AN EVALUATION OF THE MANIFESTATION OF SPIRITS AND THE IMPACT OF THE GOSPEL ON THEM: A STUDY OF MARK 5:1-13, FROM AN AFRICAN (GIKUYU) CONTEXT OF NGIRIAMBU AREA.

SUBMITTED

BY:

CENDI, ALEXANDER MUCHIRI

This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Masters of Theology in Biblical Studies, with a Specialization in New Testament, from St. Paul's University.

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ABSTRACT

The Agikuyu of Ngiriambu believe that the first African evangelist in the area, Samuel Mukuba, the father to the late Archbishop David Gitari, expelled the spirits from the forest by ringing the church bells as well as his work of evangelization. Since then, their common belief was that due to the impact of the Gospel, the spirits had ceased to manifest themselves as they used to in those days. Thus, the burden of this study is to do an inquirely on whether the church and the world of the spirits, especially within the African context, can continue to abode/exist or be found together within the same environment, guided by a theological framework informed by inculturation. To deal with this problem, the study used an empirical survey design, a case study on a field survey conducted among the Agikuyu of St. Matthew's Ngiriambu. The researcher administered copies of questionnaire, which were completed by sixty respondents. The purpose of this study was to find out how the Gospel of Jesus Christ interacts with various kinds of spirits in the New Testament and our own African context. It is illustrated in Mark 5:1-13, where Jesus encounters, Legion, a man with unclean spirits. The objectives to this study were:

i. to investigate how St. Matthew's Ngiriambu church interacted with the spirits' world in their midst,

ii. to investigate how the spirits manifested themselves and the impact of the Gospel on them in the light of Mark 5:1-13 and within the Ngiriambu community, in the light of the larger African context and

iii. Provide a Biblical solution on how the church is to relate with the spirits and spirits' world.

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The overall structure of this study begins in chapter one comprising among others with the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives and questions. Chapter two is the literature review comprising of both literary and textual criticism to the Gospel of Mark, and a brief review of spirits in the New Testament, Hebraic Graeco-Roman world and the larger African context. While chapter three outlines the research methodology, chapter four incloudes the presentation of data collected during the literature review and field survey. Chapter five is the conclusion which outlines the research findings, recommendations and the wayforward.

As a result, the study found out that, as attested by Lewis, in African context, "If the spirits are identified as useful, they are accommodated or retained, but if not, they are exorcized and cast away" (Lewis 1996: 122-138). Thus, what the Gospel in ACK St. Matthew's Ngiriambu community exorcised in 1919 and still struggles with upto today is the malevolent not benevolent spirits.

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