

Adaka-Teaa Eschatology: Daddy Lumba and Alexander the Great in a Theological Conversation

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ABSTRACT

One of the central themes in Christian theology is eschatology (the study of last things). Eschatological beliefs are important in shaping human earthly life. Though a very important subject, the concept of eschatology often proves difficult in theological discourses, especially in Africa where over-reliance on the Western approach to the subject makes it inaccessible and incomprehensible to the average Christian. A proper conceptualisation and understanding of Christian eschatology within the African setting can be achieved through theological reflections on the African culture. The relevance of African traditional songs in this regard cannot be overestimated. This paper, therefore, examined Charles Kwadwo Fosu's (Daddy Lumba's) *Adaka-Teaa* ("narrow box/coffin") from an African Christian eschatological perspective to contribute to the scholarly efforts toward making Christianity more meaningful and relevant to Africans. A literature-based research approach, comprising two steps, was used for this research. The first step was a textual analysis of the lyrics of the song from the African socio-cultural perspective in light of Alexander the Great's background and life. This was followed by the formulation of *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology and the deduction of implications for the Christian community. A theological conversation between Lumba and Alexander yielded a culturally sensitive and biblically grounded Christian eschatology for the African audience. The paper found the African worldview about death and the afterlife can serve as a solid foundation upon which Christian eschatological discourses may be built. The findings and conclusions from the paper contribute immensely to the contextualisation and decolonisation of Christianity for the African community.

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INTRODUCTION

The oral nature of traditional African societies is well documented. Most African philosophies and beliefs are passed on orally. According to Liz Gunner, African oral tradition is "the means by which societies of varying complexity regulated themselves, organized their present and past, made formal spaces for philosophical reflections, pronounced on power, questioned and in some cases contested

power, and generally paid homage to the ‘the word’, language, as how humanity was made and constantly refashioned.”¹ The African saying, “When an old man dies, a whole library burns down,”² underlines the role of oral history in African cultures. People keep a lot of information in their memories and so, when they die, they go with a vast amount of undocumented knowledge. Religious poetry, poems, elegies, myths, proverbs, pithy sayings, liturgy and songs are important aspects of African oral tradition.

Due to the oral nature of the African traditional society, oral theology also plays a key role in African Christian theologising. The expression “Oral theology” refers to theological reflection based on sermons, teachings, prayers, discussions, songs, conversations, witnessing, and testimonies.³ One of the key aspects of oral theology is musical theology, that is, a form of theology that focuses on revelations about the nature of the divine and, more broadly, of religious beliefs based on the background, lyrics, and performance of songs. In Africa, as in other parts of the world, music reveals and also shapes beliefs. African music draws heavily from the African worldview and hence, reveals traditional African philosophy and theology. Yet, musical theology has not received much attention in African Christian scholarship.

This paper explores theological motifs embedded in Daddy Lumba’s *Adaka-Teaa* (narrow box/coffin). In the process, relevant aspects of Alexander the Great’s life and the three last wishes are also employed to facilitate a conversation between the world’s most accomplished warrior and Ghana’s most celebrated highlife singer.

Background of Daddy Lumba

Charles Kwadwo Fosu (popularly known as Daddy Lumba) is a Ghanaian highlife composer and singer. He was born on 29th September 1964 at Nsuta Amangoase in the Sekyere Central District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.⁴ Lumba is an Akan, the dominant ethnic group in Ghana. Lumba’s father Owoahene Kwadwo Fosu, a teacher, died in the early stages of his (Lumba’s) life.⁵ His mother, Comfort Gyamfi (popularly known as Ama Saah), who was also a teacher, died in 2001 in Kumasi.⁶ Even though Ama Saah did her best to raise Lumba after Owoahene’s demise, life became difficult for Lumba after the demise of his father. Lumba cherishes his mother so much and showers praise on Ama Saah in several songs.

After his secondary school education, Lumba travelled to Germany where he met Ernest Nana Acheampong who introduced him to highlife music. Nana Acheampong and Lumba formed a group and named it Lumba Brothers, adopting the name of a group that Lumba formed at Juaben Senior High School. The Lumba Brothers released an album titled “*Yereye aka akwantuo mi*” (“We are almost locked up in a strange land”) in 1989 which was followed by other albums. In his 1999 “*Wo ho kyere*” (“Your appearance is revealing”) album, Lumba introduced Ofori Amponsah who later mastered love songs. Before 2002, Lumba released a successful album every year.

Lumba has received many awards—including the Best Album, Artist of the Year and the Most Popular Song of the Year at the 1999 Ghana Music Awards; the Artist of the Year, Best Album of the Year, Most Popular Song of the at the 2000 Ghana Music Awards, and the Contemporary Highlife Artist, Contemporary Highlife Song, Contemporary Highlife Album at the 2003 Ghana Music

¹ Liz Gunner, “Africa and orality,” T. Olaniran and A. Quayson (eds.), *African literature: An anthology of criticism and theory*, pp. 67–73 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 67.

² Caroline Starbird and Amy Bahrenburg, *Step into Africa: Elementary Level Activities Using Africa is Not a Country* (Denver: University of Denver, CTIR, 2004), 35.

³ Richard J. Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology: An Evangelical Perspective* (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1987), 28.

⁴ Ghanaweb, “Daddy Lumba” [Accessed at <https://www.ghanaweb.com/person/Daddy-Lumba-1257> on 5th February, 2023]; Operanews, “Check Out Daddy Lumba's Profile: His real name and Age, Career and His Award,” [Accessed from <https://gh.opera.news/gh/en/entertainment/461ce1c9a8eb019a1e61f75478fef0be> on 5th February, 2023]

⁵ Ghanaweb, “Daddy Lumba”; Operanews, “Check Out Daddy Lumba's Profile.”

⁶ Ghanaweb, “Daddy Lumba.”

Awards.⁷ On August 18, 2018, he was acknowledged with an “Icon/Legend of Entertainment” award at the Exclusive Men of the Year Africa Awards (EMY Award).⁸ A list compiled by entertainment journalist Austin Woode named Lumba as the all-time best Ghanaian musician.⁹ Lumba's music career has influenced many 21st-century youth in Ghana. In *Adaka-Teaa* (the song under consideration), Lumba featured a lady called Tina. The next section engages the lyrics of *Adaka-Teaa*.

