

4-2008

## A Strategy for Evangelism with Samoans

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

A STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM WITH SAMOANS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY  
LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

BY  
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PORTLAND, OREGON

APRIL 2008

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**TITLE:**

**A STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM WITH SAMOANS**

**WE THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ  
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have received much assistance in the preparation of this project. I would like especially to express my gratitude to Drs. James and Hannah Dean for their skillful editing of the paper, and to Dr. William MacDonald for his words of encouragement in times of distress and discouragement. My sincere thanks to the professors of the Theology Department, especially my advisor Dr. Chuck Conniry, for many helpful suggestions.

My greatest thanks to my mother, Taulesulu; brothers Auimatagi Esau, Reverend Sepusione, and Reverend Moli; sisters Nofoao Fitisemanu, Saufua Sauvale Tui, Faimalieloto, and Faimalie; and all my nephews and nieces who prayed silently for the completion of this project. Your silent prayers and your unvoiced cheers sounded loudly in my innermost being when I was in doubt. Our relationship as a family, especially when we were together with our late father in our country, and when we ate and worshiped together regularly were the greatest inspiration for me. That memory is permanent in my heart, and I hope that is also in yours.

My unending appreciation to all the members of my family, my lovely wife Miriama, and my daughters Metanoein Salamo Moli, Shubh Liliu Wallis, Soteria Faaolataga Moli, and my only son Tauileata Junior Moli, my daughter in Lord, Mativa Atonio, and the sweet little Soteria Atonio for your patience and longsuffering when I

spent hours finishing this project. May God of the ministry bless you all and keep you in His peace and love.

There are those whose names I have not mentioned, but I remember you all, your goodness, advice, suggestions, encouragements, and criticisms. It is my prayer that the good you all did for me, you will continually do for somebody else. Thank you.

## ABSTRACT

Title: A STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM WITH SAMOANS

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Degree: Doctor of Ministry

Year: 2008

Institution: George Fox Evangelical Seminary

This paper will provide an evangelism plan designed to carry out this mandate among traditional Samoans in Samoa. The plan supports and utilizes the Samoan communal patriarchal family system. The thesis of this paper is that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with the Samoan communal, patriarchal family system.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation describes conflicts caused by using individual evangelism style in the Samoan community, which is community oriented. Chapter 2 will provide historical information about the country of Samoa and its cultural background. Change and especially change that destroys the cultural system is very painful for Samoans. For this reason, individualistic evangelism is very disruptive in Samoa. Chapter 3 will describe biblical definitions of family and community in relationship to God and His people. This chapter provides a biblical basis for this assertion, and for communal based, patriarchal evangelistic techniques.

Chapter 4 describes the role of community in church history. From the first century on, the church used church councils whose leaders acted similarly to Samoan village chiefs, and church history includes many examples of families and countries that turn to Christianity as a communal unit. Chapter 5 will provide the basis for an evangelistic program designed for traditional Samoans based on the culture of the people. This chapter describes how an evangelist can approach Samoans and use evangelistic techniques that strengthen traditional Samoan, patriarchal, communal cultural values.

Chapter 6 will provide a step-by-step model of how to evangelize the community using family chiefs and the hierarchal system. The model creates a culturally smooth and peaceful process, and no one is injured when the steps are followed in the order described. This paper provides a culturally sensitive evangelistic system based on biblical and historical examples of community conversion. Evangelists who use the communal, patriarchal approach will win Christian converts and protect ancient Samoan social and cultural values and patterns.

## INTRODUCTION

Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” This paper will provide an evangelism plan designed to carry out this mandate among traditional Samoans in Samoa. The plan avoids individualistic, Western-style evangelism and respects the communal traditional Samoan family structure. The plan supports and utilizes the Samoan communal patriarchal family system. The thesis of this paper is that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with the Samoan communal, patriarchal family system. The Samoan cultural traditions emphasize the patriarchal family structure, which is antithetical to Western-style, individualistic evangelistic methods. Intense cultural conflict emerges when individualistic evangelistic methods are used in the Samoan milieu.

The ministry of the church is to change individual lives through the power of Jesus Christ. It is sad, however, that the Western-style technique of saving souls independently can destroy Samoan families and communities. Chapter 1 of this dissertation describes conflicts caused by using individual evangelism style in the Samoan community which is community oriented. The story of Tui and Sina illustrates the conflicts traditional Samoans face when evangelism is conducted using the Western individualistic evangelism approach.

Chapter 2 will provide historical information about the country of Samoa and its cultural background. People of Samoa believe they were specially created instead of descending from other races. Change and especially change that destroys the cultural system is very painful for Samoans. For this reason, individualistic evangelism is very disruptive in Samoa.

Chapter 3 will describe biblical definitions of family and community in relationship to God and His people. The Old and New Testament support and value the idea of family, and community is used by God to further the work of ministry in the world. The Christian mission can save individual souls within traditional family and community structures when appropriate techniques are employed. This chapter provides a biblical basis for this assertion, and for communal based, patriarchal evangelistic techniques. Jesus said, “My prayer is not to take them out of the world but that you protect them from the world” (John 17:15).

Chapter 4 describes the role of community in church history. From the first century on, the church used church councils whose leaders acted similarly to Samoan village chiefs so that no heresy or false teachings would destroy the work of ministry. In addition, church history includes many examples of families and countries that turn to Christianity as a communal unit. This was communal conversion, not individualistic conversion.

Chapter 5 will provide the basis for an evangelistic program designed for traditional Samoans based on the culture of the people. Evangelism is an essential Christian mandate, but the use of individual techniques that destroy people is not good

news at all. This chapter describes how an evangelist can approach Samoans and use evangelistic techniques that strengthen traditional Samoan, patriarchal, communal cultural values. The techniques work within Samoan culture and do not destroy traditional cultural patterns.

Chapter 6 will provide a step-by-step model of how to evangelize the community using family chiefs and the hierarchal system. The model creates a culturally smooth and peaceful process, and no one is injured when the steps are followed in the order described. The individualistic evangelistic approach should not overrule or disregard the community approach. The church is a community of believers who identify with each other based on faith, beliefs, standards, and an understanding of the Bible. This includes opportunity for social life with parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and other members of the community. This paper provides a culturally sensitive evangelistic system based on biblical and historical examples of community conversion. Evangelists who use the communal, patriarchal approach will win Christian converts and protect ancient Samoan social and cultural values and patterns.

## CHAPTER 1

### CONFLICT: SAMOAN CULTURE AND INDIVIDUALISTIC EVANGELISM

Samoan culture is family/community based and patriarchal. This cultural pattern contrasts with contemporary American culture that emphasizes individualism and individual decision making. American evangelistic religious practices emphasize an individual's "decision for Christ," which contrasts with Samoan cultural patterns that stress communal behavior led by the patriarchal chief of the family or tribal unit.

These facts and cultural elements lead to a basic conflict in evangelism directed toward Samoans. The church's evangelistic ministry in American Protestant tradition as a program or crusade is designed to change each individual through conversion and discipleship (Matt. 28: 19-20). A key question for this paper is: how can evangelism be practiced among Samoan people and maintain the sacredness of family orientation in Samoan life? The thesis of the paper is that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with Samoan communal, patriarchal family structure.

Individualistic evangelism and individual action is antithetical to the Samoan tradition of community decisions led and affirmed by the chief. Traditional Samoans come to Christ collectively, not based on individual choice. When Samoans are pressured into American-style individual choice, cultural tension and crisis result. The following story dramatizes this dilemma and illustrates key issues in Samoan culture and Christian evangelism.

### **A Story**

Tui and Sina married thirty years ago and are in their late fifties. They have been Christians their entire lives and have a grown son. Their family is a Christian family, and they practice Christianity by going to church, giving a tithe, doing good to others, and performing many other positive works for the community and God. They believe that marriage and family are sacred and ordained by God.

They decided to stay permanently in the United States because their son married an American, and they want to live together with their two grandchildren. They do not have an easy life in the United States because they have limited financial resources. They live on social security plus the results of pushing a shopping cart at four o'clock in the morning and collecting cans and bottles for extra cash. The most important thing in their minds is to live with their son and grandchildren because family and family relations are central Samoan values.

A small church is located in a southeast Los Angeles city. Members of the church invite Sina and Tui to attend one of their church's evangelistic meetings. Sina and Tui demonstrate their Christian support by attending the meeting, and they become friends with some of the church people.

The church's evangelistic campaign lasts four weeks and ends with the rite of baptism. The baptism is the climax of four weeks of intensive work by the minister who preached the word and the hard labor of church members greeting guests and attending the meetings. The four week effort is a sacrifice for many of the church members. They transport people to the church every evening and take them home for dinner at nine or ten

o'clock at night. Their efforts are rewarded when new members are baptized, and they work to convince individuals to be baptized and join the church.

Tui and Sina are not ordinary people. Tui is a chief in the Samoan community and shows high respect for ministers and people. His Christian values of support and loyalty for ministers are interpreted incorrectly by the church he visits with his wife. The church members believe the only reason Tui and Sina attend their church is because they found the light and truth through the church.

The day of baptism arrives, and the baptisms begin. The minister asks Tui and Sina to be baptized. The service goes on for a long time while other ministers attempt to convince Tui and Sina to be baptized. Tui believes baptism is not the central issue because Tui believes he must respect and show loyalty to the minister. This comes from Tui's Samoan tradition. Sina refuses to be baptized, and Tui and Sina's conversation proceeds like this:

Tui: "Honey, let's agree to be baptized. Look at the minister. He's been asking us for so long."

Sina: "Tui, why? We have totally committed ourselves to our family's denomination."

Tui: "Honey, we can just be baptized and then go back to our own church, or I will be baptized on our behalf. I don't think they'll mind."

Minister: "Tui, let me read you what Jesus says in Matthew 16:24-28, 'Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever

will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”

Sina: “Tui, remember all the years of our marriage. We have vowed before God to be true to each other. Don’t do this to me, please.”

Tui looks confused. He loves his wife very much; however, his values are being challenged. For Tui, baptism is not a problem. Loyalty to the pastor as a chief is central in his thoughts. Sina understands the thinking of the pastor and the new denomination. If Tui and Sina are baptized, they will be counted as members of that denomination and lose their attachment to their Samoan community and family. The minister continues to pressure them.

Minister: “Tui, let me read you what Jesus said in Matthew 10:34-37, ‘Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.’”

The minister continues to interpret this text so that Tui will turn his back on thirty years of married life, even to the point of divorcing his wife. The interpretation suggests God does not care about their cultural traditions and does not care about them being divorced as long as one of them is baptized. Sina sobs and begs for someone to help, and

she cries like a little girl lost in a strange crowd. Church people look at her as the stumbling block to Tui's spiritual journey. She feels the hatred of the crowd of so-called Christians who were at one time so friendly, but now they stand against her. She feels she is fighting her battle alone against a great enemy army, and they use the Bible to wound her heart and cause her much pain.

Minister: "Tui, let me continue reading from God's word in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 10:32, 'Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.'"

Others in the crowd add to the interpretation of these strong texts in an attempt to convince Tui to forget about his loving wife and be baptized. The minister adds more Bible texts to the battle.

Minister: "Tui, the Bible says, 'All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved' (Matt. 10:22). Persecution is part of everyone's life journey when he has decided to follow Jesus with all his heart. Persecution is a sign of loyalty to God and a sign of a firm believer in Jesus Christ."

Tui feels the pain of being hated by the only person who loves him and has committed herself to him for thirty years. Tui starts to cry with confusion, frustration, and disappointment. The biggest questions in his mind are, "Why has this simple thing become so complicated especially with the only one I love and to whom I am married and vowed faithfulness before God?" "Does God really care?" He looks at his wife with sorrow and emotion, but his eyes reflect great confusion. His unspoken thought speaks

loudly in his heart while he gazes at his wife's eyes, "Help me; please help me; do something please; I am confused now." Tui does not get any help from his wife, and it only adds to his painful heart when his wife says:

Sina: "Tui, this will be the end of our family if you were decide to be baptized in this church. You must think deeply about that."

The thesis of this paper is that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with Samoan family structure. The purpose of this paper is to describe this evangelistic model so that evangelistic efforts among Samoans will strengthen and not undermine and destroy Samoan families. The ministry of the church is to change individual lives in the power of Jesus Christ. It is sad, however, that the process of saving souls independently can destroy Samoan families and communities.

The next chapter describes Samoan history and cultural traditions that emphasize the role of family and patriarchal leadership. This history and tradition should be taken into account in developing evangelistic approaches for Samoans. Without this understanding and sensitivity, western individualistic evangelistic programs will stress, undermine, and possibly destroy Samoan culture. The story of Sina and Tui dramatizes this destructive potential. The individualistic approach of ministry should not overrule the community approach to ministry. The church is a community of believers who identify with each other based on faith, beliefs, standards, and an understanding of the Bible. This does not, however, eliminate opportunity for social life with parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and other members of the community.

## CHAPTER 2

### SAMOAN HISTORY AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Samoan historical records began in the sixteenth century when Jacob Roggeveen discovered Samoa in 1722. “The earliest recorded notices we have of Samoa are those of the Dutch ‘Three Ship Expedition,’ Jacob Roggeveen commanding, in its voyage round the world to Java via Cape Horn in 1721-1722.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Robert Louis Stevenson, quoted by Simon Winchester in “Saving the Samoans,” “Foreigners in these islands (islands of Samoa) know little of the course of native intrigue. Partly the Samoans cannot explain. Partly they will not tell.”<sup>2</sup> According to the father of the author of this paper, and many older people in the country who understand Samoa’s past, Samoan history, relations, taboos, and tales “were not in writing until the arrival of the missionaries.” Samoan history and tales were passed verbally from generation to generation, and the stories changed through time.

Those who first spoke to westerners told stories without considering the truth. A great example of this behavior was the experience of anthropologist Margaret Mead who recorded what she believed were accurate Samoan narratives. Ethnologist Derek

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Mackenzie Watson, *History of Samoa* (Wellington, New Zealand: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1918), 24.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Winchester, “Saving the Samoans,” *Database: Academic Search Premier*, <http://search.epnet.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&an=9403174029> (accessed 17 March 2005).

Freeman claims that Mead's conclusions were wrong. The acknowledgment from Fa'apua Fa'amu, one of the girls that Mead interviewed when writing *Coming of Age in Samoa*, is that the information she gave was just a joke.<sup>3</sup> Freeman quotes Fa'apua Fa'amu, "[Mead] must have taken it seriously, but I was only joking. As you know, Samoan girls are terrific liars when it comes to joking."<sup>4</sup>

This paper reports published sources about the pre-historical Samoa and the lives of its people before Christianity arrived. It is important to recall, however, that information about Samoa was delivered verbally and may include historical inaccuracies.

### Samoan Geography

Watson describes Samoa's geographic location, "[W]est by north along and across the parallel of 14° south latitude, and between 168° and 173° west longitude, [it] lies in the Western Pacific Ocean a volcanic chain of four main islands and a number of lesser subjacent islets. The chain, or group, is collectively known by its native name, Samoa."<sup>5</sup> The largest island of the four is Savaii, which is "fifty miles long and twenty-five across at its broadest."<sup>6</sup> The second largest island is Upolu, east of Savaii and it is "forty-five miles long and at its greatest width some thirteen miles."<sup>7</sup> The two other islands lying between Upolu and Savaii are Manono and Apolima, and Manono is larger

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<sup>3</sup> Derek Freeman, *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Watson, *History of Samoa*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

than Apolima. The four islands form the independent country of Samoa and the other half, the eastern part of the country is American Samoa, a territory of the United States of America.

Nearly forty miles to the eastward of Upolu and a little south lies American Samoa, the first and main island of which is Tutuila, stretching east and west eighteen miles. Here on its southern side is Pago Pago, the sole real harbour of the group which the United States Government has improved by the establishment of a naval station. Further east is the little group known as Manu'a, comprising the islands of Tau, Ofu and Olosega, and still further east and again a little south, the small uninhabited and unimportant Rose Island.<sup>8</sup>

The country was under one government before Christianity arrived in 1830. The Manu'a islands and Tutuila island now form the government called American Samoa formed by Britain, America, and Germany who confronted the local disputes between Samoan chiefs.

Of these earlier wars we know little with definiteness, but such legends as have survived indicate that for centuries some fighting could generally be found in the group for those so minded, either in local hostilities or in warfare with Fiji or Tonga. But, from 1829 on, the causes of wars are matters of history. . . [T]hese at first concerned the natives only, and, later, drew into partisanship certain white residents of the group and from them their respective nationalities – British, American or German.<sup>9</sup>

The “three Powers”<sup>10</sup> (Britain, America, and Germany) decided to meet in Berlin and continued discussions in Washington in June 1887. The meeting concluded on June 14,

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 94.

1889, and the treaty was signed as “The Final Act of the Berlin Conference on Samoan Affairs.”<sup>11</sup>

This 1889 act is known to the Samoans as the “Berlin General Act.” The Act can be summarized as “the free right of the natives to elect their Chief or King, and to choose their form of government according to their own laws and customs.”<sup>12</sup> The Samoan Supreme Court was established at this time, and the power for dispute resolution and enforcement was taken away from the traditional system of chief’s council in villages. Local disputes between cousins and relatives were no longer resolved in an easy apology, hand shake, and food to feed the chief council. Authority was given to the foreign chief justice who enforced the law without considering Samoan personal relationships. The country now faced,

[T]he contradiction of two sources of authority, fa’a Samoa (the Samoan way of doing things), and Western legal traditions. The crisis illustrated the difficulties that Samoans and the Samoan government face because the two systems contradict [each other] in their premises and assumptions. While the constitutional crisis was an important case on the national level, examples of these contradictions can be observed in the behavior and activities of individuals, families, villages and districts.<sup>13</sup>

An event in 1996 illustrates the problems this juridical change created. A village burnt the house of a village member who had moved back from New Zealand and ran a village business, but did not contribute to the village activities for the oneness of the

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>13</sup> Malama Meleisea, *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and Colonial Administration in the History of Western Samoa* (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1987), xiv.

community. The business owner thought he could live as an independent person in the village community and create personal wealth through his business activity. This notion, however, went against the cultural communal patterns and values of traditional Samoan life, which has no place for individualistic wealth accumulation. The village warned him that the Samoan way of disciplining rebels in Samoa applied to him. He refused to obey because he believed the government justice system overruled the chief's (*matai*) council power. The chief council, therefore, decided to burn his house, all his belongings, and even his family members if they refused to leave the village. The man was killed and his property was burned to ashes.

The government later sentenced several of the chiefs to jail. This episode, and other similar circumstances, has weakened the power of the chief council. A Samoan cultural reality is that the land connects everyone in the village and they become one family. No one stands as an island in the village. Another incident involved a group of converts to the Assembly of God movement who wanted to plant an Assembly of God church branch in the village where a Methodist Church and a Congregational Christian Church of Samoa already existed. They refused to obey the chief council who asked them not to bring another denomination into the village. The chief council believed too many religions in the village divided the village. The Assembly of God members believed they had a right to plant their church against the ruling of the council. The chief ordered them to be tied, treated like pigs, and thrown on the boundary line of the neighbor village. The government justice system charged the chief council and prosecuted them in a court of law.

The three powers did great damage when they separated the country into two geographic divisions. Between 1898 and 1904 the Savai'i, Upolu, and Manu'a Islands were under German control, and the chiefs of Tutuila Island signed an agreement with the U.S. Navy for Pago Pago as a Navy base. On July 14, 1904, the high chief of Manu'a islands (TuiManu'a), agreed to join Tutuila Island as part of American Samoa, while Savai'i and Upolu islands remained under German control until 1914. Western Samoa (Savai'i and Upolu) was under New Zealand's administration from 1914 until 1939. In 1962, New Zealand declared independence for Western Samoa, but the only thing that changed was the country's name. Since 1997, it is called Samoa although only half of the country is included. The other half (Manu'a and Tutuila Islands) is still called American Samoa. The division of the country had great consequences especially because the people speak the same language and practice the same culture. Samoans who travel to American Samoa must have visas.<sup>14</sup>

### **Before the Division, Samoa Was One**

From Manua to Savai'i the Samoan people hold similar beliefs and customs, though there are different versions of the same stories. They believe the same concepts, practice the same culture based on those beliefs, and they speak the same language. Meleisea writes in her book *The Making of Samoa* that "Samoans in their two thousand year occupation of their islands, did not have periods of more centralized authority."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Misilugi Tulifau Tofaeono Tu'u'u, *History of Samoa Islands: Supremacy and Legacy of the Malietoa (Na Fa'alogi I Ai Samoa)* (Wellington, New Zealand: Tugaula, 2004), 9.

<sup>15</sup> Meleisea, *The Making of Modern Samoa*, 1.

She believes Samoa had “a unitary system of dispersed power.”<sup>16</sup> This dispersion of power makes Samoa different from many countries of the Pacific, which had a king, such as Hawaii with its king Kamehameha and present day Tonga and its unified kingdom. There is a common phrase in Samoa: *e tala tau Toga, ae tala tofi Samoa*. This means that Tonga’s *Toga*, (power and rule) exists in war stories, but Samoa’s power and ruling authority is a calling or vocation. For example, nearly everyone in the Samoan community has a role and calling. Even children, who are not counted in the village community, have a calling in the family community.

Based on the experience of this paper’s author in Samoa, the foundational Samoan community is the *aiga* (family). “The term ‘aiga’ is used in a similar manner to the English word ‘family,’ which is applied to all sorts of literal and metaphorical situations ranging from the smallest unit of kinship to the family of man and can be translated as ‘family’ or as ‘extended kin-group.’”<sup>17</sup> The father and mother are both respected as heads of the family even though the father is the first and foremost of all. The role of boys and girls in the family is to support the parents in every way. The boys are involved in hard labor and bring food from inland and the sea. The girls learn from their mothers to clean house and prepare things to host visitors who come to the house unexpectedly.

The role of the boys is to protect the girls. There is a saying in Samoa that all the boys live according to: *o le teine o le i’oimata o lona tuagane*, which means that the girl

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6

is the “inner corner of her brother’s eye.”<sup>18</sup> In other words, no one should come and touch the iris of a boy’s eye. It is the duty of the brother to protect that iris (girl) in every way, and that makes the Samoan girl special and protected.

The second community is the *nu’u* (village). “The *nu’u* comprised groups of *aiga*.”<sup>19</sup> In the village, the council of chiefs, “made decisions on all village matters beyond the scope of individual ‘*aiga*.’”<sup>20</sup> There is a council of women whose husbands hold a chief title, and they support the chiefs and strengthen their decisions. This council of women is supported by the council of the *aualuma*, which includes unmarried girls of the village together with women whose husbands do not hold chief titles. They are different from the council of married women who married the boys of the village but do not yet hold chief titles. There is a council of young men called *aumaga*, which includes men who do not hold chief titles, married or not married. They serve the chief council.

“*Matai* title are of two kinds: *alii* and *tulafale*. *Alii* titles were those that traced sacred origins through genealogies, which begin with Tagaloa-a-lagi, the creator, and are linked to major aristocratic lineages. *Tulafale* had more utilitarian associations, in accordance with their role of rendering service to and oratory on behalf of the *alii*.”<sup>21</sup> The roles of the *tulafale* and the *alii* are very complicated and hard to explain in its context.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 8.

For example, the *tulafale* is the orator for the *alii*, making the *alii*, in most cases, higher in rank than the *tulafale*. In some other cases, however, the *tulafale* outranks the *alii*.

People travel from island to island in canoes. People of the country still sing songs about the arrival of Roggeveen in the country, and he called the people of Samoa “masterful seafarers.” The lyrics are:

*O Rokeuaine lena, Na taunuu i Manu’a,  
I le tausaga e 1722, Sa faio lana tala,  
O tagata Samoa, E malaga i va’a’alo i le sousou o le vasa.  
O ia na maua ai le igoa, Ua faaigoa ai Samoa  
O le motu o tagata folau i le vasa loloa.*

Here is Roggeveen, who arrived in Manu’a,  
In the 1722, He once said,  
People of Samoa, Travel by canoes while the sea is rough,  
He found a name, That label the Samoans today,  
The island of people who can cross bodies of water forever.

Even though Samoans live in various islands, at far distances they are tightly connected. For example, there is only one language and no dialects, compared to Fiji that has hundreds of dialects. Every island practices the same culture, people in the far east of Manu’a in the east practice the same culture and live the same values as people who live in the far west of Savai’i. There is a story of the high chief of Upolu (Malietoa) who paddled his canoe to the east and met the high chief of Manua (Tuimanua) in the ocean. They had a *kava* ceremony in the middle of the ocean using sea water, and Samoans still quote sayings from the chiefs’ meeting.

### Origins of Samoa

Some writers assert that the Polynesians, including Samoans, come from “Asia, from the islands off India.”<sup>22</sup> The relationship appears substantiated based on the work of Franz Bopp discussed by Kramer: “Franz Bopp proved in his comparative grammar the inter-relationship of Indo-European languages, so here also primarily German scholars explored and established the Malayo-Polynesian relationships.”<sup>23</sup> In *Lagaga*, Meleisea repeats Te Rangi Hiroa’s conclusion that “the Polynesians were originally descended from the Aryans of North India and had migrated into the Pacific through South East Asia and the islands of Micronesia.”<sup>24</sup>

Anthropologists, sociologists, archaeologists, and biologists have studied many issues to test theories about the origin of the Samoans. For example, “[T]he shape of the Samoan skull is, like that of all Polynesians,”<sup>25</sup> and according to Kramer, the hair is between Melanesians’ curly texture and the Polynesian straight black hair. The “skin colour of the Samoans is light brown and only seldom shows darker shades,”<sup>26</sup> according to Kramer who criticizes Bulow’s findings about “black-brown Samoans.”<sup>27</sup> In regard to bone and body sizes, “the stature of the Samoan men is, as was noted with surprise by

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<sup>22</sup> Augustin Kramer, *The Samoa Islands: An Outline of a Monograph with Particular Consideration of German Samoa* (Auckland, New Zealand: Polynesian Press, Samoa House, 1995), 35.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Malama Meleisea, *Lagaga: A Short History of Western Samoa* (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1987), 17.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

earlier observers, considerable. Heights of 190-200cm are not at all uncommon . . . they are well proportioned and one may well say that among the young men of Samoa between the ages of 15 to 25 years one can find the most beautiful figures imaginable.”<sup>28</sup>

Meleisea quotes Bellwood that “In Melanesia, the making of the pottery is evidently absorbed into surrounding population[s] after this time, [with] loose archaeological identity. In Polynesia, the line of ancestry back from the present Polynesians is continuous and unbroken.”<sup>29</sup> Meleisea believes Bellwood means that the Melanesia lifestyle today is far different from earlier eras, but the Melanesian lifestyle before is very similar to the lifestyle in Tonga and Samoa.

Tonga and Samoa were first settled by the Lapita people: “There is a strong similarity between the way of life of the early Lapita people who were the first human beings to live in Tonga and Samoa, and the way of life of Polynesian people as observed by European explorers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.”<sup>30</sup> According to a team of archaeologists from the University of Utah who worked in Samoa in the mid 1970s, the country was first settled by “Lapita people”<sup>31</sup> about 1000 B.C. There was additional evidence found in other parts of the country placing the first settlement of the country between 300 B.C and A.D 200.<sup>32</sup> Kramer noted that “the migration of the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.,15.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

Polynesians must have taken place shortly before or since the birth of Christ.”<sup>33</sup> Samoans believed strongly that they were born from the first created being made by their god, Tagaloa.

In the book *History of Samoa*, Watson writes: “[T]here is, it may be conceded, nothing known in Samoa to indicate a race prior to its present native Polynesians. That they however have long resided in the group is clear. They have no suggestion in their legends, as the Maoris have, of migration from other lands. To them Samoa is the earth.”<sup>34</sup> Meleisea tells a similar story about the Maori scholar Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Buck) who told a Samoan audience his discoveries demonstrate Polynesians came from Asia to the Pacific. Meleisea writes that when the Maori scholar had finished speaking, one audience member replied, “We thank you for your address. The rest of the Polynesians may have come from Asia, but the Samoans—No. The Samoans originated in Samoa.”<sup>35</sup>

Samoans believe they originated in Samoa based on a story of Tagaloa that was passed from generation to generation verbally. Some people consider it a legend or myth because it was transmitted verbally. Fred Henry noted in his *History of Samoa* that “the tradition of the Samoans does not by any means reach as far back as that of the Maoris, Rarotongans or Marquesians. In fact, the old Samoan chiefs and orators firmly believe that the Samoans have always been in Samoa. In proof of it, they will relate some of their

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<sup>33</sup> Kramer, *The Samoa Islands*, 37.

<sup>34</sup> Watson, *History of Samoa*, 19.

<sup>35</sup> Meleisea, *Lagaga*, 2.

fanciful myths in accordance to which Samoa and the Samoans were created by Tagaloa, the highest of their gods.”<sup>36</sup>

The story of Tagaloa is provided in detail by Meleisea in her book *Lagaga*. She believes the story was first recorded by “Thomas Powell in the 1840s, [and] was later translated into English by the Rev. George Pratt and published in 1892.”<sup>37</sup> In part, the story reads:

The god Tagaloa dwelt in the Expanse; he made all things; he alone was (there); not any sky, not any country; he only went to and fro in the Expanse; there was also no sea, and no earth; but, at the place where he stood there grew up a rock. Tagaloa-faatupu-nuu (creator) was his name; all things were about to be made, but him, for all things were not yet made; the sky was not made nor anything else, but there grew up a Rock on which he stood.

Then Tagaloa said to the Rock, “Be thou split up.” Then was brought forth Papa-taoto (lying rock); after that, Papa-sosolo (creeping rock); then Papa-lau-a’au (reef rock); then Papa-‘ano-‘ano (thick rock); then Papa-‘ele (clay rock); then Papa-tu (standing rock); then Papa-‘amu-‘amu (coral rock) and his children.

But Tagaloa stood facing the west, and spoke to the Rock. Then Tagaloa struck the Rock with his right hand, and it split open towards the right side. Then the Earth was brought forth (that is the parent of all the people in the world), and the sea was brought forth. Then the Sea covered the Papa-sosolo; and Papa-nofo (that is, Papa-ta’oto) said to Papa-sosolo, “Don’t bless me; the sea will soon reach you too.” All the rocks in the manner called him blessed.

Then Tagaloa turned to the right side, and the Fresh-water sprang up. Then Tagaloa spoke again to the rock, and the Sky was produced. He spoke again to the Rock and Tui-tee-lagi (sky proper) was brought forth; then came forth Ilu, “Immensity,” and Mamao, “Space,” (that was a woman); then came Niua (clouds).

Tagaloa spoke again to the Rock; then Lua-ao (two clouds), a boy, came forth. Tagaloa spoke again to the Rock, and Lua-vai (water hole), a

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<sup>36</sup> Fred Henry, *History of Samoa* (Apia, Western Samoa: Commercial Printers, 1992), 4-5.

<sup>37</sup> Meleisea, *Lagaga*, 2.

girl, came forth. Tagaloa appointed these two to the Sa-tua-lagi (behind the sky).<sup>38</sup>

The entire creation myth is included in the appendix of this paper.

These stories are used by chiefs (orators) to show that Samoans believe strongly in their god, Tagaloa. For example, when a chief starts his speech (*lauga*) upon entrance to a different territory or village, he says, *A sopoia le maota e afio ai Tagaloa- lagi, ona faapea lea, tulouna le lagi*. This means that when someone is about to cross the resting place of Tagaloa-lagi, he must first say “excuse heaven.” There are also familiar names such as Po and Ao in the island of Manua today.

### Samoan Culture

The main component of the Samoan culture is *fa'aaloalo* translated as “respect.” Jeannette Marie Mageo in *Theorizing Self in Samoa*, writes that “fa’aaloalo was the signature of the Fa’aSamoa, ‘the Samoan way of life.’ A song, ‘Samoan Custom’ (Le Aganu’u Samoa), counsels listeners to ‘stand on Samoan custom . . . the best custom of all countries’ and proclaims that this ‘beautiful custom’ is to give ‘respect to people’ because ‘everything is made from mutual support.’”<sup>39</sup> Mageo concludes that “in Samoa respect amounted to appropriate role playing.”<sup>40</sup> The author of this paper believes that respect in the lives of Samoans’ is not just role playing as Jeannette believed, but is a way of life. The author’s father said that “people know you are a Samoan by the way you talk,

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 2-7.

<sup>39</sup> Jeannette Marie Mageo, *Theorizing Self in Samoa, Emotions, Genders, and Sexualities* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 3

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

walk, stand up, and sit down.” (*E iloa oe e tagata I lau tu, nofo-i-lalo, tautala ma lau savali.*) This respect differentiates human beings from the animal world. For example, walking before people who are sitting is bad manners. Samoans believe that only animals, who have no consciousness, would do that. Humans, therefore, walk away from a seated crowd of people. Sitting down is a very respectful way of conducting oneself when approaching someone else on any matter. For example, when a Samoan asks neighbors for some salt to season food, the Samoan sits down and asks them, until they respond. It is disrespectful to talk with a mouth full with food because animals make noises while they eat, and it is impolite to stand and eat because only animals eat standing.

The proper way of talking is to use “T-language”<sup>41</sup> described by Jeanette Marie Mageo. This paper’s author calls it “T-accent.” The T-accent is rarely used at present, and many believe it a polite way of speaking. In her book *O Si Manu a Ali’I*, Mataitusi Simanu writes that “o le mea moni, o le gagana lava a Samoa, o le tautala lelei”<sup>42</sup> (the truth is that the real language of the Samoans is to speak the T-accent).

The T-accent is used in the pulpit by ministers, and it sounds light, musical, poetic, and friendly. The T-accent was changed by missionaries. The author of this paper was told by his father that the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa added three letters to the Samoan alphabet for the sake of interpreting the Bible in a readable

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Aumua Mata’itusi Simanu, *O Si Manu a Alii: A Text for the Advanced Study of Samoan Language and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 77.

language. Lowell and Ellen Holmes in their book believe “the major religious influence in Samoa over the years has come from the London missionary Society, now known as the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa. Beginning with their project of reducing the Samoan language into writing in 1834.”<sup>43</sup> The letters are h, k, and r. The T-accent is the proper way of speaking, but most Samoans now speak the K-accent. Using the T-accent is a respectable way of speaking in Samoa, and it is the original language of Samoa.

The K-accent sounds harsh, rude, and heavy. The K sounds were transliterations from the English. For example, the word Genesis translates to Samoan as *Kenese* because of the sound in the English word. When Samoans teach young ones the language, they use the T-accent. This paper’s author remembers having difficulty rolling his tongue when he learned the alphabet in the Pastor’s school. The Holmes write that “Samoan has only nine consonants: p, t, f, v, s, m, n, g (pronounced ng), and l. The five basic vowels used in English a, e, i, o, u are augmented in Samoan speech by the use of long vowel sounds.”<sup>44</sup> The order of the alphabet that is learned from the beginning is a, e, i, o, u, f, g, l, m, n, p, s, t, v, and the additional ones, h, k, and r.

According to Forman, the first missionary was George Brown who landed on Samoa and introduced the Methodist faith to the people of Samoa. Forman observed that

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<sup>43</sup> Lowell D. Holmes and Ellen Rhoads Holmes, *Samoa Village Then and Now*, 2d ed. (New York: Henry Holt, 1992), 18.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 13

he “loved the Samoan people admired their culture.”<sup>45</sup> Brown wrote: “I have always considered the Samoans to be amongst the nicest and most lovable people with whom I have ever lived.”<sup>46</sup> In his article, Forman mentioned that Brown studied the Samoan culture in great detail and could speak the language and preach the gospel in Samoan.

### **Respect**

Respect is the way of life in Samoa, and Samoan culture was structured on respect before Christianity arrived. Respect is shown by boys for girls, by a brother for a sister, by children for parents, by servants for the chiefs, by chiefs for the high chief, and by chiefs for the minister of the Gospel. Respect is the key factor at every level of relationship in the culture. The Samoan language reflects the power of respect in two forms of the language. One form is for everyday conversation, and the other is called a chiefly language. Holmes wrote:

The most unusual feature of the Samoan language is the special set of honorific terms known as the “chief’s language.” This is a class of polite or respectful words that are substituted for ordinary words when one is speaking to someone of chiefly rank. For example, an untitled man has an “aiga” (meal), but a chief has a taumafataga; an untitled person puts a hat on his “ulu” (head), but a chief places it on his “ao”; an untitled person may become ‘mai’ (ill), but a chief becomes “gasegase”; and a chief may ‘maliu’ (die), but a commoner will merely “oti.”<sup>47</sup>

Respect in the Samoan culture is the controlling force in the hierarchy system.

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<sup>45</sup> Charles W. Forman, “The Legacy of George Brown,” *International Bulletin of Young Missionary Research* 22, no. 1 (January 1998): 2-3.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 3

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

### The Samoan Family

The key factor in learning respect is the *aiga*, which is commonly translated “family.” The Samoan family was never a young couple living together after marriage as a nuclear family. The married couple is called *ulugalii* in Samoan, which literally means *uluga-alii* or “two heads joined together.” They are not called a family because they are already part of their families, and they continue to be loyal to both families they ascended from. Meleisea defines family as “that applied to all sorts of literal and metaphorical situations ranging from the smallest unit of kinship to ‘the family of man’ and can be translated as ‘family’ or as ‘extended kin-group.’ An aiga can be any family group from a married couple to a large clan comprising all the descendants of a common ancestor either male or female.”<sup>48</sup>

“The term for the core group of an aiga associated with a particular estate and title is *pui’aiga*.”<sup>49</sup> The prefix *pui* to the root word *aiga* means “many families tie together in one string.” The Holmes described it as “household” (*fua’ifale*).<sup>50</sup> This has the same meaning as the word *pui’aiga*. The word *fua’ifale* comes from the word *fuavaa*, which defines many canoes in the part of the sea fishing together as a unit, a fleet that moves together. “However, the term aiga is also used of descent groups which identify themselves in relation to an extremely important ancestor or ancestress with the prefix ‘sa’ as in ‘the Sa Malietoa.’ In this sense aiga were not necessarily localized (although

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<sup>48</sup> Malama Meleisea, *Change and Adaptations in Western Samoa* (Canterbury, UK: University of Canterbury Press, 1992), 12.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Holmes, *Samoan Village Then and Now*, 29.

they had focal points in one or more nu'u) but were ramified, with branches in many nu'u. As nu'u comprised groups of aiga so groups of nu'u formed districts termed 'itu malo.'"<sup>51</sup> The structure makes the Samoan family more important than any other institute in the surface of this world.

The most powerful family is the family with many members, especially if members of the family are dominated by men. The story of Nafanua is well known because she fought and won many wars, and later people found out she was not a man. She is called a prophetess, and she prophesied the coming of Christianity that overpowered all other forces in the country.

The family is the most important thing in the life of any Samoan. They live to protect family property, land, and houses, and they fight for the extension of family properties. Boys and girls sacrifice their lives for the family. The formal way of addressing the public when speaking publicly is: *O tama ma o latou aiga, o aiga ma o latou tama*, which means "a gentleman must be proud of his family while the family supports the gentleman." Samoans are never born as independent persons because everyone is born into a family, for the family. No child is ever treated as the center of the household such as so many young children experience in Western culture. Each child has his or her place, and that place becomes more important as the child grows older, and more and more babies are born over whom the person may exercise authority by virtue of superior years. Growing up is a process of slowly acquiring prestige and position, of

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<sup>51</sup> Meleisea, *Change and Adaptations in Samoa*, 13.

being permitted to do longer and harder tasks commensurate with one's greater age, of having more people to command and fewer who may command one.

Every child in a household works from the age of five or six. When the oven is fired, everyone, even the headman, cooks. The headman does the most important work of all; he dresses the pig. The mothers and the other fathers prepare difficult foods, while the young people skin the bananas and grate the breadfruit, and the little children fetch leaves for seasoning and water for mixing puddings. All children believe they are part of the work of the whole family.

As a result, children think of their parents as they think of all the elders in the society: people who have mastered the elaborate tasks the children will some day learn. There is no feeling of play for children and work for adults because everyone works and plays, and the work is for the good of many people. The children never learn to think of their parents as working especially for the children. Samoan children do not think of adults as a different kind of people, but only as people who have learned more. There is a Samoan word *maufaufau*, which means something like discretion. Children are taught that as they grow older they will acquire one discretion after another, and there is a separate discretion for every act including social life, mat making, and speech making. When they have learned all the discretions, they will be middle-aged. Boys will become members of the council, and girls will become dignified wives of council members. "The

parents, that is the whole group of older relatives, stand for the fixed and grave order of the universe in which even the smallest child can learn to play a role.”<sup>52</sup>

### **Samoaan Worship Before Christianity**

Two things motivate Samoans to worship someone or something. The first thing is the powerful; the second thing is the mysterious strength or mighty acts. The powerful is identified by the physical strength and the size of people, and individuals worship and follow the powerful. There are signs in some places in Samoa that recall the size of powerful people from the past. For example, the foot of Moso (*vae o Moso*) is a huge rock formation. Mysterious strength is seen by the control someone has over a village, district, or the whole country. This is the main reason for warfare before Christianity came to Samoa because people conquered other territories and took over land and the people. People worshiped powerful leaders and power and mystery could reside in one person. According to K. T. Faletoe in his book called *Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa (L.M.S)*, “Samoans believed in gods (*atua*) or ghosts (*aitu*), that cannot be seen by eyes, but they come in form of animals, fish or any other sorts of things, and people worship them. [Sa talitonu Samoa e I ai *atua* po o *aitu*, e le vaaia e mata, a e ua liu tino mai I nisi manu ma I’a p o o nisi mea, ma ua latou tapuai I ai;]”<sup>53</sup> This translates as: “Each family has a god. Districts have gods. The whole country has a god.”

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<sup>52</sup> Margaret Mead, “Parents and Children in Samoa,” *Education* 94, no. 4 (April/May 74): 330-331.

<sup>53</sup> K. T. Faletoe, *Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa (L.M.S)* (A history of the Samoan church (L.M.S) (Western Samoa: Malua Printing Press, Western Samoa, 1959), 5.

“Samoans believed that there is a spirit in a person. When that person dies, the spirit goes to the cave of spirits of those who died and later comes back and lives in other living people. They believe that heaven is the place for gods with great and holy things.”<sup>54</sup> According to Faletese, there are three parts of worship in the Samoan custom: worship while sitting down, giving or offering, and bowing for forgiveness. Worship while sitting down refers to sitting in silent prayer to a personal god or public gods to bless work, games, or wars conducted by others. “The use of the ‘gava’ ceremony in this worship is conducted first, and it is called ‘worship gava ceremony.’”<sup>55</sup> The offering ceremony follows the *gava* ceremony. In this ceremony people offer various things, but primarily food. “There is no praises [*sic*] given to any offering that doesn’t have enough food.”<sup>56</sup> Finally, bowing for forgiveness is the prayer for forgiveness. If an individual commits a serious offense such as murder, adultery, or any wrong doing to a high chief, he or she must seek forgiveness:

It is usually done in the dawn of the day. The prisoner and his/her family or even the whole village, they go and sit outside in front of the house of the chief, or the house of whom they are wronged of. The prisoner sits in the front, he/she is covered with a very important fine mat as his/her redeemer. In other words, he/she gives him/herself to the judgment of the family whom they wronged with. Usually this is always accepted.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 3

### COMMUNITY IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

#### **The Concept of Family**

The family of God is diverse, unlike the beginning of human history when God made Adam and Eve. Beliefs, teachings, theological understanding, and interpretations separate church congregants, and those differences may divide families. The concept of family and its role in Samoan culture is central to this paper. It is in support of this paper's thesis that effective evangelism in Samoan culture must emphasize the communal dynamics and reality of Samoan tradition.

According to Charles B. Nam at the Center for Demography and Population Health, Florida State University, a "family is generally regarded as a major social institution and a locus of much of a person's social activity. It is a social unit created by blood, marriage, or adoption, and can be described as nuclear (parents and children) or extended (encompassing other relatives)."<sup>1</sup> An Iranian author, Bahram Maskanian, writes that a "family is a primary social group in any society, typically consisting of a man and a woman, or any two individuals who wish to share their lives together in a long-term commitment to one another, [and who] bring up offspring and usually reside in the same

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<sup>1</sup> Charles B. Nam, "The Concept of the Family: Demographic and Genealogical Perspectives," *Sociation Today* 2, no. 2 (Fall 2004), <http://www.ncsociology.org/sociationtoday/v22/family.htm> (accessed 12 September 2006).

dwelling.”<sup>2</sup> The Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University provides this definition: “A family consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All persons in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. Families are classified by type as either a ‘married-couple family’ or ‘other family’ according to the sex of the householder and the presence of relatives.”<sup>3</sup>

Relationship is a common theme among these definitions and Genesis reflects a similar concept in the second account of creation (Gen. 2:4-25). This version of the creation story emphasizes companionship: “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him’” (Gen. 2:18). When Adam and Eve were ejected from the Garden of Eden, they left together as a family and procreation unit (Gen. 4:1-2). Other families are identified in Genesis as descendants of Cain (Gen. 4:17-22).

Family in the New Testament is *genos* and refers to posterity, family, people, or kind, as in species of animals and plants.<sup>4</sup> The New Testament word *oikos* suggests “family and race” and translates as “house.”<sup>5</sup> For example, the “House of David” (Luke 1:33), “House of Jacob” (Luke 1:33, Acts 7:46), and “House of Judah” (Heb. 8:8).

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<sup>2</sup> Bahram Maskanian, “Definition of Family Values” [http://www.venusproject.com/ecs/definition\\_family\\_values.html](http://www.venusproject.com/ecs/definition_family_values.html) (accessed 12 September 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Indiana Business Research Center, “Data Definitions: A Glossary of Terms Frequently Used in the Presentation of Economic and Demographic Data” [http://www.stats.indiana.edu/web/definitions/data\\_definitions.htm](http://www.stats.indiana.edu/web/definitions/data_definitions.htm) (accessed 12 September 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1985), 117-118.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 675.

### **The Problem of the Creation**

The words, “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen. 2:18), carry the deep meaning of human relationship. Adam was never alone because he was surrounded by the whole creation, but social life is based on relationships of the heart. Before God created Eve, God created Adam and surrounded him with “every beast of the field and every bird of the air” in a garden filled with plants and animals (Gen. 2:8-9). When God completed the creation of the animals, He brought them to Adam, and Adam named them: “The man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field” (Gen. 2:20).

In spite of all the animal and plant companions, Adam’s life was incomplete, and he could not identify with the plants and animals. Gregory Lint writes, “Before God created the woman, He prepared Adam by bringing to him all kinds of animals and birds which He had already formed out of the ground. . . . God let Adam become lonesome so he would be ready to receive the woman God was about to make.”<sup>6</sup> Lint continues, “God determined to make a help ‘meet’ for . . . Adam . . . corresponding to him or as his counterpart—like him mentally, physically, and spiritually.”<sup>7</sup>

In spite of Adam’s activity and responsibility as he named the animals and exercised authority over them, Adam was incomplete. The writer of Genesis 2:21 reports that God caused Adam to fall asleep, and God took one of Adam’s ribs and formed

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<sup>6</sup> Gregory A. Lint, *The Complete Biblical Library, The Old Testament Study Bible*, vol. 1, *Genesis* (Springfield, MO: World Library Press, 1994), 31-33.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

woman. God could have made a woman from the ground as God had formed Adam, but that would create two separate beings. God formed Eve from Adam's rib as a sign of oneness, unity, love, and affection.

Adam and Eve relate to each other because they are one in origin and creation. The blood in their veins is the same blood. When Adam awakened and saw Eve, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man" (Gen. 2:23). Adam and Eve formed the first human family, bound together in origin and life. "The Hebrew *ishshah*, meaning woman also means wife, because she was taken out of man (Hebrew *ish*, 'an individual male person,' also means 'husband.')." <sup>8</sup> It is a relationship of blood between two persons who are really one. The equation, one plus one equals two, is true in the animal world because animals were created separate from each other, but for the human couple the equation is wrong mathematically. One plus one is one in the biblical concept because Eve was made out of Adam's rib. They are inseparable, and they are together even though they live separately. They have a common bond.

Adam could not experience a family relationship by living with animals. "The man and the woman were meant to be partners, each contributing their full abilities to the well being of each other and the family." <sup>9</sup> The family is inseparable because blood connects each member to the others. "As someone has said, God did not take the woman out of the man's feet to be stepped on as an inferior; nor out of his head to be put on a

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 31.

pedestal as a superior; but from his side close to his heart as an equal. She was to take her share of responsibility, love him, and be loved by him.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Problem of Sin**

God made salvation available after sin ruined the perfect world created by the mind of the perfect God; however, God's plan before sin remains valid: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28). The calling before sin was to "be fruitful, and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). God moves in the crowd, and the lifestyle before sin was community: God, Adam, and Eve.

God visited the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve lived (Gen. 3:8), fellowshiped with them, and they communicated openly. Sin, however, ruined their close relationship because sin separates humans from God and destroys their community. Adam and Eve, therefore, were sent from the Garden of Eden and communal contact with God. They no longer talked to God face to face, and they experienced hardship and labor: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

Adam and Eve were ashamed of their nakedness before the creator. Lint writes, "Adam and Eve were in a state of innocence, [before sin] as innocent as new born babies, and there was no sin yet to make them ashamed or to hinder the total openness of a

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 33.

perfect relationship with each other before God.”<sup>11</sup> Sin separated the perfect family from God, and the family hid from God because of its shame and nakedness (Gen. 3:9-10).

Sin divided the first family, caused hatred between family members, and this led to murder. Cain and Abel were the first biological children of Adam and Eve, and the blood of their parents flowed in their veins. They should have loved and cared for each other, but Cain killed his brother Abel when Abel’s offering was accepted and Cain’s offering was rejected (Gen. 4:3-5). God said to Cain, “If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it” (Gen. 4:7). Shame was the first consequence of evil, the second was hatred, and murder the third. Hatred divides families, countries, organizations, and nations.

Another component of sin that destroys families is deception. A later story in Genesis explains how Jacob deceived his father for the blessings intended for Jacob’s older brother Esau (Gen. 27:1-38). The deception split the family, and Jacob fled and lived away from his parents for a long time. “Esau said, ‘Isn’t he rightly named Jacob? He has deceived me these two times: He took my birthright, and now he’s taken my blessing’” (Gen. 27:36).

The perfect community of God was destroyed by sin; therefore, God was no longer immediately present in the community. God responded:

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping

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<sup>11</sup> Lint, *The Complete Biblical Library*, 33.

thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.  
But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (Gen. 6:5-7)

God planned the destruction of the old world, and Noah spoke for God and warned the world of the flood. Sin destroys, but God saves and re-creates. God knows it is not good for humans to be alone, separated by sin, hatred, murder, and deception, and God worked for humanity's salvation even though humanity is dominated by sin.

According to the author of Genesis, Noah "walked with God" (Gen. 6:9), "did all that God commanded him" (Gen. 6:22), and God's salvation included Noah's family. "And the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (Gen. 7:1). The salvation of Noah and his family is community oriented. The first family of Adam and Eve formed the first world; Noah and his family formed the second world.

The old world ended through the flood, and Noah, his family, and the animals formed the new world when the ark saved them. With time the human population increased, community flourished, and easy communication prevailed with no confusion of languages: "The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech" (Gen. 11:1). Humanity's prideful, power-hungry nature disturbed this community, and humanity built the Tower of Babel to "make a name for ourselves" (Gen. 11:4). God rejected humanity's plan, and God differentiated the world's languages. Community broke down, languages proliferated, communication was difficult, relationships disintegrated, and humanity was "scattered . . . over the face of the earth" (Gen. 11:96). Sin produces broken communities and isolated people. Babel means "confused" (Gen. 11:9a).

God works through families and communities, and God called a new family to be the vehicle of His grace to a splintered, dysfunctional human community. Noah's son, Shem (Gen. 10:1), founded the line of Abram (Gen. 11:10-30), and God called Terah, Abram's father, out of Haran and Ur and into Canaan (Gen. 11:31). God said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3). The majority of the world was dominated by sin; therefore, God began a new family, a new community, led by Abram. Through this family, God worked His will.

Abram went to Canaan with his nephew Lot and the whole family, according to God's calling (Gen. 12:4). God's calling of Abram was family oriented; a community was called. They received blessings as a family, and they faced difficulties as a community. When famine struck the land of Canaan, Abram and his household moved to Egypt for food (Gen. 12:10), and although Abram's actions were imperfect and fearful (Gen. 12:10-20), God blessed him and his community. Abram left Egypt a "rich man" (Gen. 13-2).

Abram and his nephew Lot's household grew larger, and the land could not sustain them: "And the land was not able to bear them [Abram and his relative, Lot, and their communities] that they might dwell together; for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together" (Gen. 13:6). For the sake of peace between his people and

Lot's household, Abram suggested the community separate and find new territory (Gen. 13:8-12). Lot chose to live in Sodom and Abram lived in Mamre (Gen. 13:12-18).

God's call comes to communities through individuals within the community, and the call is community based. God blesses the whole community as He did Abram, and God curses an entire community as He did the Egyptians. Although Abram disavowed Sarai, his wife, out of Abram's fear for his personal safety, "The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife" (Gen. 12:17). Abram and the Pharaoh were the source of the problem (Gen. 12:17-19), but God punished Pharaoh's family.

The story of Joseph demonstrates that God works through and in community, and uses an individual to save the whole. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery because of their fury and jealousy towards him based on how their father favored Joseph (Gen. 37:1-36, 39:1-50:26). "Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh . . . and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt" (Gen. 37:27-28). Genesis reports that "the Midianites sold him [Joseph] in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard" (Gen. 37:36).

Joseph was sold as a slave to the Egyptians as part of God's plan to save Joseph's community; one person's fate saved an entire community (Gen. 45:4-10). Famine struck the land of Joseph's family, and Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy flour. Joseph recognized his brothers and said:

“Come near to me, I pray you.” And they came near. And he said, “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, grieved, or angry with yourselves, that you sold me here: for God sent me before you to preserve life. . . . And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it is not you who sent me here, but God; and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (Gen. 45:4-8)

God called Joseph to save his family and community. Joseph understood his role and did not resent the evil actions of his brothers. He believed that the evil actions had meaning and purpose according to God’s plan: “And he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he [Joseph] kissed all his brothers, and wept upon them: and after that his brothers talked with him” (Gen. 45:14-15). Joseph’s relationship with his brothers and his father was not destroyed by the evil and hardship he experienced because Joseph believed his enslavement had purpose: the salvation of his family and community. These actions produced redemption for all.

### **Salvation through Community**

According to Bernhard Anderson:

The story of Israel’s life, has two important dimensions. On the one hand, it was a history with Yahweh – a history that was set in movement toward the future by Yahweh’s promise that opened new horizons of faith. It was a God-story, in the sense that Yahweh was an active participant and therefore the One whose judgment and grace had to be reckoned with in daily affairs and in political events. On the other hand, it was a story of a people who were invited to take part with Yahweh in the unfolding story.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 179.

The writer of Exodus pictures God's relationship with Israel as a family or communal relationship, and the tabernacle became the means of holding the family of God together with God. God told Moses, "Have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them" (Exod. 25:8). God is with His people. The tabernacle in the time of Moses may be an image or picture of the Garden of Eden when God met His people, and God's people met each other.

The children of Israel came out of Egypt as a family under the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Exod. 12:50-51). The twelve tribes were organized "with three tribes on each side of the tabernacle with Yahweh's dwelling place in the midst of the camp. Further, when they break camp and march, the six tribes on the east and south set out, followed by the Levites with the tabernacle traveling in the center, followed by the six tribes on the west and north, respectively. Whether encamped or on the march, the tabernacle is central."<sup>13</sup> The tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali are found on the north side of the tabernacle. On the south side are located the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. On the West side are the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin and on the East are the tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun.<sup>14</sup> The tribes surrounded the tabernacle as a united community: "When the Israelite tradition was being formed and transmitted orally, the pattern of twelve was so sacred that if one tribe dropped out, a way was found

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<sup>13</sup> Thomas Nelson, *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts: Old and New Testaments*, rev. and updated ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 53.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

to fill its place. So, for example, when Levi lost tribal standing, ‘the house of Joseph’ was split into the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (Gen. 48).”<sup>15</sup>

The children of Israel grew stronger because they “were loosely bound together on the basis of a common religious obligation.”<sup>16</sup> In times of military emergency “the tribes united to face the common foe, and the federation brought about some degree of unity in language, customs, and political interests.”<sup>17</sup> In the midst of them was the sanctuary that the “tribes cared for in turn.”<sup>18</sup> The Israelite community was formed under Moses’ leadership and was handed on to Aaron. Individual leadership produced community salvation, but individuals in the group had to take individual action, Bernhard Anderson writes:

Faith in Yahweh was not belief in a body of knowledge that could be transferred, like a bank account, from parents to children. To know Yahweh, in the proper sense of the Hebrew verb (*yada*’), means to acknowledge Yahweh personally, to be in covenant relation with Yahweh. The faith of parents does not necessarily become the faith of their children, as we well know. Each generation must either renew or repudiate the covenant in its own way.”<sup>19</sup>

This faith was rooted in community loyalty to God. “The Deuteronomistic historian attempted to emphasize the central truth that Israel’s vitality and solidarity lay in a united,

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<sup>15</sup> Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, 146.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

exclusive loyalty to Yahweh. When this covenant faith was strong, Israel was in a better position to cope with the inrush of foreign ideas and armies.”<sup>20</sup>

### **The Community Concept of the New Testament**

In *The Complete Biblical Library*, Thoralf Gilbrant defines *koinonia* as an “abstract noun denoting ‘participation, fellowship, communion.’”<sup>21</sup> Gilbrant writes that the word emphasizes “the closeness. . . involved in this relationship [a]s a readiness to share, a sense of equality among the participants, and a unity among the members.”<sup>22</sup> William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich define *koinonia* as “association, communion, fellowship, and close relationship,” and add: “generosity, fellow-feeling, [and] altruism.”<sup>23</sup> Kittel and Friedrich use the phrase, “to share in something.”<sup>24</sup>

This communal concept was common in the time of Paul and Peter. In the New Testament, *koinonia* appears nineteen times and thirteen are in Paul’s writings. The writer of Acts used the word *koinonia* and it means, “Where the believers are said to ‘devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship.’”<sup>25</sup> The life of the early church depended on the unity of the disciples, new converts, and followers. The outpouring of

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>21</sup> Thoralf Gilbrant, *The Complete Biblical Library, The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary, Zeta-Kappa*, (Springfield, MO: The Complete Biblical Library, 1990), 367.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *The Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 440.

<sup>24</sup> Kittel and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 449.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

the Holy Spirit united the apostles and gave power to their work of preaching and gospel proclamation (Acts 1:8). As a consequence, the listeners could not detach themselves from the apostles (Acts 5:12-16).

Paul's use of *koinonia* was far deeper than just a fellowship of believers. It is fellowship with Jesus Christ and can be translated as "association, communion, fellowship, or close relationship,"<sup>26</sup> probably in reference to the Lord's table. "For Paul, eating and drinking are more than mere symbols, though symbols are involved; eating and drinking at the Lord's table denote an inner 'participation' with Christ. It is the ultimate expression of unity—the common bond—between Christ and His body the church (1 Cor. 10:16f)."

Paul believes that when believers bond with Christ through the Holy Spirit, they bond with each other. Paul wrote that "sexual immorality" and the act of "bonding" with a prostitute violates the bond with Christ. "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, 'The two will become one flesh.' But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit" (1 Cor. 6:15-17). The struggle in the church of Corinth demonstrates that fellowship is not just a communal act of worship: "In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it, for there are factions among you" (1 Cor. 11:18).

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<sup>26</sup> William Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 439.

Paul used *koinonia* to mean more than just fellowship and meetings. It is bonding with God by eating and drinking the body of Christ (1 Cor. 11:23-32).

The writer of 1 John uses *koinonia* as fellowship with God (1 John 1:3a). According to the writer, however, *koinonia* with God must have an effect horizontally on believers' relations with other believers (1 John 1:3b). There is no "joy" (*chara*) without *koinonia* with God and other believers. There is no real *koinonia* if it is done only vertically with God. There is no real *koinonia* if it is experienced only horizontally toward others. Jesus said, "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and you found something between you and your brother, leave your offering before the altar and go; first be reconciled with your brother then come and offer your offering" (Matt. 5:23-24). Fellowship with God ties the community of Christ together. *Koinonia* with God begets *koinonia* with others.

### **The Body of Christ**

The concept of community and the relationships of individuals to the Christian community were discussed by Paul in the image of the body of Christ. Paul wrote to the church of Corinth about the concept of unity in diversity:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:12-13)

This suggests there is one body, but there are many parts that form the one body. This concept of Paul has application for this paper's thesis. The thesis of this paper is that

effective evangelism in Samoan culture must emphasize and incorporate the communal realities of Samoan tradition.

Individuals function and use God independently according to the gifts of the Spirit given them for service in the church and world. Matthew Henry writes, “The meanest member of his body is as much a member as the noblest, and as truly regarded by him.”<sup>27</sup> Every member of the body is important to God, and Henry comments: “All the members of the body are, in some respect, useful and necessary to each other.”<sup>28</sup>

The diversity of members of the body strengthens the body and enables its function. Henry writes, “None should despise and envy another, seeing God has made the distinction between them as he pleased, yet so as to keep them all in some degree of mutual dependence, and make them valuable to each other, and concerned for each other, because of their mutual usefulness.”<sup>29</sup> Ralph W. Harris believes “this diversity in unity is illustrated in several ways. Paul used the illustration of the foot and the hand. The foot might feel inadequate in comparison with the dexterity of the hand. But the foot has a function that is vital.”<sup>30</sup>

The diversity of the body and its various parts is united in one body, and the diversity allows the body to move and function as one. Harris writes, “The work of the

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<sup>27</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. iv, *Acts to Revelation* (McLean, VA: MacDonald, 1991), 570.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ralph W. Harris, *The Complete Biblical Library, The New Testament Study Bible Romans—Corinthians* (Springfield, MO: World Library Press, 1986), 419.

one Spirit brings a common bond to each life. There is a sense of unity with Him (Christ) and each other, a sense of close contact and fellowship, deep, lasting, eternal. When it is the Spirit doing the work, it produces certain specific results and fruit all the time.”<sup>31</sup> The writer of Acts describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the early church was blessed with the oneness and community even though people spoke different languages (Acts 2:1-13). This biblical understanding of community has direct application for evangelistic activity among Samoans who live in a communally oriented cultural environment.

Samoan culture, history, and tradition are communal in thought, behavior, and custom. For example, as described in Chapter 1 of this paper, traditional Samoan culture has no place for individualistic wealth accumulation. Paul’s description of the church as the body of Christ in which individual parts are understandable and functional only in relationship and connection to the whole is very Samoan. The communal character of Samoan culture is contrary to the Western notion of individual salvation in which an individual decides to follow Christ based on a particular sense of guilt and personal fear of punishment.

Christianity must speak communally to Samoan culture. The thesis of this paper is that effective evangelism in Samoan culture must emphasize the communal realities of Samoa. The interaction of the Samoan person and the community is a unity rather than a tense dichotomy. This is similar to, for example, Joseph’s story as related in this chapter. The communal aspect of Hebrew culture formed an environment for individualistic

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

activity, awareness, and salvation. Without the communal component, there was no personal hope for salvation. The individual exists, is functional, and has identity as part of the community. Individual differences among Samoans make the community functional and richer, but only through the cultural union of the individual differences. The next chapter describes community in Christian history and its importance in church development. The chapter provides additional foundation and legitimacy for communal based evangelism in Samoan culture described by this paper's thesis.

and Silas answered, “‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and all that were in his house . . . and he was baptized at once, with all his family” (Acts 16: 30-34).

In this circumstance, a patriarchal father made a decision that involved his whole family in a communal conversion experience. This approach has direct application for Samoan patriarchal communal culture in contrast to American individualistic conversion techniques that focus on individual decisions. This approach recognizes and maintains the cultural roles and expectations of a communal based culture. The communal evangelistic method is, therefore, biblical.

Henry writes that “the voice of rejoicing with that of salvation was heard in the jailer’s house; never was such a truly merry night kept there before.”<sup>5</sup> Acts reports that the jailer “rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house” and Henry writes, “None in his house refused to be baptized.”<sup>6</sup> The entire household includes everyone that relates to the family even those that are related in occupation such as servants, security guards, and slaves. Ralph W. Harris writes, “In all likelihood the ‘entire household’ embraced nonfamily members too. This would have included the jailer’s servants and any guards.”<sup>7</sup>

The joy of a family that moves by the Spirit in worship and praise is very powerful. This paper’s author experiences such joy when his Samoan family prepares for

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph W. Harris, *The Complete Biblical Library, The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary Pi-Rho* (Springfield, MO: The Complete Biblical Library, 1991), 37.

church. Henry writes that “[the jailer] went to every apartment, expressing his joy.”<sup>8</sup> The faith of the jailer produced joy, and Henry writes that “those [who] by faith have given up themselves to God in Christ as theirs have a great deal of reason to rejoice.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Church Matters Settled by Church Councils**

The communal aspect of early church evangelism and life is reflected in the first Christian council. This council emphasizes the community aspect of early Christianity that attempted to hold Christian men and women together in unity instead of emphasizing individualistic efforts. Acts 15 describes the events that led up to and followed the council of Jerusalem, and this set a precedent for how matters and issues were discussed and settled. This is unlike the present time when evangelistic programs are designed by individuals who preach their own beliefs, gather a few individuals, and build independent organizations.

The communal nature of the church as the body of Christ and the family of God is reflected in the Jerusalem council decisions. “Judas, who was called Barsabas (probably the brother of that Joseph who was called Barsabas was a candidate for the apostleship, ch. 1:23), and Silas.”<sup>10</sup> According to Henry, “The character which these men had in the church at Jerusalem had some influence upon those that came from Judea, as those false teachers did, and engage them to pay more deference to the message that was sent by

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<sup>8</sup> Henry, *Acts to Revelation*, 215.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 195.

them.”<sup>11</sup> Henry believes the key issue before the council was “to keep up the communion of saints, and cultivate an acquaintance between churches and ministers that were at a distance from each other, and to show that, though they were many, yet they were one.”<sup>12</sup> This reflects the central, communal role the Jerusalem church played in early Christianity, which Hans Lietzmann emphasizes:

Those who were compelled to live outside Jerusalem belonged equally to the Church of Jerusalem for all the far-flung hosts of Christians were branches of one all-embracing central body. All stood under the authority of the apostles to whom the Lord Himself had given the right of pronouncing the final verdict on all questions relating to the proper form of worship (Matt. 18:18).<sup>13</sup>

Differences in beliefs and understandings of the gospel were discussed at the council of Jerusalem. The issue focused on Gentiles who joined the Christian community and whether or not the Gentiles had to be circumcised and live a Jewish life in order to be accepted in Christianity. The council’s decision was an attempt to hold the community together: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things” (Acts 15:28-29).

Communal unity is a very important goal, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity. It is like precious oil . . . like the dew of hermon . . .” (Psa.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Hans Lietzmann, *The Beginning of the Christian Church*, vol. 1 of *A History of the Early Church*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf (Cleveland, OH: Meridian Books, 1961), 73.

133:2-3). The church that is held together by councils is similar to a Samoan village controlled by a council of chiefs. Peace is the first goal of this communal control. The council resolves issues and disputes between individuals so that peace and love can grow in the community.

When individuals act outside the Christian community, problems develop, such as the separatist Montanist movement.<sup>14</sup> According to Latourette, the Montanist “movement [was] quite distinct from both Gnostics and the Marcionites, but which had wide vogue in the latter part of the second century and persisted for more than two centuries and which brought division in the Church.”<sup>15</sup> Montanus’ goal was for Christians to live stricter lives, and expect the second coming and the establishment of an ideal society in Jerusalem.

According to Latourette, one of the motives in the development of the Catholic Church was “the desire to unite all Christians in conscious fellowship” so that Christians would come together as the visible body of Christ.<sup>16</sup> This goal was defeated because believers defined the truth differently and developed disconnected organizations. The goal of universal, Christian community was lost. According to Latourette, “Those who regarded themselves as Christians separated into organizations which denounced one another and as an indication of their disagreement excommunicated, that is refused to admit to the rite instituted by their professed Lord, those from whom they differed.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 128.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

The church emphasized that the truth, as it understood the truth, must not be based on false teachings. The church did this in three ways:

(1) By ascertaining lines of bishops who were in direct and uninterrupted succession from the apostles and could therefore be assumed to be transmitters of the apostolic teachings, (2) by determining which writings were by the apostles or clearly contained their teachings and bringing them together in a fixed and authoritative collection, and (3) by formulating as clearly and briefly as possible the teachings of the apostles so that Christians, even the ordinary unlettered ones among them, might know what the Christian faith is, especially on the points in which the Catholic Church differed from Gnostics and Marcionites.<sup>18</sup>

The council method was a community system in which members of the community set beliefs and structure for the entire church. The Samoan tradition uses the same approach because individuals give way to group decisions led by patriarchal leaders.

According to Jaroslav Pelikan, the council of Nicea held in AD 325 was “first in time, but also first in eminence and in significance for all that followed.”<sup>19</sup> This council settled issues about Arius’ teaching and emphasized the humanity and divinity of Jesus. The Council of Nicea affirmed the dogma of the Trinity<sup>20</sup> and many Christian denominations still subscribe to it. The doctrinal unity continued and “the fathers chosen by God after the Council of Nicea, and every council of orthodox and holy men, did not . . . introduce another definition of faith by adding their own words. . . . [They] solemnly confirmed the one identical definition as the first and only one legislated by the 318

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>19</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, vol. 2 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 25.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

fathers.”<sup>21</sup> God worked through a community of ordained fathers who believed in God, prayed for the unity of the church, and hoped the world would follow the teachings of Jesus Christ for salvation. This is an example of potential church unity, clear teachings, and conversion without family disruption or destruction.

The council of Constantinople occurred in AD 381.<sup>22</sup> According to Pelikan, council members discussed the “denial of the full deity of the Holy Spirit, a question that ‘had not yet been raised’ at Nicea . . . the second was a theory of the hypostatic union in Christ that interpreted the formula ‘Logos plus flesh’ for the incarnation in such a way as to seem to deny the presence of a human soul in Christ.”<sup>23</sup> Church councils demonstrate the power of community and community’s importance in church history.

Another council was held in Ephesus in AD 431.<sup>24</sup> Pelikan writes, “If Constantinople [381] condemned ‘those who are hostile to the Spirit,’ Ephesus anathematized ‘the man-worshiper Nestorius and his entire impiety, which is hostile to Christ.’”<sup>25</sup> The continued conciliar movement defined and refined Christian doctrine for the followers of Jesus Christ. The council of Chalcedon was held in AD 451, and Pelikan notes the “assembly [was] filled with the wisdom of God, of the 630 celebrated fathers and torchbearers of the faith.”<sup>26</sup> This large number of people gathered together for a

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

discussion, shared their wisdom and understanding, and demonstrated the power of community. According to Pelikan, the council “determined that the person of Jesus Christ, the God-man, was a person ‘in two natures’ without separation or confusion.”<sup>27</sup>

Pelikan believes the four “councils occupied a special place in the structure of dogmatic authority, corresponding to that of the four Gospels—a parallel that was also employed by Pope Gregory I. Even after there had been additional councils that were acknowledged by both East and West as ecumenical and authoritative, Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon continued to have a special aura.”<sup>28</sup> The author of this paper believes the councils were led by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit acted through the community under the influence of powerful patriarchs. This supports the paper’s thesis that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with communal Samoan family structure. Many American evangelists emphasize individual decisions for Christ without reference to communal dynamics in, for example, Samoan culture. This evangelistic technique damages the Samoan community structure as pictured earlier in the story of Tui and Sina.

### **Armenia**

The conversion of Armenians under St. Gregory is another example of communal evangelism and dynamics in the history of Christianity. Latourette writes, “Armenia is on the south slopes of the Causasus and on the mountainous table-land north of the valley of

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 29.

the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.”<sup>29</sup> The communal dynamic took place under King Tiridates,<sup>30</sup> which Latourette spells: “Tradat, Tirdat, or Tiridates.”<sup>31</sup> Tiridates converted to Christianity under the influence of St. Gregory and before the conversion of Constantine. Gregory had become a Christian while in Caesarea in Cappadocia. He returned to Armenia and exercised his new faith, but “Gregory encountered persecution. Then he won the king, Tradat, Tirdat, or Tiridates by name.”<sup>32</sup> When Tiridates became Christian, the Armenian community turned to Christianity following Tiridates’ example and with the support of Armenian nobles.

The old Armenian religion was Zoroastrian, and its holy places were given to the Christian church.<sup>33</sup> The priests and their sons transferred their service to Christianity, and the Armenian church has continued for nearly two thousands years. According to Latourette, “Here was an instance of what was to be seen again and again, a group adoption of the Christian faith engineered by the accepted leaders and issuing in an ecclesiastical structure which became identified with a particular people, state, or nation.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>30</sup> *Collier’s Encyclopedia* 1997 ed., s.v. “Armenia.”

<sup>31</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 79.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> *Collier’s Encyclopedia* 1997 ed., s.v. “Armenia.”

<sup>34</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 79.

Latourette writes, “We can only conjecture [why Tiridates became a Christian], but with the consent of his nobles he supported Gregory.”<sup>35</sup> When the king converted, the Armenian nation also converted to Christianity. This is very much different from Western style crusades conducted by, for example, Billy Graham, Benny Hinn, and many others who preach to individuals and press for individualistic decisions. The individualistic approach is inappropriate for the Samoan community.

The way the Armenians became Christians parallels Samoan Christianization in AD 1830. When the Samoan king converted, the Samoan people showed loyalty and respect for their king, and followed him to the new faith. In this way there were no family disputes, no differences in decision. Children and parents came together with the rest of the community because everyone spoke the same language and prayed the same prayers at the same time of the day and the same day of the week.

Community based conversion is powerful and effective. For example, “Late in the fifth century the Sassanian monarch gave up the effort to de-Christianize Armenia by force and granted religious liberty.”<sup>36</sup> Since the third century when king Tiridates was converted into Christianity through the efforts of Gregory the Illuminator, the whole nation converted to Christianity, and “Christianity was the national religion and had a national organization.”<sup>37</sup> Their faith was attacked, first by the Romans and second by the Sassanid Persians who invaded Armenia. Their efforts were unsuccessful because the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 321.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

community conversion to Christianity became imbedded in Armenian culture and, therefore, in individual Armenian lives. This demonstrated the historical validity and resiliency of communal conversion.

### **Community Christianity in the Monastic Tradition**

The monastic tradition in the Western church is another example of community based Christianity, and it provides additional validity for communal evangelism in Samoan culture. According to Joseph Henry Allen in *Christian History in its Three Great Periods*, “Poverty and celibacy are the two features which most distinctly mark the Catholic idea of the higher religious life.”<sup>38</sup> Separation from the world and sanctified life began early in Western church history as a reform movement.<sup>39</sup> A lifestyle adopted by one person but involves the entire Christian community. This frame of mind is very strong among Samoans and helps hold families together. For example, when a boy offers his life for the ministry and enters theological study, the whole family celebrates with a big feast to say good-bye, the whole village mourns for him, and the community respects him. In Samoa, the family and village called that person “*o le lupe faalele a le aiga ma le nuu*,” (*lupe* = dove; *faalele* = let go, letting it fly; *aiga* = family; *nuu* = village. “He is the dove of the family, and the village lets him fly.

The roots of monastic poverty and chastity are found in Jesus and His teachings, and Paul wrote, “Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor” (2 Cor. 8:9). He

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<sup>38</sup> Joseph Henry Allen, *Second Period: The Middle Ages*, vol. 2 of *Christian History in its Three Great Periods* (Boston, MA: Roberts Brothers, 1884), 134.

<sup>39</sup> Williston Walker, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1959), 125-126.

freed Himself from all domestic ties (Matt. 10:37) and voluntarily took upon Himself the condition and service of a slave (Matt. 20:25-28). Poverty was taught by such texts as these: “Take no thought for the morrow” (Matt. 6:34), “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt. 5:3), “Give to him that asketh thee” (Matt. 5:42), “Let him that hath two coats give to him that hath none” (Matt. 5:39-40), “If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor” (Matt. 19:21), “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life” (Matt. 6:25), and “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to inherit the kingdom of God” (Matt. 19:24).

Even though “family life is both at the foundation of civil society and the source of all the common virtues,”<sup>40</sup> Jesus apparently did not marry and issued extreme statements: “If a man hate not father, mother, wife, and children, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:25-28), as does Paul: “Let them that have wives be as they that have none.” The author of Revelation writes of the “one hundred and forty-four thousand which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins, which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth” (Rev. 14:3b-5). These concepts set a pattern for communal monastic life exemplified by St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

Joseph Allen writes that Saint Bernard (AD 1091 – AD 1153) “is the most eminent example of monastic life at the time of its greatest authority and splendor” and “Bernard from early youth had been a zealot for monastic life.”<sup>41</sup> “Bernard was a fiery disciplinarian [who shared] his rough diet of beach-leaf broth and bread made of barley,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 145.

beans, and cockle. He had no patience with those who complained of hardship, ill fare, or fever.”<sup>42</sup>

As a Cistercian, he advocated a strict austerity and believed clergy should eliminate all property and temporal power as Christ’s true disciples. He was a strong patriarchal leader who became a monk at about twenty-five years of age. His communal approach is reflected in that he brought about thirty relatives and friends with him, including six brothers, into the communal monastic life when he joined the monastery.<sup>43</sup> The monastic dynamic was not limited to St. Bernard and the Cistercians. The Christian communal lifestyle included many others such as the Carthusians founded by Bruno in AD 1084, the order of Grandmont, and others.<sup>44</sup>

The monastic orders include followers of Christ who believe in disciplined Christian practice, and who form communities as brothers and sisters. The use of the words, father, brother, and sisters is common in these communities and emphasizes a sense of family orientation. The *Rule of St. Benedict* exemplifies this communal approach and is written clearly:<sup>45</sup>

Benedictines commit themselves for life to three vows: stability in community, conversion through a monastic way of life, and obedience. Monastic stability means that a monk belongs to Saint John’s Abbey. He casts his lot with this particular group of brothers for his spiritual and material needs; he shares the community’s work and joins his future to

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 424.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 425-426.

<sup>45</sup> Jerome Theisen, “About the Rule of Benedict: Benedict, the Author,” *The Rule of Saint Benedict: Introduction*, <http://www.osb.org/gen/rule.html> (accessed 25 September 2006).

that of the monastery. The vow of conversion embraces the essential aspects of monastic Christianity: dedication to prayer, celibacy, sharing of material goods in community, a life of simplicity. Benedictine obedience is willingness to live according to the guidance of the Rule, steady listening to the teaching of the abbot, and attentiveness to one's brothers in community.<sup>46</sup>

The way of Saint Benedict draws individuals into a communal way of monastic life. Each novice is asked, "What do you seek?" and replies, "The mercy of God and fellowship in this community. His own search for God now occurs in the midst of his brothers in this monastery, as he blends his own insights and experience into the shared life at Saint John's. In helping others to bear their burdens, he in turn receives the "help of many brothers."<sup>47</sup>

The individual monk is included in the community. The monks base their lifestyle on Jesus' words, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24 NIV). The parents, sisters, and brothers understand that the monastic vow for ministry is a full denial of the world and entrance into a community. The Samoan view is similar, and they label it as a "high calling" in the sense that not everyone can reach it. A Benedictine website includes the following descriptions:

Saint John's Abbey carries on the spirit of the first Christian community, committed to the communal life, to the breaking of our daily bread at altar and table, and to times of public and private prayer. From these rich fountains flow the creative and varied work we do with exultation and sincerity of heart.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Saint John's Abbey, "What is a Benedictine Monk? Commitment," <http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/beingamonk/index.html/> (accessed 25 September 2006).

<sup>47</sup> Saint John's Abbey, "What is a Benedictine Monk? Glory to God," <http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/beingamonk/index.html/> (accessed 25 September 2006).

<sup>48</sup> Saint John's Abbey, "What is a Benedictine Monk?" <http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/beingamonk/index.html/> (accessed 25 September 2006).

Saint John's Abbey is a monastic community of men who are seeking God through a life following the teachings of Jesus Christ and rooted in the Rule of Saint Benedict.<sup>49</sup>

The monastic movement is another example of communal Christianity in church history. It does not emphasize a modern rugged individualism, but rather a patriarchal family structure of father, sister, and brother. This reality supports the paper's thesis that a Christian evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with Samoan family structure. The next section describes the Amish community approach.

### **The Amish Family**

The Amish community is another example of communal Christianity in contrast to the individualistic approach of modern evangelism. The Amish community reminds the author of this paper of his village in Samoa, its cultural beliefs, and its influence on people's lives. The Amish concept of the family is very strong, and they avoid marriage with those outside of their community, which reflects Old Testament teachings about intermarriage and Paul's notions of being unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14). The Amish believe in the Bible, interpret it literally, and live the word and the commands of the Bible as directly given. They use another guide called *Ordnung* that contains the church's rules they must follow:

The Bible is the sacred text of the Amish people. The Amish interpret the Bible literally and directly in many cases which explains their lifestyle. In addition to the Bible there are unwritten rules on which the Amish people base their morals and way of life. The Ordnung are the unwritten rules of

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

the church and are not specified in writing, but are known and closely followed.<sup>50</sup>

The author of this paper visited an Amish community in Indiana, and he was impressed by their community lifestyle and their adherence to tradition. For example, they hand wash their clothes, use firewood for cooking, travel in buggies, and dress uniquely. They are easily identified as a community of religious people surrounded by a secular world.

The roots of the Amish tradition come from the Swiss Anabaptist movement in 16th century Europe. In February of 1527, several Anabaptist leaders met in a secret conference, from which they issued a declaration of “brotherly union.” This declaration captured the Swiss Anabaptists’ view of a Christian brotherhood living together in a community. The declaration has since been given the name of The Schleithem Articles, and is still one of the basic guidelines in the lives of Swiss Bretheren and the Amish today.<sup>51</sup>

Amish concepts are based on Paul’s words, “But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat” (1 Cor. 5:11). Being a community member is important. Brothers and sisters unite, worship together, laugh and cry with each other, eat and live in the same household. These elements are basic in Samoan culture, and evangelistic approaches should consider them carefully. The author’s father said, “Sons, don’t let your differences in beliefs and

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<sup>50</sup> New Religious Movements, “I. Group Profile: Sacred Texts,” *The Amish*, <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/amish.html> (accessed 21 February 2007).

<sup>51</sup> New Religious Movements, “III. Beliefs of the Group,” *The Amish*, <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/amish.html> (accessed 21 February 2007).

understanding break-up your brotherhood and our family.” Samoan families stay together like butter and bread.

### **Summary**

This chapter described the concept of church as the body of Christ, the conversion of the prison guard and all his family, the role of the conciliar movement as a communal exercise, the patriarchal decision of the Armenian king and the conversion of his people, the monastic movement, and the Amish community. Based on these historical foundations, the author believes a scriptural and historically valid evangelistic model can be designed that is compatible with Samoan patriarchal, communal family structure. The development will avoid the destruction of Samoan culture and evangelize the community. The next chapter describes the evangelistic model.

## CHAPTER 5

### AN EVANGELISTIC PROGRAM DESIGNED FOR SAMOANS

As explained in Chapter 2 of this paper, the communal dynamic is extremely important in Samoan culture. In addition, the family community is subordinate to the village community because the village council of chiefs decides issues affecting the whole community. The village community, therefore, must be involved in new church establishment, or disputes occur and people suffer. This understanding is the foundation for successful, non-individualistic evangelistic efforts in Samoan culture. It supports this paper's thesis that effective evangelism in Samoan culture must emphasize the communal dynamics of Samoan culture. The biblical and historical validity of a communal evangelical method has been demonstrated in previous chapters of this paper.

#### **Find the Relational Connection**

Jesus instructed His disciples to go out into the community: "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave" (Matt. 10:11 NIV). This approach applies in Samoan communities. In Samoan culture, some titles are more valuable and influential than others. For example, if someone is in trouble, the individual may enter the house of the village high chief and be protected. On the other hand, if someone causes trouble in the high chief's household, the

troublemaker faces danger because the whole village will seek out the troublemaker and harm him/her.

The first important step in Samoan community evangelism is based on these cultural dynamics. The evangelist must first know people in the community. This parallels the story of Lot when the angels visited him, and the people of the village “surrounded the house, both young and old” (Gen. 19:4 NIV). This happens in Samoan village life. When a new person comes to a village, people come around, ask questions, want to know where the visitor is from and the person’s relationship to the family. Before sunset on the first day the person arrives, the whole village knows who, where, and why this individual is in the village. Then people sit back and observe the visitor’s activities to test their presuppositions based on the news spread by word-of-mouth (in Samoan, “story from the air”) the night before. Before anything happens, the villagers have established ideas about the visitor’s purpose and agenda.

Jesus told His disciples, “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.

Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matt. 10:16 NIV).

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Whenever the author of this paper reads these instructions, they remind him of his Samoan village culture. Village people say little to new comers, but they observe and determine if the person comes in peace or in trouble.

The first important step in Samoan communal evangelism, therefore, is finding a connection in the village. The following list provides action steps to establish the connection:

1. Look for those with whom you have an established relationship. For example, a father's or mother's relative, a grandparent's relatives on both mother and father's side. A wife's relationship through her parents' and grandparents' relatives. When the author of this paper considers these immediate relations, he has connections with more than ten villages in Samoa.
2. Villages of very dear friends are another important connection. For example, the author has friends from high school that stay in contact and their parents treat him as a member of their family.
3. The key evangelistic rule is to follow the relational trail: friends of friends, distant or near relatives, friends of relatives, and other key relationships.

### **Approach the Village in the Samoan Way: *Fai le O'o***

The *O'o* in *Fai le O'o* means: something that I have brought with me for the village. This sounds simple and easy, but it is not easy because it involves more than fine mats (*ietoga*), money, or food. It also involves key values including respect, honor, and loyalty. Respect, honor, and loyalty require Samoans follow the line of command that operates in the hierarchal system in Samoan villages.

As explained earlier in this paper, certain chiefs hold authority over a village, but they are not the only ones who can give the final saying in a village. For example, a village may include a high chief and the orator chief. It appears that the high chief is the most influential one, but the orator chief may be more powerful, because the orator influences the high chief. In other cases, the power arrangement may be reversed. It is

important, therefore, to understand the order in a particular village and identify the influential person in the village. This is done on a case by case basis.

Once the influential chief is located, he can call the village together in one place and announce the reason for the village gathering. The chief might say something like this: “There will be a Christian evangelist who wants to do an evangelistic program in our village. He will be in the village a week from today.” If this is the first time in the village, the evangelist must act honestly so that villagers will believe the evangelist is authentic and trustworthy. The rule is: evangelists must not give villagers opportunity to stop them before they get started.

Samoans have a parable: “*Na sau e ati afi ae sau no masi*” which means, “He came to get some fire, but he ends up asking for some biscuits.” In other words, the evangelist must not pretend he/she came to the village for a social purpose but really intends to evangelize. Certain issues are very sensitive in the lives of Samoan people as explained in this paper. Two of the most important things are the church and Samoan custom. Whenever someone challenges these two things, people are uncomfortable and disturbed.

### Approaching the Village

This section describes the evangelistic approach of this paper’s author to a Samoan village that respects Samoan tradition and community structure. Early in the morning before many people leave for their usual daily tasks, the author enters the village with the village chiefs. Each high chief in a village has his/her *sua*, which is a respectable

way of announcing the food for the chiefs. For example, if the village has three high chiefs, each of them must have a *sua*.

In the presentation of the *sua*, three kinds of *sua* must be understood and presented. The first one is called *sua taute*, and *taute* means drinking. This drinking *sua* is presented with a tablecloth, which is an entire roll of fabric from a store. An open coconut is placed on the cloth and covered with a ten or twenty dollar bill so that no flies get into the coconut.

Following the *sua taute* is the *sua talisua*. *Sua talisua* is the food that is prepared and ready to be eaten. Someone brings before the high chief the *sua talisua* made up of taro cut into pieces, wrapped in banana leaves, tied up with bark of one of the trees called *fu'afu'a*, and baked in an outdoor oven with a whole clean chicken. Presently, some villagers substitute these items with food from the store; however, some Samoan villages still use the traditional food.

The third *sua* is the *sua ta'i*. It is called a *sua ta'i* because, in the past, this *sua* was either a living pig or a living cow. The chief took the animal home for his/her future food, and this *sua* must be covered with a beautiful, fine mat. People who could not afford an expensive mat for the *sua* used money to cover up the *sua ta'i*. This is now sometimes substituted with a carton of corn beef, mutton flaps, or cartons of tin fish. In more modern times, the *sua* is money and is called the *pasese*. *Pasese* means a "fare to go home," and the fare is \$300 to \$500.

Another factor must be considered. The minister already in the village does not come to such occasions; however, the minister is never forgotten. The minister's personal

*sua* will be presented at the pastor's residential home by some people from the village and will be compatible with the high chief's *sua*. Whatever is presented to the high chief must also be presented to the minister.

This describes the presentation of the *sua* to the village chiefs by the evangelist. The evangelist will present the orator chiefs and the rest of the chiefs in the village their usual food for the feast. The evangelist will also present food to the chiefs, which they distribute among themselves such as thirty cartons of tin fish, corn beef, chicken thighs, and other foods. The fine mats for the orators are called *lafo* and are presented in the house of chiefs before they are dispersed with money for bus fares.

A women's committee is also part of the village, and they must receive something. For example, five cartons of corn beef, five cartons of tin fish, and \$300 are distributed among themselves. The villages include young married or unmarried women who join a committee called *auwaluma tamaitai*. They would receive about seven cartons of corn beef, seven cartons of tin fish, and \$500, which they distribute among themselves. A last group of married or single men who do not hold chief titles are called *aumaga*. They usually receive their portion from the house of chiefs; however, in this situation the evangelist might give them something special. This might include ten cartons of corn beef, ten cartons of tin fish, and \$1,000 to be distributed among themselves.

This presentation by the evangelist demonstrates three things to the village. The evangelist respects the village in its present form, organizational structure, and its social life as a village or community. It also demonstrates to the village that the evangelist honors the high chiefs, other chiefs of the village, and the children and young men and

women. It is vital that the evangelist be loyal to the village, understand its taboos, and follow the village's customs. An evangelist who does not understand this will not be accepted and may even be in danger. For example, the author of this paper lived in the country of Fiji from 1986-1988, and he heard of a story about a white missionary who came to Fiji. The people of Fiji took him in and helped him with his work. One Sunday morning while the chief and his family were preparing for church together with the missionary, the missionary looked for a comb to comb his hair. He saw a comb on the chief's head, took it, and used it. The family of the chief and the village killed the missionary, cooked him in a pot together with his shoes, clothes, and everything he possessed, and ate them all. It remains a taboo in the country of Fiji to touch the head of another person.

### The Village's Response

The presentation of *sua* and the emptying of the evangelist's pockets for the village is now completed. The village orator responds in very poetic language about how much the village members appreciate what was done for the high chiefs and the whole village. There remain, however, hidden and silent thoughts in the village. The evangelist should leave the village at this time and return in two weeks time. During the two weeks, the whole village will talk about how much the village will benefit from the evangelist. This will be discussed by everyone in the village. The children will talk about it constantly at school or while doing their chores. The men in the plantation and those

fishing in the sea continue talking about the subject. The parents and children in the afternoon discuss the issue while eating.

The subject is not discussed formally in the chiefs' council because the chiefs do not want to learn who is for and who is against it. This is one characteristic of Samoan people, they want to guess and read the mind of other persons. When two weeks are over and the evangelist is back in the village, the village will respond. The best time for the evangelist to come to the village is early in the morning before people go on their daily duties. When the evangelist arrives at the house of the high chief or the main orator where the previous events took place, one chief is called to go and inform the chiefs that the evangelist has arrived. The expectation is that every chief in the village will come to this meeting with his/her well dried *tugase*.

The word *tugase* literally means, "Even though I am standing, I'm dead." This is because the *kava* was pulled out of the ground with a very long stem, peeled, and dried in the sun. It remains in the house of the chief for long time and is used especially for this ceremonial event. This is called in Samoa *usu le nu'u*, which means that the village (represented by chiefs) comes together to worship. This *kava* is used by the chiefs while they silently wait for a completed project.

A problem is perceived, however, when the chief who informed the village returns and only a few chiefs respond to the call. Their absence is the sign of rejection. In other words, the majority of the village refuses to accept the proposal offered by the evangelist two weeks ago even though they know it was an expensive proposal. If the

majority of the chiefs come to the gathering, everyone knows the chiefs have accepted the proposal, and the evangelist is allowed to work in and with the village.

The acceptance response is only the beginning because the village community wants to know if all the money spent in the initial approach was just a show or a real sign of respect, honor, and loyalty to the high chiefs and the village. Before an evangelist can preach to the people, the evangelist must live a life that people can interpret positively. The Samoan community dynamics are critical and demanding, and they are very different from American, short-term, individualistic evangelistic methods. Samoan evangelism requires commitment to and involvement in the village community.

### **The Evangelist As a Village Family Member**

The life of the evangelist and family in Samoa is in the hands of the village people after they accept the evangelist into the community following the procedure explained in this chapter. The evangelist has a house to live in and a piece of land to work and farm. The evangelist becomes part of the village, mingles with the people, and socializes with them.

Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town” (Matt. 10:14 NIV). When Jesus sent out His disciples, He told them “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves” (Matt. 10:16 NIV), meaning the minister is at risk. The evangelist must remember the word sacrifice because the evangelist lives in the village as a sacrifice of God for a purpose.

Chapter 4 described the life of monks who prepared themselves for the ministry. They sacrificed themselves and their basic human desires to form religious communities in monasteries. The evangelist must have the same sacrificial approach, work within the Samoan community, and evangelize them. Like monastic life, an evangelist in Samoan culture demands a complete cultural immersion, and the evangelist is an offering into God's service. This is very much different from American evangelistic programs that use short-term crusades and individualistic evangelistic campaigns on limited duration.

### Start Small

Large, impressive numbers are important in American culture because they provide pastoral prestige and a sense of success. Samoan culture is different, and it is important to start small when approaching a village setting. The evangelistic process also takes time for village members to believe and accept the message and new faith. For example, the author of this paper grew up in a village where a Methodist church was started by one family. It was there for years, and the village people slowly accepted it as a part of the community. Now it is growing larger without any problem within the village because it became part of the community over time.

An offensive action occurs in the life of a village community when someone enters a village and "disturbs the peace." As described earlier in this paper, Samoan community members watch and believe actions before any words are expressed. Samoans say, "People know you by the way you walk, talk, sit, and stand." Based on the author's experience, the lesson is:

If you walk, don't walk tall, attract attention, or cause others to turn their heads towards you. When you walk, try to bow from your shoulders upward; don't put up your nose. When you talk, don't talk loudly because you might disturb the community. There may be older people in the village who don't need loud noises unless it is expected and necessary. Don't talk too loudly because the high chiefs are near and need no disturbance. When you sit, know where to sit.

Jesus said, "When you are invited to a feast, don't go and sit at respectable places or else the master will ask you to sit somewhere else" (Matt. 23:5-7, author's paraphrase). This is very true in Samoan culture. A Samoan house is structured so that each chief in each level sits in proper form, or someone will ask the chief to leave the house. When a Samoan stands, the individual must know where to stand: not above those who are sitting, not while eating, and not while chiefs hold a meeting. All these behaviors are taught from childhood and people understand how to behave in the village and keep community peace.

Once the evangelist is accepted into the community, the evangelist must start small and according to the structure and expectations of the village setting. As described earlier in this paper, it was common practice in the life of the first century church that people met at home for house services. In Samoan culture, starting small uplifts the family structure. For example, the author of this paper started small in a village with himself, his wife, and four children. In that way, the village saw the family worshipping at home and the Samoan villagers did not feel threatened. Second, they felt sorry for the family worshipping alone while the whole village was together in a main sanctuary. Third, village people showed some respect because they were no longer threatened by the family's new establishment, they no longer believed the family disturbed the community

peace, they no longer felt sorry for the family, and they asked: “Why aren’t we with them? What makes us different from them?” With time, the villagers came around, sat with the family, listened, sang family songs, and showed some interest.

Usually, the children are the first ones who break barriers. They are the ones who rarely ask questions about differences, but they come for certain reasons. First, the evangelist gives them cookies or candies whenever they visit. Second, young people should be included with whom they can associate and develop friendships. Samoan parents are not concerned that their children visit the new church in the community if the visits do not interfere with school, home chores, existing ministerial schools, and church programs. The parents will question their children if the children miss some of their usual programs because of the evangelist’s efforts. The best advice is do not target the children. It is acceptable if the children visit, mingle, and socialize with other children, but do not target them.

Youth are the second group of people that visit, eat, and socialize, but not because of any belief conviction. It takes a long time for older persons to come, sit, and talk. They come sometimes and talk long distance. For example, they stand ten feet away while the evangelist stands in the house and the visitor stands on the road. This relationship building takes time. This process might be called evangelism by osmosis, cultural infiltration, and assimilation.

### **God Makes It Grow**

Paul wrote, “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow” (1 Cor. 3:6-7 NIV). Humans may be proud of their work and believe that results are produced by human effort. Evangelism is God’s ministry, and humans are His fellow workers. In doing God’s work, Christians should be careful not to use God’s work and God’s name to destroy God’s establishment. This happens in Samoa when individualistic evangelism techniques are used in a community based culture. The story of Tui and Sina demonstrates this reality. The family is a sacred organization established by God in the beginning with the creation of the world. Servants of God must uphold family structure and communal life, and not destroy it.

## CHAPTER 6

### EVANGELICAL STEPS

This chapter provides an evangelical action plan designed to convert traditional Samoans in Samoa to the Christian faith. The action plan is effective when the evangelist develops relationships with Samoans as described in the previous chapter. This is in support of this paper's thesis statement that effective evangelism in Samoan culture must emphasize the communal dynamics of Samoan life. The next step begins with the chiefs who fill the top hierarchical, cultural position, and their support is crucial for responses throughout the culture. Due to the patriarchal nature of Samoan culture, a male evangelist has the most positive effect among Samoans.

Nicodemus went to Jesus in the night seeking truth (John 3:1-21). In the Samoan culture, night visits and long conversations are common because few people pay attention when visitors enter a neighbor's home. The visits are relaxed and unhurried, apart from preparing for sleep, and conversations often extend to the next morning without disturbance.

Based on the evangelist's activity described in the last chapter, the evangelist identifies village members with whom he has a close relationship. The evangelist can now enter village members' homes at night and talk socially. It is important to understand the role and status of an evangelist in Samoan culture. The evangelist is in a higher rank

with the chiefs of the village. Samoans are very annoyed when someone in a higher position acts as a young person who has no rank at all.

The evangelist should include everyone in his visits but know how to do it in a very orderly, respectable fashion. For example, the evangelist visits the high chief's family at night, but he does not go straight to the high chief's big house and talk with the high chief and his wife. The evangelist first visits the small house where the children and those who serve the high chief live, and the evangelist socializes with them. This is a social visit in everyday clothes, and the evangelist does not carry a Bible. The children and common people in the small house know about the evangelist's visit, and they understand that none of them ranks with the evangelist. They all behave, therefore, in a proper manner, but the word about the evangelist's visit reaches the big house, and the high chief learns that the evangelist is in the back house with the children.

It may be difficult for the evangelist to know when the high chief is home because chiefs visit other chiefs in their homes and socialize, talk about genealogical history, land, and titles that connect people from other villages to the people of their villages. The evangelist must go to the chief that he knows and has developed a close relationship. When the word comes to the main house that the evangelist is in the other house with the children, the chief decides to invite the evangelist to the main house or the chief decides not to invite the evangelist and communicates this by turning off the lights and dismissing whoever is in the house. If the evangelist is invited to the main house, the evangelist visits the chief. If the light goes off without any word, the evangelist must leave and go home, and the evangelist may learn the particular chief is not interested. When the

evangelist is invited to the main house it does not matter who is in the main house, and other visiting chiefs decide to leave or to stay.

The chief who owns the house is in control, and the evangelist must direct his attention to the chief. If the chief invites the evangelist to the big house, the evangelist can sit and talk with the chief and with other visiting chiefs. This is a very delicate opportunity, and the evangelist must be very brave and courageous when approaching the chiefs at night. For example, if the chiefs are playing cards, the evangelist should not attempt to play cards with them. The evangelist should behave at a high standard so the chiefs will respect him. The evangelist can laugh with them, but not joke with them if they use foul language.

This nighttime visit is an important test for the evangelist in the midst of the chiefs. The chiefs know their rank and know what they are doing, but they want to see if the evangelist knows his position in their relationship. Soon the chiefs realize that the evangelist is positioning himself in a higher level and standard, and they will stop what they are doing and face the evangelist as men who are being challenged. The chiefs enjoy this interaction, and there is always a dominant figure in the gathering. The dominant chief, who may or may not own the house, opens the conversation by saying, "Welcome, sir. How was your day?" The evangelist responds, "Very well, thank you, sir."

Normally, this is the time when the evangelist is served a cup of cocoa and, perhaps, some food. It is very polite for the evangelist to take the cup and food, and thank the children for their good manners. If the chiefs have already eaten, it is not good for the evangelist to eat alone, and it is polite for the evangelist to reject the food. If the

evangelist eats the food, the family and people will serve the chiefs because it is very bad for the family to feed the evangelist while the chiefs watch. In the Samoan community, this is the manner of old folks when they feed their pigs, sit back, and watch the pigs eat. It is very polite for the evangelist to reject the food if he knows that the chiefs already had their share, but if they did not have their share, the chiefs will let the evangelist know. On the other hand, the evangelist can tell by the way the food is served. People will come in a very close line with trays of food, and the evangelist will know that everyone will be eating.

A short first visit is most effective, but not so short that chiefs believe the evangelist was just dropping in to disturb them and then leave early. The short visit should convey that the evangelist respects the chiefs and knows how to behave among them. The second night visit is different from the first night. The other chiefs have stayed in their places and watched the house of the chief where the evangelist visited the previous night.

On the second night, the evangelist should go to the chief's house a little earlier so he does not disturb them again. The chiefs watch for the evangelist until they determine the evangelist will not visit, and then they meet with the other chiefs for their usual games and social meetings. If they have made that decision, gathered together, and the evangelist suddenly arrives, the evening will be ruined. All the chiefs will walk away from the house and meet somewhere else. The evangelist, therefore, must arrive at the chief's house without creating a disturbance. The evangelist should not go to the small

house where the children and the common people are located because he has been introduced to the chiefs on the previous visit.

When the evangelist arrives at the chiefs' house, he must act with authority. The evangelist begins by asking some social questions about the day, how things are going in the village, are any new things happening in the government, and other questions. When the evangelist feels the conversation is going smoothly and the chiefs show interest, the evangelist must pause and give the chief a chance to reflect on the conversation. The chief takes the floor and shares his personal opinion while the evangelist listens. If the chief feels good about the evangelist's visit, there will be a long silence in the house, and the evangelist might say something like, "Probably, I will be leaving." The chief might respond, "Yes? But thank you very much for the visit." The evangelist will follow up with a request, "Shall I offer a word of prayer?" The author of this paper believes the customary answer is yes. The first reason for the positive response is because Samoans respect ministers and rarely deny anything they ask. The second reason is because chiefs recognize the evangelist and his special role, and saying no to the request is rude and without good reason. The third reason is because they want to judge the evangelist's skills and abilities.

When the evangelist receives the opportunity from the chiefs to speak to the people, he must do it well. Samoan "chiefs' language" was described earlier in this paper, and it is different from the common language. Samoan people love to hear chiefs' language from the evangelist as he communicates the gospel. People love the poetic style and language they can understand including a prayer of thanksgiving for the chief, his

family, the village, and the country. The evangelist must also mention something that the chief talked about in conversation with the evangelist, and ask God to bless the people and keep them safe through the night.

The evangelist's words and prayer are critical at this juncture, and the chiefs' response to the prayer is vital. If the chief just says "thank you" without any other comment, the evangelist knows he did not do well. If, however, the chief organizes his speech and tries to impress listeners with his chief language when the chief says "thank you," the message has been accepted. The chief might say something like this:

Faamalo, faafetai mo le taulaga sa fofogaina e lau Susuga a le Faafeagaiga.  
 Ua faafofoga le Atua i le taulaga siitia.  
 Tau ina ia alofa le Atua ma sasaa atu lona tamaoaiga mo lau susuga  
 Ona o le galuega fita o loo feagai ma lau susuga.

This translates as:

Well done, very well, thank you for the offering that you offered, the covenant of the people.  
 I believe that God hears the well performed offering.  
 Let the loving God impose upon you (the covenant) His treasures  
 For the hard work that you perform as His servant on earth.

This thank you response is what the evangelist wants to hear from the chief.

When this is said, the evangelist feels something different about his relationship with the chief. The emotions come out automatically, but do not force a response. It is appropriate for the evangelist to say nothing after the chief's speech, sit quietly, and offer silent prayer for success. Silence is very good and effective in Samoan culture, and it is good to be silent and make people feel the Spirit in the air. The chief will say nothing after the thank you speech. After ten or more minutes of silence, the evangelist might say in a very

The chief goes to the evangelist's house. He does not hide from other chiefs because they know the evangelist visited the chief's house a few nights earlier. When other chiefs ask the chief why he is going to the evangelist's house, he says he wants to visit the evangelist and his family. When the chief arrives, the evangelist welcomes him in the usual way, offers something to eat and drink, and they talk about why the evangelist did not visit the chief last night. The chief might say the evangelist was expected and other chiefs were there too. The evangelist might say that he was studying the Bible and he was troubled by one biblical issue. The evangelist suggests it will be good if they talk about the issue because it is always good to talk about things with other people. This is how the evangelist begins a Bible study with the chief. This approach is not difficult because when Samoan people follow the evangelist it is easy for them to follow Christ.

The evangelist will continue a one on one Bible study with the chief for two or three weeks until the chief is fully convinced and believes in the Bible. The chief will order his family to attend the evangelist's congregation, and no one in the chief's family will refuse the chief's decision. As described in Chapter 2 of this project, one of the chief's duties is to protect the family. The family members support the chief and expect the chief to share with the family in times of hardship. The family members must believe what the chief says because one of the chief's necessary characteristics is that he be intellectually gifted and make smart decisions for the sake of the family. For the chief to direct the family to a new religion is a big decision, but for family members it is not difficult because they honor the chief.

The evangelist continues one on one Bible studies with other chiefs who are close friends of the converted chief, and the chief uses his house as an evangelistic hall. Soon the other chiefs will order their families to join the evangelist's congregation. Whether they understand or not or whether they are convinced or not they will join through their respect of the evangelist, and because also they believe the evangelist is well educated. They do not want to disappoint the evangelist by being resistant.

The chiefs bring their families to the Bible studies, and this is an opportunity for the family members to listen and learn from the evangelist. The first thing they want to confirm is whether the evangelist is as intellectual as the chiefs described and whether the evangelist is well organized with his materials and teachings. Family members go home with the chief and discuss the Bible study, and family members will confirm everything the chief said about the evangelist.

During the Bible studies with the families and chiefs, some persons from other families and chiefs may attend. Those people who do participate in the meetings and listen to the studies may not make any decision on their own. They can decide to join the congregation, but when the family chief learns about their participation, the chief gathers his family together and discusses the issue. If the chief participates with his family, as a result, it fulfills what Jesus said, "Children will turn their parents to the Lord." Evangelism is simple and easy in Samoa because Samoans wait for and follow the chief's decision. The evangelist wins the whole community through one person. This is the essence of this paper's thesis: effective evangelism in Samoa must emphasize the communal dynamics of Samoan culture.

By this time, evangelical work becomes easier among the rest of the village people. The evangelist begins contact with other chiefs he had not met earlier on a one on one basis. Now the evangelist carries his Bible, visits the village, and meets other chiefs of the village. Some will be resistant because they believe they are smarter than the evangelist. Some will have nothing to do with the congregation. No matter how hard the evangelist works, he cannot reach everyone in the village because of their own personal reasons. The evangelist must understand that whatever he does, some will murmur, show dissatisfaction, and blame the servant instead of God who owns the work.

## CONCLUSION

Modern Samoan lifestyles have changed significantly compared with pre-colonial, traditional culture. Samoans emigrate to overseas countries and airplanes fly from the island of Samoa to New Zealand in only four hours. In the past, two popular boats, the Mantua and Tofua, sailed to the islands of the South Pacific transporting people, import and export goods, and merchandise from islands to foreign countries. A trip to the United States that took months by sea takes only ten hours by air. The changes in travel from country to country affected Samoa greatly. The author of this paper identifies these categories of Samoans based on how they think, perform, live, and relate to each other.

1. Samoans who have no concept of individualism: These individuals have never left Samoa and operate under the traditional family concept. They suffer greatly because of the changes coming into the country. They feel they are the only faithful Samoans who maintain the beauty and the traditions of the country.
2. Samoans who travel overseas and learn about individualism, but who struggle to live as Samoans: These individuals move overseas, are married to Samoans, raise their family as Samoans, but their cultural traditions are tainted by the Western concept of individualism. The author of this paper belongs to this group.

3. Samoans who live overseas and marry persons outside the Samoan cultural tradition: For example, a Samoan woman whose parents are both Samoans but married a Caucasian American in America. This paper may be useful and relevant for those who seek to evangelize traditional Samoans, and other Samoans who struggle with the concept of family because of individualistic concepts prevalent in the West.

This paper presents a communal evangelistic approach aimed at the first group because the communal dynamic is extremely important in traditional Samoan culture. The family unit is subordinate to the village community and the influence of village chiefs. The village community and chiefs, therefore, must be involved in evangelistic efforts, and this understanding is foundational for successful, non-individualistic evangelistic efforts in Samoan culture. This paper presented the biblical and historical validity communal evangelical methodology.

Traditional Samoan culture has a very high concept of family orientation that ties every individual in the community. This concept of family strengthens the community and makes the country strong. This paper has demonstrated that the family concept is a sacred entity ordained by God from the beginning, and it is the duty of the church to uphold and protect it. The Old and New Testaments promote the concept of family. The work of God in the world from the beginning emphasized the concept of family even though in many cases one person's name stood for the family or tribe. For example, the use of the names Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David refers to a family unit with a hierarchal head. The New Testament concept of fellowship is a clear picture of

fellowship with God vertically and with people horizontally. This is the circle that ties God into the world of His followers and believers.

The story of Sina and Tui in Chapter 1 of this project presents a clear picture of how individualistic evangelistic concepts can destroy families, and this disruption weakens the Samoan community and nation. Growing up in Samoa and being raised in village settings where the concept of family is very strong is very rewarding. For traditional Samoans, however, living in a community that stresses individuals creates cultural tensions and strains. For example, the author of this paper is disturbed by how people treat each other in Western culture, and he is irritated when people emphasize things other than family members and especially children.

The traditional Samoan concept of family described in Chapter 2 is very structured and organized under the leadership of chiefs. Every family has its chief, and it is very important to know your place and role in the community. Individuals then play their roles accordingly, because everyone has a role to perform for the success of the community. Peace comes to the village when all community members know their roles and play them in respect to persons above them. Honor, respect, and faithfulness are very important in community life, and the orator chiefs must honor and respect the high chiefs. The women who marry the boys of the village must honor and respect the girls of the village and especially their husbands' sisters. The boys must honor and respect their sisters and the girls of the village. The family members must be faithful to their chiefs and serve them faithfully with food and service. The community is an inner-related web

of respect, obligation, responsibility, and expectation, and evangelistic efforts must understand this community dynamic and reality.

There is a line of command in the life of the community when viewed from a hierarchal point of view. The hierarchal position, however, is obligated to lead everyone into unity, and there is room for individual decision making. The expectation is that the individual decision must not disturb the peace of the community. Evangelism can build upon and strengthen this community concept rather than destroy it.

When Christianity first arrived Samoa, the community head converted and then announced everyone would become Christian. There were no complications, and the spread of the gospel was smooth and rapid. This was disturbed by the arrival of the new style of evangelism that demands individual decision making and causes people to show disrespect for their family chiefs and the community.

Although archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians assert that various Samoan beliefs originated in East Asia, Samoans believe Samoa was created, and they have their own creator god. Samoans believe, for example, that the whole Samoan culture and its structures were created by the god Tagaloa-lagi. Even though the concept of family is practiced in other parts of the world, but the concept of family and community held together by chiefs under the concept of respect is specific to Samoan culture. This is why it is very important for evangelists to understand this history and cultural dynamics, and evangelize Samoans according to hierarchal family concepts and community orientation.

The influence of America, Britain, and Germany disturbed the Samoan chief council when Western powers introduced the started the high court justice system. This justice system lessened the powers of the chief council. In addition, the system stressed individualistic beliefs in contrast to the community orientation of the traditional chief council. The thesis of this paper reinforces the power of the chief council that can help bring peace to the community.

The creation story emphasizes the concept that it is not good for the man, Adam, to live alone. Individuals and individualistic concepts promote living alone. This causes problems in a communal society such as the Samoan society and community. Sin caused the destruction of God's community and the original Edenic family. The problem identified in this paper is the use of individualistic evangelism that separates and undermines traditional Samoan culture, values, and expectations. This paper demonstrated that God uses the tabernacle concept which emphasizes His community with His people. The people of God come together in the tabernacle to fellowship with God and each other, and this communal concept helps legitimize the communal evangelism approach advocated in this paper.

New Testament stories also legitimize the communal concept applicable for Samoan evangelism. For example, the prison guard was converted to Christianity because of the miracle in the jail, and he went home and led his whole family into Christianity. This involved everyone in his family including slaves and those connected through marriage. Patriarchal, communal evangelism is based on the family concept and parallels the cultural dynamics of traditional Samoans.

The use of councils in the early church parallels the Samoa chief council and its techniques used to resolve issues and conflicts. The church council used the power of community to keep peace in the community under the guidance of patriarchal leadership. Church council decisions are community based and help legitimize the communal evangelical techniques described in this paper.

The conversion of the king of Armenia to Christianity caused the whole country to convert to Christianity. After the conversion the faith was attacked, but the Armenians held onto their faith in spite of military or political pressure. This was the same when Samoa turned to Christianity through the king's decision. The concept of family and patriarchal power is challenged and potentially destroyed when individualistic evangelical approaches are used by culturally insensitive outsiders.

The formation of monastic communities is another example of communal experiences in church history. Christian practices and values were maintained and enhanced when people formed communities and kept themselves as a unit away from the world. They practiced the community concept of living together under the leadership of a patriarchal chief, the abbot.

The Amish family is another group of believers who maintain their concept of community, beliefs, and values. They form their communities and obey leaders who keep them safe and separated from the world. They do not marry outside their community for the sake of the community. The individual surrenders the self for the sake of the community.

Chapter 5 of this project provides clear cultural guidelines for communal based evangelism in Samoa, and the guidelines follow the dictates of traditional Samoan culture and the power of the chief council. This is very important in Samoa because it honors the community and the chief council's authority by asking permission to enter and perform evangelism in the community. It also shows respect for the community by following its traditions by, for example, using "o'o" and giving out of "sua" to the community. The evangelist is faithful to the community when he relates first to the chief and does not target the children or evangelize individuals. Traditional Samoans believe that if everything is conducted properly, within the cultural tradition, and following the original format, life will be simple, and everyone will be happy and safe.

The last chapter of this paper provides specific, culturally sensitive steps for evangelistic efforts in traditional Samoan culture. If these steps are respected, the author of this paper believes effective evangelism efforts will follow. The proper methods will preserve traditional Samoan cultural and demonstrate respect for the patriarchal community. In so doing, the paper's thesis will be sustained: effective evangelism in traditional Samoa must emphasize the communal, patriarchal dynamics of Samoan life.

## APPENDIX

**The Samoan Story of Creation**

**JOURNAL**

**OF THE**

**POLYNESIAN SOCIETY**

**CONTAINING**

**THE TRANSACTIONS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY.**

**VOL. I.**

**[WELLINGTON, 1892]**

**{Reduced to HTML by Christopher M. Weimer, November 2002}**

## THE SAMOAN STORY OF CREATION—A 'Tala.'

The Polynesian Society is indebted to Dr. John Fraser of Sydney for permission to reproduce in this Journal his paper originally published in the "Transactions of the Royal Society, N.S.W.," 1891, on the "Samoan story of Creation." With equal kindness he lent us the Rev. Mr. Powell's original MS. text in the Samoan language, which is reproduced here after correction by the Rev. S. Ella of Sydney and himself. The Samoan text was not published by the Royal Society, but we have been induced to produce it here, for the same reason that other papers have been printed in the native languages in this Journal, *i.e.*, in order that it may be read by the natives themselves. We thereby hope to induce members of the native races to contribute original matter bearing on their traditions, &c.

It appears to us that this "Story of Creation" is of a high order, and may be classed with the best of the creation myths of other branches of the Polynesian race.

The Rev. T. Powell in securing this valuable tradition, the Rev. G. Pratt in translating it, and Dr. J. Fraser in editing and annotating it, have conferred a lasting benefit on the Samoans in particular and the Polynesians in general, which the descendants of the present people will as time goes on, appreciate more and more when education and refinement increase amongst them.

The exalted supremacy ascribed to Tangaloa in this myth, is characteristic of the Western Polynesians, (and some others—no doubt derivative) but we venture to suggest that further researches will prove that other branches of the race ascribed the same high position to Tane, and that probably the latter are a distinct migration into the Pacific.—  
EDITORS.

INTRODUCTION—1. All nations have traditions or speculations as to their own origin, and these often include a Cosmogony, by which they endeavour to account for the existence of the world, or at least of their own land, and for the creation of men to be its inhabitants. Our own Australian blacks, whom some ethnologists wrongly describe as the lowest of human beings, speak of a great Creator, known by such tribal names as Baiamai, Punjil, Nuralli, who made them and all things, and who still lives in the heavens above; in the work of creation, he carried a great knife, with which to shape the toil of his hands; in this work he is assisted by a *demiourgos* whom the Kamalarai tribe call Dharamulan, and certain birds and animals are also associated with him as agents; Punjil first made two men each of a lump of clay, which he gradually fashioned from the feet upwards into the human form; and, as the figures grew in symmetry and beauty, he danced round them, well satisfied with his work; then he breathed very hard on them and

Text available at: [http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page\\_175](http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page_175) (accessed February 7, 2008).

they lived, and began to move about as full-grown men. The one had straight hair, and the other had curly hair.

2. Punjil's brother had control of all waters, great and small; and so, one day, he brought up by a hook from a muddy-pool two young women, and they became the companions of the two men. Some time after, Punjil came down and visited the camp of the blacks; and, becoming very angry, he used his great knife on the men, women, and children there, and cut them into very small pieces, which still lived and wriggled about like worms; these he carried into the sky, and then dropped them wherever he pleased; the pieces became men and women, and peopled the whole land. Baiamai gave to the blacks their sacred songs and their social institutions.

There is not much of a Cosmogony in this tale, for it tells us only how men were brought into being, and how Australia came to be occupied by straight-haired and curly-haired blacks; but I have introduced it here, because it bears some relation to the Polynesian myth which I am now to make known to you.

3. The Polynesian race of the Eastern Pacific has an elaborate system of Cosmogony, which aims at explaining how the heavens were created and sustained, how gods and men came to be, how their own islands arose; but the details thereof vary much as given by the wise men in the various groups. Of the varying forms of the great Myth of Creation, the one I have here from Sāmoa seems to me to be the purest and the noblest, and to be the original from which the others have come. Any one who knows Polynesia would reasonably expect this to be so, for, in many respects, the Sāmoans are a nobler people than most of the other islanders; they have a strong claim to be considered the parents of the race; and their highest chiefs and priests were the depositories of the old traditions and beliefs. The present myth was communicated by one of these old chiefs, Tāua-nu'u of Manu'a, and as Mr. Powell who got it had his full confidence, I have no doubt that this is a genuine and uncorrupted record. In estimating value, we must always bear in mind that natives consider their traditional records as property which ought not to be shared with strangers; if circumstances compel them to open their stores against their will to foreigners, they so abridge or mutilate the narrative that it is then of little value, and, only when there is mutual confidence and trust as between friends, will they consent to tell the tale in its fullness and purity. Now, it is evident that this condition of friendship existed between Tāua-nu'u and Mr. Powell. Hence my belief in the genuineness of this record.

4. There is much simple dignity in the opening sentence of the myth—"The god Tangaloa dwelt in the Expanse" as the sole intelligence there. He was soon to be the creator of all things, but as yet there was no sky, no sea, no land. He moved to and fro in the Expanse.

Text available at: [http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page\\_175](http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page_175) (accessed February 7, 2008).

It is noticeable that this opening sentence of the myth assumes the prior existence of three things before the work of creation began—(1) an Expanse or Firmament, (2) an intelligent and self-existing creative principle, 'le atua Tagaloa, the god Tangaloa, and (3) the material wherewith to form the earth. There is here no notion that the earth was formed out of nothing. There is, however, an implied belief in the eternity of matter,—the matter, at least, which became the primitive *papa*, 'rock.' And also there was an Expanse, a sort of illimitable space—and that is a necessary belief in every creation-myth, but there was no sky, that is, no cloud-land or rain-land such as is now over the earth, and there was Tangaloa, moving to and fro at will in the Expanse. I therefore take Tangaloa to be the Aether of other cosmogonies,—the bright and pure principle of light and heat which existed before the sun, and which spread everywhere in that earliest state of things which we call Chaos. And, as this myth goes on, we shall find that, according to Polynesian belief, after the heavens and the earth had been made, this same Tangaloa places himself in the highest heavens, the Ninth, the clearest empyrean—where no cloud ever comes,—and there he dwells, calm and undisturbed, in his *fale'ula*, his 'palace of brightness.' So I see nothing sordid in these three Polynesian ideas; the whole presents itself to me as a very chaste opening to a Creation-myth.

In this same sense, Charles Kingsley eloquently says:—"Those simple-hearted forefathers of ours said within themselves 'Where is the All-father'? Then they lifted up their eyes to the clear, blue sky, the boundless firmament of heaven. That never changed; that was always the same. The clouds and storms rolled far below it, and all the bustle of this noisy world; but there the sky was still, as bright and calm as ever. The All-Father must be there, unchangeable in the unchanging heaven; bright, and pure, and boundless, like the heaven; and like the heavens too, silent and far off. So they named him after the heaven, Tuisco—the God who lives in the clear heaven, p. 167 the heavenly father. He was the Father of Gods and men; and man was the son of Tuisco and Hertha—heaven and earth."

Now as to the meaning and derivation of the name Tangaloa, I may call to your remembrance the fact that the Anglo-Saxon god-name, Tuisco, is of the same origin as the *Eng.* word day and *Lat.* dies; the old Aryan root is *dyu* or *div*, 'to shine,' which gives other god-names, the *Sans.* Dyaus and deva, the *Gr.* Zeus and Zēn, and the *Lat.* Jupiter, Jovis, as well as the common noun *divus*. The idea common to them all is that of 'bright, lustrous, beaming,' and this fits in with the fact that Tangaloa dwells in the empyrean above. But, in seeking for a derivation of the name Tangaloa, I call to mind the Polynesian tradition that originally the sky lay flat on the lower world, *lalo-langi*, as they call it, the 'under-the-sky,' and that the nine heavens, being now propped up, surround the earth and envelope it on all sides. Therefore I divide the name Tangaloa into two parts *tanga* and *loa*; in Samoan the verb *ta'ai*, that is, *takai* (= *tangai*) means, to 'wind round' like an ulcer encircling a limb, and *ta'aiga* is a 'roll,' of mats or tobacco or the like. In the Maori dialect, *tangai* is the 'bark' or 'rind,' that which 'envelopes,' and *takai* is a 'wrapper';

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in Samoan tanga is a 'bag,' that which 'envelopes' or 'encloses.' I would therefore say that the name was at first Tanga-la, then lengthened into Tanga-loa,—'the god that encompasses all things,' 'the encircling Aether'; but, as -la is not a common formative in Polyesian dialects, at least so far as I know, it is quite possible that -loa is a separate word, and may be the Samoan loa, 'long,' 'far off.'

5. The myth next goes on to say that, in his wandering to and fro in the Expanse, Tangaloa one day stood still, and then there grew up pāpā, 'a rock,' for him to rest on. In another Samoan myth, 'le Solo o le Va,' Tangaloa is, at another time, weary of flying over the waste of waters, and no sooner does he express a wish for a resting place, than an island rises up from the deep for him. In both cases, there is no laborious work of creation ascribed to him, but his wish or his need at once produces the result desired. There is certainly some dignity in this.

The word pāpā, in Samoan, means 'rock,' but in other dialects it also means 'foundation,' 'anything level or flat,' and pala, means 'mud.' Now I take the myth here to indicate that, by the exercise of his will alone, Tangaloa caused to spring up, out of chaos, first the solid foundation-material out of which the Earth, the Sea, the Sky, were afterwards evolved by separate fiats or acts of creation; for the myth then declares that he spake to the Rock, saying, 'Be thou split p. 168 open,' and there came forth, as if by successive efforts of parturition, various kinds of foundation-stuff, then the Earth, then the Sea, and Fresh-water, and the Sky, and 'Prince-Prop-up-sky,' and Immensity, and Space, and Height, and, last of all, Man, as a physical being, but not yet endowed with intelligence. Unlike the original papa, all of these come into existence, not at his will, but by the power of a separate command of evolution for each.

I am not much concerned to explain how, on natural principles, the Sea, and the Sky, and Man himself, can have been produced by this papa, but the succession of ideas in this Samoan myth is consistent; for first comes the Rock or Foundation—the physical origin of all things—then the varieties of rock, which are soon united to form the Earth; then the Sea, 'le tai,' is made to surround the Earth and lave its shores; then its counterpart, 'le vai,' Fresh-water, appears on the Earth; hitherto Earth and Sky had been as one, but now the Sky is lifted up above the earth and secured in its place by props; then the dimensions Length, Breadth, and Height appeared; and then, all things being ready for him, Man came upon the scene.

6. But Man was yet a dull, inert mass of matter; so Tangaloa created Spirit, and Heart, and Will, and Thought, and put them within him, and thus Man became a living soul. Here the myth duly recognises the composite nature of man, and that too with a precision scarcely to be expected from Polynesians.

7. The Kosmos had been, to some extent, arranged already as Land, Sea, and Sky, but now that Man is to dwell on earth, Tangaloa proceeds to make him comfortable; and so he sends Immensity and Space, as a wedded pair, to dwell in the sky above; he bids another pair, 'Two-clouds' and 'Two-fresh-water-bottles,' attend to the supply of water from the clouds, and another pair to people the Sea. Meanwhile the man and his wife are to people the earth on its southern side. But now a catastrophe seems to have happened, for Tui-te'e-langi, the Polynesian Atlas, found himself unable any longer to support the weight of the sky, and so it fell down on the earth once more. Then Tui bethought him of two native plants that grow, spread out a-top like an umbrella; with these he propped up the sky, and it has never fallen since! In this connection, it is curious to note that our Australian Aborigines believe similarly that the sky is held up by props, and they have a tradition that the props once broke, and then the wizards had great work to do in getting the sky propped up again.

8. The wedded pair, Immensity and Space, that had a little before been removed from the earth to the sky, now brought forth children—Night and Day, and these two, by their united action, produced the Sun and the Stars; these two dwell in the First Heavens, the region of alternate darkness and brightness. Immensity and Space next gave birth to Le-Langi, 'the clear, blue sky'; that is the Second Heavens. Langi then produces all the other heavens up to the Ninth, and each of these is peopled by Immensity and Space. All this means that, above the cloudland of the First Heaven, everything is serene, calm, and clear, and everywhere there is illimitable extension of space. So it must have appeared, at all events, to the earliest of myth-makers, when they turned their thoughts from earth to heaven.

9. Our myth now turns to the creation of the other gods; every one of these, however, is a Tangaloa, and is therefore not a separate and independent being, but only a phase, as it were, of the supreme Tangaloa—a distinct manifestation of himself in some one or other of his functions. These he created, but the word used here fa'a-tupu, only implies that he 'caused them to grow up' or to be. Of all these facets of himself, he makes Tangaloa-le-fuli, 'the immoveable,' to be the chief, for up there, in his domain, the Ninth Heavens, the clouds 'never roll along' (le fuli), the storms below never come nigh, and all is tranquility and peace.

10. The myth next shows the Sāmoan pride of race, for it makes Sāmoa and Manu'a to be brothers to the Sun and the Moon. And yet we cannot believe that the Polynesians are akin to the rulers of the Celestial Empire. After these, the other islands of the Pacific, as known to Sāmoans,—Tonga and Fiji and the Eastern groups—are made to spring up at the will of 'Tangaloa-the-creator-of-lands.' This is a much more dignified account of things than that which is given in some other Polynesian legends, which say that, while one of the gods was engaged in fishing in the sea, he pulled up with his line an

island here and there; and that had not the line at last broken with the pull, some of these islands might have been continents.

11. But the newly-created islands are, as yet, rough and rugged and unfit for the occupation of man; and so 'Tangaloa-the-creator' comes down and treads upon them, and prepares them for people to dwell in. And he looked on all his work, and said, 'It is good.' To people these lands, he causes Tangaloa-sāvāli to take a native climbing-plant, a Fue, and lay it outside in the sun. Under the Sun's heat, its juice brought forth a great multitude of worms; these Tangaloa fashioned into men and women, and gave them intelligence, and thus he peopled the lands. This Fue must represent some echo of the original creation of mankind by God, for our myth says, at its close, that Fue was the son of Tangaloa, and there is still in Sāmoa a variety of this vine, which is called Fue-sā, the 'sacred vine.' And, to Sāmoans, such origination of life is intelligible; for they have experience of animal life as a product of the sun's heat, to procure oil, they slice their cocoa-nuts into lumps, and leaving a heap of this 'copra' exposed in a canoe, they find that it soon produces oil and worms.

12. As a parallel to this account of the origin of man, I now refer to the Australian tradition with which I began this introduction. There the creation-god is Baiamai, that is, Bai-bai, an intensive and therefore honorific name, formed from the Australian root-word ba, 'to cause to be,' 'to make'; similarly, the verb punjilko, that is, punjil with the infinitive suffix -ko added, means 'to cut out,' 'to shape,' 'to make'; hence Baimai and Punjil simply mean 'the creator.' In his creative work, Punjil uses a knife wherewith to shape all things; similarly Tangaloa cuts and shapes the vine-worms 'into member'd forms.' Punjil too, when he wishes the land to be occupied, cuts the people into small worm-like pieces and scatters them about. Tangaloa declares himself well pleased with his handiwork; Punjil, in delight, dances around the clay image of the man, which he was making. Tangaloa gives spirit and heart to animate man; Punjil breathes hard on his image and the man lives, Tangaloa, in one of his aspects, is the lord of the sea; Punjil's brother is the lord of all waters. Baiamai gave to the Australians all their social regulations; so also, among the Polynesians, all authority comes from Tangaloa; he gave them kingly rule, and the right of holding councils, and enjoined them to live in peace.

And thus, in folklore and in tradition myths, parallel stories may be found in the most unlikely quarters, all the world over and these parallels can scarcely have proceeded from merely a similar power of invention in so many diverse nations; they seem to indicate a common origin.

#### TRANSLATION.

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13. The god Tangaloa dwelt in the Expanse; he made all things; he alone was [there]; not any sky, not any country; he only went to and fro in the Expanse; there was also no sea, and no earth; but, at the place where he stood there grew up a rock. Tangaloa-fa'a-tutupu-nu'u was his name; all things were about to be made, by him, for all things were not yet made; the sky was not made nor any thing else; but there grew up a Rock on which he stood.

14. Then Tangaloa said to the Rock, 'Be thou split up.' Then was brought forth Papa-taoto; after that, Papa-sosolo; then Papa-lau-a'au; then Papa-'ano-'ano; then Papa-'ele; then Papa-tu; then Papa-'amu-'amu and his children.

15. But Tangaloa stood facing the west, and spoke to the Rock. Then Tangaloa struck the Rock with his right hand, and it split open towards the right side. Then the Earth was brought forth (that is the parent of all the people in the world), and the Sea was brought forth. Then the Sea covered the Papa-sosolo; and Papa-nofo [that is, Papa-taoto] said to Papa-sosolo, 'Blessed are you in [the possession of] your sea.' Then said Papa-sosolo 'Don't bless me; the sea will soon reach you too.' All the rocks in like manner called him blessed.

16. Then Tangaloa turned to the right side, and the Fresh-water sprang up. Then Tangaloa spake again to the Rock, and the Sky was produced. He spake again to the Rock and Tui-te'e-langi was brought forth; then came forth Ilu, 'Immensity,' and Mamao, 'Space,' came (that was a woman); then came Niua.

17. Tangaloa spake again to the Rock; then Lua'o, a boy, came forth. Tangaloa spake again to the Rock, and Lua-vai, a girl, came forth. Tangaloa appointed these two to the Sā-tua-langi.

18. Then Tangaloa spoke again, and Aoa-lālā, a boy was born, and [next] Ngao-ngao-le-tai, a girl; then came Man; then came the Spirit; then the Heart; then the Will; then Thought.

19. That is the end of Tangaloa's creations which were produced from the Rock; they were only floating about on the sea\*; there was no fixedness there.

20. Then Tangaloa made an ordinance to the rock and said:—

(1) Let the Spirit and the Heart and Will and Thought go on and join together inside the Man; and they joined together there and man became intelligent. And this was joined to the earth ('ele-ele'), and it was called Fatu-ma-le-'Ele-'ele, as a couple,† Fatu the man, and 'Ele-'ele, the woman.

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(2) Then he said to Immensity and Space, 'Come now; you two be united up above in the sky with your boy Niuaio, then they went up; there was only a void, nothing for the sight to rest upon.

(3) Then he said to Lua-'o and Lua-vai, 'Come now, you two, that the region of fresh-water may be peopled.'

(4) But he ordains Aoa-lālā and Ngao-ngao-le-tai to the sea, that they two may people the sea.

(5) And he ordains Le-Fatu and Le-'Ele-'ele, that they people this side; he points them to the left-hand side, opposite to Tua-langi.

(6) Then Tangaloa said to Tui-te'e-langi, 'Come here now; that you may prop up the sky.' Then it was propped up; it reached up on high. But it fell down because he was not able for it. Then Tui-te'e-langi went to Masoa and Teve; he brought them and used them as props; then he was able. (The *masoa* and the *teve* were the first plants that grew, and other plants came afterwards). Then the sky remained up above, but there was nothing for the sight to rest upon. There was only the far-receding sky, reaching to Immensity and Space.

#### THE PRODUCTION OF THE NINE HEAVENS.

21. Then Immensity and Space brought forth offspring; they brought forth Po and Ao, 'Night and Day,' and this couple was ordained by Tangaloa to produce the 'Eye of Sky,' [the Sun]. Again Immensity and Space brought forth Le-Langi; that is the Second Heavens; for Tui-te'e-langi went forth to prop it up and the sky became double; and Immensity and Space remained there, and they peopled the sky. Then again Langi brought forth, and Tui-te'e-langi went forth and propped it up; that was the Third Heavens; that was peopled by Immensity and Space. Then Langi bore again; that was the Fourth Heavens. Tui-te'e-langi went forth to prop it up; that heaven also was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Then Langi bore again; that was the Fifth Heavens. Then went forth Tui-te'e-langi to prop it up; that heaven also was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Langi brought forth again; that was the Sixth Heavens. And Tui-te'e-langi went and propped it up; that heaven was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Then Langi bore again; that was the Seventh Heavens. And Tui-te'e-langi went forth and propped it up; that heaven was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Then Langi again brought forth; that was called the Eighth Heavens. Tui-te'e-langi went to prop up that heaven; and that heaven was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Then again Langi brought forth; that was the Ninth Heavens; and it was propped up by

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Tui-te'e-langi; and that heaven was peopled by Ilu and Mamao. Then ended the productiveness of Ilu and Mamao; it reached to the Ninth Heavens.

#### THE PRODUCTION OF OTHER GODS.

22. Then Tangaloa sat [still]; he is well known as Tangaloa-fa'a-tutupu-nu'u; then he created Tangaloa-lē-fuli, and Tangaloa-asiasi-nu'u, and Tangaloa-tolo-nu'u, and Tangaloa-sāváli, and Tuli also, and Longonoa.

23. Then said Tangaloa, the creator, to Tangaloa-lē-fuli, 'Come here; be thou chief in the heavens.' Then Tangaloa, 'the immoveable,' was chief in the heavens.

24. Then Tangaloa, the creator, said to Tangaloa-sāváli, 'the messenger,' 'Come here; be thou ambassador in all the heavens, beginning from the Eighth Heavens down to the First Heavens, to tell them all to gather together in the Ninth Heavens, where Tangaloa, the immoveable, is chief. Then proclamation was made that they should go up to the Ninth Heavens, and then visit below the children of Night and Day in the First Heavens.

25. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, went down to Night and Day in the First Heavens, and asked them thus:—'Have you two any children appointed to you? And they answered, 'Come here; these two are our children, appointed to us, Langi-'uli and Langi-mā.'

26. All the stars also were their offspring, but we do not have the names of all the stars (the stars had each its own name), for they are forgotten now, because they dropped out of use. And surely the last injunction of Tangaloa, the creator, to Night and Day was that they should produce the Eye-of-the-Sky. That was the reason Tangaloa, the messenger, went down to ask Night and Day in the First Heavens [if they had any children].

27. Then answered Night and Day, 'Come now; there remain four boys that are not yet appointed,—Manu'a, Sāmoa, the Sun, and the Moon.'

28. These are the boys that originated the names of Sāmoa and Manu'a; these two were the children of Night and Day. The name of the one is Sā-tia-i-le-moa, 'obstructed by the chest'; the meaning of which is this:—the boy seemed as if he would not be born, because he was caught by the chest; therefore it was he was called Sā-tia-i-le-moa, that is, Sāmoa; the other was born with one side abraded ('manu'a'); then said Day to Night 'Why is this child so greatly wounded?' therefore the child was called 'Manu'a-tele.'

29. Then said Tangaloa, the messenger, 'It is good; come now; go up into the Ninth Heavens, you four; all are about to gather together there to form a Council; go up you two also.' Then they all gathered together in the Ninth Heavens,—the place where dwelt Tangaloa, the creator, and Tangaloa, the immoveable; the Council was held in the Ninth Heavens; the ground where they held the Council was Malaē-a-Toto'a, 'the council ground of Tranquillity.'

30. Then various decrees were made in the Ninth Heavens; the children of Ilu and Mamoa were appointed all of them to be builders, and to come down from the Eighth Heavens to this [earth] below; perhaps they were ten thousand in all that were appointed to be builders; they had one name all were [called] Tangaloa. Then they built houses for the Tangaloa; but the builders did not reach to the Ninth Heavens—the home of Tangaloa-lē-fuli—which was called the 'Bright House' [fale-'ula].

31. Then said Tangaloa, the creator, to Night and Day:—'Let those two boys go down below to be chiefs over the offsprings of Fatu and 'Ele-'ele.' But to the end of the names of the two boys was attached the name of Tangaloa-lē-fuli who is king ('tupu') of the Ninth Heavens; hence the [Samoan] kings ('tupu') were named 'Tui o Manu'a-tele ma Samoa atoa.'

32. Then Tangaloa, the creator, said to Night and Day:—'Let those two boys, the Sun and the Moon, go and follow you two; when day comes, let the Sun follow; also when Night comes, the Moon too comes on.' These two are the shades of Tangaloa; they are well-known in all the world; the Moon is the shade of Tangaloa; but thus runs the decree of Tangaloa, the creator,—Let there be one portion of p. 179 the heavens, in which they pass along; in like manner also shall the Stars pass along.'

33. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, went to and fro to visit the land; his visit began in the place where are (now) the Eastern groups; these groups were made to spring up; then he went off to cause the group of Fiji to grow up; but the space between seemed so far off that he could not walk it; then he stood there and turned his face to the Sky, [praying] to Tangaloa, the creator, and Tangaloa, the immoveable; Tangaloa looked down to Tangaloa, the messenger; and he made the Tongan group spring up; then that land sprang up.

34. Then he turns his face to this Manu'a; and looks up to the heavens, for he is unable to move about; then Tangaloa, the creator and Tangaloa, the immovable, looked down, and caused Savai'i to spring up; then that land grew up.

35. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, went back to the heavens, and said—'We have (now) got countries, the Eastern group and the Fiji group, and the Tongan group, and

Savai'i.' Then, as all these lands were grown up, Tangaloa, the creator, went down in a black cloud to look at the countries, and he delighted in them; and he said, 'It is good;' then he stood on the top of the mountains to tread them down, that the land might be prepared for people to dwell in. Then he returned [on high]. And Tangaloa, the creator, said [to Tangaloa, the messenger],—'Come now; go back by the road you came; take people to possess the Eastern groups; take Atu and Sasa'e; that is a pair; they were called conjointly Atu-Sasae; these two people came from the heavens from among the children of Tangaloa.

36. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, went again to the Fiji group; he also again took two persons, a pair—their names were Atu and Fiji—from among all the children of Tangaloa; so that group of islands was called Atu-Fiji.

37. Then he turned his face towards Tonga; he took [with him] a couple; their names were Atu and Tonga; these two peopled that group of islands; their names were the Atu-Tonga; these two were the people of Tangaloa.

38. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, came back to this Manu'a, to Le-Fatu and Le-'Ele-'ele and their children; because the command of Tangaloa, the creator, [had gone forth] from the heavens, that Le-Fatu and Le-'Ele-'ele should go there to people this side of the world. Then went out Valu'a and Ti'āpā to people Savai'i; these two are the children of Le-Fatu and Le-'Ele-'ele; these two people are from this Manu'a; Savai'i and this Manu'a are one; these two were the parents of I'i and Sava; I'i was the girl, and Sava was the boy; that island was peopled by them, and was named Savai'i.

39. And Tangaloa, the messenger, went again to this Manu'a; then he stood and faced the sky, as if he were making a prayer; then p. 180 Tangaloa, the creator looked down, and the land of Upólu sprang up. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, stood and again faced the heavens towards Tangaloa, the creator; and Tangaloa, the creator, looked down from the heavens, and the land of Tutuila sprang up.

40. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, turned to the heavens, and said, 'Two lands are now gotten for me to rest in. And Tangaloa, the creator, said, 'Come now, go you with the Peopling-vine; take it and place it outside in the sun; leave it there to bring forth; when you see it has brought forth, tell me.' Then he took it and placed it in Salēa-au-mua, a council-ground, which is now called the Malae-of-the-sun. Then Tangaloa, the messenger, was walking to and fro; and he visited the place where the Fue was; he went there and it had brought forth. Then he went back again to tell Tangaloa, the creator, that the Fue had brought forth. Then Tangaloa, the creator, first went down; he went to it; he looked, and it had brought forth something like worms; wonderful was the multitude of worms; then Tangaloa, the creator, shred them into stripes, and fashioned them into members, so that the head, and the face, and the hands, and the legs were distinguishable; Text available at: [http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page\\_175](http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page_175) (accessed February 7, 2008).

the body was now complete, like a man's body; he gave them heart and spirit; four persons grew up; so this land was peopled; there grew up Tele and Upólu, which are the children of the Fue; Tutu and Ila, that is a pair; these are the children of Fue; four persons, Tele and Upólu, Tutu and Ila. Tele and Upólu were placed to people the land of Upolu-tele; but Tutu and Ila, they two were to people the land now called Tutuila.

41. Fue, the son of Tangaloa, that came down from heaven, had two names, Fue-tangata and Fue-sa; he peopled the two flat lands.

42. Then Tangaloa gave his parting command thus; 'Always show respect to Manu'a; if any one do not, he will be overtaken by calamity; but let each one do as he likes with his own lands.'

43. [Here] the story of the creation of Sāmoa finishes with this parting command, which was given at Malae-lā.

#### NOTES TO THE STORY OF CREATION.

PAR. 1. *Punjl*; for an account of Punjl and his works, see R. Brough Smyth's "Aborigines of Victoria," Vol. I., and for Baiamai, see Ridley's "Kamilaroi."

*Baiamai*; in the text I have given this form of the name, for it is the common one; but I think that it ought to be written Ba-ye-mai; for *ba* is the root 'to make,' *ba-yé* means 'one who makes,' and *mai* is a formative termination.

*Kamalarai*; this name for a native language and tribe in New South Wales has always been written Kamilaroi; but the composition of the word requires the spelling Kámālarai, for it is made up of *ka* (dialect *kya*) 'not,' *-mal* and *-arai* which are common formative suffixes.

*Dhara-mulan*; a demiurge figures in many of the ancient cosmogonies. The Egyptian demiurge Thoth created light for the world, while as yet there was no sun, and in the Orphic hymns, light exists before the sun; *cf.* note 4 s. v. *Aether*. p. 181 In the Kamalarai legends, Dhara-mulan seems to have a two-fold aspect, and hence the *-mulan* in his name may be the word *bula*, 'two.'

*Breathed very hard*; *cf.* "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." The Polynesian here and in other respects agrees with the Egyptian and the Hebrew Cosmogonies, which commence with chaos, regard light as anterior to the sun, postulate

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the moulding hand of a deity in creation and a divine breath as the source of life. The Polynesian cosmogony has also, the idea of the unity of God; for the gods are all Tangaloa. It agrees with the Avesta in tracing creation to the will of a deity and in ascribing perfection—"it is good"—to the thing created; Ahuramazda is the sole creator who made heaven and earth and men. In India also, the Self-existing One *by a thought* made the waters. The Babylonian Cosmogony considers water as the primal element from which life came; the Polynesian does not.

2. *Punjil's brother*; cf. the relation of Zeus to Poseidon.

*Cut into pieces*; cf. the Hebrew verb *bârâ*, 'to create,' which properly means 'to fashion,' 'to shape.'

*Worms*; cf. a subsequent note on *Fue-tagata*.

3. *The details thereof*; for these, see Rev. Dr. Gill's "Myths and Songs" and Sir George Grey's "Polynesian Mythology."

4. *Le atua Tagaloa*; this expression shows that this myth is not modern; for the word *atua*, 'god,' was almost obsolete when the first missionaries went to Samoa.

*Aether*; some commentators on Gen., I., 1-2 assert that the Ancient Jews believed the sky to be a solid vault, but that in its original state (verse 1) it was a liquid expanse; the 'separation' of the material of heaven and earth took place on the second day of creation (verses 6-8).

*Envelopes*; the Polynesian conception of the Heavens does not seem to include a belief that they encompass the world *all round* like a circle—not spheres, but crescent-shaped vaults. This also is the Hebrew notion; cf. "He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in" (Is. xl., 22). "He walketh in the circuit of heaven" (Job. xxii., 14).

*Fale-ula*; cf. the 'Solo o le Va.'

5. *Papa*; not a 'rock' in our sense of the word, but merely 'something flat and solid'; cf. Gen. I., 6-8. In the sense of 'foundation,' *papa* has numerous correspondences in the Hebrew Scriptures; cf. Isaiah xxxi., 17, "the earth's foundation quake"—the foundations which support the visible frame of the earth.

*Separate fiats*; this cosmogony is thus theistical, not pantheistical.

*Prince Prop-up-sky*; Tui-te'e-langi; his place here, among the physioal creations of Tangaloo, shows that he is not a god—not a Tangaloo,—but a sort of physical Atlas.

*The sky is lifted up*; cf. the English word 'heaven' and the Scotch, 'lift.'

6. *Dull, inert mass*; it had the worm-life from the Fue-sā, but that was all.

7. *Southern side*; the limited knowledge which the ancients had of geography led them to regard the north as hyperborean; and thus the south was to them the habitable part of the globe.

8. *Sun and stars*; so also in Genesis I., the sun does not appear till the fourth day. In our myth, there is no mention of the moon till further on.

9. *Ninth Heavens*; 'three times three'; cf. the notes on this point in the 'Solo o le Va.' In the "Records of the past," we read of the 'nine gods, the masters of things,' and of a 'holy nine.' As the basis of their numeration, the Polynesians have—one, two, three; they have no knowledge of seven as a perfect number.

*Tranquillity and peace*; cf. the notes on this point in the 'Solo o le Va.'

*For the occupation of man*; it seems to me that whatever is essential to the Polynesian idea of creation is contained in this verse—"He that created (*bârâ*) the heavens" &c. (Is. xlii., 5) see below, note 13.

11. *Outside in the sun*; cf. the reverence given to the scarabæus, as a product of the Nile mud under the heat of the sun.

*Fashioned into men*; cf. Heb. *bârâ*, as above.

12. *Into member'd forms*; see the 'Solo o le Va.'

13. *The god Tangaloo*. He is the great god of the Polynesians; cf. the notes on 'Solo o le Va.'

*The Expanse*; 'va-nimo-nimo' is the word used here. *Va* means space between any two things; it may be as small a space as that between two laths on a partition wall or the planking of a ship's deck; but it may include as much as the east is distant from the west; *nimo-nimo* means 'far, far distant.' I therefore take *va-nimo-nimo* to mean 'vastly extended space'—so vast that the mind cannot compass it. In Samoan, *nimo-nimo* is said of

anything that has quite passed from the memory; and a lark soaring aloft, and thus going out of sight, would be said to be *nimo-nimo*. The word *mamao*, which occurs further on, also means 'space,' but it seems to differ from *va-nimo-nimo* in that it is used of a measurable distance between objects; it may be translated 'extension.' The difference may thus be translated, 'extension.' The difference may thus be that *va-nimo-nimo* is 'unlimited extension,' whereas *mamao* is 'limited extension.' In Genesis I., 6, the 'firmament' is the Hebrew *rakîā*, that which is 'spread out,' and seems to correspond with the 'expanse' here. In Genesis I., 2, "the Spirit of God moved ('brooded') on the face of the waters;" here it is said that Tangaloa *fe-alu-alu-mai*, 'goes backwards and forwards;' *alu* means to 'go;' the prefix *fe* has a reciprocal force; *alu-alu* is a reduplication of intensity; the *-mai* is a formative termination. In the 'Solo o le Va,' Tuli, which is the *ata* or spirit-emblem of Tangaloa-savali, is tired of moving to and fro, and desires a place to rest on; forthwith up sprang Manua's Rock. So also in this myth; where Tangaloa halted from his wandering to and fro, on that spot a Rock sprang up. In line 32 of that same Solo, the footstool of Tangaloa is called *taa-tuga*, 'that on which he stands;' with this compare "Heaven is my throne, earth is my footstool, . . . what is the place of my rest?" Here comes in the ancient idea that the heavens were a solid vault; *cf. Gr.* 'stereoun,' 'stereoma;' *Lat.* 'firmamentum.'

*He made all things*, 'na faia mea uma;' with this compare, "And without him was not anything made that was made."

*No earth*; the word here is *lau- 'ele 'ele*, which means 'land spread out;' *'ele 'ele* elsewhere is merely 'earth, soil, dirt,' the *lau* here prefixed denotes 'breadth;' *cf.* the 'broad-bosomed earth' of Hesiod. With the meaning of *lau- 'ele 'ele* compare Isaiah xlii., 5, "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created (*cf.* Heb. *bârâ*) the heavens, and stretched them out (*cf.* Samoan *va-nimo-nimo* and Heb. *rakîa*); he that *spread forth* the earth (*cf.* *lau- 'ele 'ele*) and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it (*cf.* 'Solo o le Va'), and spirit (*cf.* *anga-anga*) to them that walk therein." The Hebrew verb there, '*rākâ*,' properly signifies to spread out by 'trampling' on with the feet, or 'beating' into thin plates. In Samoan, *lau* has a similar reference; for, of its compounds, *lau-lelei* means 'even, level,' *lau-papa* is a 'board, a plank,' *lau-tele* is 'wide,' and *lāu* itself, as a prefix to verbs, denotes 'uniformity' and 'universality' as if 'spread out.'

*T.-fa 'a-tutupu-nu 'u*; here *fa 'a* (dialects *ba-ka*, *fa-ka*, *wha-ka*) is a causative prefix to verbs, very abundantly used in Polynesian; *tupu*, as a verb, means 'to grow,' 'to spring up;' *tutupu* is its plural form; *nu 'u*, means 'a country,' 'a district.' The whole name thus means 'Tangaloa, the creator of lands.'

*A rock grew up*; 'tupu ai le papa'

14. *Be thou split open*; 'māvae ia,' said of parturition; *māvae*, 'to open as a crack;' hence *māvava*, 'to yawn.'

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*Brought forth*; the word is *fanau*, which is also applied to the extrusion of gum from trees. The next acts of creation are in the text expressed in each case, by *toe fanau*, 'again it brought forth,' but, for brevity, our translation says only 'after that,' 'then.' With *fanau* compare: "Before the mountains were brought forth." (*Heb.* *yullād*)—Psalm xc., 2.

*Papa*, 'rock;' it also means 'plain, level, flat,' and that meaning is in harmony with the 'spread out' of the note above. To the Polynesian myth-makers, their mountains, being mostly volcanic, do not belong the earliest stages of creation. The various kinds of 'papa' are indicated by the epithets attached—viz., *ta 'oto*, 'to lie down;' *sosolo*, 'to run,' 'to spread like creeping-plants;' *lau-a 'au*, 'resembling a flat reef' (*a 'au* is a 'reef,' and to 'swim;' *lau* denotes uniformity); *'ano- 'ano* is 'honey-comb;' *'ele* is a sort of volcanic mud or shale, so soft that it can be cut with an axe; *tu* means 'to stand' (its derivative, *tugā*, means 'standing in the way,' as a rock in the middle of the road); *'amu- 'amu* is a kind of 'branching coral,' branching like fingers.

*Children*; the word here is *pau*, not *fanau*, 'offspring.'

15. *Facing the west*; in the ancient auguries and other ceremonials, the position of the celebrant was important.

*Towards the right*. Mr. Powell says here—"In the direction of *tualagi*, 'the back of the sky' the north," cf. Ovid *Meta* I. 2, 45. 'Right' and 'left' are equivalent to 'north' and 'south,' cf. Ps. lxxxix., 12; Is. liv., 8. To the Kelts of Sootland and Ireland, the 'right' hand is still the 'south' hand (*deas* for *deaks*, 'right;' cf. *Gr.* *dex-ios*, *Lat.* *dex-ter*, 'right'); because when the face is turned towards the east, the south is on the right. An old custom among them—said to have come down from the Druids—is called *deas-iùil*, 'a turn to the right;' because, in all their solemn processions, the company, in order to secure a blessing, turns to the right, and, keeping the object on the right, marches round it 'three times' in the same direction as the daily course of the sun. The motion in a contrary way is *car-tual*, and is considered unlucky; in Lowland Scotch this is called a *widder-sins* motion.

*World*; *lalo-lagi*, 'under-the-sky.'

*Earth*; *'ele- 'ele*; this is a reduplication of *'ele*, 'red-earth,' 'rust,' 'dirt,' 'blood;' see *'ele- 'ele*. It is interesting to remember here that the Hebrew word *adâmâh* (cf. *Adam*), 'the earth,' 'the tilled ground,' comes from a root meaning to be 'red,' and is applied also to the 'dust' which mourners use.

*That is the parent, &c.* With this compare, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground."

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*The sea; sami*, 'the salt water' (Lat. *sal*), not *tai*. In Genesis i., 10, as here also, 'the seas' (Heb. *yâmim*) are gathered together when the dry land (Heb. *yâbêsh*, 'anything that is dried up or becomes dry') appears. The Samoan word *tai* means 'the sea, the tide;' the distinction between it and *sami* seems to be that *tai* is the sea where it flows upon the land, but *sami* is the big salt ocean.

*Papa-nofu* probably is 'the rock (or rocks) that remained' uncovered. The idea of the myth-maker here seems to be that the *sami* at first had not depth of water enough to cover anything but the *papa-sosolo*; but that ere long the waters would rise and reach the other rocks also, and so make them happy (*amuia*, 'blessed,' used in congratulations).

16. *Fresh-water*, '*vai*;' as in the 'Solo o le Va,' so here; the *vai* comes immediately after the *tai*.

*Your sea*. The word here is *tai*; cf. the note on *sami*.

*Brought forth; produced; come forth*; in the text these are always '*fanau*.'

*Sky*; '*lagi*;' pronounced *langi* (i = Italian i). Everywhere, the Samoan *g* = *ng*. A cognate word is the Melanesian *laga*, 'clear.'

*Tui-te'e-lagi*; *tui*, 'a high chief, a prince, a king;' *te'e*, 'to prop up;' *lagi*, 'the sky.' The Australian blacks also know that the sky is propped up; once the props broke, and the wizards (*koráji*) had the utmost difficulty in putting things right again.

*Ilu*, &c.; these three, *Ilu*, *Mamao*, and *Niuao* do not come into existence till after the sky is propped up: hence *mamao*, as I think, must mean 'limited extension' or 'space' from horizon to horizon, from sunrise to sunset; *niuao* is formed from *niu*, 'a cocoa-nut tree;' the Samoans say of a very tall man that he 'a walking cocoa-nut tree;' of smoke they say *fa'a-niu tu*, 'it stands like a cocoa-nut tree;' and in the Samoan Bible the missionaries have applied the expression to the 'pillar of fire' in the wilderness; and so, I think, that *niuao* must mean 'height.' The Samoan word *ilu* means 'innumerable,' 100,000, or any vast number; in its place in the text it cannot well refer to the stars in the sky; we may translate it 'immensity,' and apply it to distance from north to south. *Ilu*, *Mamao*, and *Niuao* would thus be the three dimensions formed by the bounding sky—viz., Length, Breadth, and Height, each of them, however, limited by the sky. Cf. the note on *the Expanse*.

17. *Lua'o and Luavai*; *lua-vai* means 'two fresh-waters;' *lua'o* should, I think, be *luao*, for *luā-ao*, 'two clouds.'

*Sā-tua-lagi*; the 'race' at the 'back' of the 'sky'; the north.

18. *Ngao-ngao-le-tai*. 'the desolate sea.'

'Came;' 'came forth;' the text has still the same *toe fanau*, 'again was brought forth.'

*Man*; 'tangata,' the human race. Last to be created was man, and the elements which are joined together to make up his composite being. These are—*anga-nga*, 'the spirit,' probably from the same root as *nga'e*, 'to breathe hard;' hence the 'breath,' the 'spirit,' in the same sense as the Heb. *ruāch*, Gr. *psuche*, Lat. *spiritus*, *animus*, Sans. *âtman*; in Samoan *anga-nga* also means 'a disembodied spirit'—*loto*, the 'heart or affections,' not the physical heart—*finagalo* 'the will,' also the 'liver;' *finagalo* is a word used only to chiefs; *finagaloa* means, 'to be angry,' 'choleric.' The next name, *masalo*, properly means 'doubt,' but this appears to be a secondary meaning, for 'doubt' arises from that power which enables the mind to cast things to and fro in reflection, and hence to deliberate; *masalo* is therefore here taken to be 'thought,' 'the power of thought.' These four Tangaloa causes to go within man's physical frame, and combine there; and thus man becomes 'intelligent, wise,' See also Ovid, *Meta* i., 1.

In Is. xlii., 5—the verse already quoted—the breath and the spirit (*neshâmâh* and *ruāch*) are distinguished; the one is the animal spirit or life; the other is the spirit which gives consciousness. Similarly, the Melanesians and Polynesians believe that man has two spirits—the one may leave him for a time when he is dreaming or in a faint; the other finally leaves his body at death.

19. *No fixture*; *ua leai se mea a mau ai*, 'there was no thing to be fast to;' *ope-opea*, 'they floated about.' Cf. "The earth was without form and void;" cf. also Ovid, *Meta*, i., 1.

20. *An ordinance*; 'tofiga.' This word comes from the verb *tofi*, 'to divide an inheritance,' 'to apportion a father's property among children.' Tangaloa's *tofiga* is thus the exercise of his sovereign pleasure in allotting to his children their several stations and spheres of action, as indicated in the five paragraphs which follow.

*Intelligent*, 'atamai.' As a verb this word means 'to understand;' as an adjective, 'clever, intelligent, sensible;' as a noun, 'the mind.' The Samoan *ata* denotes the incorporeal shadow or spirit, as opposed to the substance of a thing; and *atamai* may be a derivative from it; so also the French *esprit* and *spirituel* are related. The Sanskrit *âtman* also means 'the breath, the soul, the understanding,' p. 185 and its derivative *âtmanvant* means 'sensible,' 'self-controlled;' *âtman* is supposed to be derived from a root *ava*, *vâ*; with which compare the Heb. *hâvâ* 'to breathe.'

*Fatu-ma-le- 'ele 'ele*; 'seed-stone and earth.' *Fatu* is a word which, in various forms, is found in all Malaysia, Melanesia, and Polynesia, in the sense of 'hard,' 'anything hard,' 'the hard kernel or seed-stone of fruit.' For the meaning of *le- 'ele 'ele*, see above; but *Le- 'Ele 'ele* is here regarded as a woman, who, by the ordinance (*tofiga*) of Tangaloa is united (*fa 'a-tasi*, 'joined,' *lit.* 'made-one') to *Fatu*, the completed man. *Fatu* is the seed-giving principle, and *Le 'Ele 'ele* is the receptacle of the seed. With this compare the tales in classic authors about *De-méter* ('Mother-earth') and *Zeus*.

*A void*; 'va-nimo-nimo;' see note above. *To rest upon*; *lit.* 'to reach to.' All this corresponds with the *Heb.* 'tohu' (chaos) of creation—a waste in which nothing was defined.

*Region*; *itu*, 'a side,' 'a district;' *itu i matū*, 'the north;' *cf.* *Heb.* 'the sides of the north,' *yârekâthaim tzâphôn* (Isaiah xiv., 13) where *tzâphôn* is the region of 'darkness' (*cf.* *Homer, pros zophon*, *Odys.* ix., 25) 'the north quarter,' and *yârekâthaim* is a dual form to mean 'both sides,' hence 'the buttocks,' 'the back,' 'the remotest parts of a country.' This agrees with the idea conveyed by *tua-lagi* 'the back of the sky,' to which *Lua'o* and *Luavai* were appointed, to be regents there. Fresh-water is 'vai.' In the 'Solo o le Va,' line 21, the creation of *vai* and *tai* is mentioned. The Polynesians believed that there were reservoirs of fresh-water up in the sky. In the Biblical account of the great Flood, it is said that 'the windows of heaven were opened.'

*Le Fatu*: see note above. *Ordains*; 'tofia;' *cf. ordinance*, 'tofiga.'

*Points*; *tusi*, 'to point out' with the index finger.

*Masoa* and *Teve* are both referred to in the 'Solo o le Va,' lines 73, 75. The *Masoa* (*Tacca pinnatifida*) is the arrow-root tree; growing on a succulent stem, with leaves only at the top, where they spread out like the surface of a round table. The *Teve* (*Tacca amorphophallus*) is another kind of arrow-root tree, very like the *Masoa*. From their shape they are well fitted for the purpose to which they are applied in these myths. See also Sir Geo. Grey's "Polynesian Mythology."

*There was nothing, &c.*; 'a na leai se mea e taunu'u i ai le va'ai.'

Far-receding sky; 'va-nimo-nimo.' See notes above.

21. *They brought forth*; the text has 'ua fanau Ao, toe fanau Po;' another reading is, 'ua fanau Po ma Ao, ua fa'a-tagata-ina ai le lagi,' 'they brought forth Night and Day, who caused-to-be-peopled the sky.' The order *Po ma Ao*, 'Night and Day,' is more consonant with the ideas of the Polynesians who counted by nights. The word

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*fa'atagataina* consists of *fa'a* the causative prefix already noticed, and *tagata*, 'man,' 'mankind,' which in another dialect is *kanaka*, now commonly applied to the 'labour-men' who are brought from the islands of the South Seas to the northern parts of Australia.

*The eye of the sky*; 'le mata o le lagi.' The Malays call the Sun *mata-ari*, 'the eye of the day.' The Egyptian City, On, (*Heb.* 'Ir-ha-Heres, *Gr.* Heliopolis) 'the city of the Sun,' got its name from Ain, Oin, 'the eye'—the emblem of the Sun.

*The second heavens.* Here the Polynesians believe, like other nations of old, that the sky originally lay flat on the earth, and covered it; by the aid of the *Masoa* and the *Teve*, Tui-te'e-lagi props it up, and this gives room for *Ilu* and *Mamao* to work; this is the First Heavens; in it are placed the Sun, and Night, and Day. *Ilu* and *Mamao* then bear again, and the Sky ('le lagi'), according to myth, is produced; this probably means the region above the clouds, for the Polynesian myth-makers must have noticed the difference between cloud-land and higher sky; this Tui propped up, and it was the Second Heavens.

*Remained there*—i.e., in the Third Heavens, which they peopled. The heavens above the Third are, in the myth, produced (*fanau*) by *Langi*, the 'sky' personified, but they were all peopled by *Ilu* and *Mamao*. The notion that the stars in the heavens are gods, and men, and beasts, and trees, &c., is a very old one.

22. *Tangaloa sat still.* In the 'Solo o le Va,' he is represented as a quiet, contemplative god, who delights in tranquillity and peace—the Polynesian Brahṃā, the origin and source of all things. In his active manifestations he is *fa'a-tutupu-nuu* (see note on *par.* 13), 'the creator of lands;' but in his dealings with men he works by intermediary emanations from himself, which are all of them persons, and called *Tangaloa*; *le fuli* is the 'immoveable' (*le* 'not,' *fuli*, 'to turn over,' 'to capsize'); *asi-asi-nu'u*, 'the omnipresent' (*asi*, 'to visit,' *asi-asi*, a frequentative; *nu'u*, 'a district, a country, a people'); *tolo-nu'u*, 'the extender of lands, or peoples' (*tolo*, 'to spread out;' it applies to reefs that run out into the sea, branches that spread out from the tree, or roots running along on the surface of the ground); *sāvāli*, 'the ambassador or messenger' (*sāvāli* means 'to walk').

*Tuli* and *Longonoa* both mean 'deaf' or 'deafness,' but that meaning cannot apply to these workers of *Tangaloa*. In the 'Solo o le Va,' *Tuli* is the bird 'ata' or emblem of *Tangaloa*; so also here, I believe. As to *Longonoa*, the simple verb *logo*, means 'to report;' hence I take *Longonoa* to be 'the reporter,' the one who carries tidings up to *Tangaloa*; *logonoa* means 'to hear,' and *logo-logoā* is 'famous, renowned.' *Logonoa* would thus be used as a verbal adjective; and in form it corresponds with such verbs as *tala-noa* from *tala*. The *Longo-noa* here may be the same as the *Rongo* of other islands.

24. *They should go up.* The context means that Savali, 'the messenger,' was sent down to summon a *fono* or council of the gods whose stations had been appointed in the various heavens below, and tell them that *they should go up* to the Ninth Heavens to deliberate there. This was a council of chiefs, for these gods are called *ali* 'i, 'chiefs.' The *fono* determined to send Savali down with a message to Night and Day.

25. *Langi-uli*, 'the dark, cloudy heavens;' *Langi-mā*, 'the bright clear heavens,' called also *Langi-lelei* (*lelei*, 'good, beautiful'). *Uli* means 'black,' 'dark blue.'

26. *Last injunction*; mavaega, 'a parting command.'

27. *Manu'a* and *Samoa*. The pride of the race comes in here; Manu'a is the child of Night and Day, and is the brother of the Sun and Moon. The ruler of the 'Celestial Empire' even cannot claim a more ancient lineage than that!

28. *Sa-tia-le-moa*. On this fabulous account of the origin of the names Samoa and Manu'a, Mr. Powell's MSS. have this note:—This affair of the names is in a very confused state. A man, Taua-nu'u, who is 'keeper of the traditions' for Taū, told me lately that Tangaloa fell from a precipice on to Malae-a-Vavāu, and was badly wounded, and from that circumstance Tau was called Manu'a tele, 'greatly wounded.' Several persons told Mr. Pratt and myself, in 1862, that the whole group is named Sāmoa, from Moa, the family name of the present King of Manu'a—Sāmoa or Sā-moa-atoa. Fofu and Taua-nu'u still maintain that the account given to Mr. Pratt and myself is perfectly correct, and that *le atu o Moa* ('the Moa group') includes Samoa, Tahiti, &c., &c.

*You two also*; i.e., the father and the mother with their four boys.

*Malae-a-toto'a*. It is a peaceful region, a land of rest and tranquillity; it is the glassy empyrean, beyond the reach of storms.

30. *Builders*; 'tūfūga.' see the 'Solo o le Va.'

*Bright house*. This paragraph seems to mean that the palace in the Ninth Heavens was not their work, although they built in all the heavens below. p. 187 *Fale-'ula\** is the 'bright house'; *fale*, 'a house,' 'ula, 'red,' 'joyful,' 'bright'; hence the name means 'house of joy,' or 'the house beautiful.'

*Offspring of Fatu* and 'Ele'ele. All the children of Earth are placed under the command of these two chiefs, Manu'a and Sāmoa.

*Tail of the names.* Chiefs often have the name Tangaloa as the last part of their own names.

*Tui, &c.,* 'King of great Manu'a and all Sāmoa.' Tui also means 'king,' 'high chief.'

32. *Follow.* The sun and the moon are not here the cause of day and night; they only follow them. The day breaks, then comes the sun; darkness falls, and ere long the moon rises.

*Shades; ata,* 'shade,' 'emblem.' The 'ata' or 'spirit' of Tangaloa resides in them, as in the Tuli; see note on *par.* 22.

*Portion of the heavens; itu,* 'side,' see notes on *par.* 20. The moon and the stars always pass along the sky in the same direction.

33. *Went to and fro;* 'fe-alu-alu-mai'; *cf.* notes on *par.* 13. *To visit the lands;* 'asi-asi i nu'u.' Here Savali performs the functions *Tangaloa asi-asi nu'u*, another manifestation of the supreme god; in visiting these lands he assumed the form of the Tuli; *cf.* the 'Solo o le Va.'

*The Eastern groups;* that is, Tahiti and the adjacent islands.

*The space between;* 'vasa,' that is, the ocean-space between two islands.

*Walk it;* 'savali,' in allusion to his name.

*Turned his face;* fa'asaga, 'to direct to,' 'to face to.'

*The Tongan group;* which is placed as a stepping-stone between the Eastern group and Fiji. *That land;* 'lau-'ele'ele'; see note on *par.* 13.

34. *This Manu'a;* the land of the poet's birth.

*Move about;* 'fe-alu-mai,'—not the frequentative form this time. The meaning is that Manu'a was too small an island, and so the land ('lau-'ele'ele') of Savai'i was created. Therefore in poetry, these two islands are regarded as proceeding from the same act of creation.

*A council ground; that is, a malae.*

*Was walking; eva-eva, not fe-alu-alu-mai; eva means 'to walk by moonlight,' 'to walk or go about leisurely.' His work was done, and so he could now take a stroll for recreation.*

*Shred them; 'totosi; tosi means 'to tear in strips,' though not so as to separate; 'to draw out,' 'to form.'*

*Four persons; a myth to account for the names Upolu tele and Tutuila*

*Fue-sā, 'the sacred climbing-vine.' Here called also Fue-tagata—an additional particular, not mentioned in the 'Solo o le Va.'*

*Flat lands; lau-'ele'ele. Parting command; 'mavaega.'*

42. *Show respect to; 'le sopoia; lit. 'do not pass over.'*

*Do as he likes; pule, 'have authority and full control.'*

43. As is usual, the poet, at the close of his tale, enforces the claim of Manua, to have glory and honour.

#### ADDENDUM.

The Mexican story of Creation may be compared with the Polynesian 'tala; I therefore quote a few points of resemblance from a French translation of the "Codex Ramirez," which was written in Spanish soon after the conquest of Mexico: "The first god and the first goddess were self-created, and dwelt in the Third Heavens; of their four sons, one was born red, another was born black.\* Two of these sons, by appointment, proceeded to create first fire, then a half-sun, then a man and a woman, then the days, then a great fish\* like a cayman, out of which they made the earth. As yet there was no division of time into years; so the creating gods now made a full sun to shine on the earth. Then great giants were made, who lived only on acorns, and could carry trees in their hands. Soon after it rained\* so much that the sky fell down upon the earth. The gods then created four men to help them to raise the sky again, and two of the gods changed themselves into trees\* for the same end. The Sun now resumed his place in the sky, and, in order that he might have hearts to feed on,\* and blood to drink, men were compelled to engage in perpetual war. One year after this one of the four gods took a rod, p. 189 and

Text available at: [http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page\\_175](http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page_175) (accessed February 7, 2008).

with it struck a rock, from which sprang the 'mountaineers,' who occupied the country before the Mexicans came there."

In the introduction to this 'tala,' I have offered a new derivation of the name Tangaloa. I wish now to add that that derivation has some support from what we know as the Vedic god Varuna—the same word as the Greek *ouranos*, 'heaven.' The name Varuna is derived from the Sanskrit verb *veri*, 'to cover,' 'to surround;' and, in its compounds, 'to enclose,' 'to overspread;' a participial noun from it means 'a wrapper,' 'a cloak;' with these compare the Polynesian words already cited. In the Veda Varuna is one of the most ancient of deities; he is sprung from 'Space,' and is the god of the heavens; in some of the later hymns he is regarded as controlling the waters, both in heaven and on earth; hence in the later mythology his name is synonymous with 'the waters,' 'the ocean.' For, just as the Vedic Varuna covers and encompasses the terrestrial sphere, so the Homeric mighty river Okeanos surrounds the whole of the terrestrial lands. With all this compare the functions of Tangaloa, who, in some localities in Polynesia, is also lord of the sea.

In the Greek mythology, Ouranos is the grandfather of Zeus, and Varuna is thus more venerable and ancient than Dyaus, the lower sky.

## The Pacific

### Footnotes

\* Compare with this the story of Kahu's discovery of the Chatham Islands: "On the arrival of the Kahu at this island (Chatham Island) he found it floating about; it was Kahu who closed (fixed) all this island, including Pitt Island." There are other Polynesian myths of the same character.—EDITORS.

† NOTE.—Mr. Powell's manuscript, under date March 21, 1871, has this note:—"To-day Taua-nu'u has explained to me the reason of his reluctance to disclose his traditions; he is afraid lest contention arise, when it is found that they place Savai'i and Upólu in a position inferior to his own islands of Manu'a. When I promised due care, he opened his treasures more fully. He states that (1) 'Ele-'ele is distinct from Fatu-ma-le-'Ele-'ele; that was the name given to the first man, who was only at first floating about on the waters with 'Ele-'ele. Fatu-ma-le-'Ele-'ele was formed by the union of Spirit, Heart, Will, and Thought, and was appointed to people the lands in conjunction with 'Ele-'ele 'Earth,' but Le-'Ele-'ele was different, and Fatu was different from 'Ele-'ele.

Text available at: [http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page\\_175](http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/jpolys/ssc.htm#page_175) (accessed February 7, 2008).

\* *Fale-‘ula*, is the Whare-kura of Maori tradition, which is described as a temple, or use set apart and strictly *tapu*, where the priests taught the ancient histories and traditions of the people; it is sometimes called Whare-maire.—EDITORS.

† Compare with this, the preparations made by Maui, who in most of the myths referring to his "fishing up" of lands is described as trampling on the hills to prepare the earth the habitation of man. Had he not been overtaken by daylight this would have been accomplished and the earth have presented a level surface.—EDITORS.

\* Parallels to these are found in others of our Samoan myths.

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