

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY**  
**of**  
**THE KUKU CULTURE**  
**and**  
**THE HEBREW CULTURE**

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This is an academic study of missiological interest. The research was done in 1986 in the Sudan Theological College, while I was the Professor of Physics in the University of Juba, Juba, Sudan. The original scripts are deposited in the Sudan Collection of the University of Juba and with the Sudan Theological College. Due to the civil war the University is now relocated in Khartoum. Those who helped me in this research whose names are in the list at the end, now serve the war torn South Sudan and neighboring countries, as pastors of the Sudan Pentecostal Churches and Assemblies of God Churches. The living conditions in these parts are unimaginable to the civilized world and they need your support and prayer.

### Abstract

In this paper traditional culture, beliefs and religious practices of the Kuku tribes of the South Sudan are compared with the Hebrew culture. It is shown that there is almost identical pattern even to minute details. Even in the way of corruption they are similar. It is suggested that a historical common contact theory or information exchange theory could not possibly explain such close similarity. We are thus led to the only alternative of common source, i.e. God did reveal himself to Kukus in a way similar to the Hebrews through a special revelation. Can this be true? We examine such a possibility based on the biblical prophecy.

### 1. Introduction

The Southern Sudanese African Culture is decaying fast. Most of the tribal cultures are not known to the new generation and has never been collected or written down. If this is not done in the immediate future, it is most likely that we will loose these for ever. In 1983 when I came into the University of Juba my interest was to know what are the traditional religious beliefs and practices of the tribes around this region. A survey of existing literature showed a lack of understanding of the African mind. Most of them were written from the point of view of western materialism or from. the point of view of early missionaries who considered the African religions as totally pagan. A perusal of the literature in this field includes such great anthropologists as Lienhardt G (Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka, Oxford, 1961), Seligman C.G (Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan,

London, 1932), Frances Madtrig Dang (The Africans of the Two Worlds Yale, 1978) and Evens Pritchard E.E (The Nuer Religion, Oxford 1956) All of them indicated similarities between Hebrew culture and Southern Sudanese culture. But their subject matter were along different lines and no one the comparative study. Recently Lazarus Leek Mawut (Proc. of Conf. on the Role of Southern Sudanese, Khartoum, 1985) attempted a study of comparison from data available from the various literature. But the data was very meager and the conclusions so arrived were not conclusive or compelling. Since I felt the need of more direct information, I have made an attempt to collect data directly from the field, from the elders of the various tribes with the help of a group of dedicated young people from the Sudan Theological College. Fifteen of these people went out and gathered a lot of information from the various tribes. In this paper I am dealing only with the Kuku tribe which I believe is representative of the agricultural tribes of this area and the Bari speaking tribes in this area. The purpose of this paper is to compare the cultures of the Kuku and the Hebrew. The results are startling and the conclusions even more.

## 2. The concept of God.

There is only one God and he lives Somewhere. This God is a good God, who do not want people to sin. He is very powerful and is everywhere. He is very wise. He is good to the people as long as they are good. But if the people went in evil ways God punished them. No one can hide their sin from the God and escape his punishment because Ngun is all knowing and omnipresent. Ngun is a loving God, merciful and kind and his care will extend to generations to whomsoever pleases Him. But he is also a terrible God and will visit the iniquities of the fathers upto three generations. In comparison the identical concept of God is seen in the revelation of God to Moses. God's character was announced before he revealed himself to Moses. The announcement in Exodus 34:6-7 is as follows: 'The Lord, the Lord, a merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and children's children to the third and the fourth generations.'

Actually the word 'God' in Kuku is Ngun and the word for man is 'Nguto" or "Ngutu' meaning, the image. The Kukus believe that Nguto came from Ngun. Man is created in the image of God. The word for spirit is 'Nguteet"

with its plural as 'Nguloko'. This also means ghost. The Ngutelet is an image of God in the sense that the ghost is an image of man. There is another word for Angels, 'Muloko'. However the Nguloko are also considered as Angels. The implication seems to be that it is good people's spirit that are used as angels. There are other types of beings which are spirit beings also. These angels have the responsibility of roaming over the earth executing God's orders. There are special spirits who are responsible for each family to protect them and guide them. These spirits are often thought of as the spirits of the ancestors of the family. There are two types of spirits - the good spirits called Muloko lobut and the bad spirits called Muloko lorpk.

The correspondence with the Biblical concept of man as created in the image of God and of the angels who roam around the earth executing God's orders are evident. The presence of angels protecting the families are probably a recent concept in the Christian thought. 'So God created man in his own image, in the image God He created him; male and female created He them.' Gen.1:2? 'These are they whom the Lord has sent to patrol the earth.' Zech.1:10

'There is also an extremely interesting concept of "Ngunto" which means exactly like God. In Christian concept this corresponds to the concept of the only begotten Son of God who "is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation'. Co1.1:15 However we could not get much information about this concept. There are stories which indicate the existence of the Sons of God as we will illustrate later. There also are indications that Nguto could become Nyunto under certain conditions. If this is so Ngunto could imply a special class of beings rather than the "only begotten son" concept. This could accommodate the class of beings like Melchizedek.

There is also the concept of a designer, creator God who is unknown and unknowable called Ngun Kagwtyantt. "In him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible ..... "Col 1:16

The supreme God is always held in reverence so that the ultimate oath is based on his name. When a person escapes a danger or trouble, the common expression will be 'Ngun let' meaning luck that God brought. Taking an oath in Kuku is called 'milyo'. If someone accuses you wrongly of any misdeed, the absolute denial is done as follows. You take the sand or soil from the ground with your first finger and put it on your tongue. Then make a cutting

motion over your neck and point towards heaven. Then you say 'Ngun lo-ki' which means God is in heaven.

### 3.How Communion with Heaven was Cut.

Long ago there was a link between heaven and earth by means of a rope which stretched from. heaven down to earth. The legend has that it was controlled by a spider who was to act as gate keeper and guide. One condition that was imposed on to the visitors to the heaven was that they should not take anything from heaven to earth. During the period of harmonious relation between heaven and earth, there were no sickness, no hunger, no death, no hatred, no theft or evil. This was simply a state of eternal happiness. This continuous happy harmonious relationship was broken off when one elder who became selfish. During one of such visits he carried a piece of meat with him from the feast. When he slid down the rope, the meat rubbed against the rope and pieces remained on it. The meat gave out its characteristic odor and hyenas were attracted to it. In an attempt to eat the meat they bit off the rope. The heaven people were angry and God pulled off the rope, thus severing all connection with earth and heaven. (Some versions say that he did not really steal it, but did not wash his hands after the feast. His friends were already on their way down while he was still feasting being a glutton. So in a hurry he skipped the handwashing ritual.) Without the rejuvenating heavenly food, sickness and death entered the earth. Along with came selfishness, hatred and all sorts of evil. \par \par In another legend, the heaven was only about 50 meters above the ground and was made of leather. It was ruled by a mighty ruler beyond the skies - the God. God was with his people. There was a ladder from the sky to the ground on earth, So people of heaven and earth used to come and go as they liked and intermingled and fellowship together. This communion between the sons of God and the sons of men continued until one. day it was spoilt by a woman. She mixed some poison with groundnut paste and smeared it on the sky leather. From that time on the sky moved away and never came back. Thus man was ever separated from coming in personal contact with God.

In another legend death was introduced by a frog (probably representing Satan) against the wishes of Chameleon (God). The chameleon. wanted people. to live for ever and work and enjoy while the frog insisted that people should be lazy and should eventually die: The frog argued that otherwise he could not hear funeral drums which he said he enjoyed very

much. Though these stories about the fall and separation of man from God are very different from the Genesis story, the general concept of fellowship between God and man and its eventual disruption because of sin is clear in the Kuku legends. It is also to note the role of Satan and that of the woman.

#### **4. Sin and Death.**

In spite of the alienation of man from God because of disobedience, man still have access to God by living a moral life. The greatest sin that may bring immediate wrath of God and consequent punishment are murder, adultery and in that order. Stealing, disobedience to moral laws, disobedience to parents and elders, pride, selfishness are also punishable by God and takes the form of sickness and death. Leprosy is considered as a punishment crimes.

