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EDITORIAL

As routine, the Managing Editor and I, sincerely thank all the authors who have contributed to this issue. We also thank our in-house and external reviewers for their continued support. Papers submitted that are not in this issue will be published in the June 2016 issue.

We continue to encourage scholars in any religious and theological fields who are interested in academic publishing to send their papers to ERATS. Our capable internal and external reviewers are ready to work with you.

We are expecting your work.

Prince S Conteh, ThD; PhD
Chief Editor

The New Testament Concepts of “Living Water” (John 4) and “living Bread” (John 6) In Different Contexts: A Look at the Feeding Symbol in the Judeo-Christian, Western and Ghanaian Cultures

Peter Arthur & J. E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor¹

ABSTRACT

Faith is a concept that continues to be a subject of exploration and investigation in the Humanities, especially in disciplines like religion, philosophy, literature, anthropology and sociology. These disciplines have variously defined faith. One culture where the multi-faceted meaning of faith is given prominence is the African culture. This paper defines faith in terms of the etymology of the Ghanaian equivalent “gyedzi” in Mfantse, “gyidi” in Twi, “hemôkâyeli” in Ga and “hemikâyemi” in Dangme, mean “get and eat”. In the Ghanaian context we find such expression in “gyama” songs and in gospel music; and also that the feeding symbol in Macbeth, even though used for negative effects, indicates the damnation of man's soul if man fails to use the feeding symbol correctly or if he fails to follow the feeding symbol as prescribed by Jesus in John 4 and John 6. The feeding symbol used in constructing the meaning of faith may be a universal one, from the Judeo-Christian, the Western to

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the African culture, but its meaning-making process is different in different cultural contexts.

Introduction

Faith, as defined in the Bible as the “assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”² by its very nature, it is believed to be a difficult subject to discuss even in religious studies, let alone in literary or anthropological studies, due to its abstract, labile or indeterminate nature in meaning. By the biblical definition, faith is an exercise that brings about intellectual surrender of the believer to whoever or whatever that is believed in because the believer or the faithful has to take something as being true without questioning its validity in terms of its evidential or logical value. One interesting aspect about faith is that, even though primarily an interior mental process, it seeks objectification or materiality in human behaviour. In other words, it is must be given a practical expression through human lived experience.

As lived experience, faith is not restricted only to religion, even if it does, religion itself is a social reality that involves a lot of social activities including language. Language therefore has a very significant role to play in the meaning-making process that goes into faith expression in every human endeavour due to the fact that human behaviour is based on the meaning we make of things around us.³ As much as we believe that faith is primarily a mental phenomenon, we express it through human activities and among the numerous means of expression we also have writing or reading as in writing Biblical exegesis and verbal art as in singing hymns or performing Biblical stories. But poetics or the role of language in a social reality like faith does not come that easy for language as an expression of social reality, until quite recently, has been a subject of a huge debate and before we properly contextualize the concept of

² Hebrew 11:1, *The Bible: Revised Standard Version*.

³ This is a concept in Conceptual Metaphor Theory. See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors we live* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

faith within the dynamics of poetics, we need to visit briefly what this debate is all about to enable us know how the concept of faith moves from one context to the other in the Ghanaian and other cultures.

The debate has been whether to accept poetics or aesthetics in language which, of course, includes verbal art, as a major component of mainstream linguistics or not.⁴ Linguists had often placed syntax, phonology, semantics and other related subjects above the aesthetic use of language. Boas, for example, considered the role of poetics or aesthetics in language as just “merely parasitic upon such 'core' areas of linguistics as phonology, syntax, and semantics, or upon such anthropological fields as economy and social organization”⁵ This group of academics only placed emphasis on the referential content and syntactic structure of sentences and paid very little attention to the context, that is the cultural environment the text found itself in. In that sense, the text was text, written and read and all other matters were merely embellishments that did not count in linguistics. Certainly such a position does not allow us to call the Ghanaian “*gyama*” or gospel songs texts because what gives them their substance or their genre bothers on performance and not the normal definition of linguistics as stated above.

Again, performance in this context, is a culturally informed practice and all that were not paid attention to by Boas and his followers. In other words, linguistics is purely technical in nature and has nothing to do with being a tool used to construct social reality. But this position has been challenged by other linguists and anthropologists. Linguists like Vico, Herder, von Humbolt, the Russian “formalists” and those of the Prague School however believe that “verbal art provides a central dynamic force in shaping linguistic structure and linguistic study”.⁶ This group of

⁴ Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs, “Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19 (1990): 59.

⁵ See F Boas, “Introduction.” In *Handbook of American Indian Languages* (Bull 1911).

⁶ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 59.

linguists and anthropologists saw and still see poetics or aesthetics in language as a communicative process and not as a mere artistic use of language as the Kantian aesthetics suggest.

The famous anthropologist, Malinowski, is also reputed to have played a very significant role in helping to place poetics or aesthetics of language within the mainstream of linguistics for he believed that the “native speakers' point of view” plays a significant role in social expressions like gender and social class. He is followed by another group of very influential linguists and anthropologists who were convinced that the text which hitherto had been considered object-centered had to be reconsidered non-object centered because according to the theory of speech acts, started by Austin⁷, who even though believed poetics was not necessarily for constructing social reality⁸, words have their own behaviour and actions. This concept of the text thus breaks the fixity of the text, and the text is now believed to be having a life of its own. Linguists and anthropologists like Searle, Grice, Goffman, Bateson and linguists from the Prague School who believed in the life of the text helped shift emphasis on the text being object-centered of performance to the social construction of reality. The academic who put this side of the debate beyond all doubts happens to be a folklorist, Richard Bauman, who polishes up the performance theory with such a striking insight that has left the opposing group having very little to talk about and thus making performance theory a major investigating meaning-making process in text construction, just like we do in deconstruction, reader response, new criticism and so forth. He postulates that “performance sets up, or represents, an interpretive frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood, and that this frame contrasts with at least one other frame, the literal”.⁹ This therefore challenges the

⁷ J L Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).

⁸ See Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance* (Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1977), 9. See also Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 62.

⁹ Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*, 9.

old literary notion that the text should be evaluated using a fixed literary canon.

One interesting aspect of Bauman and Briggs' approach to performance is how they redefine performance-based research as sharing some “central goals of deconstruction, reader-response and reception theories, hermeneutics, the 'poetics and politics' of linguistic text and cultural studies”¹⁰. We need to point out that Chomski's concept of the native speaker's performance is not what is being referred here. The concept of faith as a social reality can therefore be investigated using analytical tools from various disciplines, including what we have in this paper, linguistics that takes care of verbal art and hermeneutics that takes care of the religious exegesis. Even more interesting in this development is that Bauman and Briggs offer us three main concepts that will serve as the basis of analysis for the text in this paper: context, decontextualization and recontextualization. We therefore start looking at these literary or linguistic concepts and see how they are of relevance to this paper.

Text

There is the need here to distinguish between the text and performance. Karin Barber, a renowned British anthropologist, posits that the “text is the permanent artefact, hand-written or printed, while performance is the unique, never-to-be repeated realization or concretization of a text, a realization that 'brings the text to life' but which is itself doomed to die on the breath in which it is uttered”¹¹. The text is therefore a fixity and it is performance that breathes life into it. The text is a mental script, a detached script, given a physical form as in writing, painting, printing, sculpture and so forth. It is performance when the mental script that is instantiated in this fixity is “abstracted or detached from the immediate

¹⁰ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 62.

¹¹ Karin Barber, “Text and Performance in Africa,” *Bulletin of SOAS* 66. 3 (2003): 324.

context and re-embodied in a future performance”¹² so that a text is one single instantiation of the mental script and performance is the continuous application of this script on different occasions and situations. The text we have before us is the “Living waters” in John 4. It is about the destiny of the human soul which has one of two destinations being has two forms of destiny: salvation or damnation. The script of John 4... is about the salvation of the soul of a human being that ensures permanent life in Christ. By implication therefore if one fails to choose this option, one's soul suffers damnation and is condemned to eternal death as indicated in *Macbeth*.

Context

Now the text, as a social construction of reality, unlike those who believed poetics was only an afterthought linguistic treatment, can have a context, can be decontextualised and can be recontextualised. We have various definitions for the context and they all relate to the text within its cultural environment. For the purpose of this study, we draw from another folklorist, Dundes, who coming from the background of folklore, defines context as “the specific social situation in which that particular item is actually employed”¹³. The context here in relationship to the particular social situation that produces the text has its own characteristics that makes it different from other texts which are produced by different social situations, thus lending credence to Bauman's assertion that what makes a text unique is its contrastive communicative functions, participative structures and modes of interpretation; it is an “interpretive frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood”. The context here offers us the opportunity to define the genre of the text which provides the basis for coming up with the right type of evaluation and Bauman continues that the inventories for the evaluation constitute the conventions of a particular text. By implication therefore when we call a piece of lyrics in

¹² Barber, “Text and Performance in Africa,” 325.

¹³ A Dundes, “Texture, text, and context,” *South Folklore Q*, 28 (1964): 23.

a song “gyama”, it means it possesses its own unique characteristics that identify it as such. For example, “gyama” songs are used by Ghanaian students, especially by senior high and university students as recreational, protest and exhortation songs. When we talk of Ghanaian gospel music, it is a genre of music that uses highlife instrumentation and relies on lyrics that are related to the Bible. *Macbeth* by Shakespeare belongs to genre studies in literature, drama as opposed to prose or poetry; tragedy as opposed to comedy or tragic-comedy. In other words, all these genres owe their classification to the kind of social situation they find themselves in. There is an old gospel choral song “*Nkwabodoo*” that serves as the first context. It goes like this:

Mfantse	English Translation
Yesu yɛnkwabodoo, nkwabodoodaa	Jesus is the bread of life, the bread of life
Yesu yɛnkwabodoo, nkwabodoodaa	Jesus is the bread of life, the bread of life
Obiara obedzi bi no	Whoever eats it
Ɔkɔmnkɔdze no o	Will never be hungry
Obiara ɔbɔnom bi no	Whoever drinks his water
Sukɔmnkɔdze no	Will never experience thirst
Aboodoo, Yesu yɛnkwabodoo, nkwabodoodaa	Jesus is the bread of life, the bread of life

This is using the New Testament script of the salvation of a human being in John 4, where Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that he has the water for eternal life. The social situation that informs this text is that it is a meaning-making exercise taking its source from the Bible, which is universal or global, but which uses local images to construct this meaning making process. In this text, both eating and drinking are combined in the nourishment or the eating image. Biologically, it is the conflation of both that ensures life and they are used here to symbolise eternal life. Again, the expression *nkwaabodoo* is the equivalent of “bread of life”. It is this same image that is given a semantic parallelism in John 6: 25-59 and John 4:1-26; and these texts make it clear that whoever eats the bread will permanently not be hungry and whoever drinks from this water will permanently not be thirsty. *Abodoo*, white

corn dough to which sugar is added and baked is not exactly the same as “bread”, a flour based dough that is baked, as used in the Bible. In the Ghanaian environment however, *aboodoo* is the closest to the meaning of the Biblical “bread” and to make the Biblical “bread” more meaningful to Ghanaian, *aboodoo* is used. Hence local hermeneutics have already started in this old gospel choral song. As the discussion progresses, we will see how this process constitute performance but before we understand how performance is operating in this environment, we need to understand the concept of decontextualization and recontextualization.

Decontextualization

The next concept that the performance theory offers as a major thrust for the analysis of this paper is decontextualization, otherwise known as decentering. It is another poststructuralist usage that refers to a “text that is lifted out of its interactional setting”¹⁴. The “interactional setting” is the same as the social situation we have been talking about. Here we mean taking the text as a mental script¹⁵ from its social situation, which involves taking its genre from the original context. The text in that mental state is decentered and the mental script is therefore a detached script that has the potential of being re-instantiated anytime, anywhere. This paper is talking about the themes of “Living water” (John 4), and “Bread of life, (John 6) in the New Testament. These verses have been read and sung in different ways for years. All these are various instantiations expressing the same mental script of “Living water,” and “Bread of life”. If you strip the old gospel song *Nkwaboodoo* off its local conventions, what is left is the detached text that has been decontextualised from the New Testament.

Recontextualization

Once there is decontextualization, there is “ recontextualization in

¹⁴ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 73.

¹⁵ Barber, “Text and Performance in Africa,” 325.

another”¹⁶. This also calls for *framing* in which “one generic shape is embedded in texts of different generic shape”¹⁷. The detached text decontextualized is now re-instantiated in a new context. This new context now imposes its own conventions on the decontextualised text. For example, we have seen earlier on that the original mental script of the “Living waters”, the salvation of the soul of human beings, is from the Bible. The local old gospel song we saw above is a new context and this new context imposes its own conventions including appropriating the meaning of the “bread” in the New Testament. In this paper, the *gyama* song will pick the same mental script from the Bible and place it in a new context, which is the domain of students expressing emotional attachment or detachment. The contemporary gospel song of *Nkwaaboodoo* is also another new context in which the conventions of contemporary gospel music are imposed on it. Similarly, *Macbeth* takes up the same script from the Bible and imposes literary conventions on it.

Discussion

We will now look in detail, how each genre takes advantage of the theme of “Living water” and “Bread of life”. We will examine the various conventions that makes a piece of performance qualify for a particular genre and we start with the *gyama*, *Nkwaaboodoo*, proceed with the contemporary gospel song *Nkwaaboodoo*, and investigate how Shakespeare, using *Macbeth*, a play, which on the surface, does not seem to have anything to do with these texts, had been using the same mental script.

The “Gyama”NkwaBoodoo

“*Gyama*” as a musical genre is purely a modern development from a combination of Ga traditional music like the *gome* and the Ga traditional dance *kpanlogo*. It is purely a recreational secular music enjoyed mostly

¹⁶ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 74.

¹⁷ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics and Performance,” 75.

by students and supporters of football clubs because of its power of creating a convivial atmosphere through its fast rhythm. Even though it is originally from the Ga people, *gyama* is now patronized all over the country. Its conventions include those who play it, where they play it, why they play it, how they play it and the meanings they create playing it. As indicated, *gyama* is mainly a youth development and patronized by students during athletics, football, quiz and other competitions in the high schools and the universities. Football supporters also use it. This means that *gyama* as genre is mainly played in schools, on university campuses or sometimes by youth on the street for protest purposes. “Gyama” songs are mainly a huge source of morale boosting and that is why it is common with sporting activities. There is a cantor who leads the singing and in a call-and-response manner, everybody who is part of the *gyama* group will respond. It is the tumultuous sound of the group voice that gives *gyama* its flavour. It is normally very masculine in voice output matched to a fast rhythm produced by a *dondo*, metal bell, a *fao*, gourd rattle and sometimes the tontom, the drums found on the right, next to the snare, in a set of jazz drums. In some instances, like *gyama* groups for the Black Stars, the trumpet is to add to energy to the music. It is mainly used on secular occasions so the original context is secular.

Let me use an experience Peter Arthur had while a teacher in Opoku Ware Senior High School (OWASS) as an example. During the 1996 inter-school football Kumasi schools gala competition, OWASS had to meet Osei Kyeretwie Senior High School (OKESS). At that time, OKESS was simply indomitable both in athletics and football and was very famous for providing some of the best footballers and athletes for the country. There were rumours around that OKESS had solicited the services of a “mallamm,”¹⁸ and rumours at OKESS was that OWASS had consulted a saint¹⁹ to be able to defeat them. Then came the real day of battle. When

¹⁸ In Ghana, this refers to a juju man who ostensibly uses the Koran as his source of power but who, in reality, is a sorcerer and has nothing to do with the Islamic faith.

¹⁹ Calling of saints is an occult practice that uses the names of Catholic saints and OWASS.

we entered the stadium, we could feel the tension caused by the psychological warfare between both parties. The *gyama* group or the supporters of the OWASS team were at the extreme right of the VIP stand and the supporters of OKESS were on the extreme left of the VIP stand. Before the match began, the OWASS players went to their *gyama* group who raised their arms in the direction of their players and started singing a Latin song: *in manustuadomine, commando spiritum* ("in your hands O Lord, I command my spirit"). This was a secular occasion but according to their Catholic faith, they needed the guidance of God. We clearly heard the OKESS team supporters singing in Twi, *Yâankasâwônombâfrâ saints* ("did we not say they would call saints") and they were obviously morally subdued because a lot of us were wondering where the thunderous voice of OKESS had gone. As if visited by some strange source of energy, the OWASS *gyama* group grew louder and louder in their singing, of course, to the annoyance of some of the teachers from OKESS who kept expressing disquiet at the noise level of the OWASS *gyama* group.

The first half was goalless. Then the second half began. The OWASS *gyama* was at the heights of the usual unimaginable energy. There was a goal-mouth melee at the goal post of the OKESS team and one OWASS player whose nick-name was Osepe fortuitously used his knee to knock the ball into the net of OKESS. Hell broke loose. It was even very difficult for the cadet boys who were supposed to help maintain security on the park to control the OWASS *gyama* group and the stadium security officers had to intervene to restore order. The match continued and tried as OKESS team did, they could not find the net. After the match, the OWASS *gyama* danced through the streets of Kumasi, singing "*Nkwaboodoo*."

Drenched in sweat, some of the players and supporters, as if possessed, the OWASS *gyama* group danced a distance of almost ten kilometres repeating *Nkwaboodoo*. When Arthur asked one of them his answer was that before the match, they asked the Lord to grant them victory and that anybody with God would never fail. The other students who were members of the *gyama* group also added that the winner was with God

and the loser with Satan. They added that with God, you were always a winner whether dead or alive. They were very certain that since they prayed the *in manustuadomine* prayer, they were going to win. The explication offered by these students was an expression of faith, “getting and eating” the belief that gave them the opportunity to go beyond what they were capable of doing at the physical level.

In their case, the OKESS team was well known for its superiority in football but this time the OWASS team prevailed over them. The OWASS team, contrary to speculations of having recourse to occult, took the word of God and ate it, the Akan equivalent of Biblical faith, *gyedzi*, a process which gave them spiritual food and thus the *gyama* song *Nkwaaboodoo*, the everlasting food as found in John 6 and *nkwanusu*, the living water as expressed in part of the lyrics of that song:

Akan	English
Obiara ɔɛnom bi no	Whoever drinks his water
Sukɔmnkɔdze no	Will never experience thirst

It is instructive to note that the occasion was purely secular so we cannot say that with all the religious explanation they were giving for singing *Nkwaboodoo*, the song was a gospel song. The conventions for the song were *gyama* and therefore it remained a secular genre.

Whether a song is secular or religious, a musician is a gospel or a secular artist, and whether places of worship should be reserved for only gospel musicians or that secular musicians can also perform in places of worship is now a heated debate in Ghana. These are all complications brought about by what the context or the conventions of the song is. Some Ghanaians believe lyrics are the only indicators of a text, whether it is gospel or secular. Indeed, some journalists strongly believe that if you talk about God in any genre, the text must be gospel. Do we, on the basis of what these journalists say, take it that a song like *Mete mewuo*, *mewuo*, which means my “confidant is dead” by “Professor” Kofi Abraham, known to be the father of gospel music in Ghana, is a gospel song? The lyrics run like this:

Akan	English
<i>Metē mewuo, mewuo</i>	I hear some wailings
<i>Sesɛɛmefie</i>	I guess it is from my house
<i>Metē mewuo, mewuo</i>	I hear some wailings
<i>Sesɛɛmefie</i>	I guess it is from my house
<i>Menkoamefiedee</i>	As for my house
<i>Owuompahɔ da o</i>	Death is a permanent phenomenon
<i>Metē mewuo, mewuo, m'akomaetu o</i>	I hear some wailings, and I am scared
<i>Sesɛɛmefie</i>	That it may come from my house

Clearly, there is no direct New Testament reference here but Ghanaians would normally classify this song as a gospel song. The reason for this classification emanates from the personality of the composer: though not the very originator of Ghanaian gospel music, he is known to have raised Ghanaian gospel music to the status of popular music and is therefore considered the father of Ghanaian gospel music. Again, his brand of gospel music is mostly patronized during funeral celebrations because of its power to console the bereaved. The cited song, as stated above, may not have any New Testament reference but for the fact that it has the power of consoling the bereaved, a role reserved for gospel music, the New Testament script that gives us assurance of good life after life here on earth; and for the reason of which we should not be so worried for the dead, has been recontextualized indirectly in this text. It is, however, not the recontextualization that makes the text a gospel song. It is the conventions or what Ghanaians consider to be gospel song that allows Ghanaians to interpret this song as such.

Let us look at this from another angle. The personality of the composer and the occasion on which such gospel songs are used offer the “interpretive frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood.”²⁰ Ghanaians therefore do not question the genre of this song and will play it anywhere other forms of gospel songs are played especially during funeral celebrations. What makes Ghanaians classify

²⁰ Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*.

this song as gospel goes way beyond the content of the lyrics. We have a similar example with another song by the same musician and that is *Nimpa a mene no bedwennaewuyi*, which means, my confidant is dead. OJ, a gospel musician, has a song titled *Mayesewopen* “I used to be like you” and follows the same trend in our discussion. Quite interestingly, a *gyama* song like *Nkwaboodoo* as used by the OWASS school,²¹ which clearly makes a direct reference to the Bible is not a gospel song. Indeed, differentiating boundary between certain genres, even in the churches, the boundary between more sacred and less sacred, the boundary between what is supposed to be played during church services and many more, still remains a huge challenge.

The media is not spared this seeming confusion. Today, there are gospel musicians like OJ, Christiana Love, Grace Ashy and other great gospel musicians in Ghana who are using the *gyama* rhythm for gospel music. In other words, they make their recording engineers simulate the *gyama* instrumentation and rhythm in their songs and because they use the conventions of Ghanaian gospel music like the singer being a gospel musician, the singer appearing on the same stage with other gospel musicians and using lyrics having reference to the Bible and so forth, these gospel songs in *gyama* rhythm are considered gospel songs. But not all Ghanaians are happy with this development. Nana Adjei Obrempon of Adom FM calls gospel in *gyama* vein, a “secularization of the gospel in 'gyama’”. He makes no secret his disquiet, “I hate to hear those songs because they are too canal. How can we turn worship into 'gyama' and praises into quotation recitals? Are we kindergarten pupils?”²² Evans and other panellists on Angel Entertainment Show are also caught up in the same complication of what is secular and what is gospel. The only lady panellist does not understand why Rev. Agyin Asare would say he was ready to give the Perez Dome, his chapel or

²¹ Indeed, OWASS “gyama” is now so popular. For further information on OWASS “gyama” see lagubarumps3.xyz/owass_gyama.html or www.songskull.org/owass_gyama.html

²² See lovinggh.com/gospel-musicians-are-spiritually-empty-news-caster

place of worship, to the likes of Kodwo Antwi, Amakye Dede, CK Mann and other highlife musicians for reasons that they speak sense and would refuse it to hiplife musicians because they do not speak sense. “Whether highlife or hiplife, they are all secular music and have no place in a place where people worship God”, she concluded.²³

Coming back to the feeding symbol, Ghanaians have various contexts in which they use the feeding symbol in relationship to the New Testament concepts “Living water” (John 4) and “Bread of life” (John 6) and another example is Koda's *Nkwaboodoo*, a live gospel performance.

Koda's *Nkwaboodoo*, a reflection on the New Testament concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life”

Koda, a Takoradi-based gospel musician, has a video of his live performance of his song *Nkwaboodoo*. The lyrics and the melody of this video are the same as the *Nkwaboodoo* of the OWASS *gyama*. We are looking at this video in respect of its ability to use sonic experience to define identity²⁴ with regards to the Christian faith as an expressive culture, “the processes, emotions, and ideas bound within the social production of aesthetic forms and performances in everyday life”²⁵. Anthropologists like Steven Feld, John Blacking, Christopher Waterman and many others make us see sound as a cultural expression or a symbolic communication²⁶ that leads us to understand certain social realities like faith and, in performance like what we have under discussion, define group or individual identities. Here, we agree completely with VeitErlmann who posits that, "'Hearing culture'

²³ “Angel Entertainment Show,” hosted by Evans, Angel FM. 25/10/15

²⁴ See S. Feld, *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics and Song in Expression* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press., 1982).

²⁵ Joyce Burstein. “Integrating Arts: Cultural Anthropology and Expressive Culture in the Social Studies Curriculum,” *Social Studies Research and Practice* 9.2 (2014): 132.

²⁶ E. Leach, *Culture and Communication: the logic by which symbols are connected* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

suggests that it is possible to conceptualize new ways of knowing a culture and of gaining a deepened understanding of how the members of a society know each other.”²⁷ What attracts our attention in Koda's video production is how sound is used as meaning-making, both as a discursive practice and as a non-discursive practice and how these practices help us to understand the Ghanaian interpretation of the New Testament concepts of “Living water”, (John 4) and “Bread of life” (John 6).

Let us start with the discursive practices which border on the Mfantse phonology. In the middle of the performance, Nacee, a very famous gospel musician cum gospel music recording engineer, emerge from nowhere and interacts with the audience, just like most live performers do. We should remember that the interaction is made possible as a result of the effect of the music which had succeeded in altering the consciousness of the audience and succeeded in subjecting them to the control of the performer, thus making them do whatever the performer says. Nacee therefore asks the audience, *Iesuyεabade ε?* “what/who is Jesus? Then the audience will in a thunderous voice respond, *Iesuyεnkwaboodoodaa, nkwaboodoodaa*, “Jesus is the bread of life, the bread of life always” just to join the refrain. He repeats this several times. But it is neither the call-and-response technique nor his sudden appearance that does the trick. The trick is a phonological play upon certain phonemes. The most obvious phonemes being played upon is /dz/ which has /d/ as its variant.

In Mfantse, these phonemes are interchangeable and they mean the same, just that they betray accent or where the speaker is coming from. Those from Takoradi are likely to use the phoneme /d/ while those from Cape Coast are likely to use the phoneme /dz/ for the same meaning. What we call trick here is that those who use the Cape Coast variety seem to look down on the Takoradi variety, the quality of which some Fantes, especially those from Cape Coast, believe have been unduly been

²⁷ VeitErlmann (ed.), *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity* (Oxford: Berg, 2004).

compromised by the influence of the Ahanta dialect. Thus even in Takoradi, there are those who prefer the so-called Ahanta influenced Mfantse and those who would like to speak the “original” Mfantse. These differences in dialect, which make those with the Cape Coast dialect tease those with the Ahanta influenced dialect, is made to be the point of attraction and that is why in the video Nacee keeps mentioning, *IyeyeTadimfantse* (this is TakoradiMfantse), ostensibly to draw the attention of the audience, who already have this subterranean meaning behind what is being portrayed on the surface. They will definitely laugh but it draws their attention to the refrain, *Iesuyenkwaboodoodaa, nkwaboodoodaa* and through repetition, he manages to let the concept of Jesus being the bread of life and giving the living water²⁸ register permanently on the consciousness of the audience. He is therefore using the allophonic nature of the phoneme /dz/, when /d/ is only a variety of /dz/, to make meaning beyond merely entertaining them. That call-and-response technique, as a discursive practice, has a dual function; to place emphasis on the fact that *Iesuyenkwaboodoodaa* and to construct a memorialisation cue for the audience on what is being said. Of course, this is his way of reinforcing the feeding symbol.

Another form of sonic experience which could provide the lenses through which we could see the Ghanaian culture and its interpretation of the New Testament concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life” is the difference between melody and harmony. Koda himself mentions the names of the instrumentalists and verbally ask them, *Iesuyeeben adze e?*²⁹ and each instrumentalist plays something on the instrument to answer him. Each instrumental expression is responded with a loud noise from the audience. Then he gets to Assifuah, the backing keyboards player and Assifuah uses a melody to respond to his question. He is not greeted with the usual tumultuous applause from the audience that accompanies the instrumental response provided by the other

²⁸ The concepts of the living bread and living water are co-terminous in this analysis because the lyrics in *Nkwaboodoo* capture them both.

²⁹ This is the Cape Coast accent.

instrumentalists. Koda gets surprised, turns to Assifuah and asks, *Afeyinaresuansankubɔanaa?* “Are you now learning how to play the keyboards?”. Assifuah now provides the harmonic version of the melody he played earlier on and the audience simply go wild in response to that. The audience does not appreciate the melody because they believe it is simple and like in the theory of performance, if Assifuah has mounted the stage to play, then he must be a good player and the audience do not expect mediocrity from him.³⁰ The audience however react appropriately when he renders the harmony version of that melody. This is, in fact, in the area of acoustemology (acoustic epistemology), “the study of acoustic space and human interpretation and feedback”³¹ where this sounding and sensuous experience that use skill in playing the musical instrument as a basis for faith expression constitutes the crucible in which the cultural meaning-making of the New Testament texts of “Living water” (John 4) and “Bread of life” (John 6) are constructed. The audience have a preference for their emotional response to the instrumentalists within the context of the theme of the lyrics. They consider the melody to symbolically mean simplicity and less expressive while they consider the harmony to be complex and more representative of the real meaning of *Iesuyenkwaboodoodaa*. Again, the instrumentalists' expression constitutes a sensuous exercise, representative of the kind of faith, a feeding symbol, which is being expressed in the song.

The two instances of the local interpretation of the New Testament concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life” are purely culturally context bound. One cannot fully understand the meaning unless one belongs to the Ghanaian culture that produces these sounds and it is not a mere sound production but a cultural meaning-making process that allows the users to interpret the Bible in their own way; and in this paper, to interpret the eating and drinking symbols, using the genres they consider best for such expressions. Now let us look at how another

³⁰ See Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*.

³¹ S Feld, *Sound and Sentiment*, 95.

context, *Macbeth*, even though non-Ghanaian, treats the feeding and drinking symbols with regards to the New Testament concepts of drinking the Living water and eating the Bread of life, which symbolize salvation.

Macbeth, a reflection on the concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life

Another genre, a literary genre of course, that presents the New Testament “Living water” and “Bread of Life”³² concepts is Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. *Macbeth* has never been presented as a religious book and it will never be. Yet, the message is very congruous to the New Testament concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life” as seen in John 4 and John 6. Admittedly, this book, supposedly written in 1606,³³ far away on the British Isles, is not Ghanaian but is brought into this discussion because of its striking similarities in the use of feeding symbol in relation to the theme of “Living water” and “Bread of life” as used in the Ghanaian context, examples of which are the *gyama* and Koda's *NkwaBoodoo*. The significance here is that the similarities in the use of feeding or eating image between Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and certain Ghanaian *gyama* and gospel music as shown above indicate that the feeding or eating image in the Ghanaian context may not be an isolated one, a localized culture, but a global one, one that has already been explored in the English culture way back in the sixteen to seventeen century. One clear distinction is that the conventions in *Macbeth* follow literary canons and are understood as such, thus confirming Bauman's contribution to this analysis that it is the interpretive framing of the text and the manner in which the target audience apply this framing that allows them to understand the text and that constitute the basis for evaluation of the text. So even though *Macbeth* has a message that is isomorphic in nature to the New Testament concepts of “Living water”

³² In this analysis, the theme of living waters and bread of life are used synonymously.