Socio-linguistic and cultural analysis of the song

Having outlined Lumba's background, the paper proceeds to interpret *Adaka-Teaa* under consideration from an Akan socio-linguistic and cultural perspectives. The Twi lyrics and the English renderings are respectively given below.

*Woasi so frɔm sɛ nhwiren
Ena ama worekyerɛkyerɛ wo ho a
Awia rebɛbɔ ama woaboto a-o
Woaye frɔmfrɔm sɛ nhwiren a
Ena ama worekyerɛkyerɛ wo ho a
Dabi rebɛba ama woahye ah-oh
Ɔdasani ei, nti wonim sɛ wobɛkyere bɔɔ a
Woagye asaase yi akenten so a
Barima ato wo ne mpoatwa yi
Me nua, mfɔtɛɛ ne wo wɔ bi di ao
Kɔ na wɔnkɔyɛ wo ho adwuma
Wasɔre, abɛyɛ w'akakabensem yi*

*Mese, mekyiri wei, mekyiri wei, metan wei
Barima, yɛmfa nkɔsi hwee oh, ah
Yɛn nyinaa, yede owuo ka o
Sɛ Methuselah nyiniie, nyiniie, nyiniie ah-eh
Nyiniie, nyiniie, na sɛ wankyene ɔbɔɔ deaa, ah*

*Nyansafoɔ mfa ntu yɛn ho fo ao
Ebɛyɛ kakra na yede me nsa agu me bo a*

*Charles ei, m'awieɛ no ara na aduru no a
Yie, me so nni mfasoɔ biara, yaanom ei
Nsono nkɔ nsono mu ah-eh
dɔtɛɛ nkɔ dɔtɛɛ mu
Ɔkra Fosu nso ei, merekɔ agya wo ao
Me dabere mu ne adaka teaa
Adaka teaa ei
Obiara nkwati no ao
Adaka teaa ah
Enti anyansafo nsua ε
Momma yɛmfa ɔdɔ
Na onipa ammedi kyere bi oh, oh*

*Mmm, adaka teaa ei (adaka teaa ei)
Nye ade a, na obiara bɛkwati no ah-oh
You blossom like a flower
And it has made you proud
The scorching sun will make you weak
You blossom like a flower
And it has made you proud
A day is coming and you will burn
Humankind, do you think will you live forever?
You have forcefully takes control of the land
Man you are full of insult
My brother, termites will deal with you
Go and let them deal with you
[After that you will see if] you can come back
and show pride
I say, I disgust this, I disgust this, I hate this
Man, it won't take us anywhere
All of us are indebted to death
If Methuselah grew, grew, grew
Grew, grew and he didn't live forever like a
stone
The wise should take lesson from this
In a little while, they will fold my arm on my
chest
Charles, my very end has come
I am good for nothing
May ashes go into ashes
May sand go into sand
Soul of Fosu, I am going ahead of you
My home is the narrow coffin
Narrow coffin
No one can avoid
Narrow coffin
So the wise should learn*

⁷ Ghanaweb, “Daddy Lumba.”

⁸ Ghanaweb, “2018 EMY Awards: Daddy Lumba adjudged Icon/Legend of Entertainment” (2018) [Accessed at <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/entertainment/2018-EMY-Awards-Daddy-Lumba-adjudged-Icon-Legend-of-Entertainment-677929> on 5th February, 2023].

⁹ K. Effah, “Daddy Lumba named Ghana's greatest musician of all time” (2018) [Retrieved from: <https://yen.com.gh/107229-daddy-lumba-named-ghanas-greatest-musician-time.html> on 5th February, 2023]

Let us love
 Humankind will not to live forever
Adaka teaa ah
Yie na ɔdɔ o
(Momma yemfa ɔdɔ) ah (na onipa ammedi
kyerebi oh, oh)
Enne yi a mekɔɔ fie a
Abusua regye me awaawaa atuu no
Tina ei, me wuo akyiri no a
Eba se merekɔsra abusuafoɔ yi a
Ɔmo hunu me ara na, obiara bedwane o
Na yeakɔyi me so apaeɛ se
Ɔsaman aba fie o
Ɔbatan pa a medɔ me mma o
Mentumi nkɔsra me mma yi da
Wɔhunu me a, na obiara bedwane o
Ɛfiri se ɔsaman aba fie
Maye ɔsaman yi eh
Saman twentwen
Ɔsaman eh, ma w'ani nka w'amena mu ao
Wo dabere mu ne adaka teaa
Adaka teaa ei
Obiara nkwati no ao
Adaka teaa ah
Enti anyansafo nsua ɛ
(Momma yemfa ɔdɔ) ah
Na onipa ammedi kyere bi oh, oh

Narrow coffin
 There is no way one can avoid it
 Narrow coffin
 Oh! Love
 (let us love) (Humankind will not
 live forever)
 Today I came home
 The family welcomed me well
 Tina, after my death
 When I want to visit my family
 They run away upon seeing me
 And they pray against me
 A ghost has come home
 A good mother, who loves her children
 I cannot visit my children anymore
 Upon seeing me, they run away
 Because a ghost has come home
 I have become a ghost
 A ghost hovering around on earth
 Ghost, stay in your grave
 Your place is the narrow coffin
 Narrow coffin
 No one can avoid it
 Narrow coffin
 So let the wise learn
 Let us love
 For no one will live forever

The Transient Nature of Human Life

The opening statement, “*Woasi so frɔm se nhwiren*” (You blossom like a flower) compares human life to a flourishing flower. At the peak of one’s life, one blossoms like a flower (in the morning) but in no time “*awia rebeɔ ama woaboto*” (“the scorching sun will make you wither”). Thus, humans blossom like flowers but only for a short time. The composer draws this floricultural metaphor from his Akan background. The Akan people of Ghana live in the forested area with farming as their major occupation. Due to the vegetation and occupation of the Akan, the coastal settlers refer to them as “*ahaban mufɔɔ*” (“bush settlers”). The Akan use their forest vegetation to cultivate crops like plantain, cassava, cocoyam, okra, tomatoes, garden eggs and pepper. Firewood, traditional medicine and timber are also obtained from the forest.