Thus in the Kuku thought, man need not die. If a man has lived a righteous life performing all the moral and spiritual acts of sacrifices, rituals, observing the orders of the ancestors, he will not die even if he is very old. Death is a punishment from God for the sins committed. The sins of the parents may also be carried forward to their children. Death takes its toll in decay most of the time until man dies of his old age. But for an evil doer, who wilfully violates moral codes is often instantaneous. In an outbreak of epidemic caused by God the witches die first. In war also sinners are the first to die. However a man may be poisoned to death before his time. Thus in the Kuku tribe death is always looked upon in suspicion as there may be a poisoner behind it. For contrast and comparison with Hebrew thought we refer to Ezekiel's prophecy in chapter 18. 'If a man is righteous and does what is lawful and right - if he does not eat upon the mountains and lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in her time of impurity, does not oppress any one, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, does not lend at interest or take any increase, withholds his hand from iniquity, executes true Justice between man and man, walks in my statutes, and is careful to observe my ordinances - he is righteous he shall surely live, says the Lord God' Ez 18; 5-9 'The soul that sins shall die' Ez 18:20 Though Ezekiel does not advocate the transference of sin from father to son, this is explicit in Ex 34:6-7

When a man is dead, he has paid the price of his sins and he continues to live as spirit. If he is not evil in his spirit he can have communion with God, if he wants, and be a mediator for his people, who are still alive. There is no

concept of hell in the Kuku system. Man continues to live beyond death in continuous communion with both man and spirits. As such ancestors are suitable mediators. In fact after the alienation of heaven and earth, man's only way of contact with God remains through these ancestors and other spirits who have access to God.

Kukus defines God as Father and Mother. Such a concept is slowly creeping in even in the Christian church today. The lack of the concept of God as mother has in the past forced church to develop Mariology. God as a female principle inherent in the concept of Wisdom and the Spirit. This definition helps the Kuku theology to merge ancestral cult with the concept of God as the great great grand father and mother of all mankind. God is not only the father but also the mother. Man came out of God. It is interesting to note here that in the family records of Jesus as given by Luke in chapter 4:31, ancestry ends as 'the son of Adam, the son of God.'

A small tukul (hut made of wood, mud and thatched with grass which is the common housing of the people of this part of the world) is built between the tukuls of the goats and the tukul for kitchen as the abode of the ancestors of the family and the place of worship and communication center with God. In this respect it may be compared more like that of the temple which was built as an abode for God rather than the tabernacle of the wilderness except that each family has a shrine and that they were made of perishable materials. It is always kept clean and tidy. No unauthorized person may enter inside the holy place lest they die. One person who is old and having grey hair may be selected to go into the holies to serve the place, to sweep, to clean and to confer with the spirits. Even then it has to be done by carrying with them white beer prepared for that purpose. They may enter the holy place only when everyone is asleep.

## **5 The Ancestral Cult.**

From the above discussion it is apparent that ancestor worship and respect to elders are essential parts of the Kuku culture. Sin, therefore displeases the ancestors. For the same reason, respect to elders is an essential characteristic of the tribe. If you do not honour your father and mother how can they be pleased with you when they are in the spirit? The spirits of the ancestors are always watching the members of his family, especially with regard to their inter-relationships. Every member of the family is expected to be reconciled with their grandfathers and fathers before their death. Asking forgiveness at death

bed to their grandfathers is a matter of routine in each family. If he died in his anger with any member of the family, there will be constant trouble within the family until he is appeased. If you have been in good terms with your father and grandfather it will give you a long life with abundance of blessings. Evidently tallies with the commandment "Honour your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Ex.20:12) and Paul's teaching 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honour your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth.'" It is a part of righteousness and it is the blessings of the parents that may keep sickness and death away. If there is any trouble within the family, it may be caused by the evil spirits from the rivers. But the ancestors can help you in this situation to eradicate the evil spirits.

The spirits of the ancestors are variously believed to live in their own houses and their own compounds or in the rivers in a big tree or in a grove or even in the forest.

As a mark of respect the names of the grandparents are carried on by the grandchildren. The first boy will carry the name of the father's father and the first girl will carry the name of the father's mother, If this is not done the child may die.

The nature of the spirit of the ancestors depends on his character while he was alive. A good man will remain a good spirit. He will watch over his family and its welfare even beyond the grave. His spirit will live in his compound. But if he was a bad man and if the relatives hated him, his evil spirit will go to the rivers. He may creep back into his own house during the night while people are asleep. But the presence of this evil spirit will disturb all the members of the household. They will have nightmares and may even fall sick. If this happens the elders of the house should go to a spirit doctor (I have avoided using the usual name 'witch doctor' because he is not necessarily evil as the name implies. This word was coined by the early missionaries.) who will try to convince the spirit, not to raid the house. This may require the sacrifice of a ram or white beer. In every village there is a group of elders called 'Tameilk' whose work is to look after the living by looking after the dead. When they understand from the spirit doctor that some of their ancestors are suffering in the river from sleeping outside and are sucked by the mosquitoes, they will probably build a small hut near his mother. Some small stones will be collected and kept between big pots in

that hut so that he may not injure anyone living. Thus. the evil spirits are essentially the spirits of the people who died while in disagreement with his brothers. They normally become wilder after death and will be a constant threat to people.

Mulako lobot are the good spirits- the spirits of the people who died in peace and harmony. They are considered more powerful than the evil ones. The curses of a good spirits will continue to generations to generations.

In a sense we see here the merging of the concepts of angels and devils with the spirits of the dead - one redeemed and the other condemned. In the apocryphal traditions angels did directly intervene in the lives of people and did exorcism protection, magic and guidance to safety measures by crafts. Hebrews 1:14 describes angels as 'ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation.

## **6. Spirits of Rivers.**

Kukus believe in the gods of rivers (Kate), gods of the mountains (Nuloko ti mere), gods of the bi( trees (Butt) and the gods that are ancestors (Merenye).. Though these are referred to as gods, they are considered only as beings limited in space and having powers greater than man because of their spirit nature.

They fear the gods of the rivers most. If women went to the river to fetch water they are not allowed to shout lest they disturb the sleeping river gods. One should not kill any frogs because they are the soldiers of the river gods. It makes the croaking when someone comes near the river in order to inform the river gods. The punishment of the river gods takes the form of ear ache and ear infection. The river gods are appeased by the offerings of eggs, chickens and money. These are sacrificed at the river beds. When a man wants to marry a girl from the other side of the river, he should not cross the river with her during the day. It has to be done during the night or during late evening. Then the girl's father should go and get her back the next night. These are to be done during the night as the river gods will be away from the river at that time. They are free to move about only in the night. If this precaution is not taken she may find herself barren and that is the worst curse for a woman.

Sometimes the river gods are visible in human form with big head and small legs and hands. Other times they are in the form of snakes. That is why

snakes that live in the river are not to be killed. \par \par Towards the Nile from Kajo-Keji lands there is a place where two streams meet. The area between the two streams are very fertile and resists even the heaviest drought. Where these two streams Bgiri and Gbini meet there is a Water pool below the falls. The sound of the falls can be heard upto 50 miles or more. A large number of good and bad spirits control this area even today. A lot of strange things happens here. If. you are passing through this megion please be warned. The first restriction is that as you walk along be absolutly quiet, because the evil ones are waiting to punish you if you say something about them. In order to prompt you to say something they will do many. strange things before you. 'An animal' may come running from nowhere and fall in front of you and die and within minutes it will decay and you will see only its white bones as though they died a good ten years ago. Without mentioning anything or asking your friends about. these things you should continue your jouney. Sometimes it may be a bird, at other times it may be a huge fish swimming in shallow water. It might just start raining where you are, but there will be no rain anywhere else. You will hear strange voices and funny sounds. But never say a word. If you do you will be made stiff that you cannot go, or you may get lost and will disappear into no man's land. You will be lost to this world until your relatives bring an offering of egg and goat or ram to that place. Then you will be released unharmed.

