



9 | REMEMBERING DORCAS AKINTUNDE'S FEMINIST BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

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Abstract

The subject of women in societal development has continued to attract scholarly attention globally. Much more attention is being shifted to roles and status of women as they play significant roles in family and the society at large. Ajayi and Ayantayo opined “Women are perceived to be the conscience of the nation and their contributions to society and humanity is enormous.” Though in most part of the world women are regarded as the weaker sex. Also most of the time, women are at the receiving ends of many socio-political ill-treatment, economic deprivations and social isolations. This study seeks to read into the works of Professor Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde, and her liberation theology. Dorcas Akintunde is an astute intellectual and scholar on New Testament and Women Studies; who distinguished herself in several key roles, some of which were customarily dominated by men in our patriarchal society. She also made invaluable contributions to intellectual pursuits and dissemination of ideas in her chosen field of study. This study captures Dorcas’ intellectual interest and elucidates her theology of the place of women in societal development. It also projects her immense participation and contributions to local and international projects on HIV/ AIDS discourse and projects in Africa, Europe, America and Asia. This is captured especially among women groups. This study is out to answer questions like: What were the theological context(s) that informed her work? What were the theological sources used by her work? What were her theology set to achieve? How did her theology converse with African male theologians and western feminist theologians? How did her theological ideas disavow patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, tribalism and gender/disability-based discrimination? And what are the main strengths and contributions of her theology to the world of knowledge? The instrument for this study is interview.

Keywords: Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde, Women Theology, HIV/AIDS, New Testament Studies

Brief Biography of Prof. Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde

Professor Dorcas Adebanke Akintunde, an astute intellectual and scholar on women studies lived from February 22, 1961 to March 15, 2011. She was born into the family Pastor Moses Ajibade Amusan and Madam Mariam Amusan (nee Adekanmbi) of Ibadan in the South-Western part of Nigeria. The girl Banke Amusan fondly called Banke (later Mrs. Akintunde) was born into a family of a priest in the Christ Apostolic Church. Banke was the youngest daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Amusan and the third child in the family of four children (Ajayi, 2015:2). Born into a priestly family, it was natural that all her “activities as a youth revolved round the church and its environment (Akintunde, 1997:1).

Banke was born and brought up to play her part in the ancient city of Ibadan, a historic town that served at various times and through changing scenes as the headquarters of Western Region, Western State, Old Oyo State and the present day Oyo State (Ajayi, 2015:1). According to S. Ademola Ajayi, at Nigeria’s independence in 1960, Ibadan was an impressive and sprawling urban centre. It was the largest and most populous city in the country and the third in Africa, after Cairo and Johannesburg. The following year when Banke was born, 1961, was quite significant in the political history of the city in that it was a year of major political change. That year, Ibadan city was separated from its rural district and constituted into a city council, known as Ibadan City Council (ICC) with the Olubadan (the monarch of Ibadan) as the president (Ajayi, 2015:2).

Prof. Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde, then called Banke Amusan had her primary school education at the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) Primary School, Oniyanrin, Ibadan from 1967 – 1972. She proceeded to the famous Queen of Apostle’s Secondary Commercial Grammar School, Oloyoro, Oke-Offa, Ibadan between 1973 and 1977 for her secondary education. “While in secondary school, she never displayed the traits of a genius or future scholar. This is clearly discernible from her principal’s remarks in her end-of-session report of her promotion examination from Form II to Form III that “This is a very poor result. Unless there is a big improvement in class III she will be asked to withdraw. Promoted on trial (Hayes, 1974).” That frank comment by her missionary principal must have gingered her to put in more effort, the result of which was she not

being asked to withdraw. Rather, she passed out successfully in 1977 at the age of 16. As a secondary school student, the young Dorcas derived enormous inspiration and knowledge from her teachers, especially the white missionaries who tutored and mentored her (Ajayi, 2015:2).

In 1979, Dorcas moved out of the city of Ibadan to attend the Government Teachers' Training College (GTTC), where she qualified as a trained and certified teacher in 1980. Dorcas Akintunde's initial ambition, as a young school leaver was to be a nurse. In her own words, "I longed to be a nurse due to the fact that nurses are smart, neat and beautiful when in their uniform (Akintunde, 1997:1). Her move to secure admission into school of nursing was not successful; therefore, she sought admission to a college of education in 1982 – Wesley College, Elekuro, Ibadan campus of the Oyo State College of Education, Ilesa (now Osun State). She applied for admission to a three-year National Certificate of Education programme (NCE). However, as she was proposing, God did not permit it but she was fortunate in that she got admission for a 2-year Diploma course in the Department of Religious Studies of University of Ibadan. She went further and got a Diploma in Religious Studies (with Distinction in Islamic Studies) in 1984. Then, her eyes were opened to the university education. One of the notable mentors then was Dr. (later Prof.) Samuel Oyin Abogunrin who taught her New Testament Studies. Dorcas registered for a Bachelor's Degree programme in the same department and she obtained a B.A. (Hons.) in Religious Studies in 1988. Bent on greater academic laurels, she also embarked on the M.A. programme in Religious Studies, which she completed in 1991. At this time, the scholar in her was already in the making, so, after two-year teaching experience in a secondary school, Banke's passion for further education led her to apply for a PhD-programme at the same university of Ibadan. In 2001, she obtained a PhD degree in Religious Studies from the University of Ibadan (Ajayi, 2015:3).

Her Career

Dorcas Akintunde had her entire working career within that academic setting. She began work as Grade II teacher in 1981 at Gbedun Community Grammar School, Gbedun near Akanran in Oyo State. She later proceeded to the University of Ibadan for further studies, for a Diploma, then for Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies. She immediately went for her

Masters degree. She taught at Aponmade High School, Moniya, Ibadan from 1991 – 1993. From there she was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan in 1993. At the time of her appointment in Ibadan, all other members of staff were male (ten in number). By implication, she was the eleventh staff and she was the only female lecturer. She rose through the ranks from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer II (1996-1999); Lecturer I (1999-2002); Senior Lecturer (2002-2006), Reader (2006-2010); and became a professor in 2010. This was a result of her deep interest in scholarship, particularly in New Testament and Women Studies. It is significant to note that at the University of Ibadan where Dorcas Akintunde flowered, she had a working stint of exactly eighteen years from the date of her assumption of duty as Assistant Lecturer on March 15, 1993 to March 15, 2011 when she died as a full professor, effective from October 1, 2010 (Ajayi, 2015:3-4). Her years in the University of Ibadan saw her through teaching, researching, writing, supervising, leading and mentoring younger academics.

Dorcas Akintunde emerged as an academic whose reputation transcended her intellectual base in Ibadan, and even the shores of Nigeria. She was an external examiner to other universities and allied tertiary institutions. She was also a visiting fellow to a number of universities and allied institutions in Africa, Europe, America, Asia and Australia (Akintunde, 1997:1). She registered for a Dmin / PhD programme in San Francisco, a programme in which she was writing something on Luke and was being supervised by Prof. Musa Dube. Even though she could not finish the project, she confided in her supervisor, Prof Musa, that it has helped her to get her promotion (Musa, 2023).

Honours, Distinctions and Laurels

Before the time of demise of Prof Dorcas Akintunde in March 15, 2011, she had become a brand name among female academics in her field, much sought after, even in first-rate universities globally (Akintunde, 2011:1). For example, University of South Africa offered her Research Fellowship (Makhanya, 2010). Dorcas Akintunde won several scholarships, fellowships and prizes. These included Mrs Jokotola Sebanjo Memorial prize, for the best female student in the department of Religious Studies, University of

Ibadan in 1988; Bishop Kale Prize for the best student in the same department in the same year; Post-doctorate Fellow of Yale University, New Haven, USA between 2005 and 2006; Fellow of the Centre for African Studies, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom in 2008; Research Fellow in the Department of Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, University of South Africa from August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2013.

Prof. Akintunde was also a member of many professional bodies within and outside Nigeria where she played prominent roles and distinguished herself. Notable among these societies are West African Association of Theological Institutions (WAATI), Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa, Nigerian Association for Biblical Studies, International Associations for Missions, African Association for Study of Religions and Society of Biblical Literature in Atlanta, Georgia. In all these scholarly societies, she served as head, treasurer or editor at a time or the other.