Even though Ghana’s floriculture industry is underdeveloped,¹⁰ many Ghanaians use flowers to decorate their compound. Species such as hibiscus, celosia, heliconia, caribea, curcuma and gladioli do well in Ghana under natural conditions. Most floriculture products—including all commercially grown flowering and ornamental plants in greenhouse-based pots, trays, troughs and contained beds¹¹—look very beautiful in the morning when there is plenty of water in their system. However, as the sun shines on them during the day, they become weaker and weaker due to the loss of water through transpiration. The heat from the sun at about midday is so high that some flowers may dry up and die completely if they are exposed to direct sunlight. Others are able to withstand the heat and survive for some days before dying off. Though the sun has different effects on different

¹⁰ Emmanuel Donkor et al., “Assessing the Financial Viability of the Floricultural Industry in Ghana,” *Applied Studies in Agribusiness and Commerce* Vol. 11. Number 1-2 (2017): 119-126, 120.

¹¹ Donkor et al., “Assessing the Financial Viability of the Floricultural Industry in Ghana,” 119.

flowers, one clear thing is that the flourishing nature of flowers in the early morning completely contrasts their state in the afternoon when the sun reaches its peak. Being an Akan, the songwriter has firsthand information about the drastic changes that hot, dry climates can have on plants. Drawing from the floricultural sector, the songwriter metaphorises human life as a flower that looks healthy for a brief time but quickly withers due to the effect of the heat on it. The situation described in this first line of the song brings to mind the Bono-Twi saying that “*nnipa nse hwee*” (“human beings are nothing”).

Even though Alexander the Great did not use the floricultural metaphor to describe human life, the account of his life epitomises the floricultural metaphor of life. What follows explains this further. Alexander III of Macedon (commonly known as Alexander the Great) was one of the kings of the ancient Greek kingdom. He was born in Greece in 356 BCE to King Philip II and Olympias.¹² He was educated by Aristotle, one of the greatest philosophers the world has had.¹³ Aristotle was appointed by Philip to provide for the educational needs of Alexander and the children of the nobles. Most of Alexander’s political theories and strategies were informed by Aristotle’s political philosophy.¹⁴ Most of Alexander’s Generals were people who were also taught by Aristotle.

Alexander became king in 336 BCE at the age of 20 after the death of his father, Philip II.¹⁵ His main focus and achievement was his military campaign throughout Western Asia and Egypt. Immediately after his ascension to the throne, Alexander moved to gain authority over the Greek states and to prepare to invade Persia.¹⁶ He defeated the forces of Thessaly, the Triballi in Thrace, a coalition of Illyrians who had invaded Macedonia, cowing the Greeks and making them acknowledge his political authority. He defeated the Persian army at Granicus River in 334 BCE, and at Issus in 333 BCE and caused Darius to flee.¹⁷ He established the famous city of Alexandria in Egypt after conquering Syria, Phoenicia, Tyre and other countries in 332 BCE. Later, at the Battle of Gaugamela, he finally vanquished Darius. Alexander crowned himself King of Asia in 330 BCE following the death of Darius. The defeat of Persia gave Alexander enough resources to maintain the army built by his father, Philip III. Alexander invaded India with a newly bolstered army in the summer of 327 BCE. It was his ultimate goal to go to the Indian Ocean. A few kilometres west of the Indus River, on the nearly inaccessible pinnacle of Aornos, he conquered it, impressing the local Indian leaders.¹⁸ On the banks of the Hydaspes River, Alexander fought his final significant conflict on June 1, 326 BCE. King Porus, who subsequently turned out to be a powerful ally, had a far larger army that he routed.¹⁹

In addition to his military skills, Alexander had very good managerial and planning skills. He oversaw a sizable army of foot soldiers, archers, javelin throwers and cavalry who were all experienced in combat. His military victories, even with a small military force, were partly due to his ability to plan and strategize well. He was a charismatic, affable, motivational, calculating, impetuous, cultured and brave figure who became wealthy and influential.²⁰ Many cities were named after him, making him very famous across the globe. He surrounded himself with engineers, architects, scientists, and historians to offer expert advice to him. He possessed a core group of capable and dependable generals, including Ptolemy, Cassander, Antigonos and Seleucus. He made Hellenistic culture and monetary structures widespread throughout Western and Central Asia.²¹ In both European and Asian history, his reign signalled a turning point. His voyages yielded advances in geography and the natural sciences

¹² Warren Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World* (Grands Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 2.

¹³ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 4.

¹⁴ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 4.

¹⁵ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 1.

¹⁶ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 4.

¹⁷ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 4.

¹⁸ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 6.

¹⁹ Carter, *Seven Event that shaped the New Testament World*, 6.

²⁰ Frank Lee Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great: How One Man's Wealth Shaped the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), xiii.

²¹ Howard Clark Kee and Franklin W. Young, *The Living World of the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1960), 12.

and also assisted in moving the great centres of civilization eastward. His reign saw the spread of Hellenistic civilization in the greater part of the world. In a true sense, Alexander's accomplishments paved the ground for the expansion of Christianity, the creation of the Roman Empire, and the centuries-long dominance of the Byzantine Empire. The foregoing shows how Alexander flourished in his time. Yet, as the paper reveals later, he could not stand the “heat” of death.

The songwriter uses the sun as a metaphor for death just as he uses the flower to signify the blossoming human life. He does this using a progression in the intensity of the sun and the corresponding effect of each level of heat on the flower. He first describes the effect of the sun on the flower using the word “*aboto*” (“to become weak” or “to lose strength”). Then he proceeds to use “*ahye*” (“dry up” or “to burn completely to ashes”) as what will happen to a person “*da bi*” (“one day”)—“*da bi rebeba*” (“a day is coming”) serving as a parallel to “*awia rebeba*” (“the sun will shine”). The progression from “*aboto*” to “*ahye*” signifies that the sun may gradually weaken the flower and finally bring its life to an end. The “*aboto*” state of a human being may be ill-health and the “*ahye*” state is death. The metaphorisation of death as the burning of the flower (or leaves) is meant to highlight the devastating effect of death on a person.

If death causes somebody to “burn to ashes,” then death has power over every human being no matter the person’s social status, background, economic or socio-political position. The power of death over humankind is evident in the circumstances surrounding the death of Alexander the Great. Having conquered several kingdoms, Alexander decided to return to his city. On his way home, the sun shone on him in the form of sickness. The kind of sickness that affected Alexander is something that one cannot be certain about. Malaria and typhoid fever were rampant in ancient Babylon and so it is possible that his ailment was one of these. He had the best doctors of his time attending to him. However, his condition worsened until he eventually died on June 13 323 BCE, a situation that highlights the power of death over human beings. His wealth, fame, power and wisdom could not save him when death became imminent. Death is indeed a powerful phenomenon that is uncompromising and non-respecter of persons.

The power of death over humankind is underlined by the Bette dirge which reads in part: “*Ukong ugyi; Kugaba ugyi; Too ugyi; Ma nde ukwauan uka ndi abmu, Inim ipa ha buo*” (“My Tiger; My lion; My Elephant; Behold the cotton tree has fallen, the gods have scattered”).²² The dirge stresses the power of death over the Tiger, Lion, and Elephant, appellations that signify the might of the deceased. In the Bette socio-cultural context, the cotton tree symbolises sacredness and influence.²³ The fall of the cotton tree and the scattering of the gods show the devastating nature of death. From the Akan perspective, death’s power causes one to sleep and never wake up again; so the Bono people will say *ɔdaεε wansɔre bio* (“he/she slept but did not wake up again”). In addition to showing the power of death, this expression also shows the Akan metaphorisation of death as a state of sleep that is captured in the Bono-Twi saying “*se wonnim wuo hwe nna*” (“If you have no idea of death, observe the phenomenon of sleep”).²⁴ The power of death is perhaps the reason why it is personified as “*agya wuo*” (“father death”), comparing the strength and power of death to those of the human father. Once death becomes imminent, nothing can be done about it. To sum up, the opening sentences underscore that human beings are pilgrims who are to live on earth but for a limited time.

The Inevitability of Death

Naturally, one would expect human beings to live soberly because of the transient nature of their earthly life. Contrary to this expectation, many people live as if they are the owners of the world or as if they are immortal. The songwriter, therefore, laments that despite the shortness of life, people still live boastfully. The expression used is “*ena ama worekyerekyere wo ho*” (“because of that you are

²² K.B.C Ashipu, “A Socio-Stylistic Analysis of Some Selected Bette Dirges,” *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research* 7, no. 2 (2010): 113-124, 122.

²³ Ashipu, “A Socio-Stylistic Analysis of Some Selected Bette Dirges,” 122.

²⁴ Joseph Brookman-Amisshah, “Akan Proverbs about Death,” *Anthropos* 81. (1986): 75-85, 77.

showing off”), and the word “that” refers to the blossoming nature of a person’s life. Literally, the expression “*kyerekyere wo ho*” means “show-show yourself,” meaning drawing attention to oneself, exhibiting domineering character, wanting to be seen by everyone, demanding recognition, or desiring fame and power.

The fact that the blossoming nature makes people boast, prompts the question “*ɔdasani ei, nti wonim se wobekyene boɔ [anaa] a woagye asaase yi akenten so [yi?]*” (“Humankind, do you think that you will live forever, and for that reason, you have taken control of the land?”). The word “*ɔdasani*” is the generic term for human beings, referring to every descendant of Adam. The use of “*ɔdasani*” suggests that even though the Ghanaian context is the primary context for the song, lessons from the song also apply to every descendant of Adam. Here, the thought expressed by the expression “*worekyerekyere wo ho*” is further developed by the expression “*w’agye asaase akenten so*” (“you have forcefully taken control of the land”). The expression “*wagye akenten so*” (you have forcefully taken control of [something]) depicts a crab that opens its arms to cover (take control over) a wide area of land.

The concept of “forcefully taking control over the land” applies to those who use evil means to acquire wealth. People who amass wealth through corruption, bribery, *juju* (ritual murder), and those who unlawfully cease other people’s properties are in this category. In the Akan community which practices matrilineal inheritance, a young man may take his rich uncle to a spiritualist (medicine man) to kill him so that he can inherit his uncle’s properties. With the get-rich-quick attitude, many contemporary youths may use internet fraud, *sakawa* and soccer betting as means of becoming rich. People do these things to become rich based on the principle of teleological ethics that the end justifies the means. It does not matter how one “succeeds” in life. Against this backdrop, the songwriter asks: “*nti wonim se wobekyere boɔ [anaa]?*” ([So], do you think that you will live forever?). The use of the stone metaphor for immortality derives from the fact that the Akan consider the stone as something that was, is, and will always be there till the world comes to an end. The Akan metaphorize God’s immortality by referring to him as “*Botantim*”, meaning God is the one who was, who is, and who will forever be. The songwriter is asking if people’s motivation for their unethical (boastful) behaviour is because they think they will live forever. Certainly, no one will live forever because all of us “*yede owuo ka*” (we are indebted to death). Here, one’s death is metaphorized as payment of one’s debt to death.

The subject of the inevitability of death is drawn from the story of Methuselah (Gen. 5:25-27). Genesis 5 accounts for Adam’s family line up to Noah. Of all the people mentioned in the passage, Methuselah stands out as the person who lived the longest. The 969 years he lived on earth makes him the one who lived the longest in human history. Yet, Methuselah died eventually. The inevitability and universality of death are expressed symbolically as a universal ladder in the Bono-Twi saying “*wuo atwedee baako mforo*” (“everyone will climb the ladder of death) or as a universal necklace in the maxim, “*wuo da amansan kɔno mu*” (“death hangs around everyone’s neck”). The same idea is expressed in the metaphorical maxim, “*Wuo sekane nnɔ baako*” (“Death’s cutlass does not clear only one individual”), an expression that depicts death as a farmer brandishing a ubiquitous cutlass.

Drawing from the biblical story, the songwriter says “*Se Methuselah nyiniie, nyiniie, nyiniie, nyiniie, nyiniie, na se wankyene ɔboɔ deɛ a, anyansafoɔ mfa ntu yen ho fo*” (“If Methuselah grew very old and yet he died, then the wise should learn lessons from his story”). The biblical allusion is meant to highlight that no matter how long one lives, one will inevitably die. The inevitability of death should caution one not to destroy his/her relationship with God and with others in pursuit of earthly treasures. An important lesson from Methuselah’s example is that people should use earthly chances to secure heavenly treasures.

Imagery of Laying-in-State and Burial

The statement “*ebeye kakra na yede me nsa agu me bo*” (“in a little while, they will fold my arm on my chest”) is an image taken from the Akan practice of laying a corpse in state for public viewing. In the traditional Akan socio-cultural setting, when a person dies and the news is passed to relatives and

loved ones, a one-week celebration is held to announce the venue and the date for the funeral. On the day of the funeral, the corpse is bathed by a close relative of the deceased, dressed nicely and then laid in state for public viewing. The corpse that is laid in state may have its hands folded on the chest or placed by the side. The imagery used by the songwriter draws from the former, placing the hand on the chest. The expression “*ebeye kakra*” (“in a little while”) alludes to the brevity of human earthly life. The songwriter declares after death, “*m’awiee no ara na aduru no*” (“my very end has come”), underscoring that death brings a person’s life to an end. When one dies, whatever the person was doing or intended to do cannot be done. Therefore, whatever one has to do, has to be done at the right time and in the right way because death may not allow one to do what has been postponed.

The songwriter then says that after death, “*me so nni mfasoɔ biara*” (“I am good for nothing”), alluding to the fact that when one dies, his body is of no use. When an animal dies, its carcass is taken for meat but in the case of a human being, the corpse is buried in the earth for it to decay. Proceeding, the songwriter says, “*nso kɔ nso mu, dɔtee nkɔ dɔtee mu*” (“may ashes go into ashes, sand into the sand”).²⁵ This part of the song draws on the liturgical tradition of the historic mainline churches in Ghana like the Methodist Church Ghana and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The Methodist Church Ghana, for instance, uses the expression “*nso kɔ nso mu, dɔtee nkɔ dɔtee mu, mfuturo nkɔ mfuturo mu*” (“may ashes go into ashes, sand into the sand”, “dust into dust”) as part of their burial liturgical rituals. The liturgy requires the minister (or whoever has been assigned for this role) to pour dust three times, one time each accompanying by the expression “*nso kɔ nso mu*,” “*dɔtee nkɔ dɔtee mu*” or “*mfuturo nkɔ mfuturo mu*” respectively. These expressions underline that human beings were created from dust and so, after their death, they have to return to the dust, their origin.

The book of Genesis teaches that God created humankind in his own image as stewards of his creation (Gen. 1:26-28). The image of God in human beings includes morality, creativity, spirituality, sociability and free will. God placed Adam and Eve in a garden which he had prepared for them (Gen 2:8) and gave them the freedom to do all things except to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and bad (Gen 2:17). He told them that the day that they will eat that fruit, they will die. Later (in Genesis 3), Satan, acting through the serpent, led Eve to eat the forbidden fruit and then convinced Adam to eat it as well. Among the various repercussions of their sin was the introduction of physical death into the human world. The expression “*nso kɔ nso mu, dɔtee nkɔ dɔtee mu*” reminisces Genesis 3:19, where God told Adam and Eve after the fall that, they were taken from the ground and so they will also return to the dust. This was a way of saying that, they will die and be buried in the ground. Given the above understanding, the songwriter’s use of this liturgical tradition underscores the mortality humankind.

In saying that “*ɔkra Fosu nso ei, merekɔ agya wo ao*” (“Soul-Fosu, I am going ahead of you”) the songwriter draws on the Akan worldview of a person. According to the Akan, the human person is made up of “*nipadua*” (the body, made up of bones and blood and flesh) derived from the mother, “*sumsum*” (which vanishes through the nostrils when somebody dies) and “*ɔkra*” which is a spark from God.²⁶ The *ɔkra* is divine and it goes back to God after a person’s death. He might have used “*ɔkra Fosu*” to refer to his entire body (that is, his entire person), meaning when he dies, he leaves others behind. “*ɔkra*” also means the human spirit, and so the songwriter’s point is that his spirit will leave the living after his death. Whichever way one looks at it, it is clear that death separates the deceased from the living, a theme that is explored further below.

Death Permanently Severs One’s Relationship with the Living

Referring again to the corpse the songwriter says that “*me dabre mu ne adaka-teaa*” (“my home is the narrow coffin”), meaning the grave is the home of the dead. In the Akan context, death is not the end of a person’s life; death is actually the beginning of another life in the ancestral world.²⁷ There are

²⁵ One may add “*mfuturo nkɔ mfuturo mu*” (“dust into dust”).

²⁶ Safro Kwame, *Readings in African Philosophy: An Akan Collection* (Maryland: University Press of America, 1995), 132.

²⁷ Brookman-Amisah, “Akan Proverbs about Death,” 77.

some qualifications for becoming an ancestor. The person must have lived a long life (normally not less than 70 years) and died a natural death; the person should have lived an exemplary life and should have married and given birth. When these conditions are met and the person's funeral is also conducted elaborately, the person is transitioned from the world of the living to the world of the ancestors. The Akan believe that one's life in the ancestral world is similar to the life that one lived on earth. Therefore, they bury their dead with cooking utensils, food, money and other things that may be required for a successful life in the ancestral world.

Despite the Akan belief that their ancestors interact with them on daily basis, they also believe that their dead relatives cannot appear physically because their bodies are no longer active; they only live as spirits. Because of this belief, it will be strange for the dead to appear physically. When one dies, there is no expectation of a physical manifestation of that person. The songwriter draws on this worldview when he says "*Enne yi a mekɔ fie a abusua regye me awaawaa atuu no, Tina ei, me wuo akyiri yi no....Eba se merekɔsere abusuafoɔ yi a, ɔmo hunu me ara na, obiara bedwane o, na yeakɔyi me so apaeɛ se ɔsaman aba fie o*" ("Today when I come to your house, you welcome me well, Tina, after my death, if I decide to visit my family they will all run away and pour libation because a ghost has come home"). The assertion that the physical appearance of a deceased person will make the living pour libation draws on Akan traditional religious practices. In the Akan socio-religious context, the act of pouring libation enables the living to contact the supernatural entities, appease them, thank them and seek help from them. The purpose of pouring libation in the context of the appearance of a deceased person will be to appease the ancestors and ask them to intervene in the calamitous situation. While the physical manifestation of the dead is not common, the Akan believe that witches and wizards may manifest in the form of a dead person and harm the living. That is why when it happens that way, people seek help from the supernatural realm.