If you feel thirsty and ask for water , water will come to you in a very small pot called 'Lupunit' or a gourd called 'Ker', cooled and nice. But as you drink, it will never finish. You will try to pass the pot to your friends, but it will remain stuck to you and immediately after that you will disappear into the invisible unknown world until the gods are appeased. As long as you do not speak, no god can harm you. If you are going to release a lost or locked person, please consult the land lord of the place. There are several places like this in Kuku land.

## **7. Spirits of the mountains.**

Mountains are also attributed to certain spirits and some of them are very powerful. There are four such mountains in Kuku land. They are Jale, Nyiri, Kimu and Keleke. During the time of the reign of Chief Yengi of Kajo-Keji, there was a clan called Koturume who were living near the mountain Jale. They wire rich in cattle and worshipped the god of Jale.. During the time of releasing the cows to graze, Jale also sent his children with their cows. These children of Jale are like men with well formed nose and mouth and beautiful

faces. But their back side was empty and they had no intestines. These children used to play together until evening when they separated and went home each with their cattle.

Jale has many things in common with Gbiri in character. So the hunting men and women who go to collect soft broom from this mountain usually control their tongues even in these days. This great hill lies in the border between Uganda and Sudan.

There is also an interesting story of an encounter between Christians and Jale. Across the hill Jale are the Media of Uganda. Early during the Christian missionary upthrust, some Christians decided to attack the mountain spirits of Jale. Taking their drums and harps and flute they set off to the sacred groves in the mountain. However they were forced to retreat as an avalanche of stones and sticks and lashes met them. The spirits however were invisible.

Jale is the biggest mountain in this region and women go there to collect broomsticks. However no woman is allowed to say 'I am thirsty' while they are in the mountain. It is considered as an insult to Jale and she will have the pot. No one who fought with sister, brother, father, wife or husband should attempt to climb the mountain for any reason. Those who go must be a person who is reconciled with the family and the tribe and without sin. No woman under gestation or in her periods should climb the hill under penalty of death. For Jale is a holy god and no uncleanness should be found in his land.

When people want to go hunting to the mountain, they should prepare oil in a bottle and meje (soft stones) along with white beer, The elders should then carry this ceremoniously after purifying themselves to the mountain. Without getting drunk Jale would not talk or yield his blessings.

Similar stories abound for other mountains and hills in this region. They are treated with reverence all the time because they provide meat, broom, discipline and crops. No one may start a fire on these mountains. But occasionally you may find the mountain burning and covered with clouds with thunder and lightning. But you are not supposed to talk about these things as it will bring eye diseases. No one is supposed to cut down trees from these hills, though you may collect dead trees as firewood. It is uncommon for Kukus to plant trees. They are supposed to grow by themselves.

However, strict these gods may look, they are very forgiving and loving. Once a sin-offering is made, the relationship is totally restored and curses are turned into blessings. Even he may open the wombs of the barren in the family - the greatest of all blessings.

In the Hebrew culture also mountains were often looked upon with awe and had been associated with strange supernatural powers. The ultimate example of this is found in the Lord God's appearance on Mount Sinai. However there are many other mountains that are associated with holiness and supernatural powers. In fact before the building up of the temple by Solomon after entering Canaan sacrifices were always made on the high places.

### **8. Spirit Possession.**

A person possessed with And' ude is highly feared. No one is allowed to touch the head of this person unless permitted by the host entertaining the spirit. If this happens accidentally or purposely, the spirit will throw the host down with her or his eyes closed, body stiffened and fist clenched. The possessed then may start dancing. If the person who touched the head is still around, wrestling and kicking of that person will follow. It is a great risk to fight back under these conditions because the spirit filled person has extraordinary strength. You may defend yourself or run away. Running away is not practical because the host has extra speed and strength. The alternative is to pull out some of your possession - money, handkerchief or anything at all- and wrench open the fist of the possessed and place it in. If the thing is your own the spirit will cool off. Otherwise it will retort, "It is not yours. I don't like it." Apology is permitted after the departure of the .Andude and the host can forgive. You are not to utter anything about this incident any time later. A fully possessed person climbs trees and falls down without breaking or cutting themselves. The spirit may throw a host from the house top and make him dance with the head down on the roof of the room. Under these conditions the' person may speak with flowing tongues and in languages that they have never learned or spoken before. Speaking in tongues is considered as a sign of spirit possession. Falling down, lying naked and without control and speaking in tongues were the signs of spirit possession among the early Hebrew prophets. Both good spirits and evil spirits possessed the Hebrew prophets and both prophesied to guide or to misguide people. (See Num. 11:25, 1 Sam. 10:6,9-13 etc.) During the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believers they spoke in tongues which

was considered as a sign of the filling of the spirit. However we should note here that though speaking in tongues is a sign of spirit possession it does not imply it is, the Holy Spirit. This can be ascertained only by the fruits of the spirit.

The spirits are very sensitive to musical instruments and to some specific songs. As soon as an Andude possessed person hears the sound of the drum or the song, he will start dancing in the trance. They normally want to be the drummer until the spirit departs or the song stops. Temporary possession may be induced by mechanical and musical means. For this, goat dung is collected in gassiya leaves and is put under the arm pits of the man or woman desiring such temporary possession. A helper who knows the songs of the spirit joins the person in a similar manner and starts singing the songs. The helper will pat over the head of the person in rhythm as background choir chants on. As the song reaches higher and higher pitch the person will be filled. In the early Hebrew culture temporary possession of the Spirit of the Lord was induced by music as is implied in 2 Kings 3:15, 'When the minstrel played, the power of the Lord came upon him. The spirit filled person may transmit the possession to other people willfully. This is often done in these cases to those they hate and to those who cause trouble to them by constantly talking ill of them - remember that they are highly telepathic to evil vibrations. This is done by oral pronouncement and direct contact or indirect contact. The oral pronouncement is normally done in tongues and indirect contact is made by spit. The victim will automatically walk on to the spit and touch it and the possession will be complete. Anointing of the Holy Spirit by praying in tongues accompanied by the laying on of hands is only a logical step from this.

There are two ways of exorcism. One is to use another possessed person to touch their head. Alternately a plant called Lomueju may be used to beat the spirit out. \par \par 9. Totems of the Tribe. \par \par Trees, stones, birds, animals, land, water, reptiles etc. are all sacred objects in one way or other. They are all considered as the expressions of God through these substances and life forces as the soul expresses itself through the body. However a particular clan or family or person may consider one of these as specially sacred. For example the Burs clan considers Tigers as their clan totem. 'We don't kill the tiger, and they don't kill us. In the same way we don't eat them and they don't eat us.' The tigers visit these villages as a peaceful animal and do not trouble the people. In special occasions like the burial of a chief, certain weddings etc. tigers in fact officiate silently. Its name is applied for

praising the clan at dances, funerals and other victorious occasions. \par \par 10 Sacrifices. \par \par The mode of worship and sacrifice are very similar if not identical with Hebrew culture. In every home or village there is a small hut or separated area behind the house with three hooks or stones arranged as a triangle. These are the sacred places. Sacrifices are offered at the door of the hut or on the stones. 'An altar of earth shall you make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings your sheep and your oxen in every place where I cause my name to be remembered. I will come to you and bless you' (Ex20:24). The sacrifice may be cereal offspring of sorghum, maize, millet, beans etc. or animal offerings of ram, he goat, cock etc. When the sacrifices are offered the group should not include young people below the age of 20 or women. The animal or cereal offered must be without blemish and whole. No animal which is not fattened or having only one testes or their testicles crushed may be offered as a sacrifice. It should be male, first born of the mother. The color of the animal depends on the nature of the offspring. A sin offering requires black and a thanksgiving offspring requires white. A goat is often used among the Kukus. It is then presented to the julokc (spirit) by tying it at the sacrificial spot. If it urinates, the offspring is acceptable. If it does not urinate it is not accepted and an alternate offspring may be brought. When slaughtering, the animal should be placed at the north side of the stones with its face towards south. Compare this with the levitical regulations. If the offspring is a burnt offspring from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before' the Lord.' {Lev. 1:3} 'Any animal which has its testicles bruised or crushed or torn or cut, you shall not offer to the Lord' {lev. 22:24} 'He shall kill it on the north side of the altar.' (Lev. 1:11)

Usually all the relatives are called together for the sacrifice and the meat of the sacrificial animal must be cooked according to the parts. It should not be cooked with calcium or with any fermenting substance, but it must be cooked with common salt. 'You shall offer no leaven nor honey on the altar .... You shall season all your cereal offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant lacking .... with all your offerings you shall offer salt.' (Lev..2:13) Each part belongs to each group within the family. For example the neck part belongs to the nephews of the sacrifice. In the Hebrew traditions also there are specific regulations regarding the division of the portions of the sacrificial animal. The sacrificer receives a certain portion and the priest receives a certain portion. These are eaten as a part of a great feast in both traditions.