She belonged to the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) Worldwide where she was appointed as a deaconess in 2002. This ordination looked like the crowning glory of her spiritual services. The recognition and opportunity that this provided her for service to God in her church in this honorary capacity must have quenched in her the lifelong thirst, appetite and yearning for the ordained ministry which she never fully relinquished till she breathed her last breath. Even then, she was never fully realized because of what she perceived as the patriarchal system in her church that refused ordination for women (Akintunde, 1997:2). Yet, the opportunity given her as a teacher sufficed to give her fulfillment as she had opportunities to teach priests in the university as well as colleges of theology and Bible schools in and around Ibadan (Akintunde, 1997:2).

Akintunde in Administration

Prof. Dorcas Akintunde served in various administrative capacities at the University of Ibadan. She served as the Faculty of Arts Representative on the University of Ibadan Consultancy Services (2004); Faculty of Arts Representative, Career Board of the University of Ibadan (2005); Member of the Faculty of Arts Appointment and Promotions Committee (2006-2009); Business Manager, ORITA, Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies (2005-2008); Assistant Warden of Queen Idia Hall (2008-2010); and Head

of Department of Religious Studies and Member of Senate of the University of Ibadan (October 1, 2010 – March 15, 2011) (Akintunde, 1997:1).

Internationally, Prof. Akintunde served as the Anglophone Coordinator of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, and Member of the Continental Executive Committee of the Circle (2002-2007). The Circle of Concerned African Women, is an interfaith institute as well as a community of African Women Theologians who come together to reflect on what it means to be women of faith within their experiences of religion, culture, politics and socio-economic structures in Africa. The “Circle” was organized by Prof. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and inaugurated in 1989 in Accra in Ghana by 70 African women concerned about dearth of literature by African women (Akintunde, 1997:1). The “Circle” has as her mission statement “To undertake research and publish theological literatures written by African women with special focus on religion and culture (www.thecirclecat.org). Mainly, “Circle” seeks to build the capacity of African women to actively work for social justice in their communities by sharing skills and insights with each other. A key discussion point is the complex relationship between gender, religion and culture and how to advance current knowledge by writing. Within the circle, records indicated that Dorcas Akintunde was a frontline member who inspired other members of the organization with her “calm spirit and very active leadership style as well as a crusading zeal” (Moyo, 2011). The Religious Studies Department in University of Ibadan and the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians benefitted so much from Akintunde’s solid leadership as her wisdom and sharpness of her intellect took shape in the decisions and processes that took place in both settings where her administrative acumen was in full blossom (Ajayi, 2015:11).

Her Family Life

Prof. Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde had a settled and happy marriage. According to Ajayi, her marriage life was part of the contributory factors for her exemplary life and career. Indeed, she might never have made the kind of mark she made on her times and in her career without the love, sweat, support and encouragement of her family (2015:12). Banke Amusan (now Akintunde) got married to her husband, Amos Olalere

Akintunde, in 1981 at a tender age of twenty. The couple were blessed with a settled family life for thirty years before her transition in March 2011. They were blessed with three children, two sons and a daughter. Dorcas Akintunde was a loving wife, mother and grandmother (Akintunde Amos, 2023). She was a family woman to the core. It is significant to remark that Mrs. Akintunde was not only occupied with making a career for herself, but also a living and an enduring legacy for the family she contributed to raising and nurturing. She was a good mother who reared successfully two biological sons and a daughter, and demonstrated in practical ways the importance of equal opportunities for both the male and female gender at home. She was a stern disciplinarian who taught her children the value of hard work. All the children have worked hard at their studies and have been prepared not only for education but for livelihood. The first child, Bayo, a male is now happily married too with two children. He has completed his PhD in the University of California, UC Davis. Currently, Bayo is working as a Research Scientist with the California Department of Public Health. He has worked on several research projects to eliminate tobacco-related disparities among priority populations in California. Bayo is passionate about reducing health disparities and is dedicated to working with racial and ethnic minority communities in the United States.

The second child, Toyin, a lady, who first obtained a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry, is now a registered nurse and currently works at the University of Yale Teaching Hospital, New Haven as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. She is also married and blessed with a boy and a girl. Kunle, the third child, a male, and a Master's degree holder from the University of Ibadan at the time of her transition is presently a banker. With such successful children, Banke can thus rest contented in her grave – for her children have imbibed her legacy of diligence, dedication and devotion to good effect.

According to her friend, confidant, counsellor and spouse for thirty years, Amos Olalere Akintunde, “One unique attribute of this woman was her uncommon ability to combine her academic pursuit with her rearing and nursing the children as well as keeping the challenges of the home front altogether, throughout the period of her career pursuit. The model of her life fixed into the biblical injunction (1 Peter 3:5) that beauty in her was seen in her trust in God and as fitted with her husband's plans

(Akintunde, Interview). Beyond her nuclear family, Banke Akintunde’s natural humility even for an academia of her caliber and distinction had an infectious quality among those who came in contact with her, up to the extended and social family levels (Ajayi, 2015:13).

She was a mother and “big sister” to her biological children, blood relations as well as many who came her way; they call her “mummy” or “auntie”. She took mothering and mentoring as a ministry, a call, a challenge, and a God-given responsibility. Her warmth was infectious amongst her biological as well as spiritual and academic children. All her children call her blessed (Akintunde, Interview). Indeed, her disposition is such that almost all young people that met her do not forget her as most of them make her one of their top role models. In addition, Dorcas Akintunde’s motherly disposition and love was extended to all her colleagues at work. She was always creating an atmosphere of peace even in times of turmoil. The outpouring of emotions and the glowing tributes from numerous quarters following her demise spoke so much about what her extended family and her associates feel about her.

An extract from a tribute by one of her younger colleagues and a close associate when the news of her demise was broken sums it all:

... You were always there for me; you were the big sister I never had; I could call you anytime of the day or night..., from you I learned the virtue called patience; now I say to myself, “who will calm me down when ‘my volcano decides to erupt?’ you always know the right words to say to me, you were an encourager, a source of inspiration (Labeodan, www.thecirclecat.org).

In Ajayi’s language, she was to many a quintessential “Jewish Mama” – one with a Lydia ministry – always entertaining and/or counselling. The dedication of Dorcas Akintunde’s type is not found among many wives, mothers, sisters and even mentors who are academia. She was an inspiration to several people who were privileged to come her way (Ajayi, 2015:14).

Dorcas Akintunde and her Participation/Contributions to Local and International Projects on HIV/AIDS Discourse and Projects

Prof. Dorcas Akintunde participated and contributed immensely to local and international projects on HIV and AIDS in Africa, Europe, America and Asia (Labeodan, www.thecirclecat.org). In 2005/2006, record has it that she was invited by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on HIV and AIDS in collaboration with Yale University, New Haven, USA. While she was there, she started a project titled “An Assessment of the Potentials of Seven National Women Christian Groups at Preventing HIV and AIDS in Nigeria.” The project entails key informant interview and focus group discussion among those women groups.

The Yale University training and field experience was to facilitate her being requested to organize a day workshop for religious leaders in Nigeria on the 12th of June, 2007. This was facilitated by the University of California and Harvard University. This project was titled “Nigerian Inter-faith Response to HIV and AIDS (NIHRA)” and it was inaugurated with twenty-five religious leaders from Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions (Ajayi, 2015:5). At that meeting, it was concluded that religious leaders had a role to play in giving spiritual and pastoral care to people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). Also, it was made clear that religious leaders must also have knowledge of how the virus spread so that they can also sensitize the people as well as help to curb its spread. This is because the religious leaders are the closest to the people. Besides, it was observed that Nigerians like other Africans are religious; therefore, teachings and injunctions from the religious leaders are believed to be spiritual and will be more adhered to in most cases than from the political leaders (Ajayi, 2015:5).

In August 14-17, 2007, the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS in Africa, an arm of the World Council of Churches solicited Dorcas Akintunde to facilitate a training of trainers on HIV and AIDS in Nigeria. The training targeted teachers in Religious Studies departments and Theological institutions. 30 participants from the six geo-political zones of Nigeria attended the workshop, which aimed at mainstreaming HIV and AIDS into the curricular of theological institutions in Nigeria. Two persons living

with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) were invited to the meeting to create the awareness that people could be positive to the virus and still live positive lives. It was also to enlighten people that HIV only affects the immunity and not the humanity.

The success of the Training of Trainers Workshop in Nigeria enabled Dorcas Akintunde to be invited to participate in a similar exercise by the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS in Africa which held in Kenya in November 2007. Because of her active participation in the Kenyan Conference, she succeeded in attracting funds for organization of a day conference for church founders and leaders as well as youth leaders on HIV and AIDS prevention. Participants at the one-day conference were encouraged to be involved in pastoral and spiritual care and counselling for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and those affected by the virus.

Dorcas Akintunde had great experience in planning, conducting field-work and data gathering, data organization and data analysis in qualitative research in this secondary area of her research interest (Akintunde, 1997:1). When she was asked about what predisposed her to veer into this new field of study, in addition to her primary area of specialization, she remarked, “The rate at which HIV/AIDS have been ravaging Africa as a continent generally and Nigerian in particular has spurred my interest for research into what Faith-based organizations could do to stem the tide (Akintunde, 2008a).

According to Ajayi, through her scholarship in this extended area of research interest, Akintunde influenced many of her students and made substantial contributions to scholarship in that field. Actually, she designed a course “HIV and AIDS in Africa: The Church’s Response” which she taught at the post-graduate level in the Department of Religious Studies of University of Ibadan. She was even supervising the thesis of a doctoral candidate, Ruth Oke (now Dr.) on “Situating the Story of Hemorrhaging Women within the Context of Stigmatizing Experiences of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Ibadan. The project was ongoing by the time she transited to glory (Ajayi, 2015:6).

Akintunde and her New Testament and Feminist Theology: The Place of Women in Societal Development

Dorcas Akintunde had a good and remarkable standing in the world of scholarship (Ajayi, 2015:4). Her intellectual engagement as a scholar was majorly in New Testament Studies with special interest in Feminist Theology. She wrote many books and contributed chapters in several other books. She also published several articles in academic journals as well as scholarly monographs. Her contributions to core areas of New Testament studies, Women Studies and Gender Issues are clearly evidenced in her publications and her services in advisory capacities on programmes and courses connected to these notable areas of specialization.

A balanced assessment of her scholarship would require some elaboration of these two interwoven areas. Majority of Akintunde's publications re-examines texts about women in order to re-interpret them. For instance, in her work titled "Decolonising Biblical Studies in Nigeria: Women's Perspective" she argues forcefully that Eve, rather than being the source of evil in the world brought knowledge and development into the world. To her, Eve's exploration brought about God's action of clothing them as well as Adam and Eve's opportunity of exploring new possibilities (Akintunde, 2005). Akintunde's contribution to the debate on roles of women brings to limelight new perspectives on such roles of women in the New Testament times as prophetesses, deaconesses, disciples as well as their roles in the expansion of Christianity.

These are foreshadowed in some of her publications, which include "The Achievements and Hurdles of the Good Women Association of Nigeria, 1943-2001" (Akintunde, 2002). "Healing of Simon Peter's Mother-in-Law, and Tabitha in the Context of Healing in the Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria" (Akintunde, 2004a). "Women in Birth Narratives: Agents in Salvation History" (Akintunde, 2000). "Women in the ministry of Apostles: Emissary in the Spread of Christianity," (Akintunde, 2003a). "Jesus' Attitude to the 'Anointing Prostitute' (Luke 7:36-50): A Model for Contemporary African Churches" (Akintunde, 2006). "Spirituality and Development: An Overview of Christian Women Organizations in Nigerian Society" (Akintunde, 2004b). According to Ajayi, commenting on Akintunde's life and works, rider to the above is the fact that the various

roles played by some women in the Bible have further been compared with the roles being played by women living in patriarchal structure such as Nigeria. She argued that Biblical women are role models for contemporary women (Ajayi, 2015:8). For instance, Anna, who despite her being a widow played a prominent role in Jesus birth narratives, as illustrated in one of Akintunde's papers titled "Lucan Women in Jesus' Ministry. A Prototype for African Women" (Akintunde, 2003b).

Some other texts that are horrible, such as the rape of Tamar by her brother Amnon, have been interpreted by Akintunde in the light of some cultural and societal practices which violates womanhood in Africa in general and particularly in Nigeria. Some of these practices, she argues, violates the rights of women and should therefore be frowned at because they have exposed women to HIV and AIDS in some instances, while some are helpful in promoting the well-being of women. Some of the publications of Akintunde shed lights on this, examples are her publications titled "Dynamism in Culture and Values, Desirable Trend in Combating Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS: The Yoruba Experience" (Akintunde, 2004c); "Women as Healers: The Nigerian (Yoruba) Example" (Akintunde, 2008b).

Akintunde's Philosophical Propositions and Patriarchy in African Philosophy/ Gender Based Discrimination

Overall, many of the publications of Akintunde made attempts to contextualize biblical teachings on women by relating the various interpretations to the situations of women in some of the mainline mission churches and in the African instituted churches, highlighting the differences in their treatment of women and how the African instituted churches have, to some extent, been influenced by African patriarchal cultural beliefs. Akintunde's scholarship is also geared towards finding solutions to the issue of discrimination against women in the church and generally in various African societies, advocating for a world where men and women exist and live together as equal creatures of God, with a common heritage in Jesus. The echo of her life and research was so loud on the vital roles played by women in Christ Apostolic Church, her own denomination, and other women in missions. This clearly is

placed in some of her publications titled “Partnership and the Exercise of Power in the Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria” (Akintunde, 2003c). “Violence against Women: A Threat to the Nigerian Society” (Akintunde, 1999:122-133) and “National Rebirth and the Rights of Women: An Overview” (Akintunde, 2001:60-76).

In addition, employing the same critical exegetical tools of Biblical interpretation Dorcas Akintunde examined some Pauline texts which are always being used in support of the subordination and subjugation of women and she argued that the texts have been misinterpreted by male theologians. She thus made a case for re-reading and re-interpretation of such passages of the scriptures. One of such is the passage on Paul’s directive on submission of women. Akintunde argues that this was not referring to women in general, but that each woman is expected to submit to “her own husband” (Ajayi, 2015:7). She also argues that there are cases when women featured prominently in the leadership of the early church. She pointed to some women who were co-workers with Paul such as Phoebe, Euodia, Syntyche, Tryphena and Tryphosa. She even called attention to the name of Priscilla being mentioned before her husband which is not a norm, at least, the man’s name is usually mentioned before the wife, as in “Mr. and Mrs.,” and not “Mrs. and Mr.” (Acts 18:18; Rom 18:4ff.).

CONCLUSION

To many that knew Prof. Dorcas Adebanye Akintunde, she went back to her creator too soon as her burial programme read, “Gone too soon”. Obviously, being such a hardworking and meticulous person, she did not leave any “i” undotted; nor a “t” uncrossed. At her demise, there was a call for paper in her honour, which was published in 2015 and was titled *Women in Development: Essays in Memory of Prof. Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde*. The book was edited by S. Ademola Ajayi and J. Kehinde Ayantayo. Borrowing the words of Ademola Ajayi, no doubt, the life and career of Professor Dorcas Akintunde is a whole book in living a worthy life and leaving an indelible legacy; with every phase being a chapter in

humility, and every point a page in modesty filled with statements of admonition and homilies (Ajayi, 2015:6). One can confidently say that Professor Dorcas Olubanke Akintunde's intellectual and work experience was so vast, diverse and comprehensive that a chapter in a book of this nature may not be able to capture all in full.

This chapter has merely succeeded to synthesize the interesting life and labour cum impact-making career of an astute intellectual, whose light shone brightly and who left a lasting legacy in the sand of time. This chapter does not claim to have done a full account of our matriarch, Dorcas Akintunde, all the same, the story of her life and career as encapsulated in this brief profile teaches lessons of perseverance, dogged determination, faith and confidence in one's persuasion. She was, in practical terms, a pride of the womenfolk in the academia. One, whose contributions to society at both the micro and macro levels was always directed by her realization of the historical importance of her mission and opportunity. We are confident that the memory of such a worthy and distinguished academia, administrator, mother to generation of her students, and a pioneer of noble causes in Nigeria, Africa and abroad will continue to be written in gold.

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- Labeodan, Helen Adekunbi, Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Gender Studies, Department of Religious Studies. Ibadan: University of Ibadan, Oyo State/Nigeria, December 6, 2022.