The fact that the dead cannot appear to their living relatives is painful, especially for dead parents who would have wished to guide their living children. The statement "*ɔbatan pa a medɔ me mma o, mentumi nkɔsra me mma yi da*" ("a good mother who loves her children, I will never be able to visit my children [physically]") is meant to underline the misery of the deceased because they are not able to relate physically with their relatives, especially their children. The use of the expression "*ɔbatan pa*" ("good mother") is important to the present discussion. In the Akan context, the father is the head of the family, the breadwinner, the one who makes decisions and ensures the safety of the family. The mother, on the other hand, is actively involved in advising children, bringing them up, and guiding them on daily basis. There is a very strong bond between mothers and their children that begins right from the conception of the baby. The mother-child bond is symbolically fortified immediately after a baby is born by symbolically placing the baby on the mother's chest. The bond is further deepened through breastfeeding and caring for the child's daily psychological, spiritual and physical needs. The strong mother-child bond makes a lot of people cherish their mother so much. This is evident in the attention that people give to Mothers' Day as compared to Fathers' Day celebrations. The songwriter makes the point that a mother's love or affection for her children may still exist beyond her earthly life. However, this motherly love cannot be expressed physically again because the dead and the living do not enjoy any physical interaction. Though the songwriter used the mother, the discussion applies to the father as well.

The songwriter further asserts that should he come home and visit his children, they will run and say that he is a hovering spirit and ask that he goes back into the grave because the home of the dead is "*Adaka-Teaa*" ("a narrow coffin/box"). This assertion leads to the crux of the discussion, namely, the formulation of "*Adaka-Teaa*" eschatology, which the paper attempts in the section below.

***Adaka-Teaa* Eschatology**

The expression *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology has been coined to denote the eschatological beliefs and practices from the time a corpse is carried from the family house (where it was laid in state), the journey to the cemetery, burial and the life in the grave. In formulating *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology, the author will facilitate a conversation between Lumba and Alexander, and so the resulting eschatology will be

a merger of the thoughts of the two personalities. The concept of “*Adaka-Teaa*” as the paper has explained earlier, needs further consideration.

The expression “*Adaka-Teaa*” derives from two Akan words “*adaka*” (meaning, “a coffin/box”) and “*teaa*” (meaning, “a narrow thing”) and so “*Adaka-Teaa*” means “a narrow coffin/box.” The expression “*Adaka-Teaa*” in the song refers to the coffin, a funerary box in which a corpse is placed for burial. The songwriter uses the adjective “narrow” to denote the size of the coffin—that is, the corpse’s “abode”—and the condition of “life” in the coffin and for that matter, in the grave. In Akan communities, coffins are made from African white and softwood, *Triplochiton scleroxylon* (Ghana/Akan: *wawa*; Nigeria: *abachi*, *obeche*; Cameroon: *ayous* and Ivory Coast: *sambawawa*). Usually, the size of a coffin is about six feet and so the dimension of a grave is also about six feet. This is the basis for the Bono (Akan) saying, “*anamɔno nsia da hɔ mma biaa*” (“everyone’s lot is six feet”), meaning, the six-foot piece of land remains everyone’s lot. Life in the grave is uncomfortable because of its small size which makes the heat in it unbearable. The perceived high temperature in the *Adaka-Teaa* yielded the Bono-Twi saying, “*Adaka mu ɔɔhye*” (“inside the coffin is very hot”).

The assertion that “*anamɔno nsia da hɔ mma biaa*” (“everyone’s lot is six feet”) emerged from the idea that the land on which one’s grave is made permanently belongs to that person. In the olden days, the human population was very low and the land was in abundance. By default, the land on which one was buried was not to be reused; it belonged permanently to that person. The relatives of the deceased could plant a tree on the grave for identification purposes. No one cared about the spaces left in between different graves because the land was in abundance. With urbanisation, globalisation, technological advancement and increased population in the last few decades, things have changed. Today, the construction/expansion of roads, relocation of cemeteries, and lack of adequate land for burial purposes may lead to the evacuation of the remains of the dead from the grave, implying that even the six feet grave may not be occupied permanently by the deceased. Therefore, on the one side, the assertion that “*anamɔno nsia da hɔ mma biaa*” (“everyone’s lot is six feet”) may lose its value in the near future if it is restricted to the idea of having a six-foot piece of land as a permanent burial place. However, on the other side, the six-foot ideology still applies to funerary rites in that no matter the way a corpse is disposed of (whether earth burial or cremation), it is first placed in a coffin which is also about six feet in length. This means that as long as Akan funeral rites are concerned, the six feet is a powerful imagery that has significant pedagogical values.

The *Adaka-Teaa* theology expounded above finds its expression in Alexander’s three wishes he gave on his deathbed. After leading a prosperous life and dominating the majority of the known world, Alexander realized the worthlessness of earthly wealth. On his way home after his military campaign, Alexander fell sick. He desired to return home and see his mother; however, he was aware that he would not last that long. He made three strange wishes when he was lying helpless on his deathbed. He called his generals and said, “I will depart this world soon, and I have three last wishes.” These three wishes were meant to teach people the lessons that Alexander learnt about life. The wishes were that the best doctors who treated his ailment should carry his coffin to the graveyard; his wealth—including money, gold, and silver—should be scattered along his coffin procession to the cemetery and his hands should be let loose, hanging outside the coffin, for all the people to see.²⁸

When asked by one of his Generals what his wishes meant, Alexander explained as follows: First, “I want the best doctors to carry my coffin to demonstrate that in the face of death, even the best doctors in the world have no power to heal...”²⁹ On his sick bed, his doctors did all they could, but he did not get better. Alexander then learnt that doctors are not the ultimate source of cure. In other words, healing comes not from the doctor but from the Supreme Being who decides who should be healed and who should not. His doctors did all they could but he died. The circumstances surrounding his death support the Bono-Twi saying that “*Wuo kita adee a nkwa ntumi nnye*” (“If death takes hold

²⁸ Marsha Dionisio, Christopher Raichle and Triantafillos Parlapanides, *Class Dismissed: Lessons of Survival* (Pittsburg: RoseDog Books, 2016), 57.

²⁹ Dionisio, Raichle and Parlapanides, *Class Dismissed*, 57-58.

of something, life cannot take it away”). It is clear from Alexander’s experience that when one’s death becomes imminent, there is nothing that can be done to save him or her. Alexander had all the medical specialists at his disposal, yet he could not survive, dying at age thirty-three. This idea has been expressed by Lumba as the exposition on his song has revealed earlier.

Secondly (Alexander continues), “I want the road to be covered with my treasure so that everybody sees that material wealth acquired on earth, will stay on earth...”³⁰ Alexander had become very rich through his military conquests. It is estimated that at age 25 Alexander owned “enough wealth to mint three centuries’ worth of annual supply of coins produced by Athens at the height of its power.”³¹ Frank Lee Holt quotes Francois as saying that this would be “enough to pay 100, 000 men one drachma a day for 20 years.”³² Sophia describes Alexander as wealthier than the combined wealth of all previous Macedonian kings.³³ His wealth was over 11 times the combined wealth of all people who were alive in 323 BCE if each owned one drachma of silver.³⁴ Steve Bennett estimates Alexander’s net worth as about 32 trillion US dollars.³⁵ He owned over 10 million square miles of land spread across Asia and Europe: Greece 3 million square miles, Albania 2 million square miles, Turkey 1 million square miles, Palestine 4 million square miles, Afghanistan and Pakistan and 1 million square miles.³⁶ He owned 1 million tonnes of gold and gold deposits. He had over 100,000 horses and over 5,000 elephants.³⁷ It is unimaginable that one person had this huge amount of wealth.

Certainly, if wealth could extend human life, he would have used his wealth to extend his life. However, as death stared at his face, it became clear to him that earthly wealth had no eternal significance. He knew he was going to leave all his wealth behind and so he wanted sympathizers to know that earthly wealth has no place in the afterlife. The most precious gift is life; without life, one has no wealth. The Bono (Akan) are therefore right in saying that “*Wowɔ nkwa wowɔ adeɛ nyinaa*” (“If you have life, you have everything”). This means that life is more precious than wealth; once there is life, there is the hope of acquiring wealth. The idea of the worthlessness of wealth after death is also implied by Lumba’s assertion that the dead is good for nothing.

The third wish was explained as follows: “I want my hands to swing in the wind, so that people understand that we come to this world empty-handed and we leave this world empty-handed after the most precious treasure of all is exhausted, and that is time.”³⁸ For Alexander, time is the most precious gift that God gives in addition to human life. By “time,” he meant the duration of one’s earthly life. Each person has several days, weeks, months, or years to spend on earth. The duration allowed for one’s earthly life gets used up and it is never replenished. Time is a very important treasure because it is limited. More wealth can be produced, but more time cannot be produced. When everything is used up, one will inevitably die and return empty-handed just as he or she arrived empty-handed. The dead leave everything behind and goes into the grave with nothing. His assertion can be restated as: “I want to wave my hands in the air to demonstrate to everyone that we enter this world with nothing and depart it with nothing once the priceless gift has been lost.”

Alexander’s point echoes Job’s assertion that “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart” (Job 1:21a NIV; 1 Tim. 6:7). Job lost everything, including his children, his wealth, and eventually, his health too (Job 2:7-8), despite being upright and unyielding in his devotion to God. He made this statement after he got the message concerning the loss of his properties and the death of

³⁰ Dionisio, Raichle and Parlapanides, *Class Dismissed: Lessons of Survival*, 57-58.

³¹ Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great*, 1.

³² Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great*, 5.

³³ Sophia as cited in Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great*, 5.

³⁴ Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great*, 5.

³⁵ Steve Bennett, “Alexander the Great Net Worth \$32 Trillion (Forbes) Gold Horses Castles at Death,” (2022). [Accessed online from <https://caknowledge.com/alexander-the-great-net-worth/> on 5th February, 2023].

³⁶ Bennett, “Alexander the Great Net Worth \$32 Trillion (Forbes) Gold Horses Castles at Death.”

³⁷ Bennett, “Alexander the Great Net Worth \$32 Trillion (Forbes) Gold Horses Castles at Death.”

³⁸ Dionisio, Raichle and Parlapanides, *Class Dismissed: Lessons of Survival*, 57-58.

his children (Job 1:13-19). In this text, Job used the word “naked” to describe the human state at the time of entering this world. The use of “nakedness” means possessing nothing or without possession. Everybody is born into the world naked without clothing or any other material possession. Job further states that he will return to the ground naked, referring to his death. Even though people are not buried naked, they are not buried with much possession. Job’s consciousness about the worthlessness of earthly possession equipped him to maintain his integrity in times of great suffering. Both Lumba and Alexander exhort the wise to learn from the effect of death on human life. Both of them consider the grave as the only possession that the dead has. It does not matter how rich or poor a person is, after death, the one’s lot is the *Adaka-Teaa*.

The *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology espoused in this paper has several implications for the Ghanaian community. This next section discusses some of these implications under the thematic areas: the equality of human beings, the worthlessness of earthly wealth in the afterlife, and the need to love God and humanity.

Implications of *Adaka-Teaa* Eschatology

The Equality of Human Beings

Both Lumba’s song and Alexander’s wishes underline the principle of equality of human beings irrespective of one’s background and/or status. Whether rich or poor, black or white, male or female, strong or weak, educated or uneducated, a royal or a slave, tall or short, the final destination of the human body is the *Adaka-Teaa* (or the six-foot grave). The principle of equality of human beings is rooted in a number of biblical teachings, some of which are outlined below. First, the biblical doctrine of *imago Dei* (the idea that God created human beings in his image and likeness) makes everybody God’s image bearer (Gen. 1:26-27). The Bible also acknowledges God as the creator and owner of all that is in the universe, including human beings (Gen 1.1; Psa. 24.1-2). The divine *imago* includes such attributes as creativity, spirituality, sociability, and morality, among others. The Fall of humanity affected the divine *imago* but it did not erode it. While natural endowments may vary from person to person, the divine *imago* is the same in all persons, though its manifestation may vary from person to person.

The Akan of Ghana believe that every human being has *kra* (soul) that comes from God and so returns to him after a person dies. The presence of God in every human being, in the form of the divine spark (*kra*) is underlined by the Fante expression *Nyimpa nyinaa ye Nyame nye mba* (“All humans are God’s children”). This assertion does not negate the concept of diversity in human nature. Diversity is part of God’s nature; he is the one God existing in three distinct persons, each performing a distinct role in the salvation of humankind. There is diversity in the Godhead and humanity. As a matter of fact, “humanity can only be defined and informed by diversity defined in terms of race, stock, physiology, culture and others and expressed in the oneness of being human.”³⁹ The reality of diversity points to the need for interdependence, sharing of resources, interconnectedness, and solidarity with one another, epitomized in the Akan maxim “I am related by blood, therefore, I exist or I exist because I belong to a family.”⁴⁰

The equality of all humans also relates to the consequences of sin on humankind. The Fall of humankind resulted in the pollution of Adam’s posterity with a sinful nature. All descendants of Adam became sinful and came under God’s wrath. Physical death entered the world through sin (Rom. 5:12-14). Even though Christ has dealt with the consequences of sin, physical death has become part of the human experience. No matter how long one lives, one will die at a point in time. One has to acknowledge the equality of all humans based on their need for salvation and the common inevitable end, death.

The reality of death in human life brings to the fore the fact that humans are finite mortals as opposed to an immortal and infinite God. God is not affected by death. Jesus Christ, being God,

³⁹ Emmanuel Asante, *Unity in Difference* (Accra: Methodist Book Depot, 2010), 5-6.

⁴⁰ John S. Pobee, *Toward an African Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), 49.

defeated death. These three words—Christ conquered death—define the most significant distinctiveness of Christianity. No other religious leader ever prophesied about his death and resurrection (Matt. 16:21), based his claims about himself and his teaching on that prediction (John 2:18–22; Matt. 27:40), and then fulfilled that promise (Lk. 24:6). Jesus was the first person to ever rise from the dead and never die again. Others who had been brought back to life later experienced a second death (see 1 Kgs 17:17–24; 2 Kgs 4:32–37; Mk 5:39–42; Jhn 11:38–44). Christ’s resurrection was a true and total defeat of death (John 11:25), Jesus conquered death once and for all (Acts 2:24) and now has the keys to death and hell (Rev. 1:18). Christ overcame death because of his sinlessness. Physical death was the result of the fall (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23; 1 Pet. 2:22). Therefore, Christ’s sinless life made death have no power over him. He, however, willingly gave his life as a ransom for human sins, and had to resurrect because death can have no control over the sinless (Jhn. 10:17). On the contrary, all human beings are indebted to death. They will one day pay their debt. The equality of humanity should inform human-divine and human-human relationship. The rich should not look down upon the poor and the poor should not entertain any kind of inferiority complex.

The Worthlessness of Earthly Wealth in the Afterlife

Secondly, *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology implies that one’s wealth has value for him/her after death. Of the entire land in the world, it is only the six-foot grave that one will occupy as the final and permanent abode. The family of the deceased may build a whole empire around the burial place; yet, the fact remains that the actual grave is only a six-foot piece of land. The *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology of Lumba and Alexander frowns upon the attitude of showing off because wealth, fame, position and status are irrelevant in death’s dealing with humankind.

The fact that earthly possessions have no eternal relevance is expressed by Jesus in his admonishment that believers should “store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal” rather than storing treasures on earth where “where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19, 20 NIV). Jesus’ point is that a life that is marked by materialistic hoarding is incompatible with entering God’s kingdom because everyone in the kingdom is expected to share their possessions with one another. There is the need to consider one day at a time and seek God’s guidance in all endeavours. The one-day-at-a-time mentality underscored by *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology will help human beings to set their priorities right, seeking the Kingdom of God and its righteousness first (Matt. 6:33) rather than seeking wealth at the expense of righteousness. One’s love for righteousness will be reflected in the person’s attitude toward material wealth.

The need to Love for God and Neighbor

Thirdly, *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology underscores the need to love God and to love one another. Central to *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology is the assertion “*onipa ammedi kyere bi*” (“Humankind did not come to live [on earth] forever”), a reminder of the transient nature of human earthly life or pilgrimage on earth. The brevity of human life requires humans to consider the question of why they are here on earth. One’s answer to this question will inform the person’s relationship with God and with other humans. God created human beings, out of love, to relate with him and then take care of his creation as long as they live on earth. When human beings sinned (Gen. 3:1ff.), God provided salvation for them through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is imperative that human beings love God for what He has done, what is doing and what He will do. The saved must respond to God’s benevolence by living morally upright lives.

The concept of love is important in human society. Without love, there will be a lot of chaos in human society. Love promotes interdependence, interconnectivity, sharing of resources and the holistic development of society. *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology, therefore, offers a powerful panacea to malice that sometimes characterises human society and militates against individual and societal development. The love for neighbours should inform one’s commercial activity. Any vocation that is detrimental to the lives of other people is not to be undertaken. In this category are illegal mining and

the sale of alcohol for human consumption, both of which have harmful effects on the body. *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology does not downplay the relevance of wealth, fame and power. Rather, it stands against the acquisition of these things through evil means. One's wealth is of no significance if one loses his/her life in the process of wealth acquisition. A person's worth does not depend on how much wealth he/she has but on how he/she used his life (Lk. 12:15). In other words, a life's worth is not measured in hours or money but by the amount of love shown to others. In all things, love must reign.

CONCLUSION

The paper set out to formulate *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology based on Lumba's *Adaka-Teaa* and Alexander's three wishes. The following are key aspects of *Adaka-Teaa* eschatology expounded in the paper. First, death is the inevitable end of every human's life, though each person has a different time at which he/she will die. Second, there is nothing that one can do to postpone the phenomenon of death if it is really the person's time to die. The sick may use wealth to access good medical care and get healed; however, death cannot be bribed to spare anyone. Third, after death, one's wealth is handed over to other people; the dead do not send their wealth into the next world. In other words, earthly wealth has no place in the afterlife. Implications were drawn for the Christian community based on three themes: The equality of human beings, the worthlessness of earthly wealth in the afterlife and the need to love God and humanity. In addition to providing a framework for African Christian eschatological discourses, the paper also demonstrates how Western worldview may be adopted within an African socio-cultural worldview.

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