³³ The real date is not known.

and “Bread of life,” it is evaluated and appreciated as literary work and not a Bible, thus indicating that the New Testament texts in question in *Macbeth* constitute another context of these same texts. In addition to that, *Macbeth* takes another context in the sense that while the other two contexts constitutes sites for the positive polarity of the destiny of a human's soul, salvation, the play takes the other option, the negative polarity of the destiny of a human's soul - damnation, and Shakespeare treats the theme of damnation of a human's soul with such a remarkable insight that makes him the envy of most Bible commentators. That Shakespeare treats the theme of damnation with magnificent aplomb has ever been the subject of discussion by many literary critics and commentators.³⁴ What makes this treatment different in this paper is how he weaves the eating image into the plot of *Macbeth*. This section of our analysis follows Gary Wills' approach to the plot, dividing it into two main sections; the supernatural part, where the supernatural forces completely take over the atmosphere and the spiritual climate of the plot, and the secular part, when the spiritual dark clouds hanging on the plot prescribing human behaviour, give way to purely interactions between human beings without the interference of the supernatural.³⁵ The first part is from the exposition to the climax and the second part takes over from the climax to the falling action and then to the catastrophe or the resolution of the plot.³⁶ It investigates the pervasive use of the feeding symbol in the first part and the absence of the feeding or eating symbol in the second part, relating the findings to the New Testament concepts of “Living water” (John 4) and “Bread of life” (John 6).

In the exposition of the plot, the eating or feeding symbol is used to create a dark cloud of charm and diablerie that covers the entire first part and

³⁴ H.M. Doak, “Supernatural Soliciting' in Shakespeare” *The Sewanee Review* 15.3 (1907): 321-331.

³⁵ Gary Wills, *Witches and Jesuits: Shakespeare's Macbeth* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 148.

³⁶ For a detailed dramatic structure of the plot, see Gustave Fraytag., trans., J Elias MacEwan, *Technique of the Drama* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1900).

negatively influencing both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. We see the witches³⁷ conspiring to meet Macbeth to “trade and traffic with Macbeth.”³⁸ The second witch replies the first witch when she asked of her whereabouts, “Killing swine”. In addition to the ambiguity this phrase provides, that we do not know whether she was in the action of killing swine or that “killing” is used as a participial adjective which indicates that she kills swine, a syntax that is equally ambiguous as the collective pronouncement of the witches, “Fair is foul and foul is fair”, the eating image to kill a swine alludes to feeding symbol. The image of feeding is made more explicit by the first witch who is envious of the sailor's wife who had the chestnut “And munched, and munched, and munched” and who conspires to destroy the sailor if the woman refuses to give her the chestnuts. Right from the exposition, the ominous atmosphere is registered through this feeding symbol, a negative version of *Nkwaaboodoo* which gives life but the food referred to by the witches lead to death. When Macbeth and Banquo meet them, Banquo is curious to know if they “can look into the seeds of time”, a conceptual image alluding to the seed that is supposed to be the source from which food comes but unfortunately this kind of food is not the living water or bread type that gives eternal life, it leads to damnation. While confused by the whirlwind of contradictions blowing right in front of him, he turns to Macbeth and asks, “Or have we eaten on the insane root/That takes the reason prisoner.” This eating image, eating the insane root that makes the eater mad is part of Shakespeare's dramatic skill of piling up the negative effect of the feeding or eating symbol that belongs to the evil one.

The second stage in the plot is the rising action, notably where the action

³⁷ The concept of witchcraft is different from the Ghanaian one, according to which as stated by Joseph Quayeson-Amakye in “Ghanaian Pentecostals and the Causes of Evil”, *ERATS*, 1(1), June 2015, we have activities that “are spiritual and are invisible to the naked eye. Witchcraft is personal and is possessed by human beings”. In the Elizabethan era, as presented by Shakespeare, witches were supernatural beings and not necessarily human beings.

³⁸ Act Three, Scene iv.

starts to give to itself full expression. After setting the foreboding atmosphere in the exposition using the eating or feeding image, Shakespeare moves on to examine the conscience of the would-be sinner which in this context is represented by Macbeth. This time too Shakespeare's main tool of expression is the feeding or eating symbol. Macbeth, being a rational being, has to weigh the pros and cons of his actions before taking the life of Duncan, acknowledges that “this even-handed justice/Commends th'ingredients of our poisoned chalice/To our own lips”, in other words, you reap what you sow. The image of feeding even goes further; if what you take in is poisonous, then you lose the control of the status of your health to it and this includes your mental health. After all the argument against killing the king, reasons that comprise a combination of his relationship to the king and divine nature of the king,³⁹ he resolves not to kill the king. Of course, when he fails to kill the king, an external force is needed and that is in the person of Lady Macbeth and she also has recourse to the food symbol, “Was the hope drunk/Wherein you dressed yourself,”⁴⁰ repeating the same image or trope that indicates loss of control of one's mind as suggested in Macbeth's image of the “poisoned chalice”. And for an appropriate climactic effect, Lady Macbeth gives us the famous quote:

I have given suck, and know
How tender it is to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I sworn as you
Have done to this

The trope here is very clear: the milk from the woman is what makes her a mother and imbues her with the attribute of tenderness. The milk in the breast used to feed the child, a unique attribute of a mammal, establishes the relationship between mother and child. Lady Macbeth through this

³⁹ Act one, scene vii

⁴⁰ Act one, scene vii, lines 35-36

trope is taunting Macbeth for failing to take the decision to kill the king and that she could have done it even under that extreme condition. It does appear that the eating or feeding image is completely taken over by Lady Macbeth who after Macbeth had killed the king, congratulate herself, “That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold,”⁴¹ going back to the drinking image which takes over the thinking faculty of the individual and expresses the point that what has made them lose control over their thinking has given her the ability to do whatever she wants to do and no wonder when she sees Macbeth with blood dripping from the hands, she advises him to “go, get some water/And wash this filthy witness.”⁴² Here the image of water, which is the feeding symbol in our analysis, is now used to cover up the deed of the murder.

The next stage in the development of the rising action deals with the state of mind of perpetrators of evil. Indeed, the same “drunk” image, a food or feeding image is also picked up by the porter of Dunsinane, who is a porter of the metaphorical hell, after Macbeth had killed the king. Macbeth is now conscious of the fact that he has traded his soul for power, and is not happy he is not going to have his descendants as kings but rather for Banquo's kids and, “For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered,/Put rancours in the vessel of my peace”; the drinking vessel which contains the peace of Macbeth is now full of food or drink that is bitter. At this stage in the plot, Macbeth is fully aware “mine eternal jewel/Given to the common enemy of man”⁴³ that is the devil who now controls him. This ties in very well with Romans 6: 16, “Do you not know that if you yield yourself to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?”⁴⁴ We have two parts to this question by Paul, the first part leading to damnation of the soul which is being referred to by Macbeth, and the second part leading to salvation,

⁴¹ Act two, scene ii

⁴² Act two, scene ii

⁴³ Act three, scene i

⁴⁴ *Revised Standard Version.*

the theme of OWASS *gyama* of Koda's *Nkwaboodoo*. Again, when Fleance flees after the father, Banquo, is killed, Macbeth feels so insecure and reports to Lady Macbeth that “Ere we will eat our meal in fear,” that since Fleance has fled, they will eat in the fear of being exposed or overthrown by Fleance. The ghost of Banquo will however not tolerate any hypocritical use of the image of drinking and so when Macbeth pretends to accuse Banquo of not coming for the dinner, the ghost of Banquo appears to Macbeth to worsen the already mental insecurity Macbeth finds himself in. The action of the plot is now climbing to its peak so the witches, who are the supernatural forces, who have been pushing the action of the plot so far, take over the eating or feeding image. They are seen in Act four, Scene one and in a prolegomenon to meet Macbeth, they boil their charms in a cauldron, a presentation of the feeding symbol of poisonous stuff of destruction and calamity.

This eating or feeding symbol is the very height of their art or charm and that constitutes the very climax of the play. They are seen reworking the efficacy of their charm by pouring “in sow's blood, that eaten/ Her nine farrow” and indeed the power of this potion is enough to attract Macbeth to them to enable them deceive him by showing him three apparitions, the first warning him against Macduff, the second, a bloody child, telling him to be bloody, bold and resolute because no man born of woman can conquer him and the last, a child crowned with a tree in his hand telling him he will never be conquered unless the forest of Birnam moves to Dunsinane, an apparently impossible phenomenon. This marks the end of the first part.

The falling action sees Macbeth falsely emboldened by these charm preparations based on the eating symbol and goes on a killing spree, forcing thanes like Macduff to flee to England to look for Malcolm, Duncan's son. The feeding symbol in the book does not suddenly go away because Malcom also resorts to it to test the loyalty of Macduff when he accused Macduff of offering up “a weak, poor, innocent lamb,/T'appease an angry god.” This is just about the last eating or feeding symbol in the play. Right from the exposition of the play to the

falling action, the eating symbol, a substance supposed to be taken in as food, a symbol of faith as in the sense of most languages in the southern part of Ghana has, been very negative, as opposed to the positive image of eating in the *gyama* and gospel music contexts. Indeed, the eating symbol depicts the mental alertness of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth throughout the play. The moment their thinking faculties break down completely, as we find in Lady Macbeth's sleep walking scene and Macbeth's preparation for the war against Malcolm, all after the supernatural part of the book, the supernatural forces might have finished the damage to their mind or soul and might have no need for any appearance, thus we do not find the eating symbol again in this part of the plot again. The presence or the absence of the eating symbol is thus a basis for both plot and thematic categorizations in this play and therefore occupy a very important position in this study.

Shakespeare is only demonstrating the positive end of man's destiny polarity and he decides to come from rather an obscure angle, showing us rather the dangers of death if we fail to exercise our choice in destiny well. Indeed, the eating or feeding symbol that belongs to the negative supernatural forces as flooding the diablerie landscape of the plot, is a poetic method to construct the mysteriously poetic atmosphere⁴⁵ that is calculated to undermine man's free will to decide his own fate because like in the Ghanaian meaning, food is a substance that gets into the body and becomes part of the body. Indeed, research in shrines in Ghana have explained the etymology of *gyedzi* to be that potions, concoctions and incisions taken for the purpose of making the operating spirits stay in the body.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Doak, "Supernatural Soliciting' in Shakespeare," 321-331

⁴⁶ J.E.T Kuwornu-Adjaottor, "A reading of *hudōrzōn* [living water] and its relationship with *pistuō* [believe] in John 4:1-15 through the lens of some Ghanaian mother-tongue translations of the New Testament and a practice in Ghanaian traditional shrines." *The Journal of Humanities and Social Science; Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Research Report 2015*, 116-117.

What this study has sought to achieve is to show the intercultural approach to the concept of faith, right from the Jewish, the Elizabethan and the Ghanaian points of view, all using the same symbol, eating, to define faith. Shakespeare's approach as stated earlier is rather obscure and people even believe that what he says has nothing to do with salvation. A careful reading and some deconstruction⁴⁷ makes it very clear that Shakespeare is talking about salvation by showing us what we get if we choose the other option. In fact, even though not very well documented, it is known that Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* in appreciation of the patronage of King James I of England, who adopted Shakespeare's group, praising him for being a real divine king. Malcolm makes a clear reference to this when he speaks of the King of England: "A most miraculous work in this good king...but strangely-visited people,/ All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,/ The mere despair of surgery, he cures...With this strange virtue/He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy."⁴⁸ Thus in contradistinction to Macbeth who is unhappy that he has "Put rancours in the vessel of my peace" and "Given to the common enemy of man" his "eternal jewel,"⁴⁹ the King of England is a saint, a man who has salvation. These are not the only hints of salvation in the play. Macbeth would like to know from the murderers if they are so "gospelled" that they would pray for their enemy Banquo. Macbeth also challenges the witches that though they make the winds fight against the churches they should tell him things. Clearly, the dichotomy between good and evil, damnation and salvation is clear in *Macbeth*, just that Shakespeare uses the same symbol of eating but the kind of eating that will lead to damnation, the opposite of the theme of "Living water" in John 4 and "Bread of life" in John 6. This means that the concepts of "Living water" and "Bread of life" are decontextualised and recontextualised in *Macbeth*, following literary, instead of Biblical conventions. The same process goes on with *gyama* and gospel music in

⁴⁷ J Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore, Meriland: John Hopkins University Press, 1997).

⁴⁸ Act four, Scene three.

⁴⁹ Act three, Scene I.

Ghana; the New Testament texts in John 4 and John 6, are decontextualised, recontextualised in them but each genre manifests its own conventions.

Conclusion

The feeding symbol in the New Testament concepts of “Living water” and “Bread of life” are seen in many contexts all over the world. In paper work, we sought to show how this symbol is decontextualised in the Bible, recontextualised in Shakespearean writings like *Macbeth* and recontextualised in Ghanaian meaning-making process of faith, eating the bread of life and drinking the Living water for eternal life, in genres like the *gyama* and gospel music. In all these instances of meaning-making of faith as a social reality, the question of genre, that which differentiates a piece of art, performance, values and ideas from the other,⁵⁰ comes to the fore, telling us that you can have the same text in several instantiations or contexts. This particular aspect about the performance theory seems to be posing problems in Ghana. Ghanaians usually encounter complications in defining what is secular and what is gospel and this is the problem of context, decontextualization and recontextualization. We need to know the context of a text, when it is decontextualized and when a text is recontextualized to be able to classify whether it is gospel or secular and even though the OWASS *gyama* makes a direct reference to the Bible, even though it expresses faith in God, in the Akan sense, taking and eating God's word, may have a Biblical text but lacks Biblical context, indeed too light-hearted a context to be called a gospel song. This poses a challenge to most of the churches. To what extent do we consider this text a secular text? To what extent do we consider this song a sacred or less sacred song? Indeed, as what pertains in some of the Mainline or Historic churches, which type of songs do we sing or play at which stage in the worship? If we do not want the youth to leave our churches, which songs do we sing or play

⁵⁰ Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*.

without compromising our teachings? Of course, there is no direct answer to these questions but if analysis in this work is anything to go by, then the performance theory should be brought in to solve such problems; we should allow the interpretive frame that allows the users of that text to make meaning dictate the kind of genre that we are dealing with. If the performance theory is properly explained to church members, they will eschew the kind of prejudices that accompany the reception of new genres in the church. Whether it is *gyama*, gospel music or *Macbeth*, they may be different genres but have the same message.

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The Role of School Administrators in Enhancing Discipline among Students in Christian Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on the prevalence of indiscipline among secondary school students, especially students in Christian schools. With the understanding of the nature, history and purposes of Christian Secondary Schools, this reveals the sad reality that some mission or Christian schools are not immune from students indiscipline. Schools have a role to play in inculcating discipline in students. Principals of secondary schools are considered as administrators and by extension; they are also seen as leaders. As leaders their ability to lead effectively is therefore crucial. Effective leadership in schools begins with identifying one's roles and responsibility so as to function productively thereby achieving the objectives of the school. This paper articulates that the role of administrators of secondary schools will either enhance student discipline (among other aspects of a school) or affects the tone of the school (Christian or secular). It is against this backdrop that this paper examines the roles of school administrators in fostering an environment that nurtures and supports good behaviour thereby enhancing

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discipline among students such that the objectives of establishing mission/Christian schools could be achieved.

Introduction

Two important studies have shown that Educational Administration is a comprehensive effort intended to achieve some specific educational objectives and it deals with educational practices.² Furthermore, Kochhar opined that “fundamentally, the purpose of Educational Administration is to bring pupils and teachers under such conditions as will more successfully promote the end of education”.³ Educational Administration consists of administration, supervision and inspection, coordination, organization, planning, the school plant, school auxiliary services, major components (such as the principal, the teachers and the pupils), and areas of relationships and interaction in which discipline in schools (among others) is situated.

Majority of the secondary school students are adolescents, within the age range of 12-19 years. Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. At this developmental stage, great changes occur in all the students' developmental dimensions and tend to create disequilibrium in their personality that they find it difficult to obey school rules and regulations.⁴ Supporting this view, Fatola noted that 20% of the adolescents experience serious psychological conflicts, which may result in problem behaviours like truancy and delinquency.⁵

² S. F. Kochhar, *Secondary School Administration* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1970), 3; A.O. Ozigi, *A Handbook on School Administration and Management* (London: Macmillan Educational Limited, 1977), 8-9.

³ Kochhar, *Secondary School Administration*, 4.

⁴ C. M. Louttit, *Clinical Psychology of Children Behaviour Problems* (New York: Harper and Sons, 2000).

⁵ B. M. Fatola, “Improving Attendance and Behaviour in Secondary Schools,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 10. 2 (2005): 11-45.

Thus, it became imperative that student discipline and orderliness should be effectively maintained in secondary schools to enable the students learn as well as lead to the development of individuals with well-rounded character.⁶

Nwaka and Obikeze stated that discipline and orderliness ensure conducive environment for the development of the whole child. It is a habit or a way of training that promotes obedience and self-control for the purpose of bringing about steady growth and development. Discipline has to do with the establishment and maintenance of order and harmonious functioning in the home, school and in larger society.⁷ Ozigistated that the school principal, as a matter of fact, has the responsibility to effectively maintain discipline and orderliness to the best of his ability and in accordance with the stated directives in order to create an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning.⁸ Naturally, schools have reputation for high standards of discipline. Discipline helps the individual student to be well adjusted, happy and useful in the society when discipline and orderliness is established and maintained in the school.

In establishing the importance of discipline, Kochhar asserted that “discipline is the most vital aspect of the secondary school administration”. Strengthening on this assertion.⁹ Aguba noted that discipline is needed to produce a breed of well cultivated youths who will develop not only respect for themselves, but also for others in the school

⁶ N. Wren, *Discipline, Guidance and Counselling in Schools* (Nairobi: Nehema Publishers, 2006).

⁷ N.G. Nwaka and N. Obikeze, “Maintaining Discipline and Orderliness in Secondary Education System for National Development,” *African Research Review: An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal*, Ethiopia. 4 (4), Serial No. IT: pp. 399-411, 2010, 400.

⁸ A.O.Ozigi, *A Handbook on School Administration and Management*. (London: Macmillan Educational Limited, 1977), 40.

⁹ S.F.Kochhar, *Secondary School Administration*. (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1970), 323.

and society;¹⁰ also, good discipline is one of the main attributes of effective schools and many failing schools have been blamed on lack of discipline or indiscipline

The burden of this paper lies in the findings from literature which has revealed the prevalence of indiscipline among secondary school students. Factors investigated and reported by some scholars to cause indiscipline include: drug abuse by students, home conditions (poor housing condition, poor parenting and over protection of children), environment (negative influence by the mass media and politics), peer group influence, unfavourable students' personal characteristics, level of learners, seniority, poor study habits, restlessness and inattention by some students, poor value system, lack of social order in the society as well as injustice in the society revealed by the practice of favouritism, nepotism and corruption, uncondusive school environment, teachers' lateness and absenteeism, overcrowded classrooms, harsh school rules and regulations, teachers' behaviour, poor teaching by some teachers, administrative structure of school leadership, poor leadership of some school administrators.¹¹

The reports coupled with the desire to contribute to efforts at finding solutions to the problems of indiscipline in secondary schools generally constitute the motivation for this paper. Specifically, the writer of this

¹⁰ C. R. Aguba, *Educational Administration and Management: Issues and Perspectives*. Enugu: (Tons and Tons PDS, 2009).

¹¹ P. Martimore, *Behaviour Problems in Schools: An Evaluation of Support Centre*. Croom Help Publishers, 1985; Ileri, E. R., "A Study of Pupils Indiscipline Faced by Primary Schools Teachers in a Nairobi Slum Area: The Case of Mathare Primary Schools". University of Nairobi, Unpublished Thesis, 1992; Gathenya, T.W., "Management of Secondary Schools in Kenya". Unpublished MED Thesis. University of Bristol, 1992; Siringi, S. "Drug Abuse in Schools and Universities". In *Daily Nation*. Kenya. Nairobi. Nation Media Group, 2003; Abdulamud, Y.F and Yarduma, A.C. "A Survey of Behaviour Problems among Secondary Schools in Akwanga Local Government Area of Niger State", 3(1): pp. 11-19, 2007.

paper's preference for Christian Secondary schools is borne out of the understanding of the nature, history and purposes of Christian Secondary Schools. This is coupled with the sad reality that some mission or Christian schools of present day are not immune from some manifestations of indiscipline as observed from experiences, reports from newspaper and other media at various times. These observations raises an interest to take a cursory look at the roles of school administrators in fostering as well as ensuring discipline among students such that the objectives of establishing mission/Christian schools could be achieved.

The aim of this paper is achieved through a glimpse at the meaning of discipline; stating the rationale for student discipline; exposing the concept of biblical discipline; examining the characteristics and objectives of Christian schools; identifying who school administrators are and itemizing their responsibilities. The paper culminates with the roles of School administrators in ensuring good discipline in Christian schools.

Meaning of School Discipline

Several sources and authors have defined the term discipline. Among them is the *American Heritage Dictionary* which defines discipline as the training that is expected to produce a specified character or pattern of behaviour. It is punishment that is intended to correct or to train. But at an organizational level, discipline can be defined as the action by the management to enforce organizational standards and the process of encouraging workers to move uniformly towards meeting the objectives of the organization.¹² It is also the administrative action taken by education managers to encourage employees to follow the standards, rules and organizational (school) expectations enthusiastically.¹³ It also

¹² J.A.Okumbe, *Educational Management. Theory and Practice.*(Nairobi, Kenya Sunlitho Ltd., 1999).

¹³ Ibid.

refers to the values that students should live by within the school, family, the neighbourhood, the village and all the social units up to the nation and the entire world community.¹⁴ At the classroom level, discipline can be defined as the business of enforcing simple classroom rules, to facilitate learning and minimize disruption. In fact, school discipline is the system of rules, punishment and behavioural strategies appropriate to the regulation of children and the maintenance of order in school.

Also, the term discipline is applied to the punishment that is the consequence of breaking the rules in a school.¹⁵ Hornsby posited that discipline is a practice of training people to obey rules and orders and punishing them if they do not.¹⁶ Order presents a controlled state of affairs. Specifically, discipline and order result from training and lead children to develop socially and have desirable habits such as neatness, punctuality, obedience, honesty, industry and so on. In the words of Adesina, discipline means teaching the students to respect the school authorities, to observe the school laws and regulations and to maintain an established standard of behaviour.¹⁷ This definition implies that, the school has a role to play in inculcating discipline in students. According to Egwunyenga discipline is the training that enables an individual to develop an orderly conduct, self-control, restraint, respect for self and respect for others.¹⁸ This definition emphasizes the modern educators' belief in self-discipline, in which the source of control is largely within the individual rather than from external source imposed with force. This

¹⁴ Shiundu, J. S., and Omulando, S. J., *Curriculum Theory and Practice in Kenya*. (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹⁵ Wapedia "School Discipline",. <http://wapedia.mobile/en/>. Retrieved 17th October, 2015.

¹⁶ A. S.Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹⁷ S. Adesina, *Aspects of School Management*.(Hoadan: Board Publications Limited, 1980), p. 105.

¹⁸ E.J. Egwunyenga, *Essentials of school Administration*. (Benin City: Jecko Publishers, 2005).

gives room for the capacity for self-control and self-direction to be developed.

Rosen sees discipline as a branch of knowledge and training that develops self-control, character, orderliness or efficiency, strict control to enforce obedience and treatment that controls or punishes and as a system of rules.¹⁹ Discipline involves teaching and self-control. However, The United States Department of Education acknowledges that maintaining a disciplined environment conducive for learning requires an ethics of caring that shapes staff-students relations.²⁰

Abubakar defined being disciplined as the ability and willingness to do what one ought to do without external control.²¹ Hence, discipline can be said to be internally motivated within the individual, it is voluntary and an individual can deliberately make efforts to conform to or abide by an established code of conduct. In contrast, Aguba, while explaining Douglas McGregor's "theory X" maintained that discipline is externally induced in that individuals do not succumb to established rules and regulations out of their personal volition but out of fear of punishment or sanction.²²

Rationale for Student Discipline in Secondary Schools

School discipline is the system of rules, punishments and behavioural strategies appropriate to the regulation of children and the maintenance of order in schools. Its aim is to create a safe and conducive learning

¹⁹ L. Rosen, *School Discipline: Best Practices for Administrators*. (California: Corwin Press Thousand Oaks, 1997).

²⁰ R.I. Asiayi, "Indiscipline in Nigerian Secondary Schools: Types, Causes and Possible Solutions". *African Journal of Education and Technology*, 2012: 2 (1): p. 40.

²¹ S. Abubakar, "Rights and Obligations" In Adesina, N. (Ed). *Citizenship Education in Nigeria*, (Lagos: Idowu Publishers, 2000).

²² C.R. Aguba, *Educational Administration and Management: Issues and Perspectives*. (Enugu: Tons and Tons PDS, 2009).

environment in the classroom in particular and the school in general. In the opinion of Owolabi, the main purpose of discipline is to assist individuals to internalize societal norms in a pragmatic way. When a student obeys the rules and regulations of a school without anybody goading such a student into action, it can be assumed that the student has internalized the rule and adopted the rules.²³

Discipline is an important component of human behaviour. It helps not only to regulate people's reactions to various situations but also regulating human conduct and relations among themselves. It is the epicentre of success of a school and all members of a school are expected to adhere to various standards or codes of behaviour.²⁴ According to Ileri, in traditional society, the question of children's discipline was a joint effort for all members of society.²⁵

Student discipline is a complicated process which involves several people – the school staff, the students and their parents. It may mean something very different to people from different backgrounds, with different experience. To many teachers, discipline means obeying rules. Most schools have rules and a reward and punishment scheme to monitor students' behaviour. Thus, when the issue of discipline comes up in discussion, the argument would centre on how many rules there should be, whether there is too much or too little punishment, and what kind of punishment works best.

Discipline in the context of quality education implies more than rules and

²³ O.Owolabi, "A Creative approach to Corrective Discipline and Counselling in Secondary Schools". In K. A. Adegoke, M. B. Adegboye, A. Ajani, O. Owolabi and A. O. Faniran, Eds. *Creativity in Personnel and Academic Problem-Solving in Secondary Schools*. (Oshogbo: AbusiOlu-Commercial Press, 1996), p. 102.

²⁴ J. A. Okumbe, *Human Resource Management: An Educational Perspective*. Nairobi, Kenya Educational Development and Research Bureau, 2001, p. 102.

²⁵ Ileri, E. R., "A Study of Pupils Indiscipline Faced by Primary Schools Teachers in a Nairobi Slum Area: The Case of Mathare Primary Schools". University of Nairobi, Unpublished Thesis, 1992.

regulations. The general expectation is that students are to be well behaved not only when they are closely monitored and threatened by the punishment imposed. The concept of discipline illustrates the necessity for students to think critically, to analyze the situations, to solve problems and make appropriate decisions on the action to take. Students learn more from how school administrators behave and what teachers believe in than what they teach. When teaching is meaningful and personalized, students develop a high sense of achievement and belonging to the class and the school. Thus when they leave school, they will behave responsibly even in the absence of the watchful eyes of stakeholders saddled with the responsibility to ensuring discipline.²⁶

To the educationist, discipline is an educative process. There is an expectation on school administrators to give students ample opportunities to interact with teachers in class and the principals in order for them to develop a holistic appraisal of the concept of discipline. Responsibility resides with school administrators to facilitate a sufficiently safe and democratic environment for students to participate actively in the learning process.²⁷ Learning appropriate behaviour should be an integral part of every lesson. The nature of discipline demands that students require an interaction with school administrators in line with setting standards for behaviour. This will allow for students to express their views regarding school rules. This is not the sole responsibility of the discipline masters/mistresses. School administrators share in this educative process. If students understand the meaning behind rule and limit setting, they would be more prepared to observe school rules.

School discipline has two main goals:

²⁶ D, O.Osher, G. G.Bear, J. R.Spargue, and W. Doyle, "How can we Improve School Discipline?" *Educational Researcher*, 39 (1): 2010: pp. 48-58, DOI: <http://er.aera.net>

²⁷ G. Dunlap, "Overview and History of Positive Behaviour Support," in *Handbook of Positive Behaviour Support*, ed. Wayne Sailor et al., *Issues in Clinical Child Psychology* Springer: 2009, pp. 3-16.

- to ensure the safety of staff and students, and
- to create an environment conducive to learning. Serious student misconduct involving violent or criminal behaviour defeats these goals and often make headlines in the process.

However, the commonest discipline problems involve non-criminal student behaviour.²⁸ It is important to keep the ultimate goal in mind while working to improve school discipline. As education researcher Duke points out, "the goal of good behaviour is necessary, but not sufficient to ensure academic growth."²⁹ Effective school discipline strategies seek to encourage responsible behaviour and to provide all students with a satisfying school experience as well as to discourage misconduct.

Biblical Concept of Discipline

Atkinson noted that the Christian approach to discipline “involves the dynamics of learning, growth and maturation, rather than revenge and penalty.”³⁰ The scriptures frown at any level of indiscipline and so there are many passages in the Bible which enjoins parents to train or discipline their children. Therefore, Christian parents have been assigned the divine responsibility to train or discipline their children. Forder and Bushnell both explained that parents must teach, train and discipline their children in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6) and bring them up in the nature and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). When biblical injunctions on the importance of discipline are carried out, parents will always cherish their children because they will be sources of joy, peace

²⁸ O. C.Moles, *Strategies to Reduce Student Misbehaviour*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. ED311 608,1989.

²⁹ D. L.Duke,*School Leadership and Instructional Improvement*. (New York: N.P, 1987).

³⁰ D.Atkinson, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*. (England: Intervarsity Press, 1995) p. 310.

and rest to them and the society. Christian teachers and leaders represent parents and are expected to accept this responsibility of promoting discipline among the children in their schools or under their care. However, this is to be done in love and not in anger.³¹ Proverbs 13:24 requires parents to discipline the child because “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him” (NIV).

Strong explained that the Hebrew word used for 'spares or spareth' in the above verse is '*chasak*' (*kha-sak*) which means to 'restrain, refrain, refuse, and spare'. The Hebrew word for love is '*ahab*' (*ah-hab*) which means “to have affection for, like, friend.”³² The Hebrew word for discipline is 'Mowcerab' which means “correction or corrections.”³³ These two words combined would mean while parents who love must correct their children, all must be done in love because of the affection which must still exist after the correction.

In the same vein, Proverbs 22:6 says “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it (NIV). This implies that parents have the obligation to train (discipline) their children. The Hebrew word for 'train' is '*chanak*' which means to “institute or discipline, to train up” (Strong, p. 41). This means that if a child is guided in the right way to go, when he matures, he will follow the path earlier set for him. This firmly establishes the fact that the scriptures endorse that a child be disciplined, trained, and guided to behave rightly.

The phrase “train up” could also be seen in the verb “*hanakh*” which means 'educate'. Buttrick highlighted that the training of a child must start early when the child's mind is impressionable such training will enable him to dedicate and commit his life to meet the standard that God

³¹ R.Forder, “An Opportunity Missed”. *Home Life*. 42(2): 49, 1987. Bushnell, H. *Christian Nurture*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 164.

³² J.H.,Strong,*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. (Gordonsville: Dugan Publishers, Inc.1989),p. 9.

³³ J. H. Strong, p. 63.

requires and which parents desire.³⁴ According to Hurt, parents are usually very happy and willing to provide for children who are well behaved. Likewise, when children refuse to be guided, it is usually a painful experience for the parents, even the neighbours may be affected by the resulting misbehaviour of such children.³⁵

In the bid to train and discipline, the biblical narratives expect fathers to be the authority (*patrapotestas*) in inculcating values, but the part of the mothers are not to be neglected³⁶. Paul emphasized the need for proper upbringing and care. Parents, in performing this task, must not be too harsh; for this will make the children to lose heart (Colossians 3:21). Instead, “let these children enjoy both bodily nourishment” (Ephesians 5:29) and education in its entirety.

