

## LESSONS FROM A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JESUS' AND INIKPI'S SACRIFICES FOR THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT

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### **Abstract**

*This study attempted an understanding of Jesus' sacrifice in Hebrews 10:1 – 18 in the context of the sacrifice of Inikpi in Igala society with the aim of proffering a model for communicating the gospel to Igala Traditionalists within their own cultural setting with lessons for the society. This is in line with the global task of making the gospel relevant to every context. This paper focuses on some lessons from a comparative study of Jesus' and Inikpi's sacrifices. It seeks to encourage people and their leaders to have other people at heart. The researcher used the inculturation method, which is an aspect of contextualization of biblical interpretation in Africa. The researcher also used a combination of the library-based source of data and survey method to obtain information for the study. The findings of the study reveal some similarities and lessons drawn from the love, selflessness, courage, determination, volition, patriotism and obedience of Jesus Christ and Inikpi. The researcher therefore recommends that the lessons in both sacrifices should be used in communicating the gospel in Igala society since they create more understanding of the gospel to the people.*

**Key Words:** comparative study, sacrifice, Jesus Christ, Inikpi, selflessness

### **Introduction**

The interpretation of Jesus Christ's sacrifice in Hebrews 10: 1 – 18 in the context of the Inikpi sacrifice provides the researcher an opportunity to draw some lessons from a comparative study of both sacrifices. This task requires a comparative analysis to show some of the characteristics of the Inikpi sacrifice that illuminates the preaching and teaching of the gospel. Some of the characteristics of Jesus' sacrifice and that of Inikpi that aid the understanding of Jesus' sacrifice include love, the substitutional character of their sacrifices and the

incapability of animal sacrificial victims to serve as substitutes for the sacrifices. Moreover, selflessness, submission and willingness in the sacrifices, victory and peace derived from both sacrifices, and the efficacy of the sacrifice of Inikpi and Jesus Christ aid the understanding of Jesus Christ's sacrifice. This study hinges on Justin Ukpong's theory of inculturation Hermeneutic, a contextual hermeneutic methodology that seeks to make any community of ordinary people and other social - cultural context the subject of interpretation of the Bible using conceptual frame of reference and involvement of the ordinary people in the interpretation process. The study therefore attempts to pinpoint lessons from a comparative study of Jesus Christ's and Inikpi's sacrifices. This paper therefore seeks to answer the question: What are the lessons that may be drawn from a comparative study of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that of Inikpi?

### **The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ in Hebrews 10: 1 - 18**

The book of Hebrews 10:1 avers that the Levitical sacrificial system is unable to perfect worshippers since God intended it to prepare the way for the expected consummation of their perfection in the single sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The conjugation γάρ links the argument on the inability of the levitical Sacrificial system to make worshippers perfect with the previous one in chapter eight and nine which dealt with the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus Christ to that offered by the levitical priests. The conclusion of the discussion in chapter nine is that the single sacrifice of Jesus Christ is sufficient to take away the sins of humanity and that at the *parousia*, Jesus Christ will bring salvation to the people waiting for His return. Hence, Jesus Christ has finally dealt with the sin problem of humanity. Hebrews 10:1 - 18 expands on this point and rounds off the argument that the priesthood and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ are superior to that of the Old Testament regulations.

Hebrews 10:2 asserts that the Levitical Sacrifices were deficient in that they could not cleanse men's consciences of their consciousness of sin. The author of Hebrews buttressed his point by stating that the Levitical Sacrifices in their repeated form cannot cleanse the worshippers. "That is to say, no worshipper was ever brought into the real and enduring fellowship with God; for none fully lost his feeling guilty for sins" (Hawthorne 1524). Each time they prepared to meet God in fellowship they remembered that they were sinners whose sins must be atoned for by the blood of animals before they can worship Him. They often had guilty conscience, which reminded them of their sins. Even after offering of the sacrifices the worshipper's conscience is not cleared of the guilt

since the guilt is not permanently removed. The conscience thus places the worshipper under God's judgment.

Larm rightly observes that the concern of the author of Hebrews here is not just the subjective need that sacrifices meet but on what it takes sacrifices to cease (3). Under these regulations and sacrifices, the price of sin can never be paid. The author, in Hebrews 10: 2, therefore asks a rhetorical question, "If it could, would they not have stopped being offered?" (NIV). The answer to this question implies that the impotency of these sacrifices remains evident as long as the worshippers repeatedly offered them.

The inadequacy of the Levitical sacrificial system is equally evidenced in the fact that sin offerings offered by the Israelite community annually on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) only served as a reminder of their sins. The author of the Epistle begins his contrast in Hebrews 10:3 by using the conjugation  $\alpha\lambda\lambda'$  (but) to introduce the next line of thought contrasting the unreal condition of Hebrews 10:2 with the real situation that follows. He had indicated that the Levitical sacrifices could neither perfect nor cleanse the worshipper's conscience of sin because they were not meant for that purpose. Hebrews 10:3 shows that the law and the sacrifices were introduced as an annual reminder of sins. The sacrifices are a "reminder of sin" for the people and not for God.

Moreover:

Leviticus 16:20-22 calls for a confession of sins on this day, a sure reminder. Rather than the new covenant hope of Jeremiah 31:34 (Hebrews 8:12 and 10:17) where God promises to "remember their sins no more," the early sacrifices serve as a continual remembrance of sins. Not only are the cultic sacrifices of no positive value, they are a disadvantage because they remind us of our sins (Gordon 129).

Those sacrifices were instituted to remind the worshipper that his sins were not permanently removed or erased and that the sins were temporarily covered. In other words, they reminded the worshipper how sinful he was and that his sins are yet to be fully paid for (Ritenbaugh 4).

Similarly, Gordon clarifies that the rituals of the Day of Atonement involved the calling of sins to remembrance as the high priest confesses all the sins of the people of Israel over the head of the scapegoat in compliance with Leviticus 16:21 (129). He reiterates that these reminders of the community's sins cannot banish

sin from the consciousness of the community (Gordon 129). This implies a contrast with the provision of the new covenant, according to which sins are erased from the divine memory (cf. 17:18; 8:12) (Gordon 129). In the same vein, constable states that the Day of Atonement reminded the Israelites yearly that their sins needed removed so they could continue to have fellowship with God (86).

According to Hawthorne, the author of Hebrews declares that the fact that the sin offerings were made continually, year after year, was itself proof that the institution of the ancient order, though divinely ordained, was not final (1524). This researcher agrees with the scholars cited above that the Levitical sacrifices, like the traditional sacrifices, were inadequate due to their repetitive nature. Worshipers were required to offer sacrifices daily or annually as against Jesus' single sacrifice. If those sacrifices had met God's requirements for making worshippers perfect, they would not have been repeated.

The author of Hebrews brings his argument on the inadequacy of the Levitical system to its climax in Hebrews 10:4 by stating that they cannot completely remove the sins of the worshipper. The key explanatory clauses are "for or because it is impossible" (αδυναθον γαρ) which corresponds with "can never or it is never able" (οὐδέποτε δύνανται) of Hebrews 10:1. Similarly, "take away sins" (ἀφαιρειν ἁμαρτίας) correlates with "make perfect or perfect" (τελειῶσαι) of verse one and "for the blood of bulls and of he-goats" (γὰρ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων) which corresponds with "the same sacrifices" (ταῖς αὐταῖς θυσίαις) mentioned in Hebrew 10:1. These terms indicate that in Hebrews 10:4, the author of Hebrews is trying to conclude the argument he began in Hebrews 10:1. Therefore, αδυναθον, which is the accusative form of the nominative αδυναθος, meaning "impossible" rules out the efficacy of the blood of these sacrificial victims in taking away the sin of the worshipper. This is the blood of the victims used for the sin offering on the Day of Atonement, which surpassed all other sacrifices and offerings, only covered the sins of the worshippers. Covering excreta with sand does not amount to its removal. Remove the sand; you will still see it underneath. Although the sin offering seems to have atoned for the Israelite community, it never completely removed sin and its consciousness from them.

In view of the inadequacy of the sacrificial system discussed above, Hebrews 10:6 shows God's displeasure with sacrifices and offerings which gave rise to the final sacrifice of Jesus Christ. God's rejection of sacrifice and offerings in

Hebrews 10:6 is based on the attitude of the worshippers who came before God to offer ritual sacrifices without a commensurate repentance from sin, obedience to God, faith, self-dedication and service (Hewitt 156).

Hebrews 10:15-18 reveals the adequacy of Jesus Christ's sacrifice in his abolishment of sin consciousness and perfecting God's people. Thus, the decisive character of the perfection achieved through Jesus Christ's single sacrifice is rhetorically presented in Hebrews 10:10, 14 and 18:

We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:14).

By one sacrifice, he has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy (Hebrews 10:14).

Where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 10:18).

These verses reveal that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ has done what the repeated sacrifices could not do by qualifying God's people for acceptable worship. He did this perfection for the last time. The author of Hebrews calls the Holy Spirit to witness to the fact that Jesus has finished the work of redemption. Consequently, he has fulfilled God's promise in Jeremiah 31:33 cited earlier in Hebrews 8:10. God promised that he would abolish the old covenant and establish a new covenant since the old covenant could not produce the desired result in the life of His people. The provisions of the mosaic covenant were written on tablets of stone but under the new covenant God promised to put his laws in the heart of his people and write the laws on their minds. This makes it easier for them to remember and obey the laws since it becomes part of their lives.

God also promised that under the new covenant he would remember the sins of his people no more (Hebrews 10:17). Poole rightly observes that "By so doing, God sanctifies and justifies his people, so as their sins shall be remitted, and God will solemnly absolve them from the punishment they merit" (855). This promise refers to the contents of Jeremiah 31:33-34 where Christ's death is implied. The author of Hebrews referred to this covenant in Hebrews 8:6 where he asserts that the death of Jesus Christ, confirms this covenant as the mediator, and obtains forgiveness of sins for believers. Under the new covenant, sin consciousness gives way to justification and sanctification. The climax of the whole argument

about the superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to the Levitical sacrificial system is in verse eighteen that concludes:

Now where there is absolute remission – forgiveness and cancellation of the penalty of these (sins and lawbreaking) there is no longer any offering made to atone for sin (Amplified Bible).

The issue is that the single sacrifice of Jesus Christ has finally settled the sin problem of humanity by offering complete eternal forgiveness of sin whereby God remembers their sins no more. Adam Clarke points out that where sin is pardoned, there is no further need of a sin offering; but every believer on Christ has his sin blotted out, and therefore needs no other offering for that sin (1272). Therefore, there is no need for repetition of the sacrifice again or of any other sacrifice for sin (Poole 854). Barker and Kohlenberger make a very solid conclusion:

The body of Jesus' body was made 'once and for all' ... it matters immensely that this one offering avails for all people at all times. This contrasts sharply with the sacrifices under the old covenants, as the author has been emphasizing. But it contrasts also with other religions. No other religion speaks of one great event that brings salvation through the centuries and through the world. This is the distinctive doctrine of Christianity (986).

The point in Hebrews 10:18 is "where sins have been effectively dealt with, there can be no additional offering for sin". Barker and Kohlenberger posit that "since the new covenant has been established as a reality, the prophetic word allows no further sacrifice for sin" (987).

Jesus Christ views his death as a sacrifice for the sin of humanity. In Matthew 20:28 Jesus Christ says "Just as the son of man did not come to be cared for or served but to care for or serve and to give or donate his life as a means of redemption instead of many" (ὡσπερ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν). In Mark 10:45, Jesus Christ states "for the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν). These scriptures show that the purpose of his coming into the world is for him "to give life as a ransom for many" (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν).

Apostle Paul speaks of the death of Jesus Christ in substitutionary terms. Jesus Christ died for humanity that others might not experience the second death. Similarly, the high Priest, Caiaphas, at the trial of Jesus Christ, saw the death of Jesus Christ as a substitutionary one since he posits that it is appropriate for one man to die for many (Jn.11:50). Matthew Slick rightly observes that the death of Jesus Christ is seen as a substitution (12). Hence, Jesus Christ as the sinner's substitute bore the awful judgments of God against sin (Slick 13).

The preposition, ἀντί serves the same purpose with ὑπέρ since both of them mean "for," "instead of" or "in place of." This researcher therefore translates the phrase, δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν "he gave his life as a ransom in place of many people." This is because πολλῶν is used here as a substantive adjective and is genitive, masculine plural, indicating that the word translated "many" refers to people not things. Matthew 26:28 reads, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν). Other scriptures in the New Testament buttress the fact that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was substitutionary.

### **The Sacrifice of Inikpi**

Sacrifice plays a very important role in African Traditional religion as it is in every religion of the world. Edwin Emererenu rightly observes that it is inconceivable in African mind to have a religion without a system of sacrifice. He sees sacrifice as the act of offering the life of an animal or a human being to the divine power or powers since it serves as a means of communion between humanity and God (web).

Writing from the point of view of African Traditional Religion, Yusufu Turaki rightly observes that sacrifices are gifts required to atone for some wrong doings while offerings are gifts that are given voluntarily (79). He sees sacrifices and offerings as means of maintaining harmony between human beings and the Spirit world. Moreover, the concepts of sacrifices and offerings are common to all traditional religion (Tukari 79). Similarly, Adeyemo et al. posit that almost every people group in Africa seems to have had some forms of traditional sacrificial system in which cattle, sheep, goats and chickens, kola nuts, grain, beer, etc were items for sacrifice (1502). Furthermore,

Human sacrifice was not common, but it was sometimes, practiced in circumstances of extreme need... a crisis such as that caused by HIV

/AIDS in many villages in Africa might have called for the highest possible sacrifice to appease God so that he would remove the plague. The thinking was that it would be worth sacrificing one human life to save many from dying (Adeyemo 1502).

Joseph Onuche rightly observes that Inikpi's sacrifice is an example of human sacrifice required to avert an imminent enemy who could have destroyed the Igala Kingdom.

Inikpi was the beloved daughter of Ayegba Oma Idoko who reigned about AD 1500 as the fourth Attah Igala (Usman, 37). There is controversy on the war during which the Inikpi sacrifice took place. The popular opinion of earlier scholars like Okwoli and, Simon Sugei Usman (37) is that Inikpi sacrificed herself for the salvation of Igala Kingdom during the war between the Igala Kingdom and the Jukun (37). However, in an oral interview with James Agama of the Akogun Royal lineage, he posited that Inikpi sacrificed herself during the war between the Igala and Benin Kingdoms considering the fact that her grave is located beside the River Niger at the Ega market at Idah, the route the Benin people took to Idah. This view corroborates with that of Idegwu and some recent researchers that Inikpi sacrificed herself for the Igala and Benin war.

Peter Adebo Opaluwa (the Ekeh of Ofu Local Government) and James Alaji Abalaka (the District Head of Ugwolawo) postulate that Omodoko was the one sacrificed for the Jukun war. This position is substantiated by the fact that Omodoko was buried beside Inachalo River, which served as the war front between the Igala and Jukun Kingdoms (personal interview with Peter Adebo Opaluwa and James Alaji Abalaka at Ugwolawo). This researcher, against the popular opinion, supports and adopts the view that Inikpi sacrificed herself during the war between Benin and Igala kingdoms because her grave is located beside the River Niger at the Ega market in Idah, the route the Benin people take to Idah. According to Umonu James Yusufu, the current chief diviner to Attah Igala, the war for which Inikpi sacrificed herself is not the basic issue in the Inikpi sacrifice. He asserts that "the basic issue is that she was buried alive as a substitute for the Igala nation; and that the efficacy of the sacrifice is evident in Igala's freedom and victory" (oral interview with Umonu James Yusufu at Idah).

Since the blood of animal victims could not save or purge the land from this predicament, Inikpi surrendered to her father's will, and was buried alive as a substitute for the Igala people. It became incumbent on Inikpi to die since the gods of Igala kingdom rejected animal substitutes for the sacrifice. There lies the

significance of Inikpi's sacrifice, in the sense that she did what animal sacrifice could not do. As Egbunu puts it:

The blood of goats and bulls were to no avail in appeasing the gods of the land against the impending doom. However, the blood, the head, the life of Inikpi (Om'ufedo Baba) alone, the beloved, it is believed, could perform this feat. Moreover, she did offer herself vicariously like a sacrificial lamb (Egbunu, Igala 20-21; Egbunu, Religion 114).

Adejo, Umonu, Haruna and Ibrahim Aruwa state that special sacrifices like that of Omodoko and Inikpi were offered to purge the land of defilement that could have led to greater calamity in the land. According to Egbunu, the sacrificial death of Inikpi is esteemed higher and above that of Omodoko sacrificed for another war. This is because Inikpi voluntarily begged her father nine times before he consented to allow her to die for his own survival and that of the entire Igala Kingdom (Religion 112).

### **Lessons From Jesus' And Inikpi Sacrifices**

#### **1. Love**

This study shows how God through Jesus Christ demonstrated his love for humanity. The study also shows how Ayegba Oma Idoko and Inikpi demonstrated their love for the Igala nation. Their love was sacrificial and overwhelming. It cost God to release Jesus Christ to die for humanity just as it cost Ayegba Oma Idoko to release *Inikpi* for the Igala nation. Emmanuel Ubolo states that no one in our generation will agree to offer his child in the way Ayegba did even if the child is incapacitated (personal interview). Jesus Christ and Inikpi allowed themselves to be sacrificed as a demonstration of their love for other people. This kind of sacrificial love is required of the people as well as political and religious leaders in the country.

The citizens and the leaders need to develop love for one another in order to develop the country. Tradition states that Inikpi's love for her father moved her to beg him nine times, to allow her die for him and for the Igala nation to survive the impending doom. This kind of love is comparable to the "agape" type, which does not look for personal gain but for the good of others. It does not look at what the giver gets out of his or her, serves as a reference point for interpreting the superior type of love between God the father and Jesus Christ. It also exemplifies God's love for the world stated in John 3:16.

The sacrifice of Inikpi and Jesus Christ were products of the love of their fathers as well as their own love for the people. We need to develop love for others in order to develop the country. Joshua Odeli rightly observes that love pushed Jesus Christ and Inikpi into offering themselves as sacrificial victims on behalf of others. Consequently, leaders and their services to the nation should be rooted in love (personal interview). Odeli reiterates.

We should serve people because we love them. We should not serve people just because we want money in our pockets or because we want to enrich ourselves or save an inheritance for our children. Love for our country should be the essence of our service to the nation (interview).

Unlike Ayegba Oma Idoko, some leaders would prefer sacrificing other people's children, if an occasion demands, rather than giving their own child as a ransom. Some people have lost their children and loved ones during "ethno" - religious and socio - political crises in the country. Some unemployed youths are involved in such crises as they are employed as thugs. Children of some leaders, on the other hand, may not even be in the country during such crises. Hence, none of the children of the people these youths fight for is ever involved in such violence. These selfish leaders love their children but sacrifice children of the poor masses for their selfish gain. This kind of attitude impairs the peace, stability and prosperity of the nation. People and their leaders should be prepared to demonstrate their personal love for others in order to curb the rate of poverty and shedding of innocent blood in the land. Love for others places premium on other people's lives. Genuine love is one of the key elements for national development.

## **2. Selflessness**

The story of Inikpi is a story of selfless sacrifice (Kate, Chukwu Web). Inikpi's selflessness is evident in her unreserved surrender regardless of her royalty. Egbunu expressed this fact:

Far wondrous, indeed it was that one who was the most beloved of the royal heart, in all her beauty and regality should think of relinquishing all the appurtenances of princely might and gait for the sake of her fatherland. Nevertheless, what is her life, her beauty, her wellbeing to her compared with the joy of seeing the whole land in peace? For her, life meant nothing without a sacrifice (Igala 20).

The above description of Inikpi's selflessness elicits a high sense of concern for others rather than a concentration on the loss of all she was and had. Self meant

nothing to her. As we have said earlier, the salvation of her people was paramount in the scheme of things.

According to Agama, Tradition states that while Inikpi's father was devastated by the news of her death, she sent some slaves to dig a big hole for the burial at Ega, near River Niger at Idah. When it was ready, she entered the hole on her own and asked the men to cover her and the nine slaves buried alive with her (personal Interview). Inikpi was neither forced nor pushed into the hole. She entered the hole on her own volition. Moreover, Agama said that Inikpi's father was in the Palace when he heard that his daughter was already at the graveyard (Personal Interview).

Samuel Alfa and Emmanuel Ubolo observe that the kind of selflessness found in Inikpi is rarely seen in Igala society and among Igala people today (Personal Interview at Ankpa). Inikpi offered herself for the sacrifice unmindful of her life's ambitions and that of her royalty. The sacrifice saved others while she lost her life. Chukwu, kate corroborates this feat thus: "She was from a royal family and a heroine with great attributes. The story of Inikpi is a story of a selfless sacrifice" (Web). Idegwu rightly observes that people need to have an understanding that in the present age, though we do not need to go into ritual murder, there are several levels of sacrifice that we ought to give to keep the society afloat. He posits that we need such heroes and heroines in the society today (Web).

Furthermore:

If we can be selfless and give our little sacrifice to our community, not necessarily to be killed, it would pay off. Years after we are gone, people will still remember us for it. The point is that even should leave a credible legacy (behind), which people can refer to even when we are no more. Today, so many people bear the name Inikpi in honor of the... (Idegwu Web).

People should emulate the selflessness of Jesus Christ and Inikpi instead of greed and selfishness which perpetuate corruption in our society (Musa Hassan). It is a common knowledge that some people, political and religious leaders no longer take interest in the development of their areas of jurisdiction but in what they will get and in the acquisition of material wealth to the detriment of other people. This frame of mind compels some contractors to do shabby jobs that lead to the collapse of some structures before or after completion. These contractors

use substandard materials that are not suitable for storey buildings not minding the grave danger their jobs constitute to the poor masses.

Some leaders instigate crisis for selfish reasons. Some of the events that take place after election in some countries might be traced to this kind of instigation. Such crisis does not lead to development of the country since it leads to destruction of lives and property. According to the traditional ruler of Ogugu, Hi Royal Highness Michael Aduku Salifu,

We have to sacrifice our resources to save the country from being plunged into hardship. Some people embezzle money entrusted to them for development. Igala should have been wiped out completely if Attah and his family refused to release Inikpi for the sacrifice. For the nation to survive we must voluntarily sacrifice so many things (personal interview).

Selflessness is a virtue all people need in every society to eradicate corruption that has adversely affected the image of the nation. People and their leaders need to imbibe the culture of selflessness as epitomized in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that of Inikpi. Rebranding the nation therefore, should begin with the eradication of selflessness and greed within the society. This will happen when people become more concerned about what they can do for the country rather than what they can get from it. When office holder genuinely pursue he development goals of their ministries, they make positive impacts in the society, beginning from their offices.

### **3. Courage**

Jesus Christ and Inikpi courageously paid the price for the benefit of the people. Umonu Yusufu James states that Inikpi had a lion's heart (personal interview). The kind of courage, determination and volition that made Jesus Christ and Inikpi to offer their lives for many is required of the people in every fact of life for the good of the society. The imagination of the horror of pains, shame and death involved in the sacrifices of Inikpi and Jesus Christ is enough to deter someone from facing it. In the case of Jesus Christ, he asked the father if he could possibly be relieved of the ordeal. He prayed until the sweat from his body was like drops of blood. Despite that, he finally courageously passed through the pains of crucifixion at Calvary.

Inikpi's courage is evident in the fact that she pleaded with her father, Ayegba Oma Idoko, nine times to release her for the sacrifice that would save his life and

that of the entire Igala nation from destruction and bondage. She was not afraid to die. She courageously entered the big hole in which she was buried alive with nine female slaves. She asked the people to cover them up. Jesus Christ and Inikpi were not married when they died. They did not mind their lack of children, a thing that is so painful to people in many African cultures. Fear kills a man faster than death. In spite of the challenges facing individuals and various institutions and Parastatals, courage is an indispensable tool in the hands of leaders to face such challenges believing that as they do their own little portion of work, they will overcome some of the challenges

#### **4. Determination**

Jesus Christ determined to face the cross without turning back. Inikpi determines to face death for the salvation of the Igala people unmindful of the commission that ended her life,. She did not change her mind at the covering of the grave. Both Jesus Christ and Inikpi were determined to affect the lives of others at their own expense. This is evident in the fact that nothing could discourage them from offering themselves for the sacrifice. Determination to serve other people, and do the right thing at the right time and place will no doubt lead to the development of the nation. Leaders should focus on social amenities and human development as well as the welfare of the populace.

#### **5. Volition**

Jesus Christ says in John 10 that he has the authority to lay down his life and to take it. He surrendered to the soldiers during His arrest. He chose to endure pain on the cross. Inikpi voluntarily offered herself for the life burial since her father did not force her to do so. Egbunu commenting on Inikpi's volition states that she offered herself vicariously like a sacrificial lamb (Igala 20-21). He reiterates:

Most important of it all was that she gave up her life not by compulsion, nor was she put to death by some murderous intent or violence but on her own accord, not being ashamed or afraid to do the land proud. In addition, as a heroine so dear, her beauty, her golden and legacy was not interred with her. That was how the patriotic act of a princely maiden impacted so much on the welfare of the entire Igala nation (Egbunu, Igala 20-21; Egbunu, Religion 114).

Religious and political leaders need to learn endurance from Inikpi and Jesus Christ's experience when faced with the pain of losing elections to ensure peace and stability in the country. Endurance accompanied Inikpi's courage and determination, she endured the pain and the loss of personal ambitions to ensure

the completion of her task. Each of them endured the pain. Leaders and populace of the country should not wait to be forced to discharge their legitimate duties.

### **6. Patriotism**

According to Tamim Ansary “Patriotism refers to pride in one’s country, and intense love for her and a zealous devotion to her interests” (Web). It takes a patriotic heart to face the sacrifice. Only a person with fervent love and one has made up one’s mind to see to the progress, peace and overall wellbeing of one’s people can do what Inikpi and Jesus Christ did. Such patriots know that the society cannot thrive without peace and tranquility. They therefore play their own roles to ensure that other people benefit from their lives and activities. If people are patriotic, put others first, pursue progress, peace and overall wellbeing of the country there will be more development here.

### **7. Obedience**

Children and youths should learn obedience from Inikpi and Jesus Christ in order to avoid participation in political and religious violence as well as other societal ills. The act of obedience to one’s parents is demonstrated in Inikpi’s appeal to her father to permit her to be sacrificed for others. She did not force her way into it without her father’s consent. Jesus came into the world to do the will of His father and to save humanity from sin. Obedience to parental and constituted authority will equally produce the desired peace and stability required for the development of the nation.

### **Conclusion**

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ in Hebrew 10:1-18 has fulfilled all the requirements for the salvation of humanity for the last time because it cleanses the consciences of the worshipper and fulfilled the task partially excelled by the levitical sacrifices. Moreover, Jesus Christ’s sacrifice is a finished work since Jesus sat down at the right hand of God’s grace to humanity and has reconciled man to God. Jesus Christ therefore died as a substitute for humanity as evidenced in the analysis section of this study. He died to set humanity free from sin. He did not die for his sin for he was a sinless man according to scriptures (1Corinth.5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26-27; 1Peter 2:22, 24; 1John 3:5). Similarly, the sacrifice of Inikpi for the Igala nation was not in recompense for her sins but as a fulfillment of the requirement of the gods of Igala society for victory in a given war. She died instead of the larger populace of the Igala Kingdom. Her death was a sacrifice like that of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ and Inikpi died for the benefit of many people. However, Jesus Christ’s sacrifice was for the benefit of humanity while

Inikpi sacrifice was for the benefit of the Igala nation. Jesus Christ died as a substitute for humanity while Inikpi died for the ninth largest tribe of Nigeria.

The study reveals that love, submission, obedience to the father's will, selflessness, willingness to die as a substitute for others are some of the characteristics of the Inikpi sacrifice which appear similar to that of Jesus Christ. No matter the efficacy of the Inikpi sacrifice, it is limited to Igala people alone. This shows that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is superior to that of Inikpi. Inikpi's sacrifice cannot provide the forgiveness of sins, the grace of God and the salvation of humanity available in Jesus Christ's sacrifice. This makes it inevitable for any Igala person seeking salvation through Jesus Christ to accept his finished work of redemption.

### **Recommendations**

Communicators of the gospel in Igala society should use the Inikpi sacrifice as an entry point for interpreting Jesus Christ's sacrifice either in evangelism or for Bible teaching. Whenever a communicator of ideas begins from the known to the unknown, the listener understands the lesson better than when a communicator of ideas begins from abstract communications. The value placed by Igala people on the Inikpi sacrifice in Igala society very appealing and persuasive.

Moreover, communicators of the gospel in Igala society should use the elements of similarities between Jesus Christ's sacrifice and the Inikpi sacrifice in the area of love, selflessness, willfulness, obedience, courage, substitution and efficacy in order to enhance understanding and a positive response from listeners. Igala sons and daughters should remember that without the Inikpi sacrifice, the Igala kingdom would have only existed in history and they might not have been what they are today. Igala people are known for honesty and integrity but it seems that the story has changed. The Inikpi history should motivate them to be patriotic as they seek to serve God and humanity.

Despite the fact that some people in Igala society still worship Inikpi, Igala people should accept the superior sacrifice of Jesus Christ by receiving him as their personal lord and savior. Turning back to traditional sacrifices as some people do when in difficulty or contemplating to do so. Like some Jews wanted to do, which led to the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is an aberration of God's standard for His people. Christians should therefore turn to God and seek the counsel of their pastors whenever they are at the verge of backsliding. Igala people who are Christians should avoid religious syncretism since it hampers effective and efficient relationship with Jesus Christ.

The act of obedience to one's parents is evident in Inikpi's appeal to her father to permit her to sacrifice herself for others to live. She did not force her way into it without her father's consent. Obedience is a virtue required by God and carries many blessings a. obedience to God, parents and to constituted authority Is a necessity in any given human society. Children and youths should learn obedience from Inikpi and Jesus Christ in order to avoid participation in political and religious violence. They should obey those that encourage them to do what will foster peace, stability, development and progress of the larger society. They should not obey leaders or people that send them out to kill, maim and destroy lives and property.

The leadership and followership should avoid violence and whatever could breach the trust reposed on them for the development of their nation. Where personal interest and national interest are at conflict with each other, the leaders and the led should be willing to sacrifice the former for the later.

People should learn from the love, selflessness and courage demonstrated by Jesus Christ and Inikpi. Selflessness and love will deter people from succumbing to the urge to partake in that menace of corrupt practices bedeviling development in various parts of the world today, people should put others first and be ready to make sacrifices for which they will be remembered.

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