesh the distinction between the Jews and gentiles was only provisional. Since transitoriness is a mark of *sarks*, it holds good only within the earthly but

not applicable to the spiritual community of Christ's Church. The author to give more clarification to what he means adds *ensarkicheiropoiētou* (in flesh made by hands) to *peritomēs* (circumcision). *Cheiropoiētos* (made by hands) stands for work of human origin as opposed to the work of God. In this sense, the author transmits the view that the judgment the circumcised pass against the uncircumcised has only a relative validity (Robinson, 1979). It recalls to mind, the true circumcision performed by the Holy Spirit in virtue of Christ's death that Paul describes elsewhere in Rom 2,29; Phil 3,3 and Col 2,11. It shows that the distinctions arising from the physical rite of circumcision are purely human, belonging to the realm of the flesh, the old creation and have to give place to what is done in the new age by the Spirit. *Legomenoi* (being called) is present passive participle of *legō*. It begins the participial clause standing in apposition to and also describes *ta ethnē*. It marks a digression giving the verse its anacolouthic or incomplete character necessitating the use of *hoti* in the next verse in order to resume the topic of discussion.

Verse 12 begins with *hotiētētōkairōekeinōchōris Christou*. Grammatically, this verse could be said to be resumptive of the main clause of Eph 2,11 (wherefore remember that formerly you Gentiles in the flesh). The beginning *hoti* of v. 12 resumes the *hoti* of that clause in v. 11 after the interruption of the appositional clause of Eph 2,11b (Salmond, 1970). The *tōkairōekeinōchōris* (at that time) resumes the *pote* (formerly) of that clause. Semantically, the verse gives the content of what the writer wants his readers to remember signaled by the beginning *hoti* (Candlish, 1901). The imperfect *ēte* marks the durative aspect of their former state, and contrasts with the aorist *egenēthēte* (you have become) in Eph 2,13. The imperfect tense in Greek expresses an action viewed wholly as happening continuously in the past without termination while aorist expresses an event that happened once and terminated. They were existing in a very deplorable condition (imperfect), but all at once this ceased and they entered (aorist) an entirely different position. It was because of their former condition without Christ that they excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and were strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope and godless of this world (*apēllotriōmenoitēs politeias tou Israēl kai Zenoitōndiathēkōntēsepaggelias, elpidamēechontes kai atheoientōkosmō*). The verse shows a chain of event clause. Each following predicate is the cause of each immediately preceding predicate, so that the primary predicate is the effect or result of the chain (Hodge, 1950). The chain goes like this: you were without Christ because you were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and excluded because you were strangers to the covenants of the promise, and strangers because you were having no hope, and hopeless because you were godless in the world. The use of the term 'Christos' is of particular interest here. It is the Greek term for the Messiah. It recalls the OT promises and the fact that Christ was with Israel in his prophets, a privilege which the Greeks did not enjoy because they were not of the covenant nor of the commonwealth of Israel but which now, they have because of their faith in Christ. The author used the perfect participle (*apēllotriōmenoi*) to show the completeness of this separation. The present active participle of *echō* used here with the negative particle *mē*, have the nuance of 'being bereft of', 'to be without'. Thus, they have no ground for proper hope and no relationship with God (*atheos*) because they were ignorant of Him.

Verses 13-16 introduces another unit. It gives a portrait of the peacemaking Christ through what he has done. He has now reconciled Gentiles and Jews making them one new man without distinction through what he has done.

De (but) contrasts with *pote* of v. 11 and the *tōkairōekeinō* of v. 12 while *enChristōlēsou* contrasts with and reverses *chōris Christou* (without Christ) of v. 12 (Lincoln, 1990). *En* with dative object indicates close personal connection. *Nuni* is emphatic form of *nun*. The author uses it to mark a point of time that is simultaneous with the event of the discourse itself.

The participial clause *humeis hoi poteontesmakran* (you who were once far off) serves to repeat what was stated in v. 12 about their former condition especially of 'being alienated' (*apēllotriōmenoi*) and being 'strangers' (*zenoi*). It prepares one for the metaphorical reference to the dividing wall in v. 14 (Beare, 1953). The metaphorical word *makran* (far off) and its antonym *eggus* (near) seem to come from Isa 57,19. In the OT actually, the terms were used to designate the Jews and Gentiles. The Temple is located in Jerusalem and signifies the presence of God. Since the Gentiles were located in lands outside of the geographical bounds of Israel, the location of the Temple, they were regarded as far from God spatially. Whenever a Gentile became a proselyte, he was allowed admittance to the court of Israel or God's holy community (Hendriksen, 1967). *Egenēthēte* (brought near) is an aorist passive indicative from *ginomai*. Its passivity shows that the Gentiles are brought near not because of any merit of theirs but by God's grace (Eph 2,6) manifested through the instrumentality of Christ's blood. The author makes this clear by his use of the preposition *en* (by means of, through) which is a marker of means. If the preposition is read in the light of Lev 16,3; Heb 9,25; 10,19 it could us be said to have been used to mean that the guilty party is metaphysically present or represented in the blood of the one making the atonement. *Haima* generally means blood. Bauer (1979) sees its figurative usage here. He believes that it is figurative of blood and life as an expiatory sacrifice which here brings about a fellowship. The blood stands for the sacrificial death of Christ. It is a synecdoche, standing for violent death and the death standing for the atonement effected by the sacrificial act. Bullinger (1968) does not see it as the actual blood