Characteristics and Objectives of Christian Schools

The motivation for the establishment of Christian schools is a consequence of the awareness that parents have a God-given responsibility for the education and general development of their children. Christian schools are established to assist parents in the education of their children. Building upon the home's foundation with an education which provides for the student's maximum development spiritually is the basis for Christian education.³⁷ The characteristics of Christian schools will be discussed along these parameters: ownership/proprietorship, motto, vision and mission statements, objectives, religious activities and other practices. The following examples of statements are coined from some Nigerian Christian schools' prospectus and documents. These schools include schools of

³⁴ G. O. Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible*. Volume 4. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), p. 907.

³⁵ B. G. Hurt, “Teach them Responsibility”. *Home Life*. 42(2):1987, p. 18.

³⁶ F. E. Gaebelien, (Ed.) *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), p. 89.

³⁷ <http://www.fbcchurch.org/objectives.aspx>, Accessed February 10, 2014

these denominations: Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Anglican, Apostolic, and Christ Apostolic.

Ownership/Proprietorship

The proprietors of Christian schools include the government, churches, pastors, individuals, who are Christians, group of Christians, group of churches, seminaries, Bible colleges and other mission agencies.

Motto, Vision and Mission Statements

Certain Christian schools (government owned and others) have the following as their motto: “faith, knowledge and service”, “discipline, unity and industry”, “knowledge, discipline and service”, “moral and academic excellence”, “education for life”, “godliness for academic excellence”, “knowledge for value”, “education for judgement, mercy and faith”, “goodness, honesty and service to humanity”, “the nation's hope, “God first” and so on.

Examples of the vision statements of Christian schools are: “Academic mindedness and nurturing of spiritually minded youths in Nigeria”, “Ensure education for both rural and urban children”, “Leading the younger ones out of ignorance (spiritually and physically)”, “To build a better and godly generation of people with both moral and academic excellence”, “To give moral, spiritual and academic education”, “To train students to be first among their equals”, To train students in moral and academic pursuits”.

While examples of their mission statements are: “Teaching of academic excellence, moral and spiritual standard for better future”, “Teaching and training God-fearing students”, diligence, integrity and faith in Jesus Christ”, “To develop them morally, spiritually and academically in order to fit in the society”, proper upbringing of students”, “To train and develop the minds of students who are tomorrow's leaders, in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning predicated on equity”, “Consistently prepare students that will be role models, self-

reliant and good ambassadors of the nation”, and so on.

A broad categorization of the objectives of schools are said to include: academics, sociality, and physical spheres of life.³⁸ The specific objectives of Christian schools are broadly categorized into the following:

Spiritual

- To lead all students, who do not have the saving Knowledge of Jesus Christ, to do so.
- To develop in each student a love for the person, work, and word of Jesus Christ coupled with a respect and fear of the Lord.
- To develop an appreciation of the Bible and an ability to make daily application to life.
- To develop biblical self-awareness and confidence which produces a mature and vital testimony for Jesus Christ?
- To encourage each student to understand, live and bear witness to her faith and to deepen her love of and relationship with God.
- To cultivate in each student an informed awareness and appreciation of all God's creation.

Academics

- To provide an alternative to secular humanistic education for children that offer an instructional programme based on the Christian perspective.
- To enable students to master the tools of learning and communication so that they will think clearly, logically, and independently.
- To instil a lifelong love of learning and inculcate in students the qualities of scholarship, character, service and leadership.

³⁸ Jackson Christian School's Parent-Student Handbook 2012; <http://www.ecsdalecity.org/about-ecs/Evangel-School-Objective.cfm>. Accessed February 10, 2014.

Social

- To nurture and instruct students in such a way as to develop in them a world and life view consistent with biblical principles.
- To promote within each student the ethical and spiritual qualities which constitute Christian character.
- To develop patriotism and respect for the godly values, common memories, and traditions which have made the country what it is today.
- To develop in each student a sense of personal integrity, inner reflection, and responsibility for her own actions.
- To stimulate students to think independently, critically and without prejudice.
- To encourage in students a social consciousness and global awareness which elicit a sensitive and active response to justice and human need in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- To focus on the cultural, religious, social and economic diversity within the School as a forum for understanding and cooperation.

Physical

- To provide students with opportunities to discover and develop talents in the arts and in athletics.
- To develop physical strength, motor skills, and teamwork through organized physical activities.

Religious activities and other practices

Religious activities of Christian schools include devotions, students and staff fellowships, retreats, prayer and fasting days, and so on. While other activities include sporting activities, debates, quiz competition, academic clubs and societies, young farmers club, homemakers club and business oriented clubs, and so on.

School Administrators and their Responsibility

The administrator of a school in addition to his administrative functions

of planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and coordinating, must as a leader, possess certain qualities to be able to perform effectively. Such qualities include: maturity, intelligence, and initiative, sense of judgment, emotional stability, decisiveness, dependability, and high degree of personal integrity.³⁹ His ability to lead effectively therefore, affects the tone of the school.⁴⁰ The way the principal works with people and sets the stage for human relationships will make the difference in what type of school he directs. As a staff developer, the principal must possess skills, knowledge, and creativity to set up with the staff, high but attainable standards and help them to achieve them.⁴² The principal's leadership roles (responder, manager, and initiator) contribute to teachers' morale either by fostering a rough atmosphere or by supporting and collaborating with them. Research on organizational psychology demonstrated the relationship between leadership effectiveness and subordinates' confidence. More recent research has integrated the relationship between the perceived leadership style of principals and the acceptance of teachers in professional matter.⁴³ These researches have clearly established the fact that the principal's leadership style has an effect on the teacher and subsequently the instructional process.

The Christian principal should be very concerned about the long-term developmental needs of teachers. This can be enhanced by the principal establishing a good working relationship with the teachers and making

³⁹ N.B. Oyedeji, and Y.A. Fasasi, "Dynamics of Administrative Leadership" In J.B. Babalola, A.O. Ayeni, S.O. Adedeji, A.A. Suleiman and M.O. Arikewuyo. (Eds.), *Educational Management: Thoughts and Practice*. (Ibadan: Published by Codat Publications, 2006), 175-86.

⁴⁰ C. O. Duze, "Leadership Styles of Principals and Job Performance of Staff in Secondary Schools in Delta State of Nigeria." *AFRREVIJAH* 1. 2 (2012): 9.

⁴¹ S. Espinosa, "The Principal as a Supervisor." *Adventist Education* 39. 1 (1976): 20.

⁴² M. Doggett "Staff Development: Eight Leadership Behaviours for principals." *NASSP Bulletin* 71 (497): (1987): 1-10.

⁴³ G. E. Hall, "The Principal's Role in Setting School Climate for School Improvement" *ED*. 288: (239), 1980.

sure the avenues for effective communication is available and utilized. For the school to be effective, both the principal and each teacher must realize they need each other and an atmosphere of mutual partnership to plan and implement strategies for the effective leadership of the school at their respective levels. School administrators, unlike teachers, work a twelve-month year and are fairly busy most of this time. Whether running a small, private day-care centre or an overcrowded public secondary school, administrator's tasks are many and varied, ranging from curriculum development to student discipline.⁴⁴

The principal sets the environment for the parents and teachers to play their respective roles effectively⁴⁵ and channels their efforts towards achieving school goals.⁴⁶ The management of student discipline in schools is a collective responsibility between the principal, the teachers, students and parents.⁴⁷ However, in discussing the nature of collective responsibility, principals, teachers, students and parents share in ensuring discipline. The Church of England High School (1995); San Andrea School (1999/2000) and St. Thomas the Apostle College (1995) enumerated the following in their respective documents:⁴⁸

- **Administrative responsibility:** The administrator(s) of each

⁴⁴ A. F.Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Wm B Publishing, 1994).

⁴⁵ J.D. Chapman, *School Based Decision Making and Management: Implications for School Personnel*. (London: The Palmer Press,2003).

⁴⁶ G.Griffin,*School of Masterly Straight Talk about Boarding School Management in Kenya*. (Nairobi: Lectern Publications Ltd.,1994).

⁴⁷ J.Bosire, “The Relationship between Principals' Managerial Approaches and Student Discipline in Secondary Schools in Kenya”. *African Research Review: An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*.3 (3): 2009, p. 403.

⁴⁸ *Behaviour and Discipline – policy adopted by the Governors*. London, UK: Twyford Church of England High School, June 1995; *Code of Conduct*. San Andrea School. In: *Welcome Back to School*, Scholastic Year 1999/2000. Middle and Senior School and *Code of Conduct*. St. Thomas the Apostle College, 1995.<https://education.gov.mt/.../good%20behavior%20and%20discipline.pdf> Accessed on December 28, 2015.

school is responsible for ensuring that a fair and effective Code of Behaviour and Discipline that includes rules, ways of encouraging and affirming student efforts, rewards, sanctions, and implementation procedures, be developed and implemented with the participation of staff, students, and parents. It is the responsibility of the principal to create the right climate within which individuals in the school community can fulfil their responsibilities and to ensure that the school's Code is administered in a manner which is consistent and fair to all. The Senior Management Team is to ensure a participatory evaluation of the impact of the school Code.

- **Staff responsibility:** School personnel are responsible at all times for the behaviour of students within sight or sound of them and should respond promptly and firmly to any instances of unacceptable behaviour. It is an established fact that the quality of teaching and the quality of students' behaviour are directly proportional. Lively and stimulating teaching methods, with work well-matched to student's abilities, are those most likely to receive a positive response from students. School staff behaviour and actions influence those of the students they teach and they have a crucial role to play in fostering an environment that nurtures and supports good behaviour and mutual respect among all the members of the school community. While being firm and consistent, any response to disruptive behaviour should avoid threats, ambiguous statements, reprimands or punishment directed at the person rather than the action. Sarcastic remarks which invariably hurt antagonize, and win the sympathy of disgruntled fellow students must be avoided at all times. Consistent use of language and actions aimed at demotivating students and crushing their spirit may constitute emotional abuse. Humour has the potential of diffusing tense situations.
- **Parental responsibility:** Parents and a supportive home environment play a crucial role in shaping attitudes that produce good behaviour from students. Thus, it is important that parents not only be made aware of the aims, values and the nature of expected behaviour of their children's school but that they be

actively encouraged to become involved in the process of the drawing up of the school Code of Conduct.

- **Student responsibility:** Students should align themselves with the learning and application of such life enhancing skills as self-control, conflict management, problem-solving, decision-making, and effective intra-/inter-personal communication. Negative behaviour has its consequences and good behaviour shapes the desired community environment. It's the responsibility of students to be actively involved in class meetings, student councils, and in the development of the school Code as well as to take up leadership roles through the system of class prefects.

Role of School Administrators Ensuring Good Discipline

Kochhar enunciated that good discipline is a prior condition for the efficient working of a school. It is both a cause and a consequence of the successful functioning of a school. It can be ensured in the following ways:⁴⁹

- **Effective Team-work:** Effective team-work in the wake of intelligent professional leadership is the key to sound disciplinary policies. There must be team-work between the principal and the staff; teachers and teachers; teachers and pupils; pupils and pupils; principal, teacher and pupils. All must pool their resources and put their heads together to achieve a desired end. Let responsibility be divided among different persons and departments. Let definite duties be assigned to them so that the principal is free from disciplinary difficulties.
- **Good School Traditions:** School discipline Code is not like a written constitution. Conventions and traditions of the school go

⁴⁹ S.F.Kochhar,*Secondary School Administration*. (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited,1970), pp. 399-401.

a long way in maintaining discipline. A school without conventions and traditions may be as unruly as a mob knowing no law. Healthy traditions will reduce the incidence of indiscipline. The pupils staying in the school for a number of years get used to its ways of life – the new ones will not feel uneasy in the flowing stream. Traditions are not established in days... they take years. So the problem of discipline is to be taken as a continuous challenge.

- Well-planned school work: Before the session starts, the work plan must be ready in order to avoid all confusion and delay in execution of the work.
- Unified discipline policy: There should be a unified discipline policy evolved through joint deliberations with the staff. Everyone in the school must be very conversant with objectives and techniques of discipline. Also, “discipline should, at all times, be firm, consistent and positive.
- A suitable programme of co-curricular activities: The corporate life of the school should be so organized to provide ample and varied opportunities for the expression of the pupils' impulses and the flow of their vital energy into worthy, fruitful and satisfying channels. Co-curricular activities give the pupils a sense of social co-operation, make them self-directing, develop the insight for law and order, heighten the respect of the authority and give good training in leadership. Apart from these moral values, these activities develop the tastes and temperaments of all the students and help them discharge a portion of surplus energy in the playground or club instead of mischief in the class-room.
- Well-conducted school assemblies: It will be very useful if school day starts with general assembly where the whole of school population meets. School assemblies tune up the general atmosphere of the school. It can serve as a common meeting ground. It can be the family altar of the school to which each can bring his offering (gives a boost to the achievement of spiritual objectives and the mission of the church or Christian organizations in establishing the school. Well-conducted school

assemblies can help the cultivation of group consciousness and *esprit de corps*. It promotes school loyalty. The school daily programme can start with a prayer or a short address of an inspiring nature by the principal or a teacher or some resource personnel such as the Chaplain. Announcements can be made. It can make for a common knowledge of rules, customs and traditions. Appeals for better conduct on school functions and participation in the religious and cultural life of the school can be made there. Thus, there will be good opportunities to control and direct the efforts of the pupil body as a whole.

- Personal contact: Classes should not be very large. The teacher can then develop personal contacts. The skilled teacher, with a ready wit and tact, can turn a tantrum into purposeful activity, mischief into useful assistance and prevent a display of indiscipline. As the bond of love between teacher and the pupil student is the basis of school discipline, this bond must be strengthened.
- Good school premises library and specialized rooms: Physical facilities contribute a lot to the general atmosphere of the school. Healthy surroundings, good sanitary arrangements leave little scope for irritations. Adequate library and reading room facilities, special room for the different subjects, common rooms and so on; will keep the children profitably busy and away from indiscipline.

Conclusion

Discipline is imperative in the accomplishment of constructive school outcomes in secondary schools and it plays a vital role in didactic aftermaths. Public accountability presumes that schools (public, private and mission/Christian) are places that turn out productive and useful school-leavers such as secondary school students. Therefore, the purpose of discipline is that of fostering, enhancing and strengthening self-discipline between the individuals and the entire work group. Christian/Mission secondary schools are set up for a purpose. As such students of such schools should be good examples of discipline.

The discipline of students is necessary in order to achieve the mission of education. One of the missions is to raise education standards part of rising standards is to enforce and maintain discipline. This paper notably cascades with the fact that students' discipline is a hallmark of good administration. If the administration of schools is interpreted as all those things administrators do for the purpose of creating a situation conducive for learning, it becomes undisputable that maintaining discipline is one of the major tasks of school administrators. Discipline in a school is also the requirement and responsibility of society. Without constructive and proper discipline, aims and aspirations of societies cannot be successfully actualized.

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A Critical Assessment of the use of Psalms in African Indigenous Churches

Caleb O. Ogunkunle¹

ABSTRACT

The book of Psalms occupies a unique position in the Bible and it has been greatly used in the place of worship both in Ancient Israel and the contemporary Church. However, a glance at some of the booklets on the book of Psalms written by Church leaders in Nigeria, especially from the African Indigenous Churches, shows some disparity of interpretation from the traditional Western interpretation. Therefore, this paper compares the interpretation of some selected Psalms by the Western scholars and the leadership of African Indigenous Churches. Also, the paper highlights factors responsible for the African method of interpretation. A multiple historical- exegetical method is adopted. Obviously, there is a wide divide in the culture of the interpreters from the West on the one hand and Africa, on the other hand. Indeed, the understanding of the African world view on the reality of evil in the society has very much to contribute to the African Indigenous Churches' method of interpretation.

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Introduction

The Psalter, which is made up of 150 hymns, is generally referred to as the Book of Praises in the Hebrew Bible. Some people have regarded the Psalter as the heart of the Bible/Old Testament as the various hymns have deeply enriched the souls of men from one generation to another.² The fact that the Psalter occupies a unique position in the Bible is seen in the way Jesus Christ used it in Luke 24:44 and that several of the quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament are from the Book of Psalms.³ This position of the Psalter is still maintained by Christians all over the world today. Thus, the thrust of this paper is an assessment of the use of Psalms in African Indigenous Churches. The assessment becomes imperative in the light of the interpretation given to the same Psalms by Western scholars. The pertinent questions include: Why is the interpretation of the Psalms in the African Indigenous Churches different from that of the Western scholars? What are the factors responsible for a different interpretation of the Psalms by the African Indigenous Churches? By way of identification, African Indigenous Churches are the Churches that have been founded in Africa by Africans; they are Churches that have no connections with missionaries. Paul Makhubu says, "An African Independent or Indigenous Church means a purely black-controlled denomination with no links in membership or administrative control with any non-African Church."⁴ In Nigeria, African Indigenous Churches include Christ Apostolic Church, the Church of the Lord (Aladura), Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Celestial Church of Christ, among others. Actually, some of these Churches, like Christ Apostolic Church and The Apostolic Church, 'broke away' from expatriate Churches.

² George S. Gunn, *Singers of Israel* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963), 13.

³ Herbert Lockyer, *God's Book of Poetry: Meditations from the Psalms* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), 10.

⁴ Paul Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches?* (Johannesburg: Skottaville Publishers, 1988), 5.

General Overview of the Psalter

Modern scholarship has taken special interest in the form and literary study of the Psalms in the context of worship. One prominent scholar is Hermann Gunkel who broke away from a personal approach to the study of Psalms according to their various types to deal with the question of date and authorship. He proposed a new approach that was more constant with the Hebrew manner of speech and culture. He states that it is the task of the historian to isolate the individual literary unit by determining its beginning and ending; identifying its type or genre by observing its formal characteristics, style, mode of composition, terminology and rhetorical features; tracing the origin of the story; and then looking at the occasion in which the kind of speech was employed.⁵ Gunkel has given a new direction to biblical scholarship, instilled vitality into research and rescued it from mere craftsmanship and opened fresh vistas for the interpretation of individual literary units of the Psalms.⁶ Gunkel's classification of Psalms into four main literary types, namely, hymns, community of public lament, songs of individuals, and laments of the individual which constitute the largest group, is very helpful.

Sigmund Mowinckel built upon the work of Hermann Gunkel, his teacher, and his form-critical approach led him to conclude that the Psalms are totally cultic both in origin and intention. He argues that in ancient Israel, there existed an association with the Jerusalem temple, an annual autumn New year festival at which Yahweh's enthronement as the universal king was celebrated annually. He associates most of the Psalms to this New year festival.⁷

⁵ Hermann Gunkel, *The Psalms: A Form – Critical Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 5.

⁶ Gunkel, *The Psalms*, 3.

⁷ Adrian R. Johnson, "The Psalms," in *The Old Testament and Modern Study: A Generation of Discovery and Research*, ed. H.H. Rowley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 190 and Dafyd R. Ap-Thomas, "An Appreciation of S. Mowinckel's Contributions to Biblical Studies," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85 (1966): 321.

Artur Weiser accepts Gunkel's classification of the Psalms and he is deeply interested in the cultic setting for each of the Psalms like Mowinckel, but then he develops further the works of the two scholars. His main classification of Psalms includes: Hymns, Laments, Thanksgiving, Blessings and curses, Wisdom and Didactic poem.⁸

One scholar who has equally made a significant contribution to understanding and interpretation of Psalms is Claus Westermann. His two main arguments include: One, that there is no word for 'thanks' because the Hebrew word *todhah* means 'praise'. Secondly, that Gunkel's treatment of the hymns was defective in that it failed to defend what a hymn was. Even though Gunkel argued that the hymns were the most important category of the Psalter, he failed to give evidence for his assumption that the cult was the life setting of the hymn. Hence, Westermann proceeds to argue that no sharp distinctions should be drawn between 'hymn' and 'thanksgiving' since they belong to the category. He therefore calls the Psalm of praise 'descriptive praise' that is, praising God for his action and being, while the 'Psalm of thanksgiving' he calls 'narrative or confessional praise', that is, praising God for specific actions.⁹ For Westermann, the five main types of Psalms are reduced to two basic types, namely, “the Psalms of lamentation and application” on the one hand and “the Psalms of praise' on the other hand.¹⁰

Personally, I see the Psalter as a collection of hymns for different occasion. The Psalmist was particularly aware of various evils in his days hence he called upon God in imprecatory prayer against such acts of wickedness. Again, this explains why imprecatory concept is found in almost every Psalm in the Psalter.¹¹ Structurally, my classification of the

⁸ Artur Weiser, *The Psalms* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 86.

⁹ Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms* (Virginia: John Knox Press, 1965), 34.

¹⁰ Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 9.

¹¹ See, Caleb O. Ogunkunle “Imprecatory Psalms: Their Forms and uses in

Psalms is as follows: Psalms of wisdom for the righteous and the wicked; Psalms of imprecation; Psalms of prayer; psalms of praise and thanksgiving; hymns; and other types.¹²

Western Interpretation of Selected Psalms

Psalm 1

Psalm one describes the destiny of two individuals: the righteous who has the fear of the Lord and the ungodly who has no fear of God. The Psalmist demonstrates that the righteous will prosper in all that he does while the ungodly will perish. Craigie classifies it as wisdom Psalms which is connected with the fear of the Lord. According to him, Psalm 1 elaborates upon the principle of righteous living. To him, the righteous person is the person whose reverence of God affects his daily living; he avoids evil and learns how to live from God's Torah, and therein lies his wisdom.¹³ Artur Weiser sees the Psalm which is full of practical and godly wisdom as standing at the entrance to the Psalter as signpost that gives a clear guidance as regards the way in which the God fearing people shall conduct their lives.¹⁴ Derek Kidner, writing on Psalm 1 says, "Certainly, it stands here as a faithful doorkeeper, confronting those who would be in 'the congregation of the righteous' with the basic choice that alone gives reality to worship; with the divine truth that must inform it; and with the ultimate judgment that looms up beyond it."¹⁵

A. A Anderson sees Psalm 1 as a prologue to the whole Psalter. He believes that the Psalm is a wisdom hymn whose emphasis is on the written law and the teaching about reward and punishment. The Psalm is

Ancient Israel and Some Selected Churches in Nigeria. A Ph.D Thesis in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 2000, 148.

¹² Ogunkunle, "Imprecatory Psalms," 149-51.

¹³ Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (Waco, Texas: Word Books Publishers), 61.

¹⁴ Weiser, *The Psalms*, 102.

¹⁵ Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, England: Inter- varsity Press, 1973), 47.

an account of the happiness of the righteous and the doom of the wicked.¹⁶

Warren W. Wiersbe says, "Psalm 1 is a wisdom Psalm and focuses on God's word, God's blessing on those who obey it and meditate on it, and God's ultimate judgment on those who rebel."¹⁷

Psalm 32

Psalm 32 is one of the penitential Psalms. Others are 6, 38, 51, 102 and 130. Craigie describes the Psalm as an individual thanksgiving in which the worshiper offered a sin offering and gave thanks to God for being delivered from sickness that has affected him. He opines that the wisdom language of the Psalm is most distinctive especially as noted in verses 1-2 and 9-10.¹⁸ He states further that the Psalm illustrates powerfully the prerequisite of spiritual health, namely a self-conscious awareness of one's sinful life and of the necessity of acting upon that awareness in confession before God.¹⁹

Artur Weiser describes Psalm 32 as a Psalm of thanksgiving which looks back upon the Psalmist's penitence and upon the forgiveness of sin he has obtained and derives from the Psalmist's personal experience the lesson that should be learnt by every God-fearing man. In other words, the Psalm is a combination of two motives of thanksgiving and instruction. The fact that the Psalmist for a long time had tried to hide his sin from God led to his heart being afflicted by severe qualms of conscience.²⁰

Arnold A. Anderson connects the historical setting of Psalm 32 with

¹⁶ Arnold A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms, Vol. One* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1972), 57.

¹⁷ Warren A. Wiersbe, *Be Exultant: Psalms 1-89* (Colorado Springs: Cook International, 2008), 11-12.

¹⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 265.

¹⁹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 268.

²⁰ Weiser, *The Psalms*, 282.

Psalm 22:22 where the Psalmist offered his song of thanksgiving in the presence of his fellow worshipers in the temple. Since the song emphasizes the themes of sin and forgiveness, it may imply that at one point the Psalmist had been grievously ill, and that only through repentance and forgiveness he had attained healing.²¹

Warren W. Wiersbe begins his interpretation of Psalm 32 with its title. He notes that Psalm 32 is the first '*Maschil*' Psalm. The other *Maschil* Psalms are 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142. The word *Maschil* means "a skillful song, a song of instruction and a contemplative poem."²² He then states that, "David wrote it [Psalm 32] after confessing to God his sins of adultery, murder and deception (Psalm 51; 2 Sam 11-12). In 51:13, he vowed to share what he had learned from his costly experience, and this Psalm is a part of the fulfilment of that promise."²³

Psalm 137

Artur Wieser, is of the view that Psalm 137 reveals the suffering and sentiment of people who experienced the Babylonian captivity; the people who saw the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC. The Psalmist had a sad recollection of what had happened to Jerusalem and he was bitter at the Edomites and Babylonians, who had destroyed the city of God.²⁴

Arnold A. Anderson classifies Psalm 137 as a communal lament culminating in an imprecation upon the enemies.²⁵ Anderson is also of the view that the most likely date for this Psalm is during the early year of the return, perhaps between 537 and 515 BC.²⁶ He states further that, "the

²¹ Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, 254.

²² Wiersbe, *Be Exultant: Psalms*, 123.

²³ Wiersbe, *Be Exultant: Psalms*, 122-3.

²⁴ Wieser, *The Psalms*, 21.

²⁵ So much has been written on imprecation for details, see C.O. Ogunkunle "Imprecatory Psalms: Their Forms and uses in Ancient Israel and Some Selected Churches in Nigeria." - Page 64 -

²⁶ Anderson, *The Book of Psalms, Volume Two*, 897.

the Psalm may have been intended for one of the days of lamentation (Zech 7:1-5) in which prayers would be offered for the full restoration of Jerusalem and its people. So far they had been a 'byword of cursing among nations' (Zech 8:13), but the Psalmist pleads with God to reverse the situation."²⁷

Warren W. Wiersbe examines the key words ('remember' and 'forget') used in the Psalm in his attempt to interpret the Psalm. He suggests that a Jew, probably a Levite, wrote the Psalm after he had returned home from Babylon with the remnant in 586 BC. The Psalmist obviously was with a group of exiles as he was recalling some of their experiences, and that from this encounter with the past, he learned some lessons about the human memory, himself, and the Lord.²⁸

Interpretation of Psalms in the African Indigenous Churches

Our focus at this point is to examine how the African Indigenous Church leaders and members interpret the Psalms. Our goal is to consider four individuals who have served or are still serving in some of the said Churches. The first person is the late Most Rev. Prophet Dr. J.O. Ositelu, the founder and first Primate of the Church of the Lord Aladura. The Church of the Lord uses the Psalms heavily in each of the services, as demonstrated in the order of holy service for hourly prayers, Wednesday Vigil, Friday Clinic, Bible class and Sunday school, Sunday morning and evening services, and special services like Palm Sunday, Good Friday, etc.²⁹ The Church's understanding and use of the Psalms is well documented by J.O. Ositelu in the book titled *the Book of power of Prayer and the secret of meditation with God with the uses of Psalms*. Ositelu, in his meditative study of the Psalter, was able to

²⁷ Anderson, *The Book of Psalms, Volume Two*, 897.

²⁸ Wiersbe, *Be Exultant: Psalms* 190.

²⁹ For full information on the various order of service and the Psalms that are read, see *The Handbook of Liturgy of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Worldwide* (Ogere-Remo, Sagamu: Publication Committee, nd).

prescribe the use for each of the 150 Psalms in the Psalter. He gave at least forty-five specific uses of the Psalms, some of which include victory, protection, favour and various forms of healing.³⁰

The second person, whose booklet is entitled *Iwe Agbara Adura Owuro, Adura Ale atiAdura Ojojumo (Book of prayer and Uses of Psalms with morning and evening prayers)*, is Bosun Adeyemi. Even though he grew up in the Anglican Church, but he was greatly influenced by the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and the Church of the Lord (Aladura).

The third person, whose book is entitled *Potency and Efficacy of the Psalms*, we shall consider is J.A. Bolarinwa. He wrote the book with the aim of “helping English reading members of the public to appreciate the value of prayer through Psalms to derive maximum benefit from their use.”³¹

The fourth and the last person to consider for use of Psalms in the African Indigenous Churches is Isaac Olayinka Olarewaju in his book entitled *The Efficacious Power of Psalms in Daily Devotion*. He is a member and pastor in the Christ Apostolic Church. He wrote the book with the understanding that Joseph Babalola used the Psalms greatly at the time of his call and during his ministry. Olarewaju, in his introductory observation to the book, realized the fact that 'Satan' and the people in the darkness of the world do use the Psalms frequently. He therefore declared boldly that the Lord told him that we (Christians) should not leave the Psalms to the manipulation of occultists.³² He encouraged the Christians to use the Psalms for 'prayer', 'exhortation' and 'meditation,'

³⁰ Josiah O. Ositelu, *The Book of Power of Prayer and the Secret of Meditation with God with the Uses of Psalms*, (Ogere-Remo, Sagamu: Publication Committee, nd), 15-35.

³¹ J.A. Bolarinwa, *Potency and Efficacy of Psalms* (Ibadan: Oluseyi Press, 1980), 3.

³² Isaac O. Olarewaju, *The Efficacious Power of Psalms in Daily Devotion* (Suleja: Awosanmi Press, 1998), 11.

just as Jesus Christ and the Apostles said. He strongly argued that Psalms are the sword of the spirit to combat Satan and his hosts, and that Christians must use them “according to the direction of the Holy Spirit to fight the wicked people of this dark world”.³³

Psalm 1

J.O. Ositelu

He believes that Psalm 1 should be used for victory and for pregnant women. According to him:

The pregnant woman will use this Psalm daily with faith into water with its Holy Name, Ell Shaddai – Jehovah Abbillah 3ce. Prayer – Ell Shaddai–Jehovah Abbillah; may it please Thee Lord to prevent this woman from miscarriage, that no evil child gain entrance to her womb, above all, that she mayest deliver safely with ease and comfort, and grant to the new baby expected, health, strength and peace through thy most Holy name. Amen.³⁴

BosunAdeyemi

In his own recommendation, Adeyemi says:

Fi Psalm yigbadura fun alaboyunatisinuomi fun wiweatimimu re nigbagbogbo, orukomimo re niJehovaSalomu. [Use this Psalm to pray for pregnant women; read it in the water for them to bath and drink at all times. The holy name to use while praying the Psalm is Jehovah Shalom].

Adura [Prayer]:

*Iwo Oba Olodumareoniseiyamu, iwoti o di eru fun aboyunmasalajekiobinrinyiki o bi tibitireki o si fun nimimo re ti a npeniJehovaSalomu.*³⁵ (You king of the

³³ Olarewaju, *The Efficacious Power of Psalms*, 5.

³⁴ Ositelu, *The Book of Power of Prayer and the Secret of Meditation*, 15.

³⁵ BosunAdeyemi, *IweAgbaraAduraOwuro, Adura Ale atiAduraOjojumo (Book of Prayer and Uses of Psalms with morning and evening prayers)*(Ibadan: BosunAdeyemi Printing Press, nd), 3.

Universe, Miracle worker and the One who has made this pregnant woman to conceive; may this woman deliver safely. Grant her and her husband a bouncing baby who will be useful for them in your holy name – Jehovah Shalom).

J.A. Bolarinwa

Bolarinwa argues that Psalm 1 was written by Ezra. It was used as preface to all David's Psalms after they had been collected. Through this Psalm, the writer reminds the reader that the only path to a lasting joy and happiness is righteousness. He states further, "the Psalm is used mainly to help pregnant women. It ensures safe delivery and prevents abortion, still-birth, premature birth and all abnormalities in child bearing. Immediately a woman becomes aware of her pregnancy or perceives that she had taken in, she should read this Psalm along with Psalm 128 daily, morning and evening."

After reading she should say the following prayer:

Ell-ishaddi, Jehovah Shallom, O heavenly Father, grant me your humble servant the health and energy to bear safely through the period of gestation the baby which by your kind permission now lies in my womb. As it was well and safe with each of our ancient mothers, viz., Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, Leah, Elizabeth and even Mary the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ so let it be with me.

This process has to be repeated daily by the pregnant woman until a few days, according to her calculation, before delivery or until signs of labour set in, whichever is the earlier to occur. Then she will also read Psalm 19 as often as she can until she delivers the baby.³⁶

³⁶Bolarinwa, *Potency and Efficacy of the Psalms*, 7.

I.O. Olarewaju

Olarewaju believes that this Psalm is particularly good for those who are experiencing set back in their business. Those who are seeking for God's blessing on their businesses should use this Psalm for prayer. Anyone who is doing his work faithfully will surely find God's favour and miracles of prosperity will result by using this Psalm for prayer and meditation. This Psalm can also be read to overcome a hidden enemy.³⁷

Psalm 32

J.O. Ositelu

Ositelu titles Psalm 32 as a song of mercy and forgiveness. He says the Psalm should be read every morning to gain favour of God and man and that the sin of individuals will be forgiven. The Holy Name to use for prayer is JEHOVAH ORREMOFFIJI.³⁸

BosunAdeyemi

He says:

Ma ka Psalm yi fun itoreanu Oluwaati idarijiesepeluorukomimo Re ni EL – RAH. [Read this Psalm for mercy and forgiveness of sin with the holy name EL- RAH].

Adura[Prayer]:

*EL – RAH emimimojulo, emiomo Re mbebe fun idarijiese miki o wu Olatidariese mi jimi kin le de ibiayotikonipekun. Nitori Jesu Kristi Oluwawa Amin.*³⁹ (EL-RAH, Most Holy, I, your child is asking for forgiveness. Forgive my sin so as to get to get to your place of everlasting joy in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen).

J.A. Bolarinwa

Bolarinwa titled the Psalm as “Blessed is he whose sins are forgiven.” He

³⁷ Olarewaju, *The Efficacious Power of Psalms* 1.

³⁸ Ositelu, *The Book of Power of Prayer and the Secret of Meditation*, 20.

³⁹ Adeyemi, *Book of Prayer and Uses of Psalms*, 11.

argues that David wrote the Psalm after his forgiveness by the Almighty God for his sins and for the cure from the illness which he suffered as a consequence of his sin against Uriah (2 Sam. 11). It is a prayer of confession of sins, for forgiveness of sins and for the joy that follows such a situation.

By reading this Psalm with a general prayer daily one will surely meet with the pleasure of God and man and the forgiveness of sins committed by one.⁴⁰

I.O. Olarewaju

Olarewaju believes that Psalm 32 is for encouragement and confession. He recommends that those who are facing enemies' torment should use the Psalm daily. He should pray a prayer of faith, and definitely, Jesus will deliver him and show him the right way.⁴¹

Psalm 137

J.O. Ositelu

Ositelu is of the view that Psalm 37 is meant to change a situation for better. He says: If you are unloved and hated, read this Psalm always with the Holy Name Jehovah and you will be loved in return.⁴²

BosunAdeyemi

Adeyemi is of the view that Psalm 137 is for victory over enemies. He says:

*Kaa fun isegunotapelu Jahniigbameje*⁴³ (Read the Psalm for victory over enemies with the name Jah seven times).

Adura [Prayer]:

Oluwaokan mi kogbega, benioju mi kogbesoke. Ni

⁴⁰ Bolarinwa, *Potency and Efficacy of the Psalms*, 27.

⁴¹ Olarewaju, *The Efficacious Power of Psalms*, 7.

⁴² Ositelu, *The Book of Power of Prayer and the Secret of Meditation*, 3.

⁴³ Adeyemi, *Book of Prayer and Uses of Psalms*, 36.

*igbagbogboniemiyoo ma yinorukomimore, nitoripeiwoni
o wapeluminigbatiawoneniyانبuburufepon mi loju,
Oluwasaanu fun mi masekoiseowoara re sile.
Jekiohuniyinwalenu mi titiemiyoo fi de odo re niileogoni.
Amin (Lord, my heart is neither proud nor my eyes
arrogant. I sing of your praise at all times because you are
with me when the wicked ones made attempt to afflict
me. Lord have mercy on me, do not forsake the work of
your hand. Let your song of praises be in my mouth till I
come to you in glory. Amen).*

J.A. Bolarinwa

Bolarinwa believes that Psalm 137 was written when the Jews were carried into Babylonian captivity (Ezekiel 25:12-14). He says: "When one becomes an object of malice, hatred, derision and animosity one should read this Psalm with the general prayer frequently and the heavenly Father will reverse the order and make one an object of love and admiration."⁴⁴

I.O. Olarewaju

Olawejaju believes that Psalm 137 is a special Psalm for deliverance from a slanderer and wicked enemy. He recommends that those who have such problems should use this Psalm to pray to God; God in His mercy will send deliverance.⁴⁵

It is obvious from the above interpretation and use of Psalms 1, 32, and 37 that African Christians are confronted with several challenges. Some of the problems as highlighted above include miscarriage, complication at birth, still birth, premature birth, abnormalities in child bearing, malice, hatred and animosity from the enemy, setback in business and manifestation of the activities of the enemy.

⁴⁴ Bolarinwa, *Potency and Efficacy of the Psalms*, 71.

⁴⁵ Olarewaju, *The Efficacious Power of Psalms*, 28.

Justification for the African Method of Interpretation

The justification for the African Indigenous Churches' interpretation of the Bible in general and Psalms in particular can be seen from a number of factors that are highlighted below: One, African Worldview/Problem of evil in the society: The understanding and the interpretations of the problems in the African Indigenous Churches cannot be separated from the general African Worldview, coupled with the problem or reality of evil in the society. This has brought untold hardship as people are confronted daily with various problems which consequently have physical and psychological effects on them. People's various fears include fear of uncertainty, fear of not being able to take care of oneself or family, fear of losing one's job or unemployment, fear of suppression by superior officers, fear of evil and wicked people, fear of losing one's position and dignity in the society, fear of sickness, fear of death, etc. And usually, all these fears of evil machinations lead to serious apprehension and anxiety concerning which people seek for solutions.

African Indigenous Churches have responded to the plight of their members who seek for solutions to their problems from Ifa Priests. In other words, the Indigenous Churches give much emphasis on the reality of evil in the society. Hence, they have a soft spot for their members who run around for help. Also, the Indigenous Churches believe strongly in the efficacy of Psalms for healing their members from various illnesses and deliverance from all sort of evil that might be threatening them. Therefore, the leadership of these Churches, in their attempt to discourage their members from patronizing the Ifa priests makes use of Psalms while offering prayers.

Another factor that has affected the African Indigenous Churches' interpretation of the scripture is the belief of the people in the physical activities of the enemies. It is one thing to realize and be aware of the presence of witches and wizards in the society, it is another thing to believe strongly in their activities. Unlike the Christians from the West who pay little attention to the physical activities of witches and wizards; the African Christians from their cultural background have strong beliefs

in the physical activities of the evil ones. David T. Adamo in his 'African Cultural Hermeneutics' correctly notes:

Witches, sorcerers, wizards, evil spirits and all ill-wishers are considered enemies. The consciousness of these enemies is a major source of fear and anxiety. Among the Yoruba people of Nigeria, there is a belief that every person has at least one known or unknown enemy called *ota*. The activities of *ota* can bring painful consequences. It may be abnormal behavior, sudden loss of children and poverty, chronic illness and even death.... The belief in enemies as the main sources of all evil and bad occurrences is so strong that nothing happens naturally without a spiritual force behind it. Thus incidents like infant mortality, bareness in women, impotence in men, accident of any kind, dullness in school children and all other bad things are attributed to enemies of different kinds.⁴⁶

Apart from the reality of evil in the society and the strong belief of the people in the physical activities of enemies; another important factor that is affecting the interpretation of the psalms in the African Indigenous Churches is the reality of poverty in the society. Poverty, which has been variously defined as “the state of being extremely poor and lacking the means to exist adequately”⁴⁷ and “the lack of opportunity to develop our abilities because of economic deprivation”⁴⁸ among others, is a serious challenge in Africa. The level of poverty in Africa is captured by David

⁴⁶ David T. Adamo, *Explorations in African Biblical Studies* (Benin City: JusticeJeco Press & Publishers, 2005) 14-15.

⁴⁷ Raphael A. Akanmidu, “Poverty Alleviation Programmes and the Politics of Ethical Despair in Nigeria” 70th Inaugural Lecture, University of Ilorin, Ilorin. February 26th 2004, 2.

⁴⁸ Paul Townsend, “The Meaning of Poverty” *The British Journal of Sociology*, no. 12/1 (1992), 2

M. Kasali who while quoting the UNDP Human Development report says:

There is thus a growing trend towards a concentration of poverty in Africa. Between 1979 and 1985 the number of African people below poverty line increased almost two-thirds, compared with an average increase of one fifth in the entire developing world. The number is expected to grow rapidly from 250 million in 1985 to more than 400 million toward the year 2000.⁴⁹

Africa is said to be the least developed region of the world as 26 out of the 31 least developed nations are in Africa. As a result of the extreme poverty being expressed in Africa, the continent is plagued by diseases some of which have been eliminated in other parts of the world. The extreme poverty that is confronting the people makes it difficult for many people to seek for proper medical attention but instead settle for spiritual solution which consequently has led to excessive use of Psalms for healing.

The final factor that has affected the interpretation of the Psalms in the African Indigenous Churches is centered on the method used. Generally, the African Indigenous Churches take the Bible literally and interpret it the same. Writing on the literal interpretation Bernard Ramm says:

To interpret the scripture literally is not to be committed to a “wooden literalism”, nor to a “letterism” nor to a neglect of the nuances that defy any “mechanical” understanding of language. Rather, it is to commit oneself to a starting point and that starting point is to understand a document the best one can in the context of the normal, usual,

⁴⁹ David M. Kasali, “African Realities: Revisioning Theological Education in Africa in the 21st Century” *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, no.17/1 (1998), 20.

customary, tradition range of designation which includes “facit” understanding.⁵⁰

The African Indigenous Churches are not too keen on various criticisms – textual, literary, forms among others- that are associated with the Bible by modern Biblical scholarship. They are simply interested in what the Bible says and how they can use it within their context.

Conclusion

The issue of interpretation, that is, what the text meant in its original context and what it means today, is an issue which this paper has examined especially in the light of African Indigenous Churches. It has been established on the one hand that the Western scholars interpret the Bible in the light of various tools and criticisms that are available to them. Again, their condition of living, which is far better than what we experience in Africa, has affected their interpretation of the Bible. On the other hand, the Africans are much more concerned with the use and application of Psalms against their deplorable situation. This means that the Bible is always current as its message is very relevant to every situation irrespective of tribe, ethnicity or nation. Therefore, the various interpretations of biblical passages in general, and the contextualization of such passages in African Indigenous Churches are as a result of different experiences of the interpreters.

⁵⁰ Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 121.

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Theology of Universalism in Jonah and its Implication for Christian Missions in a Multi-Religious Environment

Emmanuel Kojo Ennin Antwi

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the message of the book of Jonah, and its relevance for the contemporary understanding of Christian missions in multi-religious and pluralistic society. It argues that a critical study of the book of Jonah brings to light some of its exegetical complications which have led to the various interpretations of certain elements of the text. The paper attempts to throw light on some of these exegetic-theological problems to unravel the message of the book. It brings out the interaction among the characters vis a vis their relationship with God which calls for a serious reflection on the dispensation of the mercy of God for all people. The paper presents how the narrator of Jonah systematically brings out the nature of God with particular reference to his universal mercy and how it can contribute to the understanding and undertakings of missions in our world of today.

Introduction

The popularity of the book of Jonah among the adherents of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, who accept the story of Jonah as part of their

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sacred books, cannot be underestimated. The book contains one of the most famous biblical stories due to its brevity, the narrative style and the disobedience of Jonah and its consequence. The content of the book of Jonah and its theological message, when examined critically, becomes very relevant to the three major revealed Abrahamic religions-Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in their relationship and harmonious co-existence. The relevance of the message of the book goes beyond the harmonious co-existence among these religions to include as well their interactions among peoples of the other religions that do not have the book as their sacred literature. In the wake of the calls for religious tolerance, harmonious co-existence and dialogue among religious groupings of different faith in the 21st century, the text of Jonah becomes an indispensable tool in coming up with an “inter-religious” theology relevant to Christian missions. I will discuss the book of Jonah and find out how its message is relevant to Christian missions and how it can contribute effectively to religious tolerance, inter-religious dialogue and harmonious co-existence among religious groupings in a multi-religious and pluralistic society.

Exegetical Problems in the Text of Jonah

The book of Jonah has been subjected to an exegetical scrutiny under the historical-critical method from different perspectives. Scholars have been struggling to come up with the precise date, authorship, audience, composition, social context, genre and the main theological message of the book.² Depending on the diverse methodologies or approaches that scholars adopt in the study of the text, they come up with different conclusions on the above-mentioned aspects of the book. This is evident in the various discussions on the proposed dates, structure, genre, authorship and the main theological theme for the book. We need to point out and discuss few elements of the text which are likely to cause

² Emmanuel Kojo Ennin Antwi, *The Book of Jonah in the Context of Post-Exilic Theology of Israel: An Exegetical Study* (St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 2013), 1-6.

misunderstanding in its interpretation and find out how we could unravel the message of the book in such circumstances.

The simplest structure that most scholars agree for the book of Jonah is the two-part symmetrical or paralleled structure, with each part beginning with a call narrative.³ However, taking the two parts and dividing each into subsections has attracted disagreement among scholars. Some provide five units and others have more than five units.⁴ The differing structure of the text is as a result of the different criteria that the exegetes adopt.⁵

The book of Jonah is not devoid of inherent literary and textual problems. Through the textual criticism of the text, we discover that some phrases and statements are rendered differently by the ancient versions. Using the Masoretic Text (MT) as our working text, some of the words that have been rendered differently are, “three days,” (3:4) “their fare” (1:3) “I am a Hebrew” (1:9). In 1:3, the MT has $\text{H}\rho^{\text{r}}\text{k}\phi$. (her fare), with the feminine possessive pronominal suffix seemingly referring to Jonah.⁶ The Septuagint (LXX), the Vulgate (Vg) and the Targum use the masculine pronominal suffix referring to Jonah. The feminine pronoun as found in the MT rather refers to the ship, $\eta\psi^{\text{v}}\iota\lambda\alpha$, implying that Jonah paid the fare

³ Cf. Norbert Lohfink, “Und Jona ging zur Stadt hinaus (Jona 4:5),” *Biblische Zeitschrift* 5 (1961): 185-203, George M. Landes, “The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah.” *Interpreter* 21, (1967): 3-31.

⁴ See the structure of Jonah provided by Uriel Simon, *Jonah: The JPS Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1999); David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids-Michigan: Baker Books, 1999); Antwi, *The Book of Jonah in the Context of Post-Exilic Theology of Israel: An Exegetical Study* and P. Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

⁵ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 69-70.

⁶ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 15.

for the entire ship.⁷ The expression ψκινΟἶ ψριβ̄ι (I am a Hebrew) is rendered as δοῦλος κυρίου ἐγώ εἰμι “I am a slave or servant of the Lord/YHWH.” The differences in the rendering are due to either the use of different *Vorlage* by the ancient versions or misreading of the text.⁸ The phrase Ἀψ ἑξήτησσι (forty days) appears in the LXX as τρεῖς ἡμέραι (three days). The “forty days” is also attested in the *Vg* and other later Greek recensions: Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion,⁹ and that is in line with the forty-day motif in the Old Testament and could be more authentic than the “three days”.

There are some elements in the psalm which are not consistent with the prose section. Furthermore, the prose and the psalm present different characters of Jonah. The first chapter of the prose presents Jonah as disobedient. In the psalm, Jonah promises to offer sacrifices and pay his vows to the Lord signaling his obedience. Jonah was thrown into the sea and was swallowed by the big fish. He however cried to God from Sheol instead of the stomach of the big fish. Some elements such as weeds around his neck and pillars being described in the psalm do not befit the description of the stomach of a fish.

The book of Jonah has attracted various genres in biblical scholarship such as satire, parable, allegory, Midrash, parody, prophetic narrative and fiction. All these genres in one way or the other can qualify the book to an extent. We need however to interpret the text as a prophetic parable with a literal meaning and an above-literal meaning.¹⁰

⁷ Cf. Yvonne Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and its Afterlives: The Survival of Jonah in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 115. Simon, *Jonah: The JPS Commentary*, 6; Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah: A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary, and Interpretation* (New York: Doubleday, 1990): 83-84.

⁸ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 17.

⁹ Robert B. Salters, *Jonah and Lamentation: Old Testament Guides* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994): 29

¹⁰ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 203-204.

Not so much information is provided in the text itself in the form of biographical sketches, based upon which one can deduce the socio-historical context of the text. Nonetheless, we could use the scanty information that we have to deduce its socio-historical context intertextually and extra-biblically. Some of the facts presented in the book are not consistent with the history of Israel. For instance, the success of an Israelite prophet, like that of Jonah, in a heathen nation like Assyria, raises doubt on its authenticity. Assyria was an archenemy of Israel and for an Israelite prophet to chalk such success in his ministry in non-Israelite city was unheard of. Three cities are mentioned in the text, Tarshish, Joppa and Nineveh. Scholars have raised questions on these cities. It has been difficult to identify the exact location of Tarshish.¹¹ Some have identified Tarshish with Tartessus in Spain.¹² The Targum Jonathan text of Jonah never used Tarshish. It instead translates אַיִלֵּשׁ "λ. "to sea." At the time of writing the book, Nineveh had already been destroyed and ceased to be the capital of Assyria. Moreover, the title "king of Nineveh" was never used.¹³

The authorship ranges from single to multiple, yet the personality of the author/s is not known. Most scholars conclude that the author is anonymous. Though the authorship of the book of Jonah is not certain, the worldview of the narrator, as reflected in the text, points to someone who might have experienced the period of the return from the Babylonian exile. The inherent Aramaisms in the text also points to a later date. The book was composed around 350-250 BC to address some of the post-exilic problems in the Persian period.¹⁴ It might have been written in favour of the theology of universalism. The narrator combines both pre-

¹¹ Cf. Alexander Sperber, *The Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962): 436.

¹² Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, "Tarshish," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 4, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon, 1962): 517-518.

¹³ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 197.

¹⁴ Cf. Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 224.

exilic and post-exilic motifs and materials to attain his objective. The problems of the text, some of which have been mentioned above, do not necessarily affect the message or the theology of the text to a great extent, especially when we approach the text from a synchronic point of view.

The message of Jonah for its Audience

The book of Jonah, despite its literary problems, had an important message for its audience and this message continues to be relevant for its present audience.¹⁵ The main characters of the narrative are God, Jonah, the sailors, the Ninevites and nature. The entire narrative revolves around the interaction among these characters. Out of the interaction among these characters evolve four relationships - between God and nature, between God and the heathens, between God and Israel, between Israel and the heathens. We shall look at the message of Jonah from three different angles, taking into consideration these types of relationships existing among the characters in the narrative. First, we will consider how the narrator presents God as a universal God in his dealings with mankind — universal God and his attributes. Secondly, we will look at the situation of the addressees of the message — the relationship between the chosen and the heathens and thirdly, we will delve into what the message is meant to achieve — message for both the “Sent” and the “Recipient”.

Universal God and his Attributes

The book of Jonah presents a universal God to its audience. The narrator presents him as the sovereign Lord through his control and use of nature in the narrative. Regarding the nature of God as universal, belonging to all peoples and nations, there were two opposing ideologies within

¹⁵ Cf. Ben E. Zvi, “Towards an Integrative Study of the Production of Authoritative Books in Ancient Israel,” in *The Production of Prophecy: Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud*, eds. D. Edelman and Ben E Zvi (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2009): 19.

Jewish circles as at the time of the writing of the book. We strongly believe that the narrator of the book intended to contribute to this debate.¹⁶ In the post-exilic times, two main ideologies concerning God's mercy and salvation for Israel and the other nations thrived. These were Particularism and Universalism.

Particularism

The particularistic point of view stressed that God belonged to Israel alone and as such salvation was destined to only the chosen people of Israel.¹⁷ This point of view was nationalistic and exclusivist in outlook. Some of the Old Testament texts that bear witness to this ideology are, Exodus 12:43-50, in which the foreigners were to be excluded from the celebration of the Passover and Deuteronomy 23:2-9, in which the illegitimate children, the Ammonites and the Moabites were to be excluded from the assembly of Yahweh. Ezra and Nehemiah are said to be the main advocates of this theology in the post-exilic times, since instances of this type of theology are presented in the books bearing their names - the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

After the return from Babylon, the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah were meant to restore not only the cult of Israel but also the true identity of Israel. The identity of the true Israelite was questioned. As seen in their reforms, as attested in Ezra 10:10-44 and Nehemiah 13:1-3, 23-30, those who had foreign wives were to get rid of them. This step towards the restoration was to cut off the foreigners from the Assembly of God's people. Other reasons have been put forward to explain this approach. These are mainly, the fear of the imitation of foreign idolatrous practices and the loss of the Hebrew language by the children of the

¹⁶ Cf. Robert H. Pfeifer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1953), 588.

¹⁷ Cf. T. Henshaw, *The Writings: The Third Division of the Old Testament Canon* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963), 338.

intermarriages.¹⁸ As the theology of Jonah differs from this particularistic point of view, some scholars see the book of Jonah as a counter-response to the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah since all of them are believed to have evolved in the post-exilic period.

Universalism

The universalistic trend of theology advocated for a universal God who belongs to all peoples and nations. In this regard, God did not belong to a particular people or nation. All nations had a role to play in the salvation of God and that salvation did not exclude the other nations. This inclusivist point of view is found especially in the prophetic texts, in which the nations are also addressed and included in the salvation of God. Deutero-Isaiah is one of the advocates of this theology. Some of the texts bearing witness to the inclusivist theology are Isaiah 19:18-25, in which we find the reversal of the exodus motif, Isaiah 56:1-8, in which the foreigner is not to see himself separated from God's people and Zech 8:20-23 in which the nations are to participate in the cult of YHWH. Other post-exilic texts which have the nations in a good picture, using them as characters of the narratives follow this trend of theology.¹⁹ The book of Jonah belongs to such biblical texts in which God is presented as a universal God to all people.

¹⁸ Cf. Nehemiah 13:23-27 and Ezra 9:1-2; Matthew Thiessen, "The Function of a Conjunction: Inclusivist or Exclusivist Strategies in Ezra 6:19-21 and Nehemiah 10:29-30?" *Journal for the Study of Old Testament* 34 no.1 (2009): 63-79; Victor H. Matthews, *Manners and Customs in the Bible* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 184; Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra-Nehemiah: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1965), 84-85; Hubert Irsigler, "Ein Gottesvolk aus allen Völkern? Zur Spannung zwischen universalen und partikularen Heilsvorstellungen in der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels: unveröffentlicht Abschiedsvorlesung," *Uni-Freiburg* 26 (2011): 4.

¹⁹ Notably among these books are Job and Ruth, in which foreign characters have a good role to play. Cyrus, a Persian king who played a major role in the return of the Babylonian exile, is referred to as the Lord's Anointed in Isaiah 45:1.

The Book of Jonah and the Theology of Universalism

The book of Jonah favours the theology of universalism. The narrator systematically presents God to its audience as a universal God, using relevant imageries. These are seen mostly in his actions and in the attributes given to him in the narrative. The narrative presents him as the creator and the controller of the universe who has creation at his disposal and uses it to attain his purpose.²⁰ Man's relationship to God's mercy is also addressed in the book. The book of Jonah raises and answers many questions such as: who can experience the mercy of God, who can be forgiven, who has the right to God's mercy — is it the chosen one, the one who claims God to be his or the one who is ready to receive his mercy or is God free to forgive whoever he wishes? To all these questions, the answer remains obvious from the book. God is free to dispense his graciousness to whoever avails himself. Though he sent Jonah to proclaim judgement against the city of Nineveh, he revoked his judgement when the Ninevites repented. The polytheistic sailors were as well spared of the near-death disaster on the sea.

The book of Jonah presents a universal God for all people. The narrator of Jonah highlights on some elements which indicate that the²¹ God of the book is the God of all. The name of the God in act in the book is given interchangeably as YHWH, the personal God of Israel, Elohim, the universal God, El, which might have been derived from the name of the wise, chief and creator god of the Syro-Palestinian pantheon,²² and the

²⁰ Cf. Georg Fischer, *Theologien des Alten Testaments* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2012), 114-115.

²¹ The definite article is used with God for emphasis to indicate that the deity being talked about in the narrative is the Supreme Being.

²² Cf. Cecil Roth, ed., *The Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia*. (Jerusalem: Massadah Publishing Company Ltd, 1958): 765; John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 338; Edwin D. Freed and Jane F. Roberts, *The Bible Says So: From Simple Answers to Insightful Understanding* (London: Equinox, 2009), 116.

combined YHWH-Elohim. All the acts by these various names of God are attributed to the same God. It is the same nature as God that the narrative presents to his audience. It is YHWH the God of Israel who sent Jonah, symbolizing Israel, to the Ninevites, symbolizing the nations and the enemies of Israel.

Furthermore, in the narrative, God showed his mercy both to the heathens and Israel, the chosen people. God forgave the sins of the Ninevites, when they repented from their evil ways and from their violence, and revoked his judgement against them. Jonah who proved disobedient in the first call also enjoyed the mercy of God when he was saved from the drowning in the sea. This is acknowledged in the psalm as he said “But you brought up my life from the pit, Oh YHWH my God”.²³ Jonah became angry at the repentance of the Ninevites, attributing his refusal to go to Nineveh at the first call to his knowledge of the nature of God as merciful. The rhetorical question, concluding the text, invites the reader to judge the dialogue between God and Jonah that precedes it.²⁴ God needed to be merciful to the Ninevites as well because he ought to care for them and even for their animals which are part of his creation. This was contrary to the expectation of Jonah, representing Israel who wished for God's judgement on the nations that have committed atrocities against it in the course of its history.

One element that the narrator uses to indicate the universality of God is his style of gradually bringing the sailors to the acknowledgment of YHWH. The origin and the identity of the sailors are not known in the text. The narrator only presented their places of departure and arrival. At the scene of the almost shipwreck, the text indicates that each one cried to his god, signifying their worship of different gods. The narrator introduces a polemical dimension to the text by making YHWH the God of Israel superior to their gods. Their cry to their gods was in vain. The Targum even interprets “his god” and adds, “but they saw that they were

²³ Jonah 2:7.

²⁴ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 113-114.

useless”.²⁵ The sailors were gradually brought to the acknowledgment of the true God of Israel and they prayed and sacrificed to him and made vows.

The identity of the Nineties is known and most scholars believe that they represent Assyria, the nations, who are the enemies of Israel.²⁶ The narrator in this case uses a symbolic language. Israel had already experienced Assyria and the other nations such as Egypt and Babylon, which scholars think that Nineveh could represent. The “sailors” mentioned in the text has certainly a role to play in the narrative. Their acknowledgment of YHWH parallels the repentance of the Ninevites. If the Ninevites stand for the enemies and for that matter the nations that Israel had encountered, then the sailors could as well stand for the other nations that Israel had not known in their history.²⁷ The sailors were presented initially as “polytheists”, with each having his (their) own god. However, they are seen as offering sacrifices to YHWH signaling their collective act in the acknowledgment of the God of Israel. Other texts with universal tendencies include the heathens coming to know YHWH and being part of his salvific plan.

Relationship between the Heathens and the Chosen

One dimension that the book of Jonah seeks to address is the relationship between Israel, the nation with whom God made a covenant, or the chosen people, and the nations or the heathens. The terms used to designate Israel (עַם) and the nations (גוֹיִם עַמִּים) to differentiate them in the MT did not occur in the book of Jonah. Nonetheless, they are represented in the symbolic characters used in the narrative as already explained above.

²⁵ Cf. Sperber, *The Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan*, 436.

²⁶ Cf. Miguel A. De La Torre, *Liberating Jonah: Forming an Ethics of Reconciliation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2007), 11. J. Jeremias, *Die Propheten: Joel, Odadja, Jona, Micha* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 79.

²⁷ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 211.

The book of Jonah seeks to bridge the gap between the nations and Israel. From the biblical history of Israel, one recognizes the friction between Israel and its neighbours. This has been characterized by enmity between them beginning from the slavery in Egypt to the exile in Babylon (and later its domination by foreign nations). Israel had hoped that there would be a time that God will intervene in their history and bring judgement against these nations to avenge for the atrocities that these nations have committed against them. The book of Jonah however deviates from this expectation. It rather bridges the gap between the nations and Israel. The narrator systematically arranges his narrative in such a way that the heathens are given a positive image in the eyes of God and the reader.

Jonah who represents Israel is made into a foil character or antagonist, though he is the main human figure in the narrative. God is the main protagonist of the entire story. He and Jonah appear in all the scenes, with Jonah being an anti-hero.²⁸ At the first commission, Jonah was to proclaim judgement against Nineveh, which symbolizes the heathens. Jonah's unwillingness to go to Nineveh is explained in the second part of the text, that he knew God to be so merciful and that he could forgive the Ninevites. Consequently, Jonah was angry at the mercy of God in the face of the repentance of the Ninevites and its consequent revocation of God's judgement against them. As a true Israelite, Jonah had shared in the Israelite expectation concerning the punishment against the nations and had wished that the judgement against Nineveh could come true. The "nations" which is presented in negative image in some parts of the Old Testament is now given a positive image in the narrative. Thus, the narrator makes the Ninevites respond positively to the proclamation of Jonah and at the end received the mercy of God. In this case, the mercy of God is not limited only to those who are called, but could also be directed to those afar off who avail themselves to receive it.

The narrator's presentation of the sailors as polytheistic, having other gods, is far contrary to the Jewish monotheistic religion. Though there is

²⁸ Antwi, *The Book of Jonah*, 293.

a polemical dimension to the narrative, the text seeks to present the view that the sailors, polytheistic as they were, gradually came to acknowledge the God of Israel. Their normal fear of the impending disaster, which began the narrative, ended with their fear of YHWH. They even prayed and sacrificed to YHWH, the God of Israel and made vows. Prayers, sacrifices, vows and the fear of God are predominant themes in the religion of Israel. In this case, the narrator brings the heathens to the acknowledgement of YHWH and the Jewish religious practices which exclude the nations.

Message of Jonah for Missions Today

The book of Jonah which also forms part of the sacred texts of the Christians and they are logically and equally the real audience of the text. Many lessons with regard to missions could be deduced from the message of the book. The book has a mission motif. Its message in no less a degree contributes to the understanding of contemporary Christian missions and could nourish the undertakings of present-day Christian missionary activities in our multi-religious environment.

The etymological meaning of Mission has to do with “sending” from the Latin word *mitto* meaning “I send”. From OT times we could find this motif of sending on both secular and religious levels. On the secular level, we recognize that in Genesis 43:1-3 Jacob sent his sons to look for food in Egypt. On the religious level, in Exodus 3:10, we identify God sending Moses to pharaoh with the aim of liberating the sons of Israel from bondage. Similarly, the prophets were sent by God to warn the Israelites of their infidelity to the covenant. Jesus was likewise sent by God to redeem humankind. He himself commissioned his apostles to go out to the world to proclaim the good news.²⁹ The commission to the apostles to evangelize has been handed down from generation to generation. Thus by this commission, the church sees itself by its very

²⁹ Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20.

nature as missionary.³⁰ This mission of the church has met challenges, from time to time, culturally, religiously or socially, due to the multi-religious and social environment it encountered. It is in this vein that I find the message of the book of Jonah very relevant to the Christian missions today.

The message of the book of Jonah is addressed to both the one sent and the ones to whom “the one sent” is sent. The response and the repentance of the sailors and the Ninevites, respectively, who represent the heathens, become a lesson that the “sent” Jonah symbolizing Israel should learn from. As it is attested in the prophetic literature, most of the prophets were not accepted. They were instead persecuted and their words were not adhered to. The repentance of the heathens was to be a lesson for Israel to repent. The essence of the repentance of the Ninevites was an example to the returnees from Babylon to emulate. They were the actual addressees of the text. The missionary in this regard must identify himself or herself with the message that he or she proclaims to the targets of the missions. In other words, the missionary needs to see himself or herself within the context of his or her mission. The content of the mission should as well be relevant to the “sent” and not only the recipient.

Like any other prophet who was sent with a mission, Jonah had a mission to proclaim a message of judgement on the people of Nineveh. The call and the commission occurred twice in the narrative. The first one was responded with refusal and the second was responded with obedience. Jonah refused to undertake his mission at the first call. He did not express his unwillingness or incapability to undertake the mission as the other prophets like Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah who expressed openly their unwillingness and incapability to assume their prophetic mission. The narrator kept his audience in suspense by keeping the reason of Jonah's refusal close to the conclusion of the narration. The reason for his refusal

³⁰ Cf. *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, No 2 in A. Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II*. (Bombay: St Paul Publications, 1992)

at the first commission was thus given after the successful outcome of his mission.

Jonah became angry at the repentance of the Ninevites. This looked unusual because every prophet would have rejoiced at the success of his mission. None of the prophets had such a positive response and success to his mission like that of Jonah. The reason for his anger was the motive for his refusal of his first commission. As explained above, it had to do with the mercy of God. Jonah expected God to act according to his understanding of the nature of God. God however acted contrary to his expectation which aroused his anger. The outcome of missionary activities must reflect the will of God and not the concerns of the one sent. The missionary needs to be aware of the role of God in his or her missionary endeavour. God, the one who sends is sovereign and acts as he wills. The missionary zeal is not meant to change the nature of God but rather to promote his will on earth.

The three dimensions of relationships among the characters in the book, discussed in Jonah are very essential to all religious missions in the face of ecumenism, inter-religious dialogue and harmonious religious co-existence. The mission should address the relationship between the divine realities and human beings, the relationship among human groupings, and among different peoples and seek to bridge gaps and boundaries among them. The book of Jonah rightly addresses these concerns. Furthermore, the book of Jonah advocates for a theology of universalism, seeing God to be for all peoples. Christian missionary endeavour needs to acknowledge the positive elements in the targets of missions and seek to uphold the common good in the relationship among humanity in reference to the nature of God.

Conclusion

As we have seen from the above discussion, the book of Jonah, written in the post-exilic period, advocates for a theology of universalism and its message is relevant for contemporary Christian missions. Jonah favours the theology of universalism and inclusivism as against particularism

and exclusivism. The book presents God as being for all nations and peoples. The number of religions that we have can never change the nature of God. Religious evangelization and recruitment in the multi-religious environment could be undertaken bearing in mind the message of the book of Jonah. Religious evangelization and for that matter Christian missionary activities could be carried out in the light of the message of the book of Jonah. In this way, certain positive attitudes towards evangelization must be recommended to promote religious tolerance and cohesion. Open-minded attitude towards other cultures and religions must be adopted. Religions must seek to promote love of neighbour and build bridges among their communities taking into consideration the cultural environment and the rights of the recipients of the message.

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A Trinitarian Theology of Leadership from the Perspective of the Threefold Office of Jesus Christ

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ABSTRACT

In our world today like in other epochs of human history, the quality of leadership is an indisputable key component in shaping it. The epitome of that quality of leadership is shown by this paper as the leadership of the Godhead revealed in Jesus Christ. Moreover, it is a leadership revealed in His threefold office the High Priest, King and Prophet. Through this office of Jesus Christ, the oikonomia of the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit is revealed to the world. The oikonomia which reveals the Economic Trinity is understood in the light of the Immanent Trinity of the Godhead in mutual correlation. The mutual correlation between the Immanent and Economic Trinity unearths the leadership of agape, liberty and partnership.

Introduction

The background of this topic is based upon the soteriological work of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit through the incarnation and Christ Event of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is strictly based upon the relationality of the *oikonomia* (economy) of the triune God which reveals the relationship within the immanent Trinity as well.² The insight which

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² C H Baik, *The Holy Trinity-God for God and God for Us: Seven Positions on the Immanent-Economic Trinity Relation in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

the Christ Event presents to us is a leadership of the triune God in Jesus Christ according to the threefold office which Christ held.³ This threefold office also known as the *munus triplex* is what secures the salvation of the world.⁴ It is the same office which empowers Jesus Christ to secure the redemption through a triadic grace scheme of justification, sanctification and vocation.⁵ Therefore, it is only through the *munus triplex* that the body of Christ that is the church is revealed to the world. The church is made up of those who have been justified, sanctified and called (*vocatio*). These people who form the church and the body of Christ are therefore beneficiaries of the one office of Christ which is priestly, kingly and prophetic at the same time.⁶

Following the tradition of John Calvin of the Reformed tradition and of Protestantism, Jesus Christ who is the cornerstone of the church and the Head of the church⁷ is the only leader there is to be studied. The leadership of Jesus, which is impeccable and holy, reveals the leadership of the immanent Trinity. The leadership of Jesus Christ thus, is the leadership of God. And inasmuch as the *ousia* of God remains the same for the three persons of the Godhead, the same leadership prevails for the three persons as well. Therefore the Trinitarian leadership, herein stated as *Trinitatis ductu*, is very crucial in understanding leadership if even it is a glimpse of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ. It is important because from it shall all leadership such as leadership in the church, home and society flow. It is from it, that the world shall know its error, at

³ J Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.

⁴ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.; C Amarkwei, *Jesus the Okpelejen Wulormor: Doing African Christology in the Ga of Ghana Context* (Hanil UPTS, South Korea: ThM Thesis, 2013), 98-100.

⁵ K Barth. *Church Dogmatics* eds. G. W., Bromiley, T. F., Torrance, (Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1956), IV/1.XIII.58. 4.

⁶ D Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: WB Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 266-268.

⁷ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.4.

least, if not transforming it and it is from it that many shall be redeemed from both earthly and eternal destruction.

The *Munus Triplex* as a Divine and a Historical Model of Leadership

Moreover, this *Trinitatis ductu*, revealed in the special manner is also revealed in a general manner as a *Logos* principle. Following the idea of Justin Martyr for example, who taught from the viewpoint of the stoics that the *Logos* exists in the universe as the governing principle,⁸ the general revelation of *Trinitatis ductu* ought to be taken seriously as well. It ought to be appreciated because most of them existed before the special revelation of Jesus Christ. The knowledge of the general revelation, which is treated in almost every systematic theological enterprise, is important so far as it helps us to appreciate the special role of the special revelation of Jesus Christ. For example, the Jewish leadership from the time of Moses through to the epitome of Jewish leadership of King David shows a general revelation which is not abrogated but fulfilled by the special revelation of Jesus Christ (Matt 5:16-18; Rom 3:31).⁹

But it should be noted that, prior to the call of Moses, and in the history of humankind, there has existed such leadership by other nations including the Pharaohs.¹⁰ Apart from the Pharaohs, most emperors of the Greeks¹¹ and Romans shared leadership office of high priests, kings and prophets (speakers of the gods). Similarly, and currently, some traditional

⁸ P Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought: From Its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism* ed C E Braaten (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1968), 27-29.

⁹ P Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2002); Also Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 306-316.

¹⁰ J P Mckay, B D. Hill, and J Buckler, *A History of Western Society Volume I: From Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), 22-24.

¹¹ Mckay et al, *A History of Western Society*, 103.

leadership of Africa still hold on to the threefold office conceptually. For example, highest priestly functions may be performed by kings although they are not the high priests; and whenever the kings speak, their messages are supposed to represent the decision of the gods and ancestors.¹² Hence, they perform both priestly and prophetic functions while in their position as kings. In the case of the *Wulormor*¹³ of the Ga of Ghana, he was, or is the high priest, the king and the prophet at the same time.

The *Wulormor* was all in all. Therefore, the *Wulormor* is one of the unique offices of traditional leadership in Ghana and Africa which is a general revelation of the *munus triplex*. What systematic theology does at all times is to borrow systems of general revelation like the *logos* in clarifying and making concrete the Christian revelation and there is no theology without it. The condition is that it ought to fit the teaching of the church from scripture and tradition in a reasonable manner. The caveat which is usually raised is that, such ideas may not be in tune with the contemporary practise of the people and therefore may not be applicable. However, inasmuch as such a caveat may be upheld in the case that it has been theologically disputed on one hand; on the other hand it may be overruled because the idea is generally accepted theologically. The duplicity is that concepts which are over thousand years old and derived from pagan and philosophical backgrounds which are alien to many cultures are accepted and faithfully taught in Churches all of the world. And unfortunately, similar ideas which are more contextual are totally rejected without any serious theological disputations.

It should be said, that in the contemporary world of postmodernism the trace of Trinitarian leadership as general revelation has waned. Most

¹² J Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann Education Books Ltd., 1969), 182-187.

¹³ *Wulomo* is the name of the leader or king who is the high priest and prophet of the land (the word priest is not sufficient enough to replace the word *Wulomo*); See Amarkwei, *Jesus the Okpelejen Wulormor*, 64-78.

institutions and nations are now secular and are now ruled by humanistic principles fuelled by science and technology.¹⁴ Therefore, the foundation of societies such as homes and communities do no longer enjoy the Trinitarian form of leadership. Most leaders cannot function as in the past because the arms of governance have separated into the judiciary (priestly function), executive (kingly function), and legislature (prophetic function). And perhaps, it was rightly so because of the fear of the abuse of leadership as an office. But therein lays the problem of deficient pastoral care, deficient parental care and deficient societal care or governance. The deficiency shall be forestalled only by the theology of the Trinity revealed in Christ alone. Therefore, the first step in being a Trinitarian leader is to experience the redemption of Christ or the triune grace of justification, sanctification and vocation; although it may be practised in a general sense.

Over the years, many views of leadership has been held in Christian circles and with the advent of a new breeze of Trinitarian doctrine it may be interesting to look at the possibilities of a Trinitarian leadership in life as a model. It is the position of this paper that a Trinitarian form of leadership as represented by Jesus Christ alone in the *Munus Triplex* (Threefold Office), may bring fresh understanding on how we perceive leadership as a concept. And as a concept it may have ramifications which may pervade every nook and cranny of society including the highest and the lowest. It may bring illumination as to how Christian leadership in Christian circles may challenge the world from the family unit through the working unit to the governing unit of leadership.

The Leadership Challenge of Postmodernism

The suggestion for the appreciation and application of a leadership style after the Trinity has become very pertinent to human life because of the lack of good leadership in the world. Right from the church to the home,

¹⁴ Z Bauman, *Postmodern Ethics* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), 21-28.

community and nation which make up the world, there is a cause for worry. This has become very important because the leadership which lacks the ability to sacrifice for the people is replaced by selfishness in material acquisition. It has also become very important because current leadership is rife with self-deification¹⁵ by defining ethics according to whim which is backed by a crushing power. There is also the problem associated with leadership which controls information and prevents people from sharing freely in the vision of leadership.

The church today is faced with the leadership which may be likened to the imagery painted by the Prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 34) who fed on the sheep that were fattened and cared not about the welfare of the weaklings. In many places in the world Pastors are considered as avaricious monsters always plotting and scheming for booty.¹⁶ They are seen not to really care for the souls entrusted to them by the Lord.

The same form of poor leadership according to the Prophet Ezekiel is extended among the flock. The stronger among them oppresses the weaker ones and prevents them from partaking fully in the abundant grace of God. These are the leadership found in social relationships which starts from the home and ends in the community and national governance. Such form of leadership ensures that the status quo remains without a glimpse of hope to the weak in society. It should be remembered however, that such communal behaviour starts from the way the home is structured. Because in most homes today leadership is not structured with passion for kids and wards as people worth dying for, protecting, disciplining and training or educating; most children grow into the community and into leadership without the qualities of passionate love; protection and discipline; and without wisdom and knowledge.

¹⁵ C Amarkwei, *Church Decline: The Postmodern Ethics and the Spirit of Science and Mammon* (Unpublished Paper, 2014), 7-12.

¹⁶ G S Han, J J Han, A E Kim, "Serving Two Masters': Protestant Churches in Korea and Money' *International Journal for the study of the Christian Church*, Vol.9 No. 4., (November, 2009), 338.

Therefore this kind of leadership comes at the backdrop of corrupt leadership associated with democracy because it is based upon the utilitarian calculus both in the mass and limited forms which is often abused. The problem is also associated with repressive regimes and governance systems in the world. It raises questions as to what is to be done to salvage the situation of leadership abuse both in their autonomous and heteronomous forms although each is needed as a check and balance. The autonomous mind is needed to call to order the heteronomous corruption and vice versa. Whenever the two meet however, there remains an unceasing conflict which makes the issue of theonomy crucial.¹⁷

The Spirit or principle of the *Trinitatis Ductu* is that unlike secular humanistic leadership which aims at scheming to achieve goals and targets; *Trinitatis Ductu* aims at manifesting the leadership for the good of the people according to the essence of the Godhead in such a way that the people experience the reality of the goodness of the leader by the quantity and quality of benefits accrued to them; and consequently lead the people to voluntarily bear testimony of or be witnesses of the immense experience they enjoy to other people. Thus *Trinitatis Ductu* aims at firstly, letting people experience the goodness of the Will of the Father through the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, it secures a real experience of the goodness of the triune God such as a spiritual or physical redemptive act. Thirdly, this kind of leadership leads to an irresistible urge to bear witness to the experience.

Thesis Statement

The thesis of this paper is to present a Trinitarian leadership as a Christian leadership model of *munus triplex* which is signified by passionate self out-pouring and self-offering; while providing protection and promoting

¹⁷ P Tillich, *Systematic Theology: Volume Three, Life and the Spirit; History and the Kingdom of God* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 252-281.

moral discipline for a better well-being to be manifested; and experienced by the led such that there is voluntary, but an irresistible urge to bear witness of same. It is presented as an alternative to the secular and religious humanistic leadership styles which are focussed merely on the goals and targets and which are not concerned with the **means** and **values** of attaining goals and targets.

Theological Method

The theological method adopted for this work is to apply Calvin's principle which posits that the point of departure for Christian revelation is Jesus Christ shown by both the apostolic witness and Jewish prophecy, which is scripture of the New and Old Testament.¹⁸ Although not shown explicitly, it is a theological method which is Trinitarian inasmuch as it centres on the *oikonomia* of the Godhead in Christ. It is Karl Barth¹⁹ who continues the work more or less where Calvin left off bringing out the Trinitarian import even more concretely in the *munus triplex*.²⁰ The point is that John Calvin's position reflects the Reformed and Protestant affirmation of *solus Christus, sola fidei, sola gratia*, according to *sola scriptura*. Moreover, this position is in consonance with the Tradition of the church which was held by the Apostolic Fathers, the Apologists and Church Fathers.²¹ It is a method hence, which employs reason that is embroiled in the philosophical or religious worldviews as aids in hermeneutically explicating the revelation brought about by the incarnation of Jesus Christ. For instance, it may be remembered that Clement of Rome in the early stages of the development of the Trinitarian doctrine hinted on the *munus triplex*. Kelly states the position of Clement

¹⁸ Calvin, Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.6-7.

¹⁹ Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 16.

²⁰ Barth *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58. 4.

²¹ A deep reflection is done by the renowned African theologian Kwame Bediako. K Bediako, *Theology and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought in the Second Century and in Modern Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1992).

of Rome as follows:

As for Christ, he takes His pre-existence prior to the incarnation for granted, since it was He Who spoke through the Spirit in the Psalms, and Who is 'the sceptre of majesty', i.e. the instrument through which God has ever exercised His sovereignty. He is also 'the way by which we have found salvation, the high-priest of our offering'; through Him we 'gaze up to the heights of heaven'.²²

In the above statement, it is clear that concerning the *oikonomia* of God, there is an active engagement of the Father and the Holy Spirit through the Son. Again in the same statement, the *munus triplex* is firmly established implicitly as high priest; the sceptre of majesty and the gazing up to the heights in the heaven (as in response to the call of God). They respectively represent the priest, king and prophet threefold office of Jesus Christ.

Specifically, this paper works with the proposition that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church²³ and therefore the only authority on leadership. It therefore derives practical instruction on leadership from Him as a revelation of the Trinitarian *oikonomia*. Further this position is attained based upon the witness of scripture first of all, then secondly to Tradition and Thirdly to Reason by implicitly engaging the general revelation presented by the *logos* in the universe (e.g. Ga of Ghana philosophy and religion; and Western philosophy). Furthermore, fourthly, it is never devoid of the personal presuppositions based upon the experiential relationship with the triune God which is also in tune with scripture.

It should be remembered that, the problems that this paper raises forms the existential questions which are raised concerning leadership. It is in

²² J N D Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 91.

²³ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.5.8-9.

answering these questions that the Christian message as expounded by John Calvin and Karl Barth are used. Therefore, on the basis of question and answer, the Tillichian method of correlation may not be ruled out as a method for this paper.

The *Munus Triplex* of Jesus' Leadership as Special Revelation

The *munus triplex*, which may be implicitly traced to the Old Testament and many cultures including the Ga people of Ghana, could be considered as general revelation. The special revelation of the Leadership of Jesus Christ as Lord is revealed in the incarnation and the entire Christ Event. It is revealed within the economic Trinity. It should be pointed out that the probable person known to have taught or hinted on the *munus triplex* in the church was an Apostolic Father in the person of Clement of Rome (99 AD) as shown in the introduction. In addition, it should be acknowledged that there were many church Fathers who taught about the *munus triplex*. Pannenberg indicates that Hegesipus (110-180 AD), Lanctatius (240-320 AD), Gregory of Nyssa (335-395 AD) and Chrysostom (347-407 AD) taught about the threefold office of Jesus Christ which is known as the *munus triplex*.²⁴ Calvin also wrote that in medieval scholasticism it was Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD) who mention it.²⁵ Martin Luther (1483 -1546) does not really deal with the *munus triplex* because while working with the office of priesthood and kingship, he does not work with the prophetic office.²⁶ Therefore, within the Protestant movement, it was Andreas Osiander (1498-1552) who first made an argument with the *munus triplex* basing on the anointment of Jesus Christ in 1530.²⁷

²⁴ W Pannenberg, *Jesus, God and Man* (Great Britain: SMC Press Ltd, 1968), 212&213

²⁵ T Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* III. xxii. 2; cited in John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.1.

²⁶ Pannenberg, *Jesus, God and Man*, 213.

²⁷ Pannenberg, *Jesus, God and Man*, 213.

Notably, it was John Calvin who might have made the *munus triplex* popular by giving it a special attention and thus made it the fulcrum of soteriology.²⁸ This was buttressed further by Karl Barth²⁹ who deepened the meaning in a Trinitarian sense and also more or less in an ecclesiological sense. Emil Brunner also worked on the *munus triplex*, however, following the methodology of this paper we may stick to the explication of the *munus triplex* given by John Calvin and Karl Barth.

John Calvin's Perspective of the Economic Trinitarian Leadership of Jesus

Since it may be easy for some to conjure reasons for John Calvin's treatment of the *munus triplex*, it is important to state clearly, his intentions. Specifically, it should be said that since people like Albert Ritchl, Jansen, the American Presbyterian theologian and Pannenberg have criticized Calvin's teaching of the *munus triplex* as unnecessary and arbitrary³⁰, it is important to state categorically the importance of his explication on the subject. Calvin at the very beginning of the teaching on the *munus triplex* stated the purpose as follows: "To know the purpose for which Christ was sent by the Father, and what He conferred upon us, we must look above all at three things in Him: The Prophetic Office, Kingship and Priesthood"³¹.

Therefore, it is obvious that the main purpose of the *munus triplex* was for Calvin to teach the soteriological work of Jesus Christ as the purpose of God (*oikonomia*), in order to confer on all creation which humanity is the representation, redemption. Again, his work was or is pointed towards the implementation of the plan of God to redeem humanity.

²⁸ Pannenberg, *Jesus, God and Man*, 213.

²⁹ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

³⁰ Amarkwei, *Jesus the Okpelejen Wulormor*, 104-107; T Peters, *God, the World's Future: Systematic Theology for a New Era* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 184-186.

³¹ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.

Starting from the title of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, Calvin infers that Jesus Christ was or is anointed by God and therefore, possessed in Himself as a single office, the positions of the Prophet, the King and the High priest who is to redeem the world. The prophetic office is crystallized in Jesus' statement about his call in Luke 4:18.³² And the apostolic witness of the event of the anointment of the body of Jesus in Matthew 17:5 and Joel 2:38 is appropriated by Calvin to show that Jesus was the herald of grace to the world.³³ Not making use of the *Logos* in the prologue of the apostolic witness of John (John 1) Calvin proceeds to buttress his point with the Pauline explication of Christ as the Wisdom of God and the grand possessor of all knowledge (1Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3).³⁴

The Kingship of Christ is based upon the Davidic reign (Psalm 89:35-37; Philippians 2:9-11). However, the Kingdom of Christ is not temporal but spiritual and eternal (Daniel 2:44; Luke 1:33).³⁵ Calvin insists primarily on the spirituality of the Kingdom as the ultimate goal, although the material or physical form may be realized out of it.³⁶ It is the reign of God through the Son in the Church first and second, in the life of the believer. It is seen within a scheme whereby the Father transfers God's Sovereignty to the Son who becomes the Seat of the Holy Spirit from which proceeds the reign of God in the church and in the individual.³⁷ This is a mystical and Trinitarian explication of Calvin about Kingship of Christ.

The priesthood of Christ is shown as the ministry of reconciliation and intercession as mediation (Leviticus 16:2-3; Hebrews 9:22).³⁸ The reconciliation is achieved through expiation and propitiation by the

³² Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.2.

³³ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.2.

³⁴ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.2.

³⁵ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.3.

³⁶ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.4-5

³⁷ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.5.

³⁸ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.6.

shedding of the blood of Christ as the Lamb of God. It is done to remove guilt and to provide satisfaction to God.³⁹ The intercessory role of Jesus Christ in His priestly office opens widely the Kingdom of God to all believers.

In sum, the leadership principles which may be gleaned from the *munus triplex* exposed by John Calvin may be summarized as a visionary and teaching leadership; whose authority is God ordained mediated through the enforcement of the stipulations of God; and hence a passionate leadership which lives in the position of the led even to the point of the tragic. It is a leadership style which combines the love of God with the love of the creation of God.

Karl Barth's Trinitarian Leadership (*Trinitatis Ductu*)

The Trinitarian explication of the *munus triplex* was not very ripe in Calvin until it was exposed by Barth. The following shows the Trinitarian connection of Barth to the *munus triplex* in his definition of it.

But in the light of the Christology there have to be these developments: the three great expositions of the fact and the extent to which the reconciliation of the world with God is actual in Him – in His servitude for us, in the humiliation of God for man which took place in Him – in His lordship over us, in the exaltation of man to God's glory which took place in Him, and all this as truth which He Himself has guaranteed and pledged.⁴⁰

The Trinitarian explication which is advanced by Barth starts with the relationship existing between the Father and the Son. Thereafter, there is another explication which infuses the role of the Holy Spirit therein. Barth employs the dialectic method in dealing with Jesus Christ firstly, as

³⁹ Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.15.6.

⁴⁰ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

the Servant who is humiliated in order to say Yes to the No of humanity to God as a priest in reconciling humanity to God. Barth calls this act of Christ and the experience of humanity as justification.⁴¹ Secondly, Jesus Christ as the Servant who was made Lord in His exaltation by the Father as the King also exalts humanity from death into the Kingdom of God.⁴² This act of Jesus and experience of humanity is called by Barth as sanctification. It is also a Yes in place of the No of humanity to God. Thirdly, Jesus Christ the Servant of God as the Truth who bears witness against falsehood as the Prophet is the manifestation of the experience of all true believers as witnesses.⁴³ This may be seen as the Call to be the witness to the Truth who is Christ who has been experienced as such. It may be termed as vocation. Like the first motion, Jesus Christ says Yes to God the Father against the negation or No of humanity.

The Trinitarian exposition is made concrete when the role of the Holy Spirit as the power of the incarnation (*conceptus de spiritu sanctus*) is made concerning Jesus' priesthood. Moreover, when the power of the exaltation of the Son is recognized as the Holy Spirit, then the Father's reign in the Son is experienced in the power of the Holy Spirit. And lastly, it is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth who is the power which worked in Christ the Prophet and calls all believers to be witnesses of their experience.⁴⁴

The sum of the leadership principle which may be gleaned from the *munus triplex* of Barth is that it is an *agape* leadership, living in the predicament of the led; it is an uplifting leadership, which shares authority, by ensuring that all targets and standards are met; and it decentralizes duties by freely providing empowering knowledge and experience.

⁴¹ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

⁴² Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

⁴³ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

⁴⁴ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1.XIII.58.4.

The following discussions shall focus on the *Trinitatis ductu* regarding the *munus triplex* from the viewpoint of Barth. The expatiation shall proceed using the immanent and economic Trinity and their mutual correspondence; while applying the mediating terminologies such as *dispositio* and *missio*.

Trinitarian Explication of Trinitarian Leadership

In Karl Barth's exposition on the subject, he showed a dialectic relationship existing between the Father and Son and then the Son and humanity. The Yes of the Son to the Father's plan of salvation for all creation is the relationality that exists between them. And this is realized in the history of the world through the incarnation, ministry and death of Jesus where the Son and the Holy Spirit make known the *oikonomia*⁴⁵ of the Father.⁴⁶ The *oikonomia* is further realized in His resurrection whereby the Father and the Holy Spirit raised Jesus Christ from the dead as the authenticity [Truth] of the *oikonomia*. Furthermore, it is realized in Him as the out pouring of the Holy Spirit (Ascension and Pentecost) from both the Father and the Son as the Seal of the authenticity [Truth] of the *oikonomia* inherent in humanity and the whole of creation awaiting its completion in the *eschaton* (Parousia and Consummation).

This may be considered as the movement of God out of Godself concerning the expression of Godself and the movement back into Godself *ad intra*. This movement is the procession of the Son from the Father in His begottenness [generation] and the return of the Son to the Father in co-eternality and co-equality and of being with the same substance with the Father.⁴⁷ In this self expression of the eternal God,

⁴⁵ Baik, *The Holy Trinity*, 42.

⁴⁶ Baik, *The Holy Trinity*, 62 – 70. In this presentation the mutual correspondence of Barth is generally adopted to describe the immanent – economic Trinitarian relationship. However, it should be held that it is adopted without the monarchial Modalism position together with some additional positions which may not be attributed to Barth.

⁴⁷ DL Migliore, *The Power of God and the gods of Power* (Kentucky:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there is the *spiratio* (spiration)⁴⁸ of the Holy Spirit. The *spiratio* of the Holy Spirit is from the expression of the Father through the Son. In addition, there is spiration of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son (*filioque*) in the *missio* or procession of the Holy Spirit.

The *dispositio* (dispensation)⁴⁹ of the Godhead, therefore, may reflect the mutual correspondence between the Immanent Trinity (IT) and the Economic Trinity (ET). And it is the dispensation of the IT which reflects the *energeia*.⁵⁰ The *energeia* also reflect the mutual correspondence existing between the IT and the ET since *energeia* particularly concerns the power and work of the Trinity. There are three dialectical *dispositio* (dispensation) represented by the outward movement of the Godhead represented by the Son; and the return inward movement of the Son into the Godhead; and the co-reign or co-eternity and or co-equality of the Son or the downward movement of the Holy Spirit. In all these scenarios there are no separations between the faces of the Trinity. In each *dispositio* or dispensation there is a spiration for the *energeia* and *oikonomia*. One may surmise, in the spirit and writings of the apostolic witness, two episodes of the three dialectical *dispositio* in economic Trinity and hence, its mutual correspondence in the Immanent Trinity as primary may be identified. Consequently, for the total *oikonomia* of God, there may be six dispensations; six spirations; and six *energeia* for four *missio* (processions). These have been represented in history by firstly, the incarnation which is marked by the virgin conception with the Holy Spirit through the death of Jesus Christ (Priesthood). Secondly, it is represented in history by the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his ascension unto the Father (Kingship). Thirdly, it is represented by the reign of Christ with the Father and the historical out pouring of the Holy

Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 77-83.

⁴⁸ Migliore, *The Power of God and the gods of Power*, 54; And Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I.27.2.

⁴⁹ Baik, *The Holy Trinity*, 36.

⁵⁰ Baik, *The Holy Trinity*, 47.

Spirit at Pentecost (Prophetic office) – i.e. the *munus triplex*. There are two *missio* or processions *ad extra*; one by the Son (Incarnation and death) and one by the Holy Spirit (Pentecost and the birthing of the Church).

Now concerning the *eschaton*, there may be two *missio* or processions *ad extra*; one by the Son (Parousia and Judgment) and another by the Holy Spirit *missio* which marks the end of history and the beginning of the new (Consummation). The three dispositions anticipated in the *eschaton* are the return of the Son in power; His operation of judgment as the King in power; and the consummation which I wish to suggest that is it is a spiration when the Father unites with the Son. The reason is that there is a special spiration when the Father and the Son unite in eternity. This Spiration brings renewal and change which the Body of Christ i.e. (church) is a living testimony. The Last Spiration shall end the predicament of the cosmos and usher in a new phase of rest; after six dispensations, six spirations, and six *energeia* which shall not end even the completion of the *oikonomia*. This point is made regardless of the mythological understanding of creation with a rest on a seventh day. This eschatological portion is represented in the *munus triplex* by the Kingship of Jesus Christ. It is about the work regarding the everlasting reign of God in the Kingdom of God.

Conclusion

The discussion on Trinitarian leadership which may be known as *trinitatis ductu*, is a crucial subject in contemporary theology. And it is because it makes use of the Trinitarian nature of God and God's work in the multiverse as the *oikonomia* to understand divine leadership. The Divine leadership of God is revealed through the Christ Event officially known as the threefold office or *munus triplex* of Jesus Christ. It is believed that a proper understanding of God's leadership in cosmic life should inspire leadership principles that provide the solution to the myriad challenges of the postmodern world today.

Therefore, the discussion in this paper showed that Jesus Christ as the

priest, king and prophet revealed the leadership and work of the Godhead. This is understood in the mutual correlation between the immanent and economic trinity of the Godhead as a dialectical relationship between the Father and the Son *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Furthermore, the work shows that the dialectical relationship between the Father and the Son is powered by the one Holy Spirit of the Father and of the Son.

Finally, this paper has endeavoured to show that through the Trinitarian dialectics of the Godhead, Divine leadership is an *agape* leadership which takes upon itself the freedom of the whole cosmos from its present predicament. It is a leadership that inspires others to become voluntary leaders of the same liberating work of God for other creatures of the cosmos. And this has been achieved through the theology of John Calvin and Karl Barth.

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The Amos Concept of Justice and Righteousness (Amos 5:7, 15- 24) and its Implication for the Church in Ghana

Frimpong Wiafe & Benjamin Anson ¹

ABSTRACT

Justice and righteousness are two important themes in the Old Testament; they emanate and have their source from the justice and righteousness of God. God's righteousness and justice in relation to the people of Israel involves treating Israel in accordance with the terms of the covenant, which He graciously made with them. Amos the prophet preached against the injustice and unrighteousness of his days. The church in Ghana is besieged with the problem of accountability, morality, and questionable lifestyles of some of her leaders and the laity. This paper argues that is the church is the 'Amos' in Ghana; and it should rise up to its prophetic advocacy of the administration of justice and the pursuance of righteousness both in the church and the entire society.

Introduction

The promotion of justice and righteousness is not a single goal, but rather a composite of many good things. Any society devoid of justice and righteousness can hardly thrive. It was in the light of this that Amos, the

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prophet cried for the continuous administration of justice and pursuance of righteousness in his days. Although the book of Amos was written many centuries ago from a different socio-cultural setting, many of the conditions in the days of Amos are evident in the Ghanaian society. As Amos cried for justice and righteousness, so is the Ghanaian society lamenting for them. The National Reconciliation Commission set up by Former President Kuffour's administration in 2002 revealed a lot of injustices and immoral acts in the country and it seems things have not changed. There is not a single day that a radio station or a newspaper does not report on an issue of injustice or immorality in Ghana.

The unfortunate situation is that, the weak in the society who normally lack protection and the ability to seek legal recourse are often the victims, despite God's command to pay special attention to the disadvantaged in the society(Deut 14:29; 16:11-14; 24:19-21; 26:12-13). The question that quickly comes to mind is why are there many Christians in the country and yet injustice and immorality are on the ascendency? On June 10th 2011 Mensa Otabil, the General Overseer of the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), speaking at the "Love Revolution Conference" held in Accra bemoaned the state at which immorality and sin keep growing in the country despite the astronomical increase in the country's Christian population. "I am worried that the growing numbers in the Christian population is completely at variance with the growth of morality and decency in our society."² There are instances where the body of Christ is even accused of perpetrating injustice and acting immorally.³ This paper, "The Amos concept of justice and righteousness

² Immorality in Ghana. Citifmonline.com 10/6/2011.

³ In the words of the Archbishop Gabriel Charles Palmer-Buckle, the Accra Metropolitan Archbishop of the Roman Catholic – Ghana, the church has not transformed neither society nor itself where there has corruption, violence, violation of human rights, social tensions and injustice the [church] has been involved. For Details see A Communiqué issued by The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference. Goaso 5 - 15 November, 2008, p.2 The Most Rev. Rev. Naameh also made a similar allegation in Tamale on Saturday 17 June 2012 in a speech read for him during the second quarter meeting of the National Council

and its implication for the Church in Ghana”, discusses the existential imports of Amos' concept of justice and righteousness and how the context of the book of Amos compares with the Ghanaian context. Are the allegations leveled against the church in Ghana are true? If they are, what has accounted for the problem and what is the way forward? If they are not true, what must the church do to correct the misconception?

Justice and Righteousness in the Old Testament

Justice and righteousness are two important themes in the Old Testament (OT). They emanate and have their source from the justice and righteousness of God.⁴ In the Old Testament several Hebrew words set forth the biblical concept of what is right. The Hebrew word (*yāshār*) denotes the “straight,” smooth way and what is agreeable or pleasing to God (Deut 12:25, 28). The one who follows such a path and performs such deeds is called “up right.” The Judge (*shōphēt*) in deciding a case and executing judgment (*mišpāt*) was expected to have the attribute of justice /right rectitude (*mišpāt*) which should be in conformity with the commandment of God as the final and the unchanging norm of right action.⁵ Another Hebrew word worthy of mentioning is (*sedeq*). It

of Catholic Women Association, under the theme “The Catholic woman, an instrument of reconciliation, justice and peace”. “According to him, greed is the order of the day, deceit, falsehood and arrogance have equally taken a grip of the Ghanaian society....” He adds that “Christians especially the Catholics [are] the worst perpetrators of injustice and white colour crime and admonished them to stop the practice for the sake of the kingdom of God.” I believe that the specific mentioning of the “Catholics” is just for emphasis. It would have been so strange for him to cite example other than his own church, especially so when he was addressing Catholics. For details on his speech, read the Ghana News Agency's (GNA) report on the second quarter meeting of the National Council of Catholic Women Association held in Tamale. (The was posted to GNA on June 17 2012.)

⁴ John Macquarrie, *Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (London: SCM, 1986), 300.

⁵ Charles F Pfeiffer, et al *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary*, (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publication Inc 1999), 1471

designates what is just, right or normal such as full and just weight and measures.⁶ According to Merrill F. Unger et al, the word (*sedeq*) comes from a Semitic root. It is legal term signifying justice in conformity with the legal corpus. Again, it could mean the judicial process, the justice of king as a judge and also the source of justice. The term also embodies all that God expects of His people. It should be emphasized that the word (*sedeq*) indicates the practicality of the concept.⁷ Besides, it involves the fulfillment of the demands of a relationship, either with God or with other human beings, although the Old OT usually has the covenant with Yahweh in view (e.g., Isa 51:7; Ezek 18:19, 21).⁸

When people fulfill the obligation of a relationship, they are said to be righteous.⁹ They are also righteous when they are deprived of what is due them in a relationship and trust in God for vindication. Thus, Israel was righteous over and against Egypt because she was forced into Egyptian slavery and then cried to Yahweh for a release. Within the nation of Israel the poor, widows, and orphans were righteous over and against both the wealthy who oppressed them and the evil rulers who denied them justice. They trusted the Lord to judge in their favour (Ps 37:12; Isa 26:2; Jer 20:12). From the above, it can be seen that, there is a connection between righteousness and faith. Israel's righteousness lies not merely in the oppression; rather in the people repenting of their sins, and putting their hope and trust in Yahweh. The same can generally be said of the poor and the oppressed. They are righteous because God judges in their favour.¹⁰ In this sense, righteousness is faith, that is, a complete trust in the Lord.

⁶ Pfeiffer, et al, *Wycliffe Bible dictionary*, 1471.

⁷ W E Vine, Merrile F Unger, William White Jr., *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 205–206.

⁸ Although the OT usually has the covenant with Yahweh in view, it does not normally indicate behavior in accordance with some norm external to a covenant, nor does it indicate an abstract legal concept of justice. Righteousness is justice within the context of a covenant relationship.

⁹ W Geoffrey Bomily, et al, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (William B. Eerdmanns Publishing Company. 1966), 980.

¹⁰ Pfeiffer, et al., *Wycliffe Bible dictionary*, 1471.

One book which vividly reveals the concept of justice and righteousness in the Old Testament is the book of Amos. For Amos, the justice and righteousness should run like water and the mighty stream without ceasing hence the statement. וַיִּבְגַּל דְּכַדְדָּמוֹ וּמִשֵּׁפֶשֶׁשׁ וְהָדַקָה בְּמִנְדְּטָל הָאֵיִת׃ (ג.נ. לְאֵהֲרָאנֶכָּ קִדְ תַּפְלִי מִיֵּאֲמֹמֵאֵב לְאֲנִינִי) “But let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream” (Amos 5:24, RSV). This concept is so central that, other responses to God are diminished and considered empty if they exist without it (see also Mic 6;6-8; Matt 23;23).¹¹ The concept promotes good life, dignity of the human person and preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.¹² It also ensures the sanity of all human life and pious living above all material possessions. For John Rawl, “each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice and righteousness that even the welfare of society cannot override.”¹³ “The concept is devoid of domination, exploitation, suppression and debauchery.”¹⁴ It is directed towards the good of each individual person, and ensures issues such as good morals, the commitment to peace and the organization of the State's power. It also enhances a sound judicial system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom and dignity.¹⁵ It demands that good act or attitude are rewarded and wrong act be punished.¹⁶ It should be noted that, Yahweh is a God of justice who sits on His throne judging what is right. “God's judgments are right and fair, executed in faithfulness for our ultimate

¹¹ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1962), 1,370.

¹² Macquarrie, *Dictionary of Christian ethics*, 300.

¹³ John Rawl, *A Theory of Justice* (Columbia: University Press, 2005), 3-4.

¹⁴ A Communiqué issued by The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference. Goaso 5-15 November, 2008, 2.

¹⁵ 2010 National Catechetical Week Celebrations October, 10, 2010, 19.

¹⁶ Fawole Ladipo, *The Essentials of Bible Knowledge* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Daystar Press, 1973), 29; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000), 75.

good”¹⁷(see Ps 119:75). He therefore demands justice and righteousness from all people at all times, especially those who have had the personal encounter with Him.

The prophetic role of Amos the Prophet

Amos the prophet preached against the injustice and unrighteousness of his days. He did this brilliantly. In the words of T.H. Sutcliffe, “it is easy to collect a crowd but it is not easy to keep it unless one says or does something worth stopping for.”¹⁸ Amos the prophet was able to collect a crowd and kept it as he preached. He began with God's judgments on the foreign nations.¹⁹ The interest of God's people (Israel and Judah) aroused as they listened to all the calamities coming to the nations around them.²⁰ He then turned to the nation of Israel whose very existence was founded on God's justice shown to them. God had brought them out of bondage and made them a holy nation to witness his mercy, justice and righteousness to the other nations.²¹ However, these people had lost sight of their responsibility of ensuring justice and righteousness. They had resorted to faulty perception of justice and righteousness that had resulted in self-seeking. Amos then prompted the people to consider their identity, reminding them that God's demand of justice and righteousness extends to all areas of life, not just religious activities.²²

¹⁷ Pfeiffer, et al. *Wycliffe Bible dictionary*, 1471.

¹⁸ Sutcliffe, *The Book of Amos* (Netherlands: The Macmillan Company, 1939), 1.

¹⁹ These foreign nations were: Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon and Moab.

²⁰ Sutcliffe, *The Book of Amos*, 2.

²¹ The Danger Waters of Justice and Righteousness <http://www.chrisianethicstoday.com/wp/> 20/6/2014. Quoted from Donoso S. Escobar, Social justice in the Book of Amos, in *Review and Expositor*. (1995), 169.

²² The Danger Waters of Justice and Righteousness <http://www.chrisianethicstoday.com/wp/> 20/6/2014. Quoted from James D. Nogalski, "A Teaching Outline for Amos," in *Review and Expositor* 92 (1995),148.

Amos then exhorted the people of God to abandon their defective perception and to allow true justice and righteousness to flow without ceasing (Amos 5:24).

The Righteousness and Justice of God in relation to Israel

God's righteousness and justice in relation to the people of Israel involves treating Israel in accordance with the terms of the covenant, which He graciously made with them. This involves acting both in judgment and deliverance. The deliverance act is often referred to as salvation. Thus we may term the rescuing of His chosen people from the oppression of Pharaoh and their establishment in Canaan in the face of their foes as God's act of justice and righteousness. God being just and righteous could not look on for the suffering and oppression of the poor to continue. Therefore, as the people cried to God, He exercised His justice and righteousness by bringing judgment on Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

In Exodus 19:4-5, we notice what the Lord did to the Egyptians and how He carried Israelites as an eagle carries her young ones on her wings and sent them to the Promised Land. The people of Israel believed in God as one passionately devoted to what is right. An Israelite was considered righteous when he fulfilled the demands of his covenant relation with Yahweh and lived without blemish.²³ The righteousness and justice of God include the obligation of power, that is, God will save His people not merely because He has promised to save them but because it is morally right for Him to do so. If God's people show themselves unworthy, God's righteousness and justice demanded that, they are punished.²⁴ But if they show themselves faithful, God's righteousness and justice demanded that, He shows His favour towards them. If God is righteous and just, He must not treat the righteous and unrighteous alike. Abraham confirmed this by confessing in Genesis 18:25. "...Far be it from thee, shall not the judge of all the earth does right? (RSV)" God Himself declares in

²³ Pfeiffer, et al. *Whycliffe Bible dictionary*, 1471.

²⁴ Pfeiffer, et al. *Whycliffe Bible dictionary*, 1472.

Jeremiah 9:24 “I am the Lord who steadfast love kindness, justice and righteousness in the earth (RSV).” In like manner, humans should make the concept of justice and righteousness practical.

The Practice of Justice and Righteousness in Ghanaian Churches

Christianity started as far back as the first century AD. It was not an institution without defect. The book of Acts of Apostles and the Epistles attest to this fact. There were some among them who were lairs (Ananias and Saphira), indifferent, immoral, apostate and skeptical (Acts 5:1-11; 6:1-7; 1Cor 5:1-5; Jude 1:3-4). But the early Christian Church was always conscious of the fact that, it was mandated to live out and proclaim the mission and the message of Christ to the whole world to affect lives and was concerned with matters of truth, justice and righteousness. Unfortunately, Warren W. Wiersbe's description of the church as an institution of reproach seems to be the reality in the Ghanaian society.²⁵ The church that is supposed to be spotless is now besieged with the problem of accountability, morality, and questionable lifestyles of some of her leaders and the laity.²⁶ The reports from the media are evident. There is not a single day that the media does not question the justice and the righteousness of the church in Ghana. Some of the pastors (the man and woman of God) are accused of not being fair in their dealings with the church members. There are instances where the poor had been denied access to the so called powerful men of God. Some even have “protocol list” as alleged by Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu. These lists include the level of hospitality they are entitled to when invited as guest preachers. Some do not even preach in small churches.²⁷

²⁵ Warren Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis – A blemish church struggling with accountability, morality, and lifestyles of its leaders and laity*.(Nashville: Oliver- Nelson Publications, 1988), 16.

²⁶ Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis*, 16.

²⁷ Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu, *Strange Warmth- Wesleyan Perspectives on Ministry, Renewal and Discipleship*, (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2011), 107.

On the aspect of morals (righteousness) it is still worrying. Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu using the Methodist Church Ghana as a case study to discuss the historic churches writes, “it is worrying to observe that every annual conference, the church deals with divorce cases, marital infidelity, drunkenness, disrespect for parishioners, misappropriation of church funds and other vices among ministers thus stifling the prophetic voice of the church in our community.”²⁸ On the Pentecostals, he identifies lack of accountability in the use of church funds, disagreements among pastors leading to acrimonious sessions and serious cases of sexual impropriety as the major problems associated with them.

The bigamy issue between Obinim²⁹ and the wife of his subordinate pastor which dominated the air waves in the year 2011 is evidence. The sexual healing case of Nicholas Osei³⁰ popularly known as “Kumchacha” in May 2011 is not an exception.³¹

Although, the body of Christ in the Ghanaian society has been contributing immensely towards the administration of justice and the pursuance of righteousness, her best as at now is not enough considering the magnitude of injustices and immorality in the country. The reason is that the strong prophetic and the ecumenical spirit, which existed some decades ago which worked miracles, is gradually dying off because of an inward looking syndrome. This confirms Kpobi's assertion that the ecumenical groups are becoming increasingly inward looking, pleading the enhancement of their denomination above the general cause.³² As a result, it is very difficult for the body of Christ to make any significant impact as it used to be. The body of Christ is being torn apart by

²⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Strange Warmth*, 78.

²⁹ The founder and the bishop of the God's Way Church International.

³⁰ The leader of the Heaven Gate Ministries.

³¹ <http://www.ghanatoghana.com/Ghanahomepage> 11/12/2012.

³² David N A Kpobi, *Missions in Ghana –The Ecumenical Heritage*. (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2008), 130.

partisanship, superiority complex and the marginalization of one another.³³ It is now blinded to the gravity of sin, immortality and injustices. It has clung on to a form of religion that lacks the moral sense and the fundamental dignity of the human person.³⁴

What has worsened the situation is the intra religious exclusivism in the spreading of the gospel and the churches' unwillingness to learn and know about other churches as revealed by the research. In the words of David Kpobi “most [Christians] are so focused on their own practices that they easily tend to either disregard others or even consider them strange and unworthy.”³⁵ He adds that the little knowledge about each other that most Christians have is often related to what is negative or unacceptable about the other.³⁶ This has resulted in accusations and counteraccusations.

The activities of the New Religious Movements (the Christian sects) cannot also be disregarded. “More than ever before the pressure of the present world has forced people to resort to these movements in search of answers to life situations.”³⁷ From a theological viewpoint, these movements deviate in many ways from historical Christianity; yet, paradoxically, they continue to insist that they are entitled to be classified as part of Christianity.³⁸ They vigorously oppose the Christian Church, particularly in the realm of Christology and soteriology. They normally believe in many gods, deny the Lordship or the God-nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit. They also consider sin as illusion, error and not real and normally care less about the here and now and righteous living.³⁹ Adherence to these sects in recent times has had a serious repercussion

³³ Asamoah-Gyedu, *Strange Warmth*, 82.

³⁴ Asamoah-Gyedu, *Strange Warmth*, 88.

³⁵ Kpobi, *Missions in Ghana—The Ecumenical Heritage*, 181.

³⁶ Kpobi, *Missions in Ghana—The Ecumenical Heritage*, 181.

³⁷ Asamoah-Gyedu, *Strange Warmth*, 56.

³⁸ Martin Walter, *The Kingdom of the Cults* (Sri Lanka: New Life Literature PVT Ltd, 1997), 17.

³⁹ Water, *The Kingdom of the cults*, 26.

on the body of Christ in Ghana as far as the issue of justice and righteousness are concerned.

How does the Church apply her Advocacy Role in the Church and the entire society?

Two effective ways by which the body of Christ has been ensuring justice and godly living as Amos did in his days are through Communiqués and Pastoral letters. The Roman Catholic Church Ghana is notable in this area. The research revealed that it has issued a lot of Communiqués and Pastoral letters.⁴⁰ The Christian Council of Ghana is not also an exception in the issuance of communiqués and pastoral letters. The intent of these documents is to guide the government as well as Christians. Other means by which the body of Christ in Ghana ensures justice and righteousness are through dialogue, national crusades, living exemplary life, preaching and teaching the word of God, and disciplining church members who refuse to live out their Christian values and principles.

The authors interviewed some church leaders⁴¹ to find out how similar the context of the book of Amos is to the context of the Ghanaian society and the implications of Amos concept of justice and righteousness

⁴⁰ These are found in the volume I and volume II of the Ghana Bishops Speak – A Collection of Communiqués Memoranda and Pastoral Letters of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference published in 1999 and 2006 respectively.

⁴¹The following church leaders were interviewed: Most Rev Osei Bonsu – The President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference, 10/2/2014. Apostle Ekow Badu Wood- Member of the Executive Council of the Church of Pentecost and the Area Chairman, Kwadaso. 7/3/2014. Rev John Abu Beidoo – District Supervising Minister for Kumasi District and a member of the Executive Board (ICGC). 7/3/2014. Most Rev Prof. Emmanuel Asante – The Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana. 3/4/2014. Rt Rev. Prof. Osei Safo-Kantanka – The Bishop of Kumasi Diocese Methodist Church Ghana 19/5/2014. Sister Olivia Umoh –Director of Street Children Project Kumasi. Very Rev Kwaku Adusei, The Minister in charge of the Methodist Relief Services in the Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist church Ghana.

(Amos 5:7, 15- 24) for the body of Christ in Ghana . The interview questions included the history of the selected churches, beliefs and practices and views on justice and righteousness. What came out was that all of the selected churches by their beliefs and practices uphold the administration of justice and the pursuance of righteousness in high esteem. However, concept is more theoretical rather than practical just as it was in the days of Amos.

The Church leaders affirmed that the prophetic role played by Amos is part of the church's missionary role in Ghana. The assertions above firstly ascertain the fact that though the religious world of Amos was different from that of the Ghanaian society, the principles of justice and righteousness of Amos' days are still applicable. Secondly, the church is the 'Amos' of the Ghanaian Society and must make sure that justice and righteousness prevail in the Ghanaian community. Failure to play this prophetic role effectively as Amos did means, neglect of her mission to the nation.

God is not just a law giver and the Lord of covenant but interested in the wellbeing and the morals of His people.⁴² The concern for the defenseless in the society is therefore not simply a command designed to promote social harmony but rooted in the nature of Yahweh (the Lord of host), hence, prophet Amos' incessant call for justice and righteousness. The concept was relevant in the days of Amos and so it is today. The exegetical analysis of the pericope shows that the pursuance of justice and righteousness is imperative and must not be sacrificed for any other thing. God demands justice, the righteousness of social order, the protection of the weak and the poor in the Ghanaian society. He also requires righteousness, which demonstrates interpersonal relationship and responsibilities. Without these elements, religious practices are worthless in the sight of God.⁴³

⁴² He also corrects. This he sometimes does through punishments, which are therapeutic and didactic.

⁴³ Bruce, et al, *New International Bible Commentary*, 907.

It should be emphasised that the expression of religious faith by confrontation with the evils, which destroy the social fabric of society, is no new phenomenon. The God who spoke long ago as one compassionate to the oppressed and the vindicator of the poor remains the Lord of the Christians. The call to see the quest for justice and righteousness as integral to faith in Christ must therefore be heard by all who claim to be children of God in the country.⁴⁴

Conclusion

In the days of Amos, the society was full of injustice and ungodliness. The situation created a state of hopelessness for the socially marginalized. This unjust and ungodly attitude emerged from corrupt religious and irreligious political systems and the prosperous aristocrats of Israel, Judah and their environs. The situation is not different from that of the Ghanaian society. Justice is now conformed to the dictates of created interests. The powerless are denied their due right. The church, although aware of its prophetic and advocacy roles seem to lose sight of the essence of the administration of justice and the pursuance of righteousness both in the church and the entire society. Through observation and the interview conducted, it was revealed that most of the churches are inward looking. Their preaching is material-centered. They avoid God's values and principles of justice and righteousness. In most cases, they implement their own selfish policies. The God who spoke in the days of Amos and sought the plight of the vulnerable in the society is the God of the Christian Church in the Ghanaian society today. Therefore, the quest for justice and righteousness should be the core business of the body of Christ for without justice and righteous living the very essence of life is meaningless.

⁴⁴ C J Haughey, et al *The Faith that Does justice: Examining the Christian Sources for Social Change* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 78.

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Dealing with the Causative Roots of Ill-Health for Wholistic Healthful Living: Critical Analysis Of Luke 5:17-26

Ebenezer Quaye¹

ABSTRACT

Wholistic health is a biblical concern. In the New Testament, especially, in the gospels are dotted several health issues of healing and healthful practices. The Lukan gospel presents several of such circumstances. In Luke 5:17-26 is found a typical example of the healing ministry of Jesus. Over the years, Biblical Scholars, Pastors, Evangelists and Bible readers in general, usually focus on the faith of the men who brought the paralytic man to Jesus, the criticism by the Pharisees as well as the power of Jesus to heal. This paper, not oblivious to these facts opines that, the narrator portrays Jesus dealing with the causative roots of the malady rather than the miracle of healing the paralysis. Therefore, it is to be concluded that this pericope presents the biblical concept of wholistic health by dealing with the 'causative agent,' the root of ill-health for the total healing of all the faculties of humankind. It further redirects the attention of the populace and the church in particular to health, healthful living through healing of the soul rather than the celebrated healing of maladies.

Introduction

Health issues are global concerns. Religion and the Bible for that matter

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are not exclusive to these concerns. Various biblical passages and pericopes provide enough grounds for healthful thoughts and teachings. In the studies of the gospels are various health issues. For instance, the author of the Lucan gospel recorded various miraculous healings of Jesus.

The pericope (Luke 5:17-26) being discussed in this paper, is a typical passage dealing with health in the Bible. Although various works were done in the past on this particular passage, much of it focused on the faith of the men who brought the paralytic man, the authority and power of Jesus to forgive and also to further heal the paralytic man as well as the pharisaic criticism of Jesus. Here in this paper, the text is probed further to ascertain the connection between the forgiveness of sins and healing of the body. Further, to verify Jesus' interest whether to provoke the Pharisees by pronouncing forgiveness or whether verily there is some plausible consequence of sin on the health of an individual hence, Jesus' acts of forgiveness and then healing.

In discussing Luke 5:17-26, a critical analysis of the text would be done using a reader centered approach of narrative criticism. Further, the paper assumes an applicability of findings through reading the text to health issues in Ghana and beyond. That is to say, this pericope provides enough grounds to dealing with health issues in Ghana – within the church and society.

Critical Analysis of Luke 5:17-26

Looking at the form, structure and setting of Luke 5:17-26, it is the third of sevenfold structure that the author adopted for 5:1-6:16. And it is the second of two closely linked healing cases or scenes (cleansing of the leper, 5:12-16 and healing of the paralytic man, 5:17-26). Luke particularly established links between 5:17-26 and 6:6-11 with the following shared words and phrases. For instance, *ἄνθρωπος* (“a man”; 5:18; 6:6); *εἰς το μεσον* (“into the middle”; 5:19; 6:8); *αἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι* (“the scribes and Pharisees”; 5:21; 6:7); *τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν* (“the thoughts of them”; 5:22; 6:8);

ἐπλησθησαν (“they were filled”; 5:26; 6:11. Further, both accounts begun with reference to Jesus' teaching (5:17; 6:6) in comparison with the Markan account of this same episode, such commonalities are not found there. Each incident hinged on Jesus' use of question in response to his opponents which posed difficult alternatives for them (5:23; 6:9).²

According to Stein, Luke 5:17-6:11 has five controversy stories that contrast the people's enthusiasm in reacting to Jesus as compared to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. The end of this controversy stories is in 6:7, 11. Accordingly, the source for this accounts is Mark 2:1-2:6, but the setting of the episodes is enlarged by Luke from Capernaum as in Mark 2:1 to “every village of Galilee and ... Judea and Jerusalem” as in Luke 5:17. This is so to explain the presence and activities of the Pharisees and scribes who had come to see Jesus.³ Before the healing of the paralytic (5:17-26), Jesus was portrayed as healing (4:38-39, 40-41, 5:12-16), exorcizing (4:31-37), and performing a miracle (5:4-9). But in this pericope, 5:17-26 and the next account, attention is focused on Jesus' divine prerogative and authority to forgive sins. Jesus' divine prerogative to forgive sins is once more portrayed in 7:36-50. Furthermore, one could observe that the earlier stories of Jesus' mighty acts in the Lucan narrative have already posed the question of who he is (4:22) and what was the nature of his authority (4:36). According to Marshall, the revelation of Jesus' person and nature is carried a step further in a story in which the focus is no longer on the mighty acts as such but rather on the nature of his authority. This is done in healing the paralytic. This was an event eloquent in its self of the saving power demonstrated by Jesus.⁴

By analyzing the periscope, verse 17 reveals that the healing of the

² John Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 231.

³ R H Stein, *Luke, The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman, 1984), 174, 175

⁴ H I Marshall. *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Australia: Paternoster, 1979), 210.

paralytic took place *ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν*, an expression which simply means “one of the days”. This may perhaps be referring vaguely to the general time period within which the incident fell. The narrator had in mind one of the days in which great crowds gathered to hear and to be healed. According to Nolland, the author used the periphrastic tense, *ἦν διδασκῶν*, meaning, 'he was teaching'; *ἦσαν καθήμενοι*, 'they were seated'; *ἦσαν ἐληλυθοῦτες*, 'had come' to set the background for the action of the story.⁵ But this phrase may further be looked at as the Lucan equivalent for the Markan *δι' ἡμερῶν*. According to Marshall, Luke not mentioning the name of the place suggests the conveyance of widening circle of influence of Jesus with the expression, “every village of Galilee and ... Judea and Jerusalem”.⁶ But this view is somehow secured by the second part of the verse which described the fact of Jesus' reputation in that region. According to Morris, Jesus has quite a reputation by now in that Pharisees had to come even from Judea and Jerusalem as well as locally to listen to him.⁷ It is upon recognition of Jesus' mighty works that motivated the Pharisees and also the scribes to come. The attention of the reader here is concentrated on the critical section of the audience by mentioning the Pharisees and scribes. The Pharisees for instance, appear in the gospels as defenders of the traditions of the elders in which the Law of Moses received many petty refinements of explanation. They were defenders of strict Jewish orthodoxy over against Jesus. Further according to Marshall, the term *νομοδισκαλός*, meaning, 'teacher of the law' appeared to be a Christian coinage designed to mark off Jewish teachers from Christian teachers. According to him, this was a decisive time referred to as absolutising of the *νόμος*. It is, therefore, equivalent to *γραμματεὺς* and *νομικός* as used in 5:21 and 7:30 respectively.⁸ Furthermore, the expression, *οἱ ἦσαν ἐληλυθοῦτες* should imply that each village had its number of Pharisees. The final piece of information of the

⁵ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 233.

⁶ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 212

⁷ Leon Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary* (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1974), 116.

⁸ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 212.

text for the action of the story was the impression created by the narrator of the presence of God's power. This elucidated the following of the actions of Jesus having divine prerogative and authority. It prepares the reader for the healing miracle that is to follow.⁹

In verse 18, it would be observed that *καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνδρες*, meaning, 'and behold men' is Lucan and its subject, *φέροντες*, 'carrying ones,' is Markan but the remainder of the verse is completely a recast by Luke. The use of the expression, *ἐπικλινῆς*, 'on a bed,' compensates for the loss of the four specified in Mark. Luke seems to emphasize the condition of the sick rather than the 'the carrying ones' with his verbal form *παραλελυμένος*, 'having been paralyzed' describing the condition of the man 'carried on a bed.' Further, the use of the imperfect, *ἐζήτουν*, 'they were seeking', points to the failure of their effort.¹⁰ Indeed, their action is not a well thought through, planned and deliberate action. It seems to be an in prompt to action being an action of the last resort. Luke may have omitted Mark's description of the large crowd blocking the doorway which necessitated lowering the man through the roof. It may be assumed that by the expansion of the audience coming from more places rather than just Capernaum (in verse 17) as in the Markan account, could inform his readers about the crowd. Nonetheless, verse 19, provides an answer to this omission.

In verse 19, since the men were unable to bring the paralyzed man before Jesus due to the crowd, they climbed up to the roof. The Lukan roof, *δομα*, is envisaged as tiles (*κεραμος*) compared to the Markan roof implied to be one made of mud and wattle. It is often argued that Luke has rewritten the passage in terms of Hellenistic architecture. But the counter argument would be that Mark did not specify of what material the roof was made of. And that tiled roofs were in use in Palestine at the time solidifies this objection.¹¹

⁹ Stein, *Luke, The New American Commentary*, 176.

¹⁰ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 234.

¹¹ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 213.

The first part of verse 20 shows Jesus' commendation of the faith of the men. This is sometimes argued to mean the faith of the men who brought the paralyzed man excluding him. For instance, according to Morris, their action was a mute appeal showing their faith. He emphasized that the faith of his friends is important giving how the faith of some people availed for others.¹² Faith (πίστις) is used here for the first time in Luke, although, the issues of belief and unbelief have already been mentioned (1:20, 45). Faith in Luke is attributed to those who act decisively on the basis of the conviction that God's help is to be found with Jesus (*see* 7:9, 50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42; and 8:25; the usage is not quite the same in 22:32, and different again in 17:5-6; 18:8).¹³

The second part of verse 20 raised some controversy as we observe in the following verses. Instead of simply healing the man's body in response to the faith of these men, Jesus went further to demonstrate his divine prerogative in dealing with probably the cause of the paralysis rather than the effect. He pronounced the forgiveness of the man's sins. In this, he demonstrated that the full salvation of men, both spiritual and physical depends on the faith in Jesus to heal both body and spirit. He seems to project the connection between forgiveness and healing. It may be implied that Jesus did not come to offer partial salvation. He did not wish to perform miracles of physical healing which would become incomplete ends in themselves but rather, to give holistic health by healing both spiritual and physical aspects of the individual.¹⁴ Here, we find out that Jesus' authority in religion starts with forgiveness of sins. His aim is to deliver souls from the paralysis of spiritual and moral energy first. Though some scholars reject the forgiveness of sins as a late doctrinal accretion, rather it should be seen as a core of the original narrative seeing the connection between sin and ill-health.¹⁵

¹² Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 117.

¹³ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 235.

¹⁴ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 213.

¹⁵ Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 117

The part of the narrative, “Man, your sins are forgiven you”, should not be understood or seen as a divine passive or circumlocution for “God forgives you.”¹⁶ This is evident from the following verses especially, verse 24 where Jesus' words are understood to be implicit claim of equality with God. Indeed, Nolland for instance, holds that the words of forgiveness in the Lucan narrative are provocative acts on the part of Jesus, rendering an unequivocal challenge to the religious leaders of his ministry to call sinners to salvation. He further sees the word forgiveness as a theological passive in which it is God who forgives but that does little to reduce the claimed scandal of Jesus' words.¹⁷ Contesting his view, Jesus is to be understood as having forgiven the man his sins and the Greek perfect tense used here for “are forgiven” emphasizes the abiding state of this forgiveness.¹⁸ Now, one of the difficulties in this narrative is an open question to assume whether Jesus here implies that the man's paralysis was due to some special sin in his own life or one should simply think of the man sharing in the universal human sinfulness. The thinking of that time was that they certainly associated sin with illness and assumed it to be physical punishment of a hidden sin. Nothing is done by the narrator of this piece to correct this impression. On the contrary, the action of Jesus forgiving the sins of the paralytic would suggest that the sin which caused the paralysis needed to be dealt with first before the cure could proceed.¹⁹ Although there is no indication of a direct link of the man's sins to his condition, illnesses could be caused by personal lifestyle or remote conditions. Whichever way, Jesus has power to deal with the causative roots of the malady by pronouncing forgiveness first.

In this paper, both universal human sinfulness and personal sins are attested seeing the narrator's silence on the matter as to whether Jesus was referring to the generality or universality of sin or personal sins. Nonetheless, one may read the text to mean his personal sins – “man your

¹⁶ J Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 10-11

¹⁷ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 235.

¹⁸ Stein, *Luke, The New American Commentary*, 176

¹⁹ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 213

sins are forgiven you.” This is because the expression, *ἀνθρώπε, ἀφεωνταισοιαί ἁμαρτιαισου* shows that Jesus was addressing the paralytic man in particular. Though 'universal' sins may be deduced in the narrative, the text refers to the man's actions leading to his ill-health. When sin is understood as missing the mark of the standardized way of living, then one may appreciate it why Jesus pronounced the forgiveness as a precursor of his healing and restoration.

The forgiveness pronounced in verse 20 provoked the Pharisees and scribes to challenge Jesus authority to forgive sins in verse 21. Luke, having already introduced the interlocutors of Jesus, he must change the Markan introduction of the scribes at this point. Mark's periphrastic form, *ἐν ταις καρδιαῖς αὐτῶν*, 'in their hearts', became *ἤξαντο διαλογιζέσθαι*, 'they begun to ponder' in the Lucan narrative probably to allow for interchange within the group. But verse 22 seems to put forward reasoning in their minds rather than an interchange within the group.²⁰ This provides Jesus another divine prerogative and authority knowing what was upon their minds. Relating to pronouncing forgiveness on the paralytic mentioned earlier, it confirms to his critics that he knew exactly what the paralytic needed since he could see the root cause of his condition. Probably for Christological focus, Luke substituted Mark's why question with *τις ἐστίν οὗτος* 'who is this' (7:49; 8:25; 9:9), and to it he appended *ὃς λαλεῖ βλασφημίας*, 'who is speaking blasphemies' in place of Mark's separate affirmation, *βλασφημεῖ*, 'he is blaspheming'.²¹ Their second question, “who can forgive sins, but God alone?” logically precedes the first. The question arises as to whether Jesus has any prerogative or authorization to make such pronouncement either by usurping the authority of God or through a prophetic gift.²²

Blasphemy is used more loosely in the New Testament than in later rabbinic literature and discussions. What is expressed here is an

²⁰ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 235.

²¹ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 235.

²² Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 214.

objection in the strongest terms of Jesus making such pronouncement of forgiven sins. In their understanding, God had reserved such as his own prerogative for the final day. The claim of Jesus to bring such an eschatological forgiveness into the very midst of history is for them nothing short of blasphemy.²³ Furthermore, the term blasphemy is understood in Mishnah to mean use of the name of God. The New Testament usage indicates that the term was used more widely to indicate any violation of the power and majesty of God.' In this view Jesus, was accused of violating the power and majesty of God.²⁴

On perceiving what they were pondering in verse 22, he therefore, challenged them with a counter-question in verse 23, "which is easier, to say, your sins are forgiven you; or to say, rise up and walk?" There is no easy answer to Jesus' question. Biblical scholars are divided on an answer to this question. For instance, it is argued that he who says "stand up and walk" calls for what can be immediately verified and therefore, subjects himself to a searching test of authenticity (thus, healing is more difficult according to Albertz, *Streitgesprache*, 8; Schurmann, 238; Fitzmeyer, 584). Others also argue that, however, he who declares God's eschatological forgiveness, does what no mere healer ever could do (thus the more difficult according to Lohmeyer, *Markus*, 54; Grundman, *Markus*, 58). For others, we are to consider the question to have no clear answer. Each activity of whether forgiveness or healing, would presume upon the exercise of divine authority to produce the desired effect.²⁵ In the perspective of this paper, Jesus chose the hard way of pronouncing forgiveness though authenticity of rise up and walk must be proven immediately. The Pharisees contested his pronouncement of forgiveness as blasphemy whereas the healing was not challenged. Dealing with the root cause of any diseased condition is more difficult. Nonetheless, it is the most efficient way. Where others may be content to leave sinners

²³ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 236.

²⁴ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 214

²⁵ Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 236

Traditionally, verse 24*a* and *c* are thought to be said by Jesus to the Pharisees and 24*b* are directed by Luke to the reader.²⁶ In verse 24, Jesus reason for the forgiveness was for the gathering to know that “the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. His words about forgiveness and healing go together. If he forgave, then he can heal too. As mentioned early on, the thinking of that time was that all sicknesses were due to sin. “R. Alexandri said in the name of R. Hiyya b. Abba: A sick man does not recover from his sickness until all his sins are forgiven him.”²⁷ According to the traditional thought of the time, Jesus should be right in his approach to the healing of the paralytic. Had they been consistent they should have accepted Jesus' approach. Nevertheless, there is no any form of indication in the pericope that Jesus would not have healed the paralytic if it had not been necessary to demonstrate his claims to the scribes and Pharisees.²⁸

In verse 24, we have Luke's first use of Son of Man as a title for Jesus. This is Jesus' favorite self-designation found over 80 times in the Gospels. This title appears to be his way of referring to his Messiahship with a term which would not arouse the wrong associations in men's minds. According to Marshall, the verse 24 poses some difficulties with its usage of the title Son of Man. He pointed the following out:

- That the usage here is identical with that in Mark. There is no indication that Luke has anywhere created fresh uses of the title or having his own unique theological view on the title.
- The Son of man is not associated with the dispensing of forgiveness in any pre-Christian sources. However, the traditional figure of the Son of man is someone who has the right to act as a heavenly ruler and judge. Such a figure has implicitly the power to forgive.

²⁶ Stein, *Luke, The New American Commentary*, 177.

²⁷ Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 118.

²⁸ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 215.

²⁹ Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 118

- The fact that Jesus forgave sins, though somehow scantily attested, is undoubtedly to be accepted as historical.
- In the present saying, Son of man referred to Jesus himself, and cannot be understood to refer to some other apocalyptic figure.

From the above postulations, one may conclude that Jesus out of and in himself forgave the sins of the paralytic and he did that rightly so.³⁰

With this authority, Jesus said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed and go to your house.” This command of Jesus to the man corresponds with the action of the paralytic in the verse 25 as a direct response to Jesus' command. He immediately rose up before them, took his bed and went to his house. In the previous time, the bed had borne the man but Jesus changed the situation. Now the man had borne the bed on which he was lying.³¹ Luke preferred the use of ἀπηλθεν, “he went off” which suits better the εἰςτονοῖκοναύτου, “to his house.” This Luke adds to make full compliance of the healed man with Jesus' directive. Luke positions the healed paralytic in the gesture of joyous response to his healing. This is congruent with the general response of the crowd in the next verse.³² The response of the paralytic further confirms Jesus' claims. Luke notes that the healing was immediate, a fact which could be derived from the general character of the healings recorded in the gospel tradition. This immediacy of the healing might lead to the man's rejoicing which may have influenced the general crowd in verse 26.

Instead of the use of ἐξίσταμαι to express the surprise of the spectators, Luke uses the periphrasis ἐκστασις ἐλάβεν ἅπαντας. ἐκστασις meaning amazement is also translated elsewhere as trance (Acts 10:10; 11:15; 22:17). This may be so to point out the level of Jesus' power to heal and the faith response of the healed. This led to glorifying God and further

³⁰ Marshall, *Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 215.

³¹ Morris, *Luke, Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 118

³² Nolland, *Luke, Word Biblical Commentary*, 237, 238.

expressed their amazement by noting that they have seen strange things today.³³ Whatever they have seen was beyond the expectation of the spectators. Human achievement could not explain that miracle.³⁴ It can be observed that apart from Jesus' commendation of the faith of the four men who brought the paralytic, nothing was said about them again in the entire pericope. It seems they have ended their work by bringing the man to Jesus. So also, the praise goes to God in verse 26 without the mention of Jesus. Both the four men and Jesus did their best in bringing to the paralytic man his healing yet they were not mentioned of the praise. Each of them may have worked the work of God hence the praise going to God.

Implications of the reading

The reading of Luke 5:17-26 captures a lot of issues pertaining to health and other issues of Ghana and beyond. The overall health of individuals is impacted mainly by lifestyle behaviours. These include healthy diets, physical activities, rest, ventilation et al. Unhealthy lifestyle behaviours particularly poor dietary practices, physical inactivity, smoking and alcohol consumption are major risk factors for conditions like overweight, obesity and chronic non-communicable diseases.³⁵ Health reports show that the prevalence of lifestyle diseases (chronic non-communicable diseases) such as stroke, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and other cardiovascular diseases are on the increase and are now among the top ten in-patient cause of death in Ghana.³⁶ As indicated in the discussions early on, there is enough grounds to see a relation between sin and ill-health.

³³ Marshall, Luke, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 216

³⁴ Morris, Luke, *Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, 118.

³⁵ KSteyn, A. Damasceno. *Lifestyle and related risk factors for chronic diseases. In Disease and Mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Edited by Jamison DT, Feachem RG, Makogoba WM, Bos RE, Baingana KF, Hofman JK, Rogo OK. (Washington DC: The World Bank; 2006), 247-264.

³⁶ W K Bosu, *Ghana's national NCD program: history, prospects and challenges. In Proceedings of the First Annual Workshop. British Academy UK-Africa Academic Partnership on Chronic Disease in Africa, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research; 2007.*

In the recent past, “more than 27,900 cases and 217 deaths from cholera have been reported in Ghana as of November 29, 2014. Many cases have been in the Greater Accra region (about 70%), including the districts of Accra Metro and La-Dadekotopon. As of November 29, 2014, the number of new cholera cases has been declining.”³⁷

Beyond Ghana, Africa is facing an urgent but 'neglected epidemic' of chronic disease.³⁸ In many African countries, disability and death rates today, are due to chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and stroke which have accelerated over the last two decades. Such disease conditions have affected populations which include urban and rural, wealthy and poor, old and young. Africa's chronic disease burden has been strongly attributed to changing behavioural practices such as sedentary lifestyles and diets high in saturated fat, salt and sugar. These are linked to structural factors such as industrialization, urbanization and increasing food market globalization.³⁹ Though the text did not mention particularly what may have caused the paralytic man's diseased condition, from the reading one may observe a connection between his lifestyle and the paralysis. This is made obvious in Jesus' statement “your sins are forgiven you.”

Some surveys done in the past, for instance, Unwin and colleagues in 2001 recommend a three-prong approach to dealing with the burden of such chronic lifestyle ill-health. These are 1) epidemiological surveillance; 2) primary prevention (preventing disease in healthy

³⁷ Information Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID). Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ). Accessed January 18, 2015.

³⁸ T J A Spray, F Mugusi, S Rashid, D Whiting, R Edwards, K G Alberti, N C Unwin, *Rural and Urban Differences in Diabetes Prevalence in Tanzania: The Role of Obesity, Physical Inactivity and Urban Living*. *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*. 2000;94(6):637–44.

³⁹ D J P Barker, *Fetal and Infant Origins of Adult Disease*. London: British Medical Journal Publishing Group, 1993. [PMC free article: PMC1664286] [PubMed: 2252919]

populations); and 3) Secondary prevention (preventing complications and improving quality of life in affected communities).⁴⁰ These three-step procedure enforces and confirms the approach of dealing with causative root of the ill-health as propounded in the reading of the text above. Each of these steps seem to be dealing with the causative roots as dealing with the sins of the paralytic man.

Conclusion

The need of dealing with causative roots of ill-health cannot be overemphasized. It may be seen as difficult but it is effective and efficient way of dealing with disease conditions. Although Jesus has the power to have pronounced the paralytic man to rise up and walk, he decided to deal with the sin issue first. By doing this, Jesus' method was a holistic approaching in dealing with the situation.

Though the debate between “your sins are forgiven you” and “rise up and walk” is not too clearly settled, this opines that “your sins are forgiven you” is difficult. This is so because, most of the time as humans, we want to deal with the symptoms of the issue rather than the root causes. It because the symptoms are easily verifiable and can easily be treated. Dealing with the causative roots of any condition is most of the time difficult. But by dealing with the roots will mean defeating the condition absolutely though difficult. The symptoms should lead to ascertain the root cause in order to deal with it. Jesus' approach is here applauded and this should be recommended approach to dealing with ill-health issues and other chronic conditions in Ghana, Africa and beyond.

⁴⁰ D J P Barker, *Mothers, Babies and Diseases in Later Life*. (London: British Medical Journal Publishing Group, 1994)

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Ethics and Bioethics in African University Education: Towards a Genuine Need

John Kwaku Opoku¹

ABSTRACT

As a branch of philosophy which deals with moral aspects of human behavior, ethics as a discipline has grown to be included in many academic fields in many African universities. In medicine, the ethics of medical and biological research (bioethics) is an important development. The systematic study of the + moral dimensions – including moral vision, decisions, conduct and policies –of the life sciences and health care, employing a variety of ethical methodologies in an interdisciplinary setting, in the 21st century, is an inevitable reality. Though bioethics attempts to reduce and manage the possible uncertainties and ambivalences that can confront us in daily life, its state as an independent study in higher institutions of learning is poor compared to Europe and America. Since health care systems in Africa have always been a place for and a target of debate and controversy, the contributions of ethics and bioethics to the search for good health have imperatively required higher studies. The main objective of this paper is not to undermine and reject contributions

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made in the study of bioethics and ethics by the few centres in African bioethics education. Rather, it is to outline the need for an independent ethics and bioethics education in African universities in an era where many ethical and moral challenges confront the African health care sector. Ethics and bioethics as academic fields not only look at moral and ethical ideals that we should have, but also examine actual codes of conducts that people do indeed follow and use in medical science research, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Introduction

Though relatively young (as compared to Europe, America), universities in Africa have accomplished much. They have increased in number since its introduction by foreign missions in different locations across the African continent. For instance, in sub-Saharan Africa, they have grown from just six institutions in 1960 to more than 100, several decades later, with a corresponding rise in enrollments.² In some cases, they have developed significant curricula and revised contents to reflect African priorities. They have also largely replaced expatriate faculty with indigenous staff and fostered intellectual communities. A major achievement has been the production of skilled human resources required to staff and to manage public and private institutions in many states.³

Today, African universities are graduating students ready to compete in the global economy, politics, information technology, law and

² William S. Saint, *Strategies for Stabilization and Revitalization* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1992).

³ David C. Woolman, "Educational Reconstruction and Post-Colonial Curriculum Development: A Comparative Study of Four African Countries," *International Education Journal* 2. 5 (2001): 27; Saint, *Strategies for Stabilization and Revitalization* (1992).

biomedicine.⁴ However, there appears to be limited growing willingness in Africa to provide a higher educational approach in ethics and bioethics in higher institutions (universities and post-secondary institutions).⁵ Higher education continues to be faced with several issues with respect to the content of ethics and bioethics education in spite of the progress made. Ogot and Weidman⁶ have observed that issues in African higher education include; the mission of higher education in African society and the quality and content of that education.

Ethics have become an organizational priority. In the post-modern era, ethics is neither a luxury nor an option.⁷ Likewise bioethics has grown to be a medical priority, though it is increasingly growing to be a profession under threat⁸ especially in Africa. It is therefore vital that measures are put in place to expatiate on the relevance of these fields in university education within the African community. The question therefore is 'What are barriers to achieving this goal and what are their implications?' and 'What does Africa hope to achieve when functional platforms on ethics and bioethics are sustained?' The objective of this paper is to emphasize the need to improve and promote interest in ethics and biomedical ethics in higher education across Africa. This purpose is pertinently in line with the idea to operationalize ethics and bioethics platforms across the African continent. The purpose when achieved will not only equip

⁴ Michael Patrick Bulfin, "Perspectives on Higher Education in Africa: Fieldnotes on Trends, Themes, Challenges and Opportunities," [Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies 36, no. 1](#) (2009): 1-2.

⁵ Temidayo O. Ogundiran, "Enhancing the African Bioethics Initiative," *BMC Medical Education* 4, no.21 (2004): 1, accessed December 8, 2015, doi: 10.1186/1472-6920-4-21.

⁶ Bethwell A. Ogot and John C. Weidman, *Prospectus for a Five-Year Programme of Research on Higher Education in Kenya and East Africa* (Maseno: Maseno University College, 1993), 1-15.

⁷ Stephen E. Brimmer, "The Role of Ethics in 21st Century Organizations," *Leadership Advance Online*, issue XI (Virginia: School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship, 2007), 2.

⁸ S. Van McCrary, *The Role of Bioethics in Medical Education: A Crucial Profession under Threat* (American Institute of Biological Science, 2001), 5.

human minds but will provide a concrete support for health care practice and biomedical development.

Understanding Ethics and Bioethic

The Family Word Finder⁹ explains 'ethics' as moral codes, rules of conduct, moral principles, morality, sense of duty and conscience. Ethics is a code of values to guide humans' choices and actions and determine the purpose and course of our lives the choices and actions that determine the purpose and the course of his life.¹⁰ Ethics concern an individual's moral judgments about right and wrong. It is the study of nature and morality of human acts.¹¹ Ethics does not only study these moral norms but studies them critically. Ethics permeates all aspects and institutions of human life including, marriage, economics, religion, politics, health care and teaching and media. Ethics is a field that not only looks at moral and ethical ideals that we should have, but also examines actual codes of conducts that people do indeed follow and use, whether consciously or unconsciously. Some ethical codes of conduct are written out, while others are orally or socially transmitted.¹²

On the other hand, 'bioethics' in simple terms refers to the ethics of medical and biological research (from the Greek '*bios*' –life and *ethikos/ithiki* –ethics¹³). It is a relatively new field of inquiry and can be defined as the systematic study of the moral dimensions –including moral vision, decisions, conduct and policies –of the life sciences and health care, employing a variety of ethical methodologies in an

⁹ *Family Word Finder* (New York: Reader's Digest Association, 1975).

Ayn Rand, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring, 2015), 4-6.

¹⁰ Maria I. P. Nabor-Nery, *Ethics* (Quezon City: Katha Publishing Co. Inc., 2003), 2.

¹¹ Maria I. P. Nabor-Nery, *Ethics* (Quezon City: Katha Publishing Co. Inc., 2003), 2.

¹² John Mizzoni, *Ethics: The Basics* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 5.

¹³ W. T. Reich, "The Word 'Bioethics': Its Birth and the Legacies of Those Who Shape it," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 4, no. 4 (1994): 319.

interdisciplinary setting. Bioethics is a neologism which first found its way into public usage in 1970-71 in the United States.¹⁴

Although it was a subject for few in ethics and the medical field especially in northern United States, the term bioethics has come to 'symbolize and influence' the rise and shaping of the field itself. Reich mentions that the discourse caught on due to the fact that it was simple and amenable to exploitation by the media which had placed a great premium 'on having a simple term that could readily be used for public consumption. It is worth noting that the term of bioethics has been used in two ways that reflect both the concerns and ambitions of two respective academics who, it is suggested, quite possibly created the word independently of each other.¹⁵ While the first sense in which the term was used had an environmental and evolutionary significance' –advocating attention to the problem of survival: the questionable survival of human species and the even more questionable survival of nations and cultures. The second sense is that bioethics was used to narrowly refer to the ethics of medicine and biomedical research which had the following focus¹⁶:

- The rights and duties of patients and health care professional
- The rights to duties of research subjects and researchers
- The formulation of public policy guidelines for clinical care and biomedical research

The development of bioethics in the 21st century has its foundation, as stated in Have and Gordijn's work, in the diverse development strategies to deal with the ambiguity of the world. They write that through tradition, custom and routine, bioethics attempts to reduce and manage the possible uncertainties and ambivalences that can confront us in daily

¹⁴ [Megan-Jane Johnstone](#), *Bioethics: A Nursing Perspective* (5Ed) (London: Churchill Livingstone, 2011), 13.

¹⁵ W. T. Reich, "The Word Bioethics," (1994): 321-2.

¹⁶ W. T. Reich, "The Word 'Bioethics': The Struggle over its Earliest Meaning". *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 5, no. 1 (1995): 20.

life.¹⁷ Since health care systems in Africa and Europe have always been a place for and target of debate and controversy,¹⁸ the contributions of ethics and bioethics to the quest of good health have imperatively contributed to the kind of professionals that all medicines must seek to provide. Before the modern discipline of bioethics evolved, ethics had been on the center stage of medical practice for more than two millennia, since the time of Hippocrates.¹⁹ Since its inception, ethics and bioethics have existed as the vital system of moral principles governing the appropriate conduct of health professionals.²⁰

The state of Ethics and Bioethics Education in Africa

In traditional Africa, the basis for ethical knowledge is considered to be from God and from human relationships. Within local communities, ethics is learned throughout life's journey through association with elders, peers, family. However, Mizzoni²¹ observes that if ethics are always learnt from others and ethical standards are wholly derived from one's society, then that might imply that all ethical standards are relative. This he believes is so because each society has its own unique history. Although the study of ethics may have its own philosophical problems (the problems of the *origins of ethics*, the problem of *relativism*, the problem of *human nature*),²² these problems are in no way impediments to the study of the discipline in higher education, and are as well not the subject under discussion here.

Though medical ethics has existed since the time of Hippocrates, formal

¹⁷ Henk ten Have and Bert Gordijn, *Bioethics in a European Perspective* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 17.

¹⁸ C. R. Inawagner and Marjorauhala, "Examining Ethical Issues of IT in Health care," *Action for Health Intermediate Report*, (2005): 5.

¹⁹ Ogundiran, "Enhancing the African Bioethics Initiative," (2004): 2.

²⁰ Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Zondervan: Hippo Books, 2008), 3.

²¹ Mizzoni, *Ethics*, 2.

²² Mizzoni, *Ethics*, 6-7.

training in bioethics did not become established until a few decades ago. Bioethics has gained a strong foothold in health sciences in the developed world, especially in Europe and North America.²³ Over the years teaching ethics and bioethics have been given little and sometimes no attention in higher institution across Africa. The situation is quite different in many developing countries. In most African countries, bioethics –as established and practiced today in the west- is either non-existent or is rudimentary.²⁴ Though bioethics has come of age in the developed and some developing countries, it is still largely foreign to most African universities and countries. In some parts of Africa, some bioethics conferences have been and continue to be held to create research ethics awareness and ensure conformity to international guidelines for research with human participants. In spite of this progress, core bioethics issues, approaches and values are still exclusively Western dominated and largely foreign to most African societies. One may agree with Andoh' argument to an extent that Africa lacks human, institutional, infrastructural capacities and a real African authenticity in bioethics which makes African views on bioethics neither sufficiently developed nor heard.²⁵

The need has therefore arisen to recognize the study of ethics and very importantly bioethics in university education not only to compete with the west but to develop capacity for reviewing the ethics of research in Africa. In institutions of higher learning, research ethics is the most developed aspect of bioethics in Africa. Most African countries have set up Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) to provide guidelines for research and to comply with international norms.²⁶ Performing similar functions,

²³ Ogundiran, “Enhancing the African Bioethics Initiative”: 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ [Cletus T. Andoh](#), “Bioethics and the Challenges to Its Growth in Africa,” *Open Journal of Philosophy* **1**, no.2 (2011): 507-516.

²⁶ J. Azetsop, “New Directions in African Bioethics: Ways of Including Public Health Concerns in the Bioethics Agenda”. [Developing World Bioethics](#) 11, no.1 (2011): 4-15.

the West Africa Bioethics (WAB) has for several years offered teaching, service and research program in International Bioethics. Its system of training program is unique because it uses the opportunity afforded by its location in West Africa to research and train individuals in Bioethics (in English and French languages both of which are widely spoken in the West African sub-region.²⁷ In the University of Ibadan, for instance, the West African Bioethics Training Program supports MSc, MPhil/PhD program in Bioethics.

Also in the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics²⁸ (SBCB) is a university-based centre committed to the values of justice, dignity, respect and freedom for all manner of persons. Staff at the centre boast a wide range of expertise in ethics and they are deeply committed to furthering the discipline of bioethics in South Africa, Africa and the world. Centre staff take pride in advising and consulting for policy makers at national and provincial level, as well as in programmes like Good Clinical Practise. The Centre for Bioethics contributes to excellence in bioethics by developing national and international research programs and collaborating with other developing and developed world-based bioethicists on training and research projects. The centre again advise health providers on policy matters, including resource allocation, rationing of health care services and monitoring standards of care for the ethical practice of the caring professions including medicine, dentistry, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and pharmacy. They also provide ethics consultation service at hospitals and clinics within the academic hospitals as well as the primary health care settings.

In the University of Cape Town, South Africa, the Bioethics Centre operates under the joint auspices of the Faculty of Health Sciences and

²⁷ 'West African Bioethics,' accessed December 11, 2015, <http://bioethicscenter.net/web/index.php/about-wab/brief-history-of-wab>.

²⁸ Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics, University of Witwatersrand, accessed December 11, 2015, <http://www.wits.ac.za/academic/health/centres/10726>.

the Department of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities. Its purpose seems not different from other established bioethics centres. The centre provides teaching, research and consultation service to many of the ethical dilemmas that challenge the work of health institution especially in South Africa. Similarly, the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa continue to provide hundreds of Africans with knowledge in advancing research ethics. Generally, attempts at improving the study of bioethics seem to face many impediments as many areas and university lack centres that can cater for the discipline. In view of this, Azetsop²⁹ has observed that bioethics has not been responsive to local needs and values in the rest of the continent. A new direction is needed in African bioethics that will promote the development of a locally-grounded bioethics, shaped by a dynamic understanding of local cultures and informed by structural and institutional problems that impact the public's health, as well as cognisant of the salient contribution of social sciences and social epidemiology which can bring a lasting impact on African local communities. In the lack of the development in bioethics in higher education across Africa, Ogundiran³⁰ observes that there is need for awareness and interest in conferences and workshops to advance the course of ethics and bioethics in higher education. He adds that the awareness and interest in these conferences must arouse the need to further strengthen and extend beyond research ethics to clinical practice. Ogundiran is of the hope that bioethics education in schools that train doctors and other health care providers is the hook that anchors both research ethics and clinical ethics.

Ethics workshops and conferences have been held in different parts of Africa, including Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Cameroon and Nigeria. Moreover, some institutions and research centres have established research ethics review committees and some members of these committees have attended training workshops on research ethics.

²⁹ J. Azetsop, 4-15.

³⁰ Temidayo O. Ogundiran, (2004).

Examples of such workshops, conferences and seminars include:

- Seminar on the Ethical Review of Biomedical Research in African Countries (Arusha, Tanzania, 5 November 1999)
- Workshop on Ethics Review Committees in Africa (Lusaka, 29–31 January 2001)
- Workshop on Ethical Issues in Health Research in Abuja (03–17 December 2001)
- An International Symposium on Good Ethical Practices in Health Research in Africa, Pan-African Bioethics Initiative (Cape Town, 23–24 February 2001)
- AMANET training workshop on health research ethics in Africa. Biotechnology Centre, University of Yaoundé (Yaounde, Cameroon; 15–19 September 2003)

Within and outside Africa such platforms intended to provide bioethics and ethics education have pioneered the movement towards ensuring that medical research in Africa conforms to international ethical guidelines.³¹ This is the aspect of bioethics that is most visible in Africa and has been anchored partly by the Pan African Bioethics Initiative (PABIN), a pan-African organization that was established in 2001 to foster the development of bioethics in Africa with a particular focus on research ethics.³² This idea has arisen in recognition of the genuine need to develop capacity for reviewing the ethics of research in Africa. It is also a condition required by external sponsors of collaborative research in Africa.

In Africa, the study of bioethics seems to have the following dimensions, ethicists and bioethicists are generally trained in philosophical ethics and law, as well as the social sciences and humanities. However, the level and type of training among individuals varies to a significant extent. Due to

³¹ *Ibid*

³² Pan African Bioethics Initiative (PABIN), “*Terms of Reference*,” accessed November 26, 2015, <http://www.pabin.net/en/index.asp>.

this, seekers of ethical ideas must be careful of the kind of consultation they seek. The study of bioethics in higher learning, according to McCrary,³³ can provide a more objective and balanced view of complex ethical issues in health care settings. In other words, bioethicists can often provide an outside perspective on medical care and should be scrupulous in maintaining their objectivity where possible.

Towards a Genuine need for Bioethics in Higher Education

In the 21st century, ethics is not an option, but a prerequisite -more than competence, experience, intelligence and drive. Indeed, people at all levels of life need ethics. According to Kidder, the principal task of this decade is the creation and nurturing of a values-based culture.³⁴ The role of ethics in our society is very important because it is the basic beliefs and standards that allow humans to reach a morally right/good decision. Ethics are involved in all organizations and institutions around us and are what gives comfort, knowing that we live in a country/continent where we are able to choose.

Without any application of ethics, our society would be one of dishonesty and uncertainty. The importance of ethics in our daily lives stems from the fact that we make ethical decisions every day. Although we do not have a perfect society, the ethics in every country is what makes it great. It is nearly impossible to go for a long period of time without being forced to make a decision that has moral consequences. Again, we confront ethical issues in society and that many people (in certain fields like medicine and health care) deal with moral dilemmas on a regular basis.³⁵ The importance of bioethics to our culture, as Africans, today is mirrored in diverse parts of our society including: health care and research. Bioethics in health care is destined to create awareness to health workers

³³ S. Van McCrary, *The Role of Bioethics*, (2001), 5.

³⁴ R. M. Kidder, "Ethics is not Optional". *Association Management*, 53, no.13 (2001): 30-32.

³⁵ Kerby Anderson, *Christian Ethics in Plain Language* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2005), 7.

of the medical practice as well as enriching the ability of health workers to further understand the patient as a person.

There is the genuine need for higher ethics and bioethics education as a result of the challenges that impede such an education in Africa. This genuine need is to be facilitated by the facts that:

- Bioethicists can provide a more objective and balanced view of complex ethical issues in health care settings.
- Many bioethicists have extensive experience in analyzing and resolving actual dilemmas in clinical medicine. In datum, 'clinical ethics' has become an unofficial sub-specialty of the field.
- Educational efforts specifically targeted to teach bioethics issues to physicians are to be enforced. Recent research suggests that after a course in bioethics, physicians have a more subtle understanding of ethical issues and are better able to analyze relevant issues critically.³⁶
- Highlighting the ethical side of bioethics, health workers will now be able to follow an ethical code when working with patients which was and is a problem. Ethical problems had a clear connection to problems in health care, so by the emergence and teaching of bioethics, the health care of our continent will be significantly improved.
- It is/will not be appropriate to consider bioethics only as biology and philosophy. Rather ethics and bioethics go a long to serve as a formation (a means of shaping and reforming minds and decision making skills).

In order to elaborate university education on ethics and bioethics in 21st century Africa, McCrary³⁷ writes that:

³⁶ The National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC), *Ethical and Policy Issues in Research Involving Human Participants* (Maryland, 2001), 36.

³⁷ S. Van McCrary, (2001), 5.

One way to convince medical institutions that bioethics is necessary may be to appeal to their bottom line. If having an excellent bioethics program in a medical school and affiliated teaching hospitals can reduce exposure to legal risks, then administrators may begin to view it as more important.

Moore quotes Myra Christopher, the President of Midwest Bioethics Center (Kansas City, Mo) as noting that when viewed in this light “good ethics is good business.”³⁸ If appealing to the benefit for suffering patients is insufficient to foster the development and continuation of good bioethics programs, approaching the issue from a legal perspective should provide ample alternative justification.³⁹ Whichever rationale is more persuasive, bioethics education should emerge as a permanent and routine part not only of medical education but university education in general. The study of bioethics and ethics in general should be made mandatory involving different categories of students.⁴⁰

Challenges to Ethics and Bioethics Education in Africa

The science of teaching and learning ethic and bioethics in Africa has inevitably faced many challenges. Bioethics education has become problematic as a result of several factors. The most critical barrier to achieving uniform bioethics education not only in the medical curriculum but in university education is **financial constraints**. In Europe, for instance, most bioethics programs in higher institutions (medical schools) are not funded in a way that ensures their continuation. Instead, bioethics education usually depends on funds set aside by a

³⁸ J. D. Moore, “Bioethics Programs' Future Uncertain.” *Modern Healthcare* 26, no. 3 (1996): 20.

³⁹ L. I. Silverberg “Survey of Medical Ethics in U.S. Medical Schools: A Descriptive Study.” *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* 100, no. 6 (2000): 373.

⁴⁰ S. Van McCrary, (2001), 5.

university or other discretionary sources such as federal grants that could rapidly dry up.⁴¹

Another barrier to bioethics implementation throughout medical curricula is that there remains **substantial variation in the quantity and quality of curriculum** in Africa. Silverberg underscores this phenomenon in western educational system as well.⁴² He observes that because the field is fairly new and remains under-funded (as indicated earlier) less effort has been expended in developing programs than in other fields of study. There is however the hope that as a result of the increase in post-graduate programs in bioethics, the field will soon become a good provider of well-trained persons able to promote health care decision making.

The third is the fact that **bioethics courses are often meager in content**. This is to say that there is too little, not enough courses in bioethics education across the continent. As a result many scholars have rendered bioethics lip service, but not substance. McCrary⁴³ writes that although accrediting organizations require institutions to address ethics issues to some extent, when it come to bioethics the compliance bar is set fairly low. Institutions like hospitals with ethics programs that only satisfy the minimum requirement of accrediting agencies do not have adequate services to ensure ethical patient care. In that sense, individuals and scholars who are mentors and teachers must indicate to students and trainees that bioethics is a crucial part of their life as biological beings. Indeed, this message must permeate the educational environment. In all, the role of the bioethicist should be one of a colleague possessing specialized knowledge and skills, and is putting it to (good) use.

Implications of the Paper

An important implication of this paper is to create awareness among

⁴¹ J. D. Moore, "Bioethics Programs' Future Uncertain," 20.

⁴² L. I. Silverberg, "Survey of Medical Ethics," 376.

⁴³ S. Van McCrary, (2001), 5.

management of higher Tertiary institutions on the necessity of bioethics, and to educate stakeholders in the health care industry on bioethical issues not only affecting Europeans/Americans but Africans as well. It creates among bioethicists the sense of responsibility. It is also to promote patients' well-being. This is because all human beings are potentially patients. Patient care may suffer if physicians are not educated about bioethical issues. For instance, if university education on ethics and bioethics is not promoted and physicians (young and old) are not taught the importance of bioethics issues for their clinical practice, patients may suffer needless pain, their lawful rights of self-determination, autonomy and justice may be disregarded, and their experience of health care will not be to their benefit.

Conclusion and Suggestions

University education which grew over the years to transform human life cannot be without necessary curriculum on ethics and bioethics education and proper financial basis. The study of bioethics and ethics in Africa deems inevitably necessary in the 21st century's philosophical, biomedical and development studies. In spite of the many challenges that need to be addressed, bioethics education in Africa seems to possess a brighter future. Bioethics must receive a higher priority in philosophical and medical education in the future than it has previously and presently occupied.⁴⁴

For this to be realized, it is therefore suggested that African institutions of higher learning develop robust research, training and service programs in Bioethics and build capacity for the ethical review of health research as well as strengthen the capacity of Ethics Committees and Consultation institutions throughout Africa. There should be financial support (from African governments and donors) and research grants to render bioethics education in institutions of higher learning financially independent. This will go a long way to motivate young scholars into the field.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Furthermore, there should be a paradigm shift from lip service and meagerness in bioethics education and practices in order to produce experts who can practically contribute to the global bioethics discourse from an African perspective.

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“Religion Should not Mix With Politics”: Reflections on the Prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana on Nation-Building

Emmanuel Twumasi Ankrah¹

ABSTRACT

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is arguably the most religious region of the world, as well as the region facing the most profound difficulties in enacting an effective programme of state-building and instituting stable democratic systems.² However, one often hears people, especially politicians reproving: “Religion should not mix with politics”.³ Even those who appear to be somewhat charitable to the Church have sometimes questioned whether or not the Clergy should adopt the approach of the so-called serial callers.⁴ This has resulted in the vilification of the Clergy that share their views on the

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² Nicolette D. Manglos and Alexander A. Weinreb, “Religion and Interest in Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa”, *Social Forces*, Vol.92, No.1, (2013):214.

³ J.N.Kudadjie and R.K. Aboagye-Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, (Accra: Asempa publishers, 2004), 28.

⁴ In Ghana serial callers are party faithful who contribute by way of phone-ins to political shows on several radio stations. They are fanatic party members who would go all out to defend their party and condemn their opponents on air. Their telephone numbers and voices are well known by radio presenters of political shows. In fact, it has now become a sort of employment for some party fanatics. It is an open secret that many of such people are on the pay-role of their various political parties.

governance process of the people. The paper examined the interplay between the Church and politics-how the Clergy engaged in rhetoric, in the decision-making process of the nation.

Introduction

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the Lutheran's "Two-Kingdom Theory". Martin Luther describes two realms of governance: the kingdom of the world which is for non-Christians governed by the law and the kingdom of God reserved for true believers or Christians governed by the gospel. Although Christians belong to both realms, Deifelt understood Luther at postulating that non-Christians belong only to the world, while the kingdom of God is reserved only for true believers.

To Deifelt, Luther's description can be misconstrued to enforce the notion that there are two mutually exclusive types of citizenship, one heavenly (for Christians) and the other one earthly (for unbelievers). Another challenge is the fact that Luther employs a dualistic language to describe his theory. This can create false assumption that human beings are divided into two categories: those concerned with heavenly matters, and those concerned with worldly affairs.⁵ He contends that the spiritual and earthly governments constitute two realms but both belong to God. They are not in opposition to each other, since both contend against the devil. God rules over both kingdoms and institutes two kinds of government. One is spiritual, and the other earthly. The two realms however, are interdependent. They testify that God rules over the whole world and does so in two ways.⁶

⁵ Wanda Deifelt, "Advocacy, Political Participation and Citizenship: Lutheran Contributions to Public Theology", *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, Vol.49, No.2, (2010): 109-110.

⁶ Deifelt, "Advocacy," 110.

This simply implies that in the sight of God there is no difference between heavenly issues and earthly issues, both are God's concern. Good governance and well-being were instituted by God. Indeed, God is the author of politics and the ruler of state and society. Christians, being God's children are first and foremost the heirs of this two but one kingdom. Therefore a good Christian is among other things a good citizen.

Indeed, some people have misapplied Lutheran's theory to mean that there should be an absolute separation of the Church from the state. A case in point in Ghana is about an incident that occurred between Johnson Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) and Emmanuel Martey, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana prior to the '2012 General Elections. It was reported that the former had in a way of response, retorted that the latter (Clergy) should take his Bible and leave the Constitution to the Politicians.⁷ As if that was not enough, the boss of the Ghana Free Zones Board, Kojo Twum Boafo, who claimed to be a member of the Presbyterian Church publicly resigned from the church accusing its leadership of dabbling in politics.⁸

Obviously, these two politicians and many others like them would feel jittery to hear a clergy speak about any issue considered political in the

⁷ Reports were all over the social media especially myjoyonline.com, 14th September, 2012, that Mr. AsieduNketiah, the General Secretary of the ruling NDC had accused Rt. Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Martey of being in bed with the opposition party. He questioned why the Church must get involved in such a controversial matter. However, after some few days, the President, John Mahama apologized to the Moderator of Presbyterian Church of Ghana for that unfortunate statement from his General Secretary. The Moderator had led his church leadership to call on the Electoral Commission to reconsider his intention of creating 45 new constituencies which had sparked a lot of controversies ahead of the 2012 national elections.

⁸ <http://www.myjoyonline.com>, 14th September, 2012, [Accessed on 11th January, 2013].

Ghanaian context. Emmanuel Martey and the likeminded clergy on the other hand would want to undertake their prophetic role in the nation the way they understand it. A classic example occurred when two Guantanamo Bay detainees were brought to come and live in Ghana by the government. It was reported that when some Christian leaders shared their dissenting views, the politicians, especially from the incumbent government rained insults on them.⁹

Would the politicians feel the same way about the Clergy if they spoke on national issues that endorsed their political stance? Will the clergy take the same posture towards a different political party when the need arises? These are questions that some political observers ask.

The Church and Politics in Ghana

The study indicates that majority of the Clergy in Ghana are unwilling to be known publicly as members of particular political parties. This assertion can clearly be seen in the results displayed by the field reports on whether or not the respondents (Clergy) belonged to any political party. 85 percent declined, while 15 percent responded affirmative. When the Clergy were asked whether or not they in anyway influenced the Laity to vote for particular political parties or candidates during elections, they unanimously (100 percent) denied. On the question that was meant to find out if the Clergy thought they ought to influence their members in voting during national elections or not, once again, the results (72.5 percent, No; and 27.5 percent, Yes) indicating reluctance on the part of the Clergy to be partisan in their political participation. In their hand-written remarks on the questionnaire, the Clergy explained that their reluctance was chiefly based on the fact that their immediate audiences (i.e. Laity) were from diverse political persuasions, so being partisan in such a setting would stir up a lot of troubles in the Church.

⁹ <http://www.Ghanaweb.com>, 11th January, 2016, [Accessed on 24th January, 2016].

Kwaku Asante, intimated that if the Clergy became partisan, the Church would split.¹⁰ He said that so long as one was a clergy, his role was like a chief - he was to unite the people. He was not supposed to be a card-holding and a dues-paying member of any political party.¹¹ He however added that a Clergy might be a sympathizer of a particular ideology but should not be an activist of any political party.¹² This obviously means that according to him, it may not be prudent for a clergy to stand on the ticket of a political party to contest for presidential or parliamentary seat. All of this is to say that from the viewpoint of the Clergy in Ghana, their reluctance to be partisan in their political participation is just for convenience and not necessarily lack of political interest.

On their part, (50 percent) of the Laity respondents conversely perceived the Clergy as members of political parties in the country while the other half (50 percent) differed from that opinion. This clearly shows that the Laity had inconsistent perceptions about the Clergy when it came to their political participation. In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire the respondents (Laity) who thought that the Clergy were members of the various political parties in the country explained that some of the Clergy displayed their clear political standpoint when they mounted the pulpit. That is, their comments and criticisms were consistently in favour and or against a particular political party.

If Kwaku Asante's definition of who a member of a political party¹³ is to be considered, then one would say that the assertion of the Laity who suspected the Clergy to be members of particular political parties just by inferring from what they say in their sermons was quite speculative and could not be scientifically substantiated. This is not to suggest that the

¹⁰ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, interviewed by the researcher, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Department of Religious Studies, March, 7, 2014.

¹¹ Kwaku Asante.

¹² Kwaku Asante.

¹³ A party member is a card-bearing and a dues-paying person and an activist of a particular political party.

speculations about the Clergy from a section of the Laity should be entirely ignored. At least few clergy such as Samuel Asante Antwi¹⁴ of the Methodist Church -Ghana and Daniel Nkansah¹⁵ of New Vision Pentecostal Church-Accra are well-known political party members in this country.

This perception about some clergy playing partisan politics in Ghana is not only held by a section of the Laity but also a section of the Clergy. King Binambo for instance has noted that some clergy normally come out on national issues to perform a function for their political parties.¹⁶ He therefore admonished the Clergy to stop using the Church for the politicization of national issues.¹⁷

¹⁴ Bishop Samuel Asante Antwi is a past Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church –Ghana. He used to be heavily criticized by some political parties especially the National Democratic Congress to be in bed with the New Patriotic Party based on his comments and criticisms. He has now been appointed as a member of the Disciplinary Committee in the New Patriotic Party. In an interview with one of the high ranking clergy of the Methodist Church –Ghana, he confirmed it and said it was unfortunate for his colleague to be deeply rooted in a particular political party but added that he thanked God that bishop Asante Antwi was doing the public party politics at the time of his retirement. According to him, Bishop Asante Antwi also has his reasons for doing what he does, for anytime he had confronted him on that issue he had explained that it was good he was in there; if he had not been there things would have been bad for the party (NPP) and the nation at large. May be in the near future, political parties would need chaplains.

¹⁵ Prophet Daniel Nkansah of New Vision Pentecostal Church is the founder of the New Vision Party (NVP). He was the flag-bearer of the party in the '2008 and '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections. However, on those two occasions he was not able to get his name on the ballot sheet of the Electoral Commission (EC). In '2012 he was reported to have fingered one of the officials of the EC to have indulged in corruption as candidates filled their nomination forms. Of course he made this allegation to be the bases for the rejection of his forms by the EC.

¹⁶ Solomon King Binambo, the Principal of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary –Kumasi, interviewed by the researcher, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary –Kumasi, March, 10, 2014.

¹⁷ King Binambo.

Those outspoken Clergy would obviously argue that they come out on national issues as concerned citizens of Ghana who are directly or indirectly affected by whatever goes on in the state. Absolutely, this is an uncontestable standpoint from the Clergy.

The results from the Laity's assessment on whether or not the Clergy do influence the former on voting during national elections showed that the Laity were surprisingly undivided (100 percent) at saying that the Clergy did not influence them on voting. Their response was consistent with the Clergy who denied completely that they did not in any way influence the Laity on voting.

We also solicited their opinion on whether or not they expected the Clergy to influence them on voting during national elections. We expected a unanimous rejection from the Laity on this issue. It was surprising that five percent of the Laity expected the Clergy to influence them on voting during national elections whereas 95 percent of them remained consistent that the Clergy ought not to influence the Laity in any way during national elections.

From the internal (the Clergy and Laity) assessment of the political participation of the Clergy in Ghana, the study postulates that the Clergy should not in any way participate in politics in a partisan manner. That is, their sermons, comments and contributions toward national discourses should appear neutral; devoid of partisan politics. However, it is instructive to note that a significant number, over 27 percent of the Clergy indicated the desire to influence the Laity during national elections. In addition to that, is the fact that 15 percent of them wish to be affiliated publicly to one political party or the other. This implies that the perception of a section of the Clergy and Laity that some Clergy participate in politics in partisan manner may be true. It could also mean that a section of the Clergy indeed indulge in partisan politics in camera since 15 percent of them suspected some of their colleagues Clergy to be members of the various political divide in the country and over 27 percent expected the Clergy to influence the Laity during national elections respectively.

Nation-Building: A definition

Nation-building is a process whereby diverse views of the citizenry are harnessed and incorporated into the collective decision-making process for the total well-being of the people in a nation state. It involves ideas on economics, employment, transportation, trade, education, health, energy, peace and justice, and many others. A nation is built by and with people. So, in nation-building process, the people in the nation are the most important resource. Nation-building is therefore a collective responsibility from all citizenry. It constitutes several activities and a combination of culture, religion and other economic factors. We build a nation with people. So the culture, social and religious backgrounds of the people have to be harnessed for development. We need to achieve a consensus of all these factors in order to shape the psychology of the people toward nation-building. It is an intermarriage of all the various connections and sub-groups into one unit so that the unity would propel the system toward a common objective or mission that the nation determines to achieve. So if you set all the fantastic national goals while the various factors of nation-building are disjointed, it will be difficult for the leadership of the nation to achieve the set goals.¹⁸ Indeed, nation-building occurs when each and every one becomes aware of the role they should play for the common good. That is, where the mental shake-up of the individuals could be geared toward national consensus. To achieve this, there is the need for intensive education on the civic rights and responsibilities of the citizenry using our patriotic songs, poems, schools, churches, mosques and durbars. Do the Clergy not have a role?

The Prophetic Voice: A definition

The Prophetic voice could be explained as a religious attempt or response to use the word of God as a measuring rod to evaluate, educate, criticize and transform the total well-being of the individual and the nation as a

¹⁸ Thomas Kusi-Boafo, a social commentator, interviewed by the researcher at his residence, March, 24, 2014.

whole. In the light of this, we are of the view that Christians as a whole and the Clergy in particular have a biblical mandate to engage in rhetoric that is geared toward building of consensus to harness the collective thoughts for nation-building.

The prophetic voice of the Clergy is using scripture as the bases for speaking the mind or the will of God to address issues of righteous living, peace and justice for the holistic well-being of the entire nation. That is, the Clergy acting as a social critic with scripture as a tool in the political environment. The Clergy in Ghana like the prophets Jeremiah, Amos, Micah and others have the responsibility to speak to the nation about what God thinks about every issue of the state. The Clergy should make the people know that their God is not a *Deus Otiosus*,¹⁹ rather, He is actively involved and equally concerned about the political affairs of the nation just as He is concerned about the spiritual life of the nation. This confirms Martin Luther's two Kingdoms theory, both of which the Christian lives and is expected to play his prophetic role for the common good of the citizenry. One could not agree more with Asante who describes the philosophy that says that the Clergy ought to concentrate only on ecclesiastical and spiritual matters as “a Gnostic perception of Christianity, where everything is reduced to the Spirit”.²⁰ Yirenkyi postulates that the Church performs her two-fold educational role in the light of political education and advocacy.²¹

¹⁹ *Deus Otiosus* is a god who is far-removed from his people and is not concerned about their daily activities. Worshippers of such a god would have to depend on intermediaries in maintaining their relationship with him.

²⁰ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, interviewed by the researcher, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Department of Religious Studies, March, 7, 2014.

²¹ Kwasi Yirenkyi, “The Role of Christian Churches in National Politics: Reflections from Laity and Clergy in Ghana”, *Sociology of Religion*, Vol.61, No.3, (2000): 332-333.

The Prophetic Voice (Role) of the Clergy

Political Educational role

The results indicated that majority of the Clergy (70 percent) and the Laity (80 percent) responded affirmative that the Clergy ought to teach the members on national issues. Indeed the Clergy have a two-dimension educational focus. They are first of all supposed to teach their members to take up their civic rights and responsibilities and secondly they serve as the conscience of society, and the voice of the voiceless (play advocacy role).

In the survey conducted, many of the Laity respondents indicated that prior to the '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, the Clergy encouraged them to exercise their franchise as good citizens of the country. Sometimes too, they created platforms for officials of National Commission on Civic Education during church meetings to educate the members about the new electoral rules and reforms especially the 'Biometric Verification System' used in the '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections. The question that readily comes to mind is, Does the educational role of the Clergy include educating the laity on the public policies in the state?

Advocacy role

This is one of the gray areas where the Clergy in Ghana have turned a blind eye for fear of being vilified by party vigilantes should they attack or endorse a political party's public policy. In the words of Kwaku Asante, "No political party comes out with a policy that would not be beneficial to the people, so for a Clergy to attack a political party's public policy choices would mean that that Clergyman had aligned himself to one political party or the other and that would not augur well for the Church and the nation as a whole."²² A position, we slightly differ in the sense that sometimes a political party in power is bent on implementing a

²² Kwaku Asante.

manifesto promise without taking recourse to assess its potency of satisfying the larger society. Some other times, we clearly see certain government programmes to be nothing more than the concept of *jobs for the boys*.²³ He however added that he would attack a political party's public policy only if it was explicitly against the teachings of the Bible and was not in keeping with the will of God.²⁴ Meanwhile, Kwaku Asante had hinted that the classical prophets were sometimes critical on national policies which were not in keeping with the will of God but they also at some point encouraged national policies which they considered to be in keeping with the will of God for the people.²⁵

King Binambo disagrees with Kwaku Asante on his reluctance to criticize a political party's public policy. He opines that if the Clergy understand the nitty-gritties of a particular public policy, they have a responsibility to educate their members so that they are not misled by ignorance.²⁶ Kwaku Asante however explains his position that considering how polarized party politics is played out in Ghana, he thinks that the Clergy ought to be wise when examining political parties' public policies because all things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial.²⁷ Opuni-Frimpong, shares a similar view with King Binambo when he says that the Clergy can only be said to be relevant when they take active participation in whatever concerns the people they serve.²⁸

²³ Sometimes, governments in power intentionally create agencies and initiate certain programmes just to create jobs for their party vigilantes, serial-callers and foot-soldiers that worked so hard during the contest. This is an open secret especially on the African political landscape.

²⁴ Kwaku Asante.

²⁵ Kwaku Asante.

²⁶ King Binambo.

²⁷ Kwaku Asante.

²⁸ Opuni-Frimpong, the General Secretary of the CCG in an interview on Hello FM 101.5, King Edward, April, 2, 2014, 8: 00am hinted that the CCG in conjunction with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) had had a crunch meeting with President Mahama concerning the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) before the President left for the ECOWAS meeting in Yamoussoukro. In that meeting, it was reported that the CCG advised the President not sign the EPA because it was going to destroy local industries.

The survey lent support to the view that the Clergy had a responsibility to educate their members about political party's public policies. 70 percent of the Clergy themselves were ready to take that responsibility while over 62 percent of the Laity had that expectation from the Clergy.

However, the number of the Clergy (30 percent) who opposed their own involvement in educating their members on any national issue could not be ignored. Likewise the 20 percent of the Laity who expressed that they would feel uncomfortable in church should their pastors began to include in their teaching sessions national issues such as the economy, injustices, corruption, education, health, politics, unemployment and so on, was significant. These are the Christians who prescribe a total separation of Church from the State. Some of them indicated that they would prefer the Clergy to keep to prayers and spiritual concerns only even if the economy was bad, since Christians were in the world but were not of the world. As pastors they were not supposed to meddle in politics and stuff like that; they were to concentrate on ecclesiastical matters and the spiritual well-being of the people.

Kwaku Asante completely disagrees with such a view. He describes it as a Gnostic perception of Christianity where everything is reduced to the spirit.²⁹ He added that the Clergy have been asked to minister holistically; therefore they have to be very much concerned about the physical, emotional, psychological, economic, social and the spiritual well-being of the people in the state.³⁰

Kwaku Asante's view is in keeping with our understanding about the prophetic role of Jeremiah. Prophet Jeremiah carried out his prophetic ministry in a chaotic era politically, morally, and spiritually.³¹ He became the greatest personality in Jerusalem because he took a stand openly

²⁹ Kwaku Asante.

³⁰ Kwaku Asante.

³¹ Charles L. Feinberg, *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 3.

against the ungodly reign and social wrongs of King Manasseh persisting in his time. If the prophetic role of Jeremiah is to be used as the epitome of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana, then one needs not to be labour on the fact that the Clergy in Ghana have a biblical mandate to be involved in the governance processes of the people in the nation.

The society sometimes calls on the Clergy to advocate on their behalf when there seem to be acts of brutalities, injustices and corruption. Literature and newspaper reports abound on how the religious bodies especially the Christian Council Ghana (CCG), Catholic Bishops' Council (CBC) and the National Catholic Secretariat (NCS) played their advocacy role during the severe repressions in the 1980s. They stood for freedom, justice, integrity and equity in the political arena in Ghana. This study examined how the Clergy played their advocacy role in the governance of the people. Osei Bonsu pointed out that it took the intervention of the CBC, CCG and the National Peace Council (NPC) to resolve the controversies that surrounded the creation of the 45 new constituencies by the Electoral Commission (EC) ahead of the '2012 General Elections'.³² He explained further that he, the chairman of that meeting with all the political parties' representatives, managed to make the feuding parties understand the issues in order to ensure peace before, during and after the elections.³³ In the words of the Chairman of the NPC, he says:

When the EC delayed in declaring the '2012 Presidential results, people started calling on us...we in collaboration with the religious bodies such as the CCG, CBC, NCS and other civil societies held a crunch meeting for the political parties and the EC in the EC office to ensure that justice and fair play was delivered to the people of Ghana...³⁴

³² Joseph OseiBonsu, the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, interviewed by the researcher, Konongo Catholic Parish, March, 20, 2014.

³³ OseiBonsu.

³⁴ In an in-depth interview with the chairman of the NPC, the Most Rev. Prof.

A typical example of the incessant calls on the religious bodies can be cited when on *Adom* FM, on Sunday, 9th December, 2012 when the EC had still not declared the results, Clement Apak was heard on air saying, “I am calling on all the top bishops - Duncan Williams, Mensah Otabil, Emmanuel Asante and even *Otumfour*,³⁵ yes, leadership must speak before things get out of hand...”

This and many of such incessant calls made the religious bodies and the civil society groups take the move they took to ensure that political stability prevailed. This goes to say that the Clergy through the bodies (CCG, CBC, NCS, Ghana Baptist Convention, Ghana Pentecostal Council and others) have engaged and continue to engage the State for the well-being of Ghanaians. Our concern in this study is not to examine the prophetic role of the various Christian/Church bodies but to examine the prophetic voice of the Clergy as individuals and as collectivities. Even where the various church bodies are referred to, the attention is geared toward their collective voice but not their denominational or sectional voices.

The study indicated that while 70 percent of the Clergy respondents preferred to speak on specific national issues when they mount the pulpit, only 47.5 percent of the Laity supported that position. Our sample indicated that 30 percent of the Clergy and 52.5 percent of the Laity

convinced the EC to give room for the aggrieved party to provide evidence of the purported rigging, the EC conceded for 24 hours within which the purported evidence could be brought. After the given period, the EC hinted that the evidence of the purported rigging was not substantive to affect the results at hand. Even though the opposition NPP was still unimpressed, they (NPC, CCG, CBC, NCS and the civil society groups) impressed on them to proceed to court for justice rather than restrain the EC from declaring the results and to delay it beyond the 72 hours stipulated by the laws of Ghana. He believed that the action they took saved this nation from plunging into turmoil. He added that he never regret for playing that role as a Clergy and a citizen of this country.

³⁵ *Otumfour* is the title for the paramount chief of the Asante Kingdom in Ghana. Otumfour Osei Tutu II the paramount chief of the Asante Kingdom is an eminent king well-known in Ghana and abroad for his wise counsel and mediatory skills.

opposed it. Based on this result, one would say that the Ghanaian Clergy was gradually becoming more sensitized and daring toward the well-being of the populace.

In the words of Osei Bonsu, “The Clergy must be agents of reconciliation between God and humanity not only in religious or spiritual matters but also in political, economic and social issues”.³⁶ Others may argue that the result revealed just an inherent desire among the Clergy but its actual demonstration was far-fetched in the Church. For example, Sarfo-Kantanka says, “I believe the Politicians fear the Media than the Clergy because we are not speaking...Who is really speaking for the voiceless?”³⁷ King Binambo shares a similar opinion. He says:

The Clergy has decided to stay back. I don't know why. It's just a few individual Clergy who come out to make contributions to national discourses...May be we are afraid that we may incur the wrath of the Politicians. We are not involved that much. Even the few who get involved may be affiliated to one party or the other.³⁸

Clearly King Binambo and many like-minded Ghanaians thought that effectively the Clergy had not demonstrated the willingness to be involved in the national debates on nation-building. Some of them explained that our democracy was too young and volatile. Many Ghanaians were too passionate and fanatic about their political affiliations many of whom were also members of the Church. Therefore as pastors they had to learn to walk on a fine line when making political

³⁶ OseiBonsu.

³⁷ OseiSarfo-Kantanka. The Kumasi diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church made this observation on a programme dubbed “Kukurantumi” on Nhyira FM 104.5 on the Easter Saturday, the 30th of March, 2013. The bishop in an interview was asked to share his thoughts on “The significance of the Death and Resurrection of Christ to the Nation”

³⁸ King Binambo.

comments on the pulpit. Others explained that the Laity had inconsistent expectations from them.

Even though a section of the Laity expected the Clergy to share their views on issues that came to the state, suffice to say that for many of those people, the kind of involvement they were prescribing for the Clergy might not include criticizing the economic mismanagement and the bad policies of the government they supported. That was a 'No go area'. If a Clergy happened to have a congregation where majority were sympathizers of the strongest opposition party, then he was sure to be encouraged to criticize the ruling party, but if it happened to be the other way round, then he was not expected to be prophetic in his ministry lest he would be accused of dabbling in politics. Clearly, these inconsistent expectations screwed up some of the Clergy and left others in a state of indecision.

The Clergy in Ghana could learn a great deal from the prophetic role of Jeremiah. Our study of the text in Jeremiah 1:5-10 has revealed that the prophet Jeremiah was called by God to have his eyes upon the nations, and to predict their destruction, or restoration, according as their conduct was bad or good. He was not to timidly or servilely flatter men, or to show indulgence to their lusts and passions. Consequently, he was encouraged by God to be magnanimous in spirit.

We have noted in this study that the prophetic voice implies being a social critic with the word of God as a tool. Also, it means becoming critical on national policies that are not in keeping with the will of God and encouraging those policies that are in keeping with the will of God. In this case we see no difference between the prophetic voice of the prophet Jeremiah and that of the Clergy in Ghana with the exception of the setting. The Clergy is required by God and the society to speak against the rot and encourage the good in the governance process of the people toward the total well-being of all. The field results indicated that 90 percent of the Laity expected the Clergy to criticize the government when the need be. While only 70 percent of the Clergy themselves were willing to do so. Again the Clergy were more cautious than the Laity in the political arena.

The 30 percent of the Clergy who might hesitate in criticizing the government explained that they had taken a cue from the ordeal, lashings, vilifications and castigations their fellow outspoken Clