The Parable of the Good Samaritan and Negative Ethnicity: A Reading Towards Good Neighbourliness among Kenya Ethnic Communities

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Abstract

Negative ethnicity was rife in the context that Jesus told the parable of the so-called Good Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans despised each other hence the parable was told to curb ethnic prejudice and hatred among them. In Kenya, negative ethnicity is rife and it has made ethnic groups to append ethnic tension in their relations. The title of the parable has a problem as it implicitly inspires tenets of negative ethnicity. It tacitly typifies Samaritans as bad except the one who helped the unnamed robbed man. Jesus proved that non-Jews too can discern and fulfil the godly value of being compassionate even to enemies. This paper seeks to examine and confirm the critical point that Jesus was stating, i.e., the neighbour is one whose ethnic origin does not matter to interpret the parable for the Kenyan context. It also aims to read the parable so as to enhance good neighbourliness among Kenyan ethnic groups.

Keywords: Jews, Samaritans, Negative Ethnicity, Good neighbourliness, Kenyan Context

Introduction

In its interpretative history, the parable of the Good Samaritan has received various readings (Noake & Buxton, 2013, p. 101). Early Church Fathers read it using the allegorical method, which endured during Middle Age, scholastic period to the 19th century (Marshall, 2012; pp. 18–12; Köstenberger & Patterson, 2011, pp. 430–431; Stein, 1994, pp. 45–47). The title "Good Samaritan," which has led the parable to appear to be inspiring charitable work, thus urging readers to identify with the Samaritan (Drapper, 2016; Stanley, 2006, pp. 212–214), is also questionable. It has been faulted because the adjective good is not used in the text and its key point is on who is a neighbour (Clarke, 2013, p. 113; Resseguie, 2005, p. 29; Michaels, 1981, p.128). Firstly, this paper evaluates ethnic relations between Jews and Samaritans. Secondly, it evaluates the critical point of the parable and the problem with its title. Thirdly, it assesses the Kenyan context and finally it reads the parable to inspire good neighbourliness among Kenyan ethnic groups.

Ethnic relations between Jews and Samaritans

Ethnic relations between Jews and Samaritans were marked by mutual hatred whose history is traced to the Assyrian invasion that led to the fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 721 BCE (Knoppers, 2013, pp. 1-4). The Samaritans who surrendered were not exiled but the Jews denied them entry into the Jerusalem temple. This forced them to begin building their temple at Mount Gerizim, but which was blasphemous to the Jews who had long held that God had directed the temple to be built in Jerusalem. This was the main cause of their enmity (Jeremias, 1971, p. 89), which deepened when Samaritans offered help to rebuild the temple after the exile, but the Jews refused. According to Ezra 4:3-5,

> Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD, the God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' houses and said to them, "Let us build with you; for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here." But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses in Israel said to them, "You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, and hired counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

John Hyrcanus' destruction of the Samaritan temple in 100 BCE and the endeavour by some Samaritans to scatter bones and pour pig's blood in the Jerusalem temple also added to their enmity, which was based on ethnicity and religion (Voorst, 2017; Montgomery, 1907, pp. 57–60).

Despite both having a mutual ancestry, they differed on sharing things, place worship and object of worship (Jn. 4: 12–28). None would call the other fellow Israelite and adherent of Yahweh (Knoppers, 2013, p. 217). This is clear in the Samaritan woman's reply to Jesus' bid to give him water, *"'how is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans"* (Jn. 4: 9). Jews hated Samaritans since they saw them as impure and as children of foreigners placed in Samaria after the fall of the Northern kingdom but who pretended to be Hebrews. But the Samaritans believed they were children of Jacob's adored son Joseph (Joshephite Hebrews) and not Judahites (Clark, 2016; Knoppers 2013, p. 19; Wine, 2012, p. 142; Graham, 2010, p. 29). Josephus (*Ant*. 9.14.3.290–291) avers that Samaritans (called Cutheans in Hebrew), had same customs with Jews and pretended to be related when Jews prosper. But when Jews fell into low levels they denied kinship, refused to show them kindness and declared they were sojourners from other countries.

Some Jewish texts represent Samaritans as people deserving death, foolish, idolaters, apostate, totally unclean and destined for hell (*Sir.* 50:25-26; *T.Levi 7: 2; Gen. Rab*. 81:3 on Gen. 35: 4; *Jub.* 30:5-6, 23). According to the Mishnah (m Šeb 8:10), "He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like one that eats the flesh of swine."

This suggests that among the Jews, all Samaritan were bad and were to be avoided like a swine. That some Jews referred to Jesus a demon-possessed Samaritan (Jn. 8: 48) shows how they debased Samaritans (MacArthur, 2006, p. 379). They branded Samaritans as heretics linked with demonic or cultic magic and as impure and demon-possessed (Shahin, 2011, p. 52; Gundry, 2010; Zsengeller, 2010, p. 83; Borchert, 1996, p. 307; Macdonald, 1964; Bowman, 1958, p. 299–308).

The Samaritans aversion for the Jews and their worship at the Jerusalem temple was analogous to the Jews hatred for them and their worship at Mt. Gerizim (Haven 2009, p. 56; Carlsen, 2000, p. 212). They always seized any available time to attack Jewish travellers from Galilee. This made Jews to take a longer route so as to avoid passing via Samaria (Roemer, 2014, p. 241; Knox, 2010, p. 71; Wegner, 2004, p. 186; MacArthur, 2002). Josephus (*Ant*, 20.6.1.118; *JW*, 2.12.3.232–233; 2.4.4.125) clearly explains the risk Jews could meet if they went through Samaria. They even refused to receive Jesus and his entourage since they were set towards Jerusalem (Luke 9: 53).

Obviously, the enmity between Jews and Samaritans circled around ethnicity, religion and ancestry. This made them consign worship of God within their own area, creating borders that validated negative ethnicity. They linked God with their ethnic origin, thus viewing God as one of their characteristics. But when ethnicity is defined religiously, each group criticize, and ridicule the other from its own horizons (wa Gatumu, 2013b, pp. 40-42).

Hutchinson & Smith (1996, pp. 6-7) have identified religion as a key factor to ethnic unity or disunity while Ndaluka, Nyando & Wijsen (2014, p. 61) have identified religion and ethnicity as sources of disunity.

The critical point of the parable and the problem with the title

The parable, as noted above, has received numerous interpretations with some negating its historical and literary contexts. Augustine allegorized it and gave meaning to each of its aspect. He posited that the robbed was Adam, Jerusalem was heaven and Jericho indicated man's mortality. The robbers were the devil and his angels who in beating the man stripped him his mortality and persuaded him to sin. Leaving him half dead meant that he had the knowledge of God but oppressed by sin. The priest represented the law and the Levite the prophets. The Good Samaritan was Jesus Christ who bandaged the man's wood, which meant curbing him from sin. The donkey was the incarnate Jesus and the robbed man, now having been put on the donkey, typified belief in the incarnation. The inn was the church while the next day pictured the resurrection of Jesus. The two coins represented either the two precepts of life and this life or the life to come. The inn keeper represented the apostle Paul (Zuck, 1991, p.216). But the method has been criticized as farfetched, extrinsic, clumsy and clashing because of defying the parable's historical and literary context (Plumer, 2010, pp. 266–267; Derrett, 2005, p. 2018; Teske, 2004, p. 353).

The parable has also received a moralistic reading seeing Jesus as giving an example of moral conduct. Contrast is made between the priest/Levite with the Samaritan by which Jesus urged his listeners to emulate the Samaritan's conduct. But this overlooks the fact that Jews would not have identified themselves with an enemy. According to Funk (1966: 211), moralistic interpretations echo the interests of the early church, which also coincides with the interests of the modern era.

He avers that the parable must not be read from the perspective of the care giver (the Samaritan) but from the viewpoint of the receiver of care (the robbed man) as this is what Jesus' Jewish audience would have taken it. The victim was humbled to accept help from a Samaritan enemy.

Therefore, the critical point for the parable is that the Samaritan is not the good neighbour that should be emulated but loving the enemy neighbour albeit the hatred (McCollough, 2008, pp. 55-63).

The parable has also received mission-oriented reading. It is a pointer to the kindness of missionaries, who share their possession with destitute Christians and heathens just like the Samaritan (Block, 1999, p.118; Christian Theological Seminaries, 1979, p. 335 Warmeck, 1883, p.87). Other scholars argue that the parable indicates a moral duty that people must follow to eradicate poverty, to provide charitable care to those in severe need and to stimulate welfare (Amstutz, 2018, p.201; Ridolfo, 2015, pp. 99-110; Corbett. & Fikkert, 2014; Cnaan, 2002, pp. 5-6). Form a legal, social and political reading, Marshall (2015, pp. 140-180) regards it as a parable of law, crime, justice. It is an appraisal of bitter experience on criminal harassment and restorative care owed to crime victims by others in the community. It affirms the overriding point of the law; to serve and protect human welfare and enabling people to offer to others equal standards that they expect for themselves. But this can only be achieved if the law is interpreted and administered through the lenses of mercy and compassion.

Spencer (2018) argues that politicians have hijacked the parable and the Samaritan is equated to politicians who help needy people. The Samaritan is like the British government walking across the hazardous financial road and binding the wounds of hurt and helpless public. This reading advocates for wealth creation so that the British political Samaritan would have sufficient funds to help the less fortunate.

Certainly, the social-political/economic readings regarding the Samaritan as one who helps the helpless are detached from both the historical and literary context of the parable just like the allegorical readings.

Harrington (2018, p. 150) notes that the priest and the Levite and the Samaritan knew that the needy person was found in the land of the Jews hence it is likely that he was a Jew. But this did not cause the priest and the Levite to act compassionately and it did not deter the Samaritan from showing mercy.

This fortifies the point that the person who needed mercy, in the eyes of the Samaritan, was an enemy since both Jews and Samaritans had innate enmity. He further notes that the Samaritan did not perform the act of mercy to feel good but that the robbed and attacked man may recover hence mercy was a matter of justice and not political publicity.

Such readings make the parable to have been answering a socio-political/economic question yet it was answering the question, "who is my neighbour". Carson (2012) reads the parable as a fictional story invented for a theological purpose. He suggests that the priests and the Levite versus the Samaritan denote positive and negative cultural polarities of the first-century Jewish custom. According to Young (2012, p. 101), the parable is an action-packed drama meant to link to a deep meaning but not to entertain. Since its literary form is Jewish, its deeper meaning is best grasped in view of its Jewish setting and on the question, who is my neighbour. However, perhaps the question assumed some people were not neighbours hence parable shows what a neighbour does (Fagenblat, 2011). It shows that a neighbour is not just friend but also an enemy (Young, 2012, pp. 102). But would have a Samaritan qualified to be that neighbour?

The lawyer, when asked who among the priest/Levite and Samaritan was a neighbour, answered it was "the one who showed mercy". Jesus had clearly identified "the one who showed mercy" as a Samaritan.

But the lawyer, who may have spoken for many, identified him only as "the one" but eventually circuitously identifying the Samaritan as the neighbour. The hearers of Jesus would not have contemplated the Samaritan as a neighbour (Blomberg, 2004, p. 64). However, Roberts (2012) argue that because the robbed man was not identified as a Jew, the helper and the helped may have belonged to the same ethnic group. So, the parable's critical point is not to condemn negative ethnicity. But Roberts fails to explain why Jesus used Jews and a Samaritan as main actors wherein the contrast between them helped the lawyer answer his own question.

The lawyer could not have identified the Samaritan as the neighbour if he only helped one of his own. As such, the neighbour includes a supposed enemy (Young, 2012, pp. 103–104).

The parable is thus directly related to Jesus' saying, "*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy'. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*" (Matt. 5: 43-44).

The title "Good Samaritan", despite the fact that the adjective "good" does not appear in the text, has controlled the meaning of the parable protractedly, considering its main point as doing charitable work. But the context in which it was told and heard reveals that Jews and Samaritans held negative ethnic prejudice and stereotypes on each other (Mckamie, 2015, p. 39; Pennel, 2009; Tiede, 1998, p.207) hence the title is dubious. According to McCollough (2008: 57), since Jews reviled Samaritans, then the neighbour could not be "Good Samaritan" but rather "bad Samaritan." Drapper (2016, p. 274) asserts that the title is not from the text but it is derived from western hermeneutical tradition. This is because while the time the title was first used is vague, the Samaritan represents westerner governments caring for the poor. This can be traced to Chamberlen's (1648) argument that role of England's Samaritan is treat the woods of the nation among other things.

The sarcasm of the title is in using "good" to refer to a specific Samaritan, depicting him as qualitatively distinct from others like him but who are bad. The title has been regarded an oxymoron since "good" and "Samaritan" not only clash, but also create a cultural paradox and social absurdity. Samaritan was a term of ridicule, which Jewish scribes avoided (Strauss, 2015, p.137; Knoppers, 2013, pp.71-77; Crossan, 2012, p.137; Young, 2012, p.109: Marshall, 2012, p.22; Nadella, 2011, p.72; Steindl-Rast, 1988, p.112; Jeremias, 1971, pp. 91-92). But the Samaritan was more than good since he knew what it meant to love enemies and to show justice and mercy.

His deeds reveal a godly person as opposed to the ungodliness of the priest and the Levite typified by their apathy and cruelty (Nadella, 2011, p. 72; Talbert, 2002, p. 130; More, 1992, p. 113). The parable would make more sense if titled "the godly Samaritan" or "the ungodly Jewish religious leaders".

This is clear since the context exposes the Samaritan as the hero but the priest and Levite as villains. According to Hanson (2015, p. 620), in one notable figure, justice mercy and humility merge into a paradigm of goodness. Such title is fitting since the Samaritan honoured God by stopping to help the injured Jewish man hence endorsing human dignity regardless of ethnicity (Crease, 2009, p. 29).

Ethnicity and Ethnic relations in Kenya

Ethnicity or ethnic origins, which deeply inform ethnic relations, are global (Nderitu, 2018, p. 5; Asouzu, 2007, pp. 227-231; Attah-Poku, 1997, pp. 53; Eller 1997, p. 127). Ethnicity or ethnic origin refers to the self-identification of a person with an ethnic group due to ancestral lineage, history, cultural cohesion and identity as well as people's shared values and customs.

Ethnicity or ethnic origin lay grounds for identity formation through integration of personal experiences and shared messages that produces positive or negative ethnic values on which positive or negative ethnicity is contrived (Ting-Toomey, 2018, pp. 102-120; Diller, 2015, p. 195; Wimmer, 2013, p. 46; Tarimo, 2010, pp. 299-301; White, 2009, p. 90; Jenkins, 2008, p. 42; McGoldrick, Giordano and Garcia-Preto, 2005, pp. 1-40; Berg-Schlosser 1994: 147). Positive ethnicity fortifies sense of freedom, security and calmness as well as flexibility in demeanour and aptitude for honesty with different "others". It dispels fear between distinct ethnic groups, generates mechanisms of conflict resolution and boosts positive social identity (Pinderhughes, 1989, p. 40; Hameso, 1997, pp. 91-92). Negative ethnicity fosters and widens ethnic hatred just because people belong to unlike ethnicity.

As an ideology of differentiation and bias, it bases human relations on the dialectics between similarity and difference and so it has ability to trigger ethnic cleansings and massacres.

In Kenya there are more than forty ethnic groups and most people attach their identity to ethnic origin, which is full of negative values that trigger negative ethnicity (Nderitu, 2018, p.11).

The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC, pp. 7, 11, 57) validated that negative ethnicity in Kenya is a legacy of British colonial rule. The regime started a divide-and-rule system built along ethnic lines, but which begot negative dynamics of ethnicity. The colonial regime and post-independent political powers exploited ethnic differences so as to keep themselves in power. Successive post-colonial regimes have used negative ethnicity to divide and rule (Materu, 2015, pp. 17–18, 41, 266; Mwangi, 2013, p.165; Hornsby, 2013, pp. 581, 803; Gumo, Akuloba & Omare, 2012, p. 36; Tarimo, 2010, pp. 297-300).

The TJRC (pp. 15-27) and the Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence (CIP-EV, n.d., p. 295) identified negative ethnicity among ethnic groups that live in Kenya.

Both reports noted that political leaders had used negative ethnicity to trigger ethnic feelings during political meetings, which caused the 1992, 1997 and 2007-2008 post-election strife. As such, Kenya suffers from vast ethnic tension among its distinct ethnic groups (Aluoke, 2016, pp. 21–38; Liotta & Bilgin, 2014, p.114; Kamencu, 2014, p.116-129; Mérino, 2014, pp.42-55; Mwangi, 2014, pp.165-178; wa Gatumu, 2013a, pp. 78-80; Njogu, 2013, p. 98; Liotta & Miskel, 2012, p. 14; Wanyonyi, 2010, p. 40; Tarimo, 2010, pp. 303-305; Calas, 2009, pp. 165-186; Herzig, 2007, p.125; Wamwere, 2003, pp. 125, 199). This tension was entrenched via provocative speeches based on stereotypes that were broadcasted in several vernacular radio stations (Asaala, 2015, p. 358, fn. 76, Nichols, 2015, p. 52; TJRC, 2013, pp. 177-178; Kamungi, 2010, p. 95; CIP-EV, n.d., pp. 41, 67, 295).

Negative ethnicity therefore has divided Kenyans into ethnic units, putting democracy at risk (Muluka, 2016, pp.184-199; Wendo, 2016, p. 253; wa Gatumu, 2013b, pp. 62–65; Kamungi, 2010, p. 107).

Unfortunately, negative ethnicity is also rife in Kenyan churches. Writing on negative ethnicity in Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), Wandera (n.d., pp. 1-9) notes a significant social diversity within the church, which revolves around perceptions of marginalization.

He recognizes an ethnic based tension as to the discourses on election of bishops, appointment of clergy and laity into leadership positions and promotions into higher ranks. The situation he describes is not only limited to the ACK but also to other churches. In fact, the tendency to manipulate ethnic identities prevails in all Christian churches like in the political circles. A person not belonging to an ethnic group in a region where the church is confined does not qualify for leadership. The loyalty of church leaders usually stops within their ethnic groups rather than the Christian faith.

Like political leaders in tough times, church leaders take cover in their ethnic cluster, making the blood of ethnicity thicker than the water of baptism (wa Gatumu, 2013b, p. 33; Galgalo; 2012, pp. 1-20; Tarimo 2010, pp. 305-306; Oluoch, 2006, p. 128; Tarimo, 2000; Shorter, 1999, pp. 28-29; Healey & Sybertz, 1996, p. 149; Waruta, 1992, p. 127). This has denied the church the ability to promote social justice and to criticize ethnic rivalry (Kolmann, 2014, pp. 70-89; Ott & Strauss, 2010, pp. 170-171; Benson, 2009, pp. 108–109).

However, western missionaries laid the foundations of negative ethnicity because they allied the churches they founded with ethnicity, making them bearers of traditional ethnic attitudes. Missionaries created spheres of influence based on ethnic lines to avoid interfering with the work of different mission stations (Tarimo, 2010, p. 305; Karanja, 2009, pp. 50, 129-130; Pollock, 1991, p. 338; Tignor, 1976, p. 113; Strayer, 1971, p. 130).

Yet negative ethnicity is not a Kenya trademark because it is found in other nations. However, Kenya is among countries that are rated second in the ladder of negative ethnicity (Wamwere, 2003, p. 91). Apparently, all interactions are built on, and shaped by ethnicity for either cooperation or competition for power and resources. According to Albert (2014), the parable was told to scorn negative ethnicity. So, it should be read to purge negative ethnicity and to incite good neighbourliness. Marshall (2012, p. 22) argues that if the parable was truly heeded, it would end racism, eliminate national hatred and abolish war. This calls for reading the parable for the Kenyan context.

Interpreting the parable for the Kenyan context

While all Kenyans do not respect the authority of the Bible as final, the Pew Research Centre (2010) shows that Christians comprises of 84.8% of the population. This means that they can influence good neighbourliness if they follow the parable's teaching.

Irrefutably, the parable has been interpreted for the Kenyan context from different angles such as corruption pastoral visits and evangelism. Nyaundi (2001, pp. 41-47) equates the robber in the parable to corruption. He notes that a society that violates its people's basic human rights is similar to the robber of the parable. Suffering Kenyans for instance orphans, refugees and the sick who cannot afford health care are modern victims similar to the victim in the parable. Therefore, Kenyan Christians should copy the Good Samaritan. Healey & Sybertz (1996, pp. 151, 309) use it to commend participation and involvement in Christian ministry. The lay minister who moves in the neighbourhood visiting the sick is equated to the Good Samaritan.

Chitwood (2017) demonstrates how Evangelical Christians interpret the parable with evangelical and socio-political/economic proclivity. It is said that being Christian is similar to being Kenyan and being Muslims is analogous to being Somali aka *shifta.* The term *shifta* has been used for a long time typecast Somali and Muslims as rebels, violent rascals and difficult people who cause misery to Christians.

Even so, evangelicals regard them as Samaritans who can be evangelized without open hostility. Yet this must not be read in conciliatory terms but as a re-writing of Christian-Muslim/Kenya-Somali narrative. It is an attempt through which Christians affirm agency and power vis-à-vis Somali/Muslim in a cluttered milieu alive with violence, terror, immigration movements and political flux. As such, the term Samaritan also encircled political subtexts that expose deceit in the ostensibly good motivation to evangelize. Yet it is clear that Kenyan Somalis, whether Christian or Muslims, belong to a specific ethnic group. Naming them Samaritan does not change anything because they are still the "other" needing redemption and conversion to Christian morals.

The Evangelical Christians thus read the parable as a pointer to conversion and not for good neighbourliness among diverse Kenyan ethnic groups and religions.

Even when there is an attempt to invite mutual co-existence, it is not without "othering" since there is always the "we" in evangelization and "them" who need evangelization. The required evangelisation and mutual co-existence is for political and economic realism. It is not based on honouring basic human rights the Kenyan Constitution (2010) safeguards and guarantees to all people despite their ethnicity or religion. The political hint for co-existence is noticeable in the idea that *we* Kenyans and Christians must love Somali and Muslims but not allow *them* to grow in power. They must become Christians in order to know the way of peace and for Kenya to move on. This is to portray non-Christians as vitally different and contrasting what it is to be Kenyan and Christian. Inevitably, non-Christians, although likely to become Christians, are typically still bad. But when they convert, they become profitable to Kenyan economic, political and religious life.

It needs less elaboration that the above readings of the parable for the Kenyan context do not focus on good neighbourliness based on equity. All people are created equally and redeemed similarly notwithstanding their ethnicity or religion (wa Gatumu, 2016, pp. 42-55). The parable teaches that negative ethnicity impedes good neighbourliness.

Failure to attend to the predicaments of internally displace people due to politically instigated ethnic clashes are similar to the actions of the priests and the Levite. The inclination to hate those belonging to distinct ethnic group is comparable to Jews who identified Samaritans as enemies and heretic (Voorst, 2017). It is on record that Kenyans have eternally failed to show love and mercy due to mistrust among unlike ethnic groups (Situma, 2010, pp. 127–140). Yet the parable teaches that all people are priceless despite their ethnicity and must be treated according to the edict, 'You must love your neighbour as yourself' (Young, 2012, pp. 117-118). The parable teaches that a neighbour is one from the other ethnic group cogitated as an enemy eligible to die. As such, a neighbour must not be judged via ethnicity or biased stereotypes.

The parable sweeps away ethnic superiority and broadens the horizons of who is a neighbour. This is didactic for the Kenyan context.

When Jesus told his Jewish listeners to love their enemies (Matt. 5: 43-48), he meant the Romans who dealt with them harshly (Scott, 2013, p. 136; Mitchell, 2010, p. 160; Kahn, 2005, p. 165; Falconer, 2004, p. 623; Vos, 1978, p. 106). Jesus was calling for good ethnic relations, but which was absent in the context of the parable and lacks in the Kenyan context. The idea that those who need help and those who offer help must come from the same ethnic group is reversed. The parable thus invites its modern readers to depart from being victims of ethnic hatred. This applies to Kenyans who are direct or indirect victims of ethnic clashes (Ayot, 2017, pp. 122-134; Kamungi, 2010, pp. 86–87). The Samaritan shows the aptitude to push through pains of victimisation so as to help a fellow human (Gordon, 2010). Emulating the Samaritan and the victim can help Kenyans to depart from ethnic and religious hate and co-exist as good neighbours. This would selflessly help victims of ethnic clashes who belong to an imaginary rival ethnic group. The attack and robbed man was assisted by a Samaritan enemy. Kenyans should go and do likewise.

Conclusion

The presence of negative ethnicity in the context where the parable was initially heard and in the Kenyan context is clear. In the same way that the Samaritan refused to remain a victim of negative ethnicity so as to help a Jewish man (Johnson, 2007. p. 125), Kenyans must escape from the same so as to help their neighbours who are in need from distinct ethnic groups. The parable's ethnic background should inform modern readers on the dangers of negative ethnicity and help them to bury negative ethnicity. Kenyan readers must change their worldview and accept people of ethnic origins different from their own as their *bona fide* neighbours.

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