corpuscles shed nor even the act of sacrifice. He sees the term as having the connotative force of the effects or merits of the atonement or expiation that the sacrificial act brought about. It is this expiation that opened the way for all mankind, Jews and Gentiles alike to approach God.

Gar (for) here indicates the beginning of a new sentence. It also shows the ground for the previous statement by introducing a confirmation and illustration. The pronoun *autos* (he himself) is a strong emphasis. It means that he himself alone and no other is our peace. The term *eirēnē*(peace) in the context designates a set of favourable circumstance involving peace and tranquility. It is not simply a psychological state involving a set of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil. The fact that it goes with a definite article *hē* shows that it is talking of a particular type of peace. It is the peace characteristic of the messianic kingdom where according to Isaiah, lion and lamb will be at peace (Isa 57,19). It has a reference to the prince of peace of Isa 9,6. Thus, the term could be said to have a sense of salvation in this context. It involves not just cessation of war and hostilities. It connotes well-being and salvation, leading to a situation of unity. Salmond (1970) notes that it gives the nuance that Christ is both absolute and essence of peace. The presence of the defining articular participle *ho poiēsas* in the clause following shows that the peace is used in some degree as metonymy to project Christ as also producer of peace. Peace does not exist outside of him. He is both the medium and substance of peace. As Messiah, the peace in question is both social and political than of an individual soul. It is an order, a healing of relationship effecting union and unity of all in having the same savior, the same hope, the same God and of the same family. *Poiēsas* is aorist active participle of *ho poieō*. In the text, it means 'to make someone or something into something' (Markus, 1974). It expresses a unique and completed action with specific reference to Christ's death. *Amphoterā hen* refers to Jews and Gentiles. The expression *poiēsas amphoterā hen* explains further how and why Christ is our peace. It gives a more precise information on how Christ has himself become our peace. He is our peace because he caused both Jews and Gentiles to become one. The author expresses it in neuter gender to portray the idea of unity. The neuter seems to look at the system or the organization of things in the Jews and Gentiles worlds. In Eph 2,15 he uses the masculine gender to describe both as a new man. The change was not in the race. They were not amalgamated sanguinely. They are one in privilege and position before God without distinctions, divisions or discriminations. In order to actualize this, Christ tore down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility (*kai to mesotoichontou phragmoulusas, tēn exthranētē sarkiautou*). *Kai* here is exegetical introducing how the Jews and Gentiles were brought into one. Graham (1997) explains *mesotoichon* as a partition inside a house while *phragmosis* a fence or railing erected for protection rather than separation. A combination of the two nouns results in a composite sense. For Graham (1997) it was a wall erected to prevent certain persons from entering into a house or city, and had a connotation of hostility such as a ghetto wall, or the Berlin Wall has for the people of our time. Wood (1978) avers that the phrase designates the ceremonial observances or the system of the Mosaic law. While *phragmos* stands for the whole arrangement of the Mosaic law, *mesotoichon* (dividing wall) was only an instrument. Ceremonial observance of the law caused the separation between the law observers (Jews) and non-observers (Gentiles) leading to enmity between the two. The enmity (*exthran*) standing in apposition to *mesotoichon* is connected to the participle *lusas* (having broken down). It also stands in apposition to *tonnomon* in Eph 2,15 and so is also connected with the participle *katargēsas* (having abolished) showing the reason for breaking the wall or partition, namely, to abolish the enmity between the Jews and Greeks. He abolished all in his flesh (*entēsarkiautou*) because by his incarnation in human nature, he represents the ideal man, the common humanity, so that all humanity finds its meeting point in him. Thus, the Son of God has formed in his own body a perfect unity.

Ton vomontōnētolōnēndogmasinkatargēsas (having abolished the law of the commandments in decrees). *Ton nomon* here refers to the Mosaic or Jewish laws as contained in the Torah. The laws are by nature commandments (*tōnētolōn*). The phrase *endogmasin* points out the dogmatic nature of the laws. One can therefore submit that *ton nomon* indicates that the law was a code sanctioned by supreme legislator. The genitive *tōnētolōn* (the commandments) indicates the contents of this code being comprised of a number of individual, minute, varied, formal regulations. *Endogimasin* (in decrees) defines the nature of these decrees, as issued under Divine sanction, revealing the immediate will of God and so are mandatory. The verb *katargeō* could mean 'to supersede', 'to make void', 'to make inoperative' 'to make ineffective', 'to invalidate', or 'to cause to cease'. Christ accomplished this by satisfying the demands of the law so that it culminates in him and we are judicially free from it. The reason for which he abolished the law causing division is *hinatous duo ktisēen auto eishenakainonanthrōpon poiōneirēnē* (in order that he may create in himself one new man thereby making peace). *Hina* is a particle of purpose. The purpose for which he abolished the law is spelt out in the verse. The first is so that he might create the two into one new man and the second is so that he might reconcile the both to God (Eph 2,16). *Tous duo* like *ta amphoterā* in Eph 2,14 is talking of the Jews and Gentiles. It is observable that in Eph 2,14, the author used neuter gender where here he adopted masculine. It is because, the discussion here deals with two men, one representing the totality of the Jews and the other the totality of the Gentiles, whom Christ has made into a single new man, the totality of Christians. It expresses their corporate unity just their passing over of the two individuals into one. He calls them *tous duo* to mark their separateness. By uniting them

into one in himself, he establishes a new order of mankind devoid of racism, divisions and classicism. This union gives birth to a new man. It is not an amalgamation of the comprising groups. It is a completely new creation. Each group is free to contribute its own idiosyncracies, history, experiences and gifts to the commonwealth marked by peace.

Reading Eph 2,11-16 in the context of African experience: The Negative Effects

Political leaders, employers and even religious leaders may try to sweep racism under the carpet. The truth is that the reality is so conspicuous to be neglected. The idea of white supremacy, incessant shooting of blacks in the USA, proscription and denial of visas by the Western world countries to citizens of some less developed countries, discrimination in matters of appointments, erection of walls are all evident signs of racial discrimination. In Africa, the story is not even different. Apartheid and Xenophobia in South Africa, the concept of 'Ghana must go' in Nigeria, imposition of high tariffs by Ghanaian government against Nigerian traders in Ghana, gory stories in the Christian North in Nigeria perpetrated by the majority Muslims are regrettable facts of racism, discrimination and divisive mentality and they are not without detrimental effects on the victim.

Racism is a structure that often limits the victim from attaining control over his own life. This is because racism is a masked prejudice. Evidently, with prejudice, great potentials are wasted as the prejudiced scarcely see the latent talents in him as beneficial to others. Even when he sees it, he is hardly given the opportunity to develop, harness and use it. He coarsed into feeling inferior before others.

Racism does not allow for equal opportunities to be given to all human persons. Coontz (1992) notes that young Black men applying for entry-level jobs were rejected three times more often than their white counterparts. Smith (1985:551) also posits that, "young white dropouts have had consistently lower unemployment rates than young black graduates. What has made a difference in working or not ... has been the color of the applicant's skin". The jobless black victims are left vulnerable to the multiple stressors that afflict individuals in the low socio-economic status brackets.

Socially, victims of racism are anger prone which is an important predictor of life stress. This explains why anger-hostility conflict are more experienced amongst blacks. Victims are liable to more health, financial, family, job, and criminal victimization problems (Broman & Johnson, 1988). Researches also suggest that suppression of angry feelings associated with poor socio-economic and stressful conditions rather than the frequent experience of anger is a greater problem among blacks when compared with whites (Baughman, 1971; Gentry, 1985; Johnson 1990). This is because black males' socialization to a dominant culture norm often make it difficult for them to express their emotions for fear of counteractions like loss of job or means of support for the family. This anger suppression lead many into depression, anxiety, alienation and intense experience of anger and resentment.

Racism is key factor in producing mental disorders (Kramer, Rosen, and White). A victim of racism is scarcely happy or fulfilled. Undoubtedly, he is at the risk of depression, cancer, sickle-cell anaemia, alcoholism and low life expectancy. According to Essed (1990), "To live with the threat of racism means planning, almost every day of one's life, how to avoid or defend oneself against discrimination" (p.260). The end result is that most victims of racism, unable to express their feelings of fear, worries and anxieties are under pressure to prove their manhood. Some end up seeking identity refuge in a gang. These gangs promote masculine culture by promoting initiation rites, displays of strength and daring, heightened sense of masculinity, camaraderie, and fashion. Yet gang life is full of danger and violence.

V. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

This paper details a study of Eph 2,11-16. Racism and what Christ did to it is her primary exposition. The preliminary part of the research demonstrates the reality of racism in human history as man made evil. The excursus into its provisions in the scriptures show that it was never God-oriented. All are equal before God despite His choice of Israel as a sample nation for His plan to reach the ends of the earth. The plan in made real again and actualized in the incarnation of the Word. In Jesus Christ, the unity of mankind is restored. There is no longer Jew or Greek. He broke down the dividing wall of hostility that separated them and formed them into a new humanity, a single construction with Christ as the cornerstone, a single body of which He is the head (Eph 2,11-22). As Christians living in a world bedevilled by racism, discrimination and divisiveness, we must live up to our vocation. We must live beyond the limitations of racism to see all as one in Christ.

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