A sheep is used as a peace offering. At the end of the peace offering the elder introduces all the members of the family by relation. This insures that the girls and boys will not marry their own relatives. Similar procedures exists for offerings for blessings before taking up a job, going for hunting and entering into a business etc.

Sin sacrifices are sometimes offered at the place of the crime. A black goat is used for this and the blood of the goat is sprinkled at the place where the sin was committed and over the people to cleanse them. The elder requests the ancestors to intercede for forgiveness from God.

First fruits of every crop is holy . They are to be brought before the hut of the ancestors and waved at the door for ancestors. The elder bless the fruit on behalf of the ancestors which are then cooked. A portion of it is then taken into the hut or the special place where the trinity stones are placed. it is left covered and the next day the elders may eat of it. But the portions may be eaten on the same day. "You shall bring the sheaf of the first fruit of your harvest to the priest; and he shall wave it before the Lord.' (Lev. 23:10,11) 'It shall be eaten on the same day you offer it, or on the morrow.' (Lev.19:6)

## **11. Protecting God.**

Talismans are very common among the Kukus. They either tie it with a piece of cloth on their waist or on their arms. This will protect them all through their lives as magic. Whenever they want to go to a house for beer or enjoyment they go to a lonely place and call upon the God to protect them and take control of all that happens. If this is done, if the food or drink brought in contains poison, the glass will break or a wind will cause a dust storm and cover the food. When they face wild animals the God will cause the animals be blind so that they cannot see him, giving him an opportunity to spear it or escape from it. Talismans were common among the Jews also following the instruction: 'And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand.' (Deut. 11:18) Blinding the enemies were a common tactics of prophets during war as is demonstrated in Kings. 'Strike these people, I pray with blindness .... So God struck them with blindness.'(2 Ki.6:18)

When going out for war or for hunting elaborate worship and ceremonies are performed. Beer is brewed and chickens are slaughtered and offered to God in the small one meter tall tukul. These are taken in and offered in the night as no one is supposed to see these ceremonies. Before entering the hut, the

elder should humble himself before the Lord and his ancestors. in order to show this he may have to say that he is a worthless person before them. Early morning all the weapons are brought before the Lord and the elder will .call .upon ,the Lord and the ancestors to bless them. Then as the representative of God the elder Will anoint the weapons and tools with oil. Once this service is over all the hunters or warriors are possessed by God and they do not talk much. Perhaps the spirit will depart from them because of wanton talking. They have to remain pure until the hunting or war is over refraining from going into their wives not getting themselves defiled otherwise if it is a hunt God will drive the animals into the net or render them blind to enable the hunters to spear them. In war God will make the enemies blind so that they can be easily speared. They themselves are protected from weapons that the spears, swords and bullets will miss them. Even if they hit, they are rendered harmless. God fights for his people. However if the people sins and do not keep themselves pure these protections will be taken away. We can see these ideas in the Hebrew thoughts also. In the fight against Jericho, the people were specifically told, 'You shall not shout or let your voice be heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth '(Josh:6:10) Before going to war the high priest blessed the Israelite warriors with these words: 'Hear O Israel, you draw near this day to battle against your enemies. Let not your heart faint, do not fear or tremble, or be in dread of them; for the Lord your God is he that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.' (Deut. 20:3,4). When Achan sinned against God the Israelites were defeated before Ai warriors.

## 12. Lopede came but they rejected him.

Once upon a time the Kuku prayed for a savior, when there was a lot of trouble in the land. As an answer to their prayer, the unseen God provided a being who sprang out with mighty strength and authority called Lopede. Lopede came to the Kuku land from Agum lo-ki meaning heaven or unknown world. He has no beginning nor end and was a son of God. He came with his family into Kuku land and made his home a little away from the natives. His first born was called Lenyang and his second son was called Lie. His ministry started with healing the sick and raising the dead. He also destroyed many evil people around and cast out demons and releasing those who were possessed of them. 'He is without father and mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the son of God he continues a priest for ever.' (Heb.7:3) "And he went about all Galilee

teaching in their synagogues and preaching The gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among people. So his fame spread through out all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniac, epileptics and paralytics and he healed them all.' (Mt: 4:23)

As all the people began to give credit to Lopede, the status of the chief was threatened. He called for a meeting of the people and planned to kill Lopede by attacking him in the night. Among the people was Lenyang who reported the matter to his father. Knowing his own position, power and authority Lopede only replied, 'Don't worry, I will take care of it.' The next day they surrounded Lopede's house. His youngest son Lie was out for girls hunt with other boys of the village. As the front line was almost at the attacking point, Lopede ordered a terrible wind which blew very hard disarming all the fighters \par of their weapon. Lopede then disappeared with all his family. However Lie was left behind as he was away. A knife without a handle was found in his settlement. Everything else including his house and horses disappeared without a trace. Even today if a Kuku finds a knife, he will say, 'I have found a knife in the former place of Lopede.' The present Lijo clan is believed to be the descendants of Lii. Liijo literally means , "The house of Lii' in the Madi language.

Lii gained power as he became man and attacked the Lugwares in the Uganda beyond the West Nile. In the ensuing war Lugwares were defeated and the Kukus took, a lot of Lugwares as war prisoners. They were given a separate place to live called Lugware Kater. Lugware .omen were very cunning and they began to poison Kukus. It is believed that Kukus learned the concept and the art. of poisoning from these people. Kukus then realized that this was the curse of Lii. Lii on request caused a wind and carted them back to Uganda where they settled back in the present Arrange area. They are there even today. But they never attacked the Kukus ever again.

### 13. Chief Yengi.

Even recently when Kioum, the poisoning by women, became rampant Chief Yengi cursed these women to death. British colonizers were already in the Sudan with their garrison in Mangalla. On hearing Yengi's power they brought him into their camp and interrogated him. Then he .as imprisoned and .as told to demonstrate his powers. Yengi called on 'his ancestors and it rained for seven consecutive days without stopping. At the end of seven days

he was asked to stop it. When the British did not believe that he caused the rain, he opened his palm and stretched his hand and showed them all sorts of creatures moving in his palm. There were lions and tigers and snakes and birds. It is believed that the British feared him and released him forthwith.

#### 14. The Rain Maker.

Kukus are an agricultural community. They rely on seasonal rains for their cultivation. There are both early rains and latter rains that are necessary for the full benefit of the crop. Hence if any of the rains are delayed there will be a disaster. Artificial irrigation are practically unknown in this land. This is essentially because the land is hilly and irrigation are not practical except through sophisticated engineering devices. In every village there are groups of people (at least six) known as 'mute' They are responsible for the rains in the land. In his early days 'Chief Yengi of Kajo-keji was himself the head of the rain-makers. The rain makers have a short stick which is kept under a stone layer filled with water from the Nile. Whenever the rainmaker wants to cause it to rain, he will come kneeling down to the stone layer, which is usually kept in the hut of the ancestors and God. He will then pick up the stick and wash his hands with the water from the layer and look up to the sky. In reply to this ritual the clouds will turn black and rain will start. If it does not rain, the chief Rainmaker will go and ask God in his house of meeting whether any sacrifices are to be rendered. It may be that a sacrifice of Kwete beer or animal or bird may be required. If God is displeased with his people because of their communal sin, He will close heavens and shall require a sin offering for the community. If the sacrifice is beer, every family will contribute grains and a lady of noble family or the wife of the chief rainmaker will brew it with care. If the sacrifice is an animal or bird, the whole community will pay for it. The normal communal sin offering is a well fattened ram, one and a half years old, black and without blemish. It is cut as prescribed on the north side of the altar and the blood is collected in an earthen pot and taken into the hut along with the meat that is cooked. All vital organs and special portions are thus offered. The remaining portions are eaten during the feast that ensues by the whole community.

If the rain still doesn't come, the chief rainmaker will again inquire of God and complain to God that without rain all the people are suffering without food and water. Then God would tell the chief that there was no rain. It may be that they have disobeyed all the commandments of God or that the sacrifices are insufficient. The chief will come back with the word to the

entire community and explain to them what should be done so that rain would come to the area. If it is sacrifice, then it is doubled. If a total repentance is required, all the community will gather together before the hut of God and tell how sorry they are. People will individually confess all their secret sins before the Lord and will beg him in tears for God's forgiveness.

But in spite of these, if the rain still do not come for a very long time, the community will gather together with all their families and will come against the rain-makers - its chief and advisers. They will beat them severely even to death because they have sinned. They will be dragged out of their houses to the hut of God to weep and complain.

Since these rain-makers have the power to open and close the heavens they are highly respected and feared. These people being priests are not allowed to cultivate. It is the duty of the community to do that for them. If they have no food, the community will collect food and beer for them. They take their wives from among the people without paying the bride price. If a girl is refused to a member of the rain-maker's family he might shut off the rain for the fields of that particular family. They might even invite some evil spirits from their groves - called 'mirri' - and cause the girl to die. To be married into a rain-maker's family is a great prestige for the girl and for her family.

When a rain-maker dies, his spirit will go to a nearby grove where all his ancestors now live. These people are usually buried with their inner parts removed. The son of the rain-maker who is next in line as the priest will have to cut open the stomach and remove the entrails. It is believed that they contain white ants and grass hoppers. (These are delicacies in this country.) If the entrails are not removed the charisma will end with him. His spirit will join the spirits of his fathers or even become a leopard and will always be a trouble to the community. No one is allowed to mourn for the rain-maker. However if someone really wants to cry, they may cover themselves with mud and then cry.

It is to be noted that the land of Kuku is similar to the land of Canaan in all respects. In Deuteronomy 11:8-19 this land of God's choice is described thus: '... go in and take possession of the land ..... a land flowing with milk and honey. For the land which you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed, and watered it with your feet, like a garden of vegetables; but the land which you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from the heaven, a land which the Lord your God

cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. 'And if you will obey my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather your grain and your wine and your oil. And he will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be full. Take heed lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, and the anger of the Lord is kindled against you, and he .shut up the heavens, so that there be no rain, and the land yield no fruit, and you perish quickly off the good land which the Lord gives you.' Southern Sudan is indeed a land which answers to every description of this, a selected land of God for his people. I have never seen a land where honey and milk flowed. Wild honey and cow milk are still found in this land. Like the Kukul the Hebrews also relied on the rains for their crop and animal feeds. One of the greatest rain-makers in the Hebrew history was Elida', who "prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruits.' Ja.5:17-18.

Notice also the fact the rain-makers as priests have no inheritance as was ordained to the levitical priests. 'You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion... To the levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance... and you may eat it...and you shall bear no sin by reason of it.' Num.18:25-32.

### 15. The Spirit Doctors.

The spirit doctors are people who are possessed by some spirit- some good and others evil. These may enter into people who are willing to harbor them and care for them and can live peaceably with them. Once a person is possessed, he will change his personality completely. He will have a split personality. The spirit will tell him to do odd things such as .to sleep on the roof top or in the attics or even on trees. They may make him to eat tobacco instead of smoking it. Sometimes these people will go without food for several days. Instead of drinking water, they may drink only beer. The alcoholic drinks were first made in the Kuku land for the spirit and not for men. Later people began to use it. It is still considered that alcoholism will lead to evil spirit possession. Drinking alcohol is considered as a communion with the devil.

A spirit doctor may not cross a river or a stream without a knife in hand. This is because the demons are at enmity with the river spirits (which are the spirits of the evil men.) The spirit doctors drive these river spirits away during their exorcism and treatments. \par \par Though most people do not like to do it, if normal sacrifices fail, sick people go to the spirit doctors for treatment. He will thoroughly interrogate the person with a view to pin-point causes of trouble and particular sins or even hatreds harbored within the hearts. He is an expert psychiatrist who can hypnotize people and get to their secret problems. Then he will prescribe sacrifices for these to the ancestors or to the spirits who are grieved because of that. If it is a small sin, spirit doctor will chew some sim-sim seeds and spit it on the patient and will .chant his magical words over the patient. 'Otherwise sacrifices of cock, sheep, ram, cow or bull may be required.

Since spirit doctors are in great demand and since they earn very well people voluntarily seek such possessions. When these people die they do not go away. Instead they take possession of the eldest son or daughter in the family. This may go or even

## **16. Blessing and Consecration.**

Oil is of great importance to the lives of Kuku and symbolizes peace. Sim-sim as they contains oil has an important part in most ceremonies.

Consecration. and blessings on people are made by the council of elders - the "Temejik'. The person's uncle and the chief of the clan and the tribe are usually present for all such ceremonies. They all chew the aim-aim seed and mixes it well with their saliva. This oily paste is then taken out and of the mouth applied on the person - on their head, arms and feet making the sign of a cross. A ram will be then sacrificed and the bile of the animal is separated. The three elders then dip their fore-fingers in it and anoint the person again in the same fashion as with the aim-aim seed in the sign of cross. The meal is then cooked and served with 'Piong Boriesi" (a soft drink) under the Parenet for all the community.

To consecrate a new house, every visitor is provided with the aim-aim seeds and they are chewed and spat all over the floor and the walls. Consecration of the weapons of war and hunt are also done the same way. This is called 'Yaka na Kamulak'.

Oil and blood are always used in consecration and anointing among the Israel. Note the following ceremonial events during the ordination of the priests by Noses. 'Noses took some of the anointing oil .... and poured some of it on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him.' Lev. 8:10-13 "Then he presented the other ram, the ram of ordination... And Moses killed it ... Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hand and on the great toes on their right feet.' Lev. 8:22-24 "Boil the flesh at the door of the tent of meeting and there eat it...' Lev. 8:31

### **17. Temejik and the Paranet.**

Paranet is the central place of meeting of the elders. This is usually under a very large tree at the center of the village. The council elders - the Temejik usually sit under this tree and holds court, where complaints and cases may be brought. Decisions regarding the community are also made here. It is also the place of feasting and dancing during community festivals.

Children while they are yet in their teenage are encouraged to hang around the paranet while 'the Temejik deal' with various affairs. They are thus trained to know the protocol of the tribe, how to address various people and how to settle matters and get reconciliation. The boys normally stay close to their fathers who will explain to them matters of interest. They are taught to be respectful to all those who are older than them. Their job will be to bring water and fire for the 'big ones' as they sit and smoke and administer. A clan that doesn't train their young ones will fall into disorder.

During the time of Judges, in Israel, the Judges held their courts under trees. Thus we note that Deborah 'used to sit under the palm of Deborah 'between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephorim; and people of Israel came up to her for judgement. City gates were also used as community courts. Hence we see Boaz obtains his Kinsman-Redeemer right at the city gate in front of ten elders. During the period of monarchy the place of normal judgment was at the court room or at the city gate.

### **18. Marriage.**

Marriage between brothers and sisters and with cousins up to four generations are strictly forbidden among the Kukus In order to avoid such transgressions the members of the family are introduced to each other during special family occasions and ceremonies. \par \par Once a boy is

Interested in a girl, he may go himself and talk to her of his interest in her. Alternately his parents may go and talk to her parents. Once the family and the couple agree the boy invites other boys and may share the friendship together. Both the families scrutinize the pedigree, traits, madness heritage, laziness, selfishness, cruelty, greediness and other matters of the other family in minute detail before consenting. If any one group finds a bad trait on the other group the engagement is withdrawn forthwith. Otherwise after several months of courtship the parents will come together to settle the bride price and other matters. The oldest person in the boy's family takes the bride price and pays to the parent of the girl. The bride price is distributed among the relatives of the girl according to the protocol. This gives the consent of the families to the alliance officially. The boy then invites all his friends to stay with him and the girl likewise invites all her friends to stay with her. The number of women invited by the girl from among relatives and friends depends on the status of the boy's family. However the boy will have to take the girl by force from her house. If the girl's family is aware of the time at which the bridegroom is coming, the brothers of the girl and the family friends will put up a fight. Hence the boy will have to plan his time cleverly and will appear at the house of the girl and forcefully take her away. Very often it can be a real war. But the next day everyone is happy and a 'Wani jagit' the sacrifice of ram, is performed and a feast ensues. This is a peace sacrifice and if this is not performed the members of the girls' family will refuse to eat as this may bring feuds between the two families, barrenness of the girl and sickness and weakness for the children of the girl. At the end of the feast the girl's family will leave with all the ladies in waiting except for a few who will help the girl to settle in her new home. They may stay for a week or even a month. The girl will stay with her husband until she gives birth to her first child. After that she may go back and visit her family. The Hebrews have very similar betrothal customs and ceremonies. The custom of the bridegroom coming at an hour unknown to the bride and her family was used by Jesus in one of his parables, the parable of the ten maidens to illustrate his second coming. "Then the Kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom .... And the bride groom was delayed ..... Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." Mt.25:1-13.

Fornication is considered as the greatest sin in the community apart from sexual relations between brothers and sisters and between near relatives. In such cases the girl brings home 'monojin' curse with her. Its effect is sickness and death within the family and childlessness. But death is her lot,

either by lightning or by wild beasts of the forest, She may be pulled down to death by the river spirits. The result is the same for the man who lies with another man's wife. A sacrifice may be necessary for reconciliation within the family and to remove the curse. But very often a woman will opt death as she will not be able to find another husband. A man may marry after the sacrifice. But the Kuku family places such great emphasis on faithfulness in marriage that usually the parents of the boy as well as of the girl curse them to death or madness. The curse is equivalent to stoning to death as it is a death sentence. "If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die' Deut.22:22-30 is the Hebrew law.

If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed, he is not committing adultery. But he will have to pay the bride price of the girl according to the demand of her father. Until such price is paid she will not be considered as his wife and the children will not be legally his and will not be called after his name. The corresponding Hebrew regulation is found in Deuteronomy 21:28,29 thus: 'If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, then the man who lies with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has violated her; he may not be put away all his days.'" Sexual relations between couples' who are already betrothed are not considered as a crime. But the children born will not be legally the children of the man unless he pays in the full bride price, Among the Hebrews also betrothal was considered as equivalent to marriage. Thus we see Mary pregnant during the betrothal period and the society accepted it as that of Joseph's.

If a boy marries a close relative unwittingly the marriage can be nullified by a simple ceremony of chicken sacrifice or even a cucumber sacrifice.

If a man die without children, his brother is expected to accept his wife and produce children for his dead brother. This is known as the levirate marriage. If the man has no eligible brother she may accept any close relative to perform the levirate duty. If a man died without marrying, his brother or a close relative may marry a girl on behalf of the dead man so that his name may not be cut off from the land of the living. The levirate rule can be found in Deut.25:5-10. 'If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go into her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her .... that his name may not

be blotted out of Israel.' The question of the Pharisees to Jesus was based on this. The girl will always according to custom will be the wife of the first man. In some clans the girl may accept anyone and is expected to produce children for her dead husband. Because of the polygamy the levirate system is extended to include the young wives of ones father also. When the father dies if he has any young wives of the age of his sons, his sons are expected to accept her as their wives. This is the duty of the eldest son.

### **19. Punishment among the Kukus.**

There seems to be vast disparity between Hebrew and Kuku culture in terms of their punishment systems. Among the Kukus there is no capital punishment for any form of crime. The close equivalence to the capital punishment is cursing. When a person commits a serious crime, the elders or the parents will curse the victim and they will eventually die or will die by accident or by wild beasts. Stoning, spearing or lashing are unknown as a punishment to these people. If a man is found to have criminal tendencies and is a bad influence in the community, by the decision of the elders he will be advised to leave the land. This again is equivalent to a death sentence as other tribes will most probably kill him if found in their territory. Such people may survive with cunningness and may start a new clan. \par \par 20. War \par \par War between other tribes are accepted as norm. Killing another tribesman is considered as murder. Intertribal wars for the sake of looting and for women are common. However they never took slaves as war loot. A war prisoner is either killed or released or accepted into the community and is never taken in as a slave. Slavery came to these parts only arts the Arab conquests. Such an attitude can be found through out the old testament period. Thus we see Samuel hacking don Kings of other nations, and David, the man after the heart of God massacring men , women and children. Read 1 Sam. 21:8-1 "Now David and his men went up, and made raids Upon the Geewires, the Birzites and the Amalekttes ..... And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, but took away the sheep, the oxen, the asses, the camels and the garments." Description of massive raid for women is found in Judges 21 where the whole Israelites took part in the raid of Shiloh for wives for the Benjaminites.

### **21.The Problem.**

We have shown in the preceding portions the great similarity between the cultures of the Kukus of the Sour Sudan (and since they are representative of

all other cultures of the region) and therefore of the Southern Sudanese culture: and that of the Hebrew (especially of the period of Judges). These similarities extends to their concept of God, man an, angels and in their details of levitical practices and in their social and economic practices. Now the question remains How did this happen?

The first possibility is that it could be an accident. The geographic similarity could be a possible explanation. But this, could not explain the vast similarity. The similarity cannot be accidental even with the little environmental similarity f~ farming techniques and seasons.

A second possibility is exchange of information through contact. Here again we meet difficulties. We know that such contacts did exist through diplomatic means between Israel and South Sudan as is indicated in the prophecy of Isaiah (Is.18). However noting the great distance between the two countries and knowing the slow communication system of that time such ~ possibility is meager. Further Israel was not a missionary people. In fact they detested other nations and kept their God for themselves. As Lazarus Mawut points out, Christianity had greater possible contact to this area through two channels, The eunuch whom the Deacon Philip baptized was a minister of Metes in Nuba regions. We also know that Soba near Khartoum, was a flourishing Christian country. Both these were in the Northern Sudan. But we see very little influence of Christianity in the southern Sudanese culture. (See Vantins, Christianity in the Sudan, Bologne, Italy, 1981)

Since Kukus are Hamites and Hebrews are Semites, they belong to entirely different ethnic groups and cannot be thought of as the 'lost tribes of Israel'. In fact Africa beyond the confluence of Nile was considered as unknown regions. \par \par Most theologians would try to explain these similarities as due to general revelation. But then was the revelation to Moses also a general revelation. Revelation to Moses was a direct and special revelation of God. Thus we are forced to the only conclusion of the same source i.e. Southern Sudanese also received the type of revelation Moses received on the Mount Sinai. But the' bible does not speak of such a prior revelation clearly. Then the Bible (the Old Testament) is only the history of the Jews except for the early chapters of Genesis. In fact Jews had the tremendous advantage of the man of Moses who was trained in the palace of Egypt as a prince in all known arts and crafts of that time. Egypt was the greatest empire of that time. So we got the oracles of God written down by the Jews.

Others were not that fortunate. \par \par In this connection we note the statement of the Dinka Chief Line August as quoted by Mawut: 'The missionaries came and found that' the people already knew a lot. The missionaries actually wrote down what they heard from the elders. What was recorded was from the people. It is Just that our people did not know how to write. We grew up hearing it from our fathers, sons from their fathers coming down from well back. What was lacking was somebody to write it down and say, 'This is our Grandfathers' book and our Fathers' book'. That was what was missing. But the Word of mouth which we ourselves 'heard was there.'

The question is, is there any reason or biblical evidence for such a previous revelation? I think there is.

Amos 9:7 reads: "Are you not like the Sudanese to me, O people of Israel?", says the Lord. Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?" The important point herd to note is the reversal of comparison. Lord is not saying 'O people of Sudan, are you not to me like the People of Israel?'. Instead God is speaking to Israel and says they are to him like the people of the Sudan, indicating that Sudanese were the people of God before Israel was chosen.

The Bible clearly states that God chose people for three specific purposes: First they are to be a kingdom of Priests to the nations so that they may declare to the rest of the world the greatness of God. 'If you will obey my voice and keep my Covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' Ex.19:5,6 Secondly they were to guard the word of God. "Then what advantage has the Jews?... To begin with the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God.' Thirdly they were to bringforth the Word of God in Flesh, i.e. they were to produce Jesus. Israel was rejected by God in carrying on as a special people as they failed to act as missionaries and they failed to accept their mesias. Is ~t not then reasonable to assume that God might have called other people and must have rejected them for some reason or other because of their failure. If so Amos' list gives these nations which includes Sudan followed by Philistines and Syrians. \par \par We do have evidence to show that Philistines were God's chosen people. Philistines, sons of Egypt, son of Ham, son of Noah were called out of Caphtor (See 1Chr.1:12, Oeu.2:23, Jar. 47:4, Amo.9:9 , Gen.10:14) a wreath shaped island in Africa. Among the Philistines we see Goliath and four of his brothers who are the

children of Anak, who occupied Palestine for it was given to them. God brought them out of Caphtor and gave them Canaan, the promised land if we accept Amos. Bible .however gives the god of Philistines as Dagon the fish-god while they were a mountain people at that time. How did this come about. Phillistines tribal memory went on to remember the great leading of God in bringing them over the ocean. Did God dry up the ocean for them. Or did he provide fishes to carry them across. With a mighty hand God led them into the promised land. Just as Israel's God is a mountain God, Phillistines' God was a sea God. But then they degraded God in the form a creature. This must have been their downfall.

Note also that Phillistines, sons of Anak, were children of the sons of God as mentioned in Gen.6 and referred to in Num.13:33. God called these Hamites out of Caphtor in Africa and brought them and gave them the promised land and they ruled from the capital of Jerusalem'. Thus Abraham meets with the King of Jerusalem, Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18,19) who was the ultimate product of the Phillistine culture. He was the priest of the Most High God. He is described in Heb.7 as one 'resembling the Son of God', i.e. resembling Jesus. Each culture could produce what it can. In the. meeting of Melchizedek with Abraham, Melchizedek blessed Abraham and handed over the election to him. Then on we see the decline of the Philistines, a falling away from the understanding of the Most High God. Abimelech, the King of Gerar, King of Philistines certainly showed a deep understanding of God., he even had visions of God and was very sensitive to God's leadings. (see Gen.20,21,26). He also was the prophet of God. (Num. 22-23) Otherwise we will find it very difficult to explain his presence. As the Israelites entered Palestine the King of Jerusalem was Adoni-zedek. Evidently he was a predecessor of Melchi-zedek. But even though his name includes Adoni he does not know Adoni. Very soon the city of Jerusalem was lost to the Philistines and they were in the hands of Jebusites, the hilly billys of that time. From them David wrenched out Jerusalem.

Thus evidently God called Philistines and produced as their contribution to the world, one like the son of God and then rejected the nation. God then must .have called other people before as Amos claims. The first call must have been Sudan, but they were able to produce only a Lopede, whom they rejected and the nation was rejected by God. What was their corruption? We can only guess. Was it the fall into ancestral worship?

Historical evidence indicates that the Southern Sudanese tribes were once occupying the Northern provinces and were pushed back. Probably God led them across Nile into the Southern provinces which flows with 'milk and honey', and is an agricultural land similar in all respects to Palestine. Mawut says , 'The Dinka have experience similar to the Jewish crossing of the Red Sea. Stories connected with their migration from the east of the Nile to the west mention such events ..... In a story of Western Dinka migration from the eastern bank to western bank of the Bahr el Jebel to Bahr El . Ghazal, a leader of a pursued people , Ajing, prayed to God at Lake Shambe that the water should part to make way for his people to cross. God heard his prayers and made the water part, after which the Dinkas crossed through a dry river bed to the west.' (see Lienhardt)

Thus a biblically acceptable and viable solution to the identity of revelations of the Kuku and Hebrew culture could be attributed to the direct revelation of God to these people. When and where this happened is not known. Once this is accepted it could also explain many of the paradox of Suddenness experience. Through the history these people were continuously exiles and were constantly given over to oppressor. It was the same experience for Israel: 'And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, forgetting the Lord their God, serving Baals and Asheroth. Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against the Israel and he sold them into the hands of .... ' (Jud. 3:7)

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## **APPENDIX 1 THE KAKWAS**

### **1. Introduction**

Kakwas are a highly developed group of clans living on agriculture. In the on thrust of nomadic pasture culture the agricultural based group were concentrated in the regions of heavy rains, rivers and valleys. The Kakwas are found around the Yei district where there are heavy rains throughout the year and the land fertile.

### **2. Nguleso.**

The God, the almighty is associated by these people with the mountains. He is the creator God who created the mountains and live in it. This mountain God is called Juleps or Ngeleso, which actually means all wise or the Great wisdom Nguleso is worshipped in the mountains where his presence is manifested through thunder and lightning and the calmness an whispering

breeze. Places near the mountains are respected and feared. No one dare to cut the trees nearby. Disobedience to this regulation will lead to blindness or deafness Immediately.

However each clan worshipped this God in their own place with their on Matat the High Priest. These places were normally associated with big tree called 'Laro". It may also be a grove near a river or hill. However God is not considered a localized. God moves with the wind and thus he is every where.

Ngulesso has a host of angels under him, who ape his agents in the world. Notice Ngelesso is not a local god. His dominion is over all 'the world and he administers law and order through his angels who reports to him regularly.. He is believed t have both good and bad angels - Malyika lobut and malyika lopok. They all did. various functions - the good and the bad one through which the world is sustained.

Since Ngulesso is 'a holy God, who would not leave any sin unpunished people are afraid of him and fear to go near him. The elders of all the clans of Kakwa gathered together and decided that one man should be elected and separated who is righteous and upright in his life to act as High Priest to the God. Aburre-Lo-liggi - who is so called because the ruling clan is known as Liggi.- was elected as Mattat which literally means chief. and people come to his house for worship. People built small'. house for God later on separated from that of Matat so that when there is a quarrel in the chief's house, God will still be in peace and may not in his anger destroy them. \par \par Ngulesso demanded that people be holy in all their walks of life. If they remained sinless he took care of the entire tribe's problems regarding healing of sickness, defeating the enemies, crop etc. Whenever the people wants of do cultivation or harvest or go fop hunting, they would first come to the house of God fop worship and to get his blessings. He will the protect the crop, the produce and the hunters. He will then keep the destroyer and the devour at bay. The Mattat could curse the enemies and even send harmful insects like the bees, the locusts and worms to destroy the plants of their enemies But if there were sin in the clans his punishment was direct and severe. He would then send thunder (piya), small pox (Kongo) and drought (Rile) etc. among the Kakwas. However accusing one's enemies falsely will be very dangerous because he is a righteous God. He discerns the needs of all people and judges both the sides rightly. God revealed himself to the Mattat through dreams, visions and through audible voices. \par \par 2. Sin and sickness in the camp.

Whenever there is sickness in the tribe whether among men, animals or the crop' it is a indication of the wrath of Ngelesso. This will be confirmed by direct revelation to Mattat. Mattat will then call hi members to discuss this problem and to identify the cause. The identification is done by traditional method of he sacrifice. The method consists of placing a number of stones in a circle and assigning each stone to a cause, a tribe or person as the case may be. A hen will then be placed at its center and its head chopped off. The hen's body is then left t run around the circle until it fall at one stone implicating it. The usual sins are stealing, killing, sleeping wit someone's wife. Once the cause is identified reconciliation of the person, village and the tribe is imperative because ever sin is a collective responsibility.

Matat. will ask God to forgive the people and since he is merciful God will forgive them. A bull will be sacrificed and it: liver, tongue, the heart and other parts including all the fat will be cooked and left in the house of God. The rest of the, meat will be eaten in the ensuing feast At the end of the meeting the Matat will take two types of leaves, Lujurtli am Lomu'ddi, and dip them into the water. all the people will then wash their hands in this water and feast on the meat of the, sacrificed bull. At the end of the feast they will again wash their hands in this water. The whole community will then stand in a group and the Mattat will move round them and talk to God thus: 'Ngelesso, we are here, we misunderstood an misbehaved before you, now forgive us and heal the sick in our midst.' At the fourth round, he will throw the leaves to t~ west in the direction where the sun sets. As the day's sun goes down, so will the sickness and all other problems and a new a day will begin with the birth of the new sun. Before the people disperse the Mattat will pour this water on the feet .c every member of the community. They are now cleansed from all uncleanness.

### **3. Communal Sin**

When the whole community grow stubborn towards God, he will send a terrible disease called Ku'du Ku'du which affects both man and beast alike. On recognizing the sickness the chief will beat the drum and gather all the community together. They will discuss the situation and may recognize their fault . Every one will then contribute dura and will make a lot of beer. A day will be set apart for a special sacrifice when a cow will be sacrifices. The blood of atonement will then be sprinkled on .the door post of every house by Mattat Aburre. Ngelesso and his angels will be given the best part c the meat. A pot of wine will be put in God's house along with the liver and other

inner parts of the cow. At the end of the feast, a discussion will be held and every body will forgive each other and God will forgive everybody. Every year the tribe will have to remember this forgiveness by organizing a similar feast at the same season.

#### **4. Three types of sacrifices.**

There are in general three types of sacrifices offered to God.

##### **1. The sin offering**

Whenever a sin is involved whether it is of the individual or of the group or of the community as a whole it has to be atoned. Atonement is obtained only through the blood of either a bull, a ram, a goat, a sheep or a bird. The animal selected must be without defect or any blemish and must be acceptable to God. Only after the God has shown his acceptance could it be sacrificed. Otherwise it may be rejected. In order to ascertain the acceptability, the animal is brought before the door of the house of God and tethered there and is watched to see for signs. If the animal urinates it is rejected, if it excretes dung it is accepted. The blood of sacrifice must be sprinkled on every door of the house of the members of the clan and its meat eaten by the elders.

##### **2..Thanksgiving offering.**

Any victory won in the battle, any hunting which gave abundance of meat or which went without loss of life or accident, any bountiful harvest are all the blessings of Ngelesso. His eyes are always over his people and his powers protects them. A year without war or sickness is also an occasion of thanksgiving.

In all these cases the people will offer goats, sheep, cows for a great feast. All the clan will eat and drink Before the Lord their God.

##### **3. Sacrifice for needs.**

Whenever there is a special need, whether at the time of cultivation, or beginning of hunting or personal need of a job or success in job, a sacrifice may be made.

Before departure into the bush before hunting, people will bring all their spears, bows and arrows to Mattat to be blessed. He will then take two types of leaves, one from Kireri and the other from Peps tree. Standing near the spears and arrows, h~ will then talk to Ngelesso and ask him to guide the hunters and to meet their needs. He will then split the leaves into two parts and will throw some to the left and some to the right. He will then release them for their hunting. The first animal to be killed must be brought back to God as a thanksgiving offering. After this they can kill as many as they like.

## **5. The Origin of Evil Spirits.**

Though very little is known about heaven and the people of the heaven, the Kakwas believe that there are tribes in heaven as there are tribes on earth. The sides of heaven are protected by rails.

There are two seasons of the year in Kakwas known as Samga and Munda which are closely associated with the position of the stars- especially the six star constellation known to them as Nyuonyuni. It is the position of these stars that determine the time of planting, pruning, weeding and harvesting. The heaven controls the earth.

One day a woman with a big head, long hair, and thin legs fell down from the heavens accidentally or otherwise. In her interview with the elders, she explained that she had a fight with her husband and a window of the sky got opened and she fell down through it to earth. She claimed that she had left three boys and one girl up there. She had her baby on her back when she fell down to earth. The elders provided for her and she stayed in the village. But on the fifth day she took a pot and went down to the river to collect water. She disappeared without a trace from then onwards. The Kakwas believe that she is the mother of all evil spirits that wander around the rivers, thick forests and mountain tops.

## **6. Origin of death.**

In the beginning people lived a long time because there was no sickness. People died only of old age. When a person died, no one was allowed to cry. The dead body will be wrapped up in a cowskin and put on top of a granary stand, 'gumere'. The body was then covered with the leaves of a tree called Konyunki. The body will be left there for a moon, after which she or he will come back alive in their youth. Thus there were no burials as people continued to regenerate in this process and lived indefinitely. One day Abure

left to another village to attend to the funeral of h' uncle's son. The report came to him that the boy was eaten by a leopard two days ago. Before his departure, he, instructed his assistant Tonjimosu to urge the. people to refrain from all evil. The journey took three days. Before his return, there was a heavy rain and white ants (Kudu-to-Konga) were expected to emerge. White ants are a delicacy rarely available. The people therefore got busy cleaning the anthills for catching the ants. Toyimosa instructed his people to concentrate on one side of the village opposite to the forest where wild animals lived. But the side was near a neighboring tribe called Kujuba who did not worship Ngelesso. The people arrived and started their preliminary preparations. But soon they heard people crying and wailing and singing and dancing. They have never heard this before, because KuJubes were burying a corpse and they had their burial place near the anthill. The whole ceremony looked so wonderful to the Kakwas. They stopped the people .and asked whether they could buy the corpse so that they too can cry, sing and dance. After a long bargain time KuJubos agreed at a big price. The Kakwas carried the corpse to their village with crying and singing and dancing and the buried the corpse according to the condition of the purchase. They brought beer, killed a sheep and had a great feast. When they were drunk they fell into evil ways. \par \par When the Abure' returned, he was told of the story. That night Ngelesso appeared to him and said 'that his people desecrated the land with a corpse. So from then on they may bury their dead for all time. Some days later a man died. placed him on the gumere as before. But he simply decayed and was rotten. Thus death entered the Kakwa tribe.

## **APPENDIX 2 THE LATUKO TRIBE**

### **The Concept of God**

Latukos believe that in the beginning God of the sky was very close to the people on the earth. There was no need for the people to toil for their living. The great God provided abundantly for every need of the people on earth He gave man authority to order anything from heaven and it will be provided 'miraculously. They had absolute faith and confidence in the God who loved them and cared for them. They therefore worshipped him as their father.

In order to receive the gifts from up above, the person will have to show his or her faith as work. For example if a woman wanted to have flour to make bread, she will take one grain of wheat and grind it and put it in a pot (called atobok) and leave it overnight. The next day there will be enough flour to

meet the needs of the family for the day. These gifts are provided every day whether for necessities of life or desires of the heart. These were met according to the riches in heaven based on the spoken word and the act of faith. Faith with corresponding act was the way of life.

However something happened at the time of Chief Mongore. Mongore was a tall, well built man who was also one who called for rains. His food was prepared by a group of young men. They mixed food with their feet after washing it. It was then kept in the sun to cook. The sun was only a few miles away at that time. However Chief Mortgore one day did not share his food with anyone, even to those young men who prepared it. As a result the heavens moved to a very great distance as it is today. The sun also moved away and the heat it gave became insufficient to cook any food. People struggled for many years to get alternate form of energy which was later offered as fire from heaven. Heaven ceased to provide for the needs and the cordial fatherly relation with God was lost. People now had to toil and struggle for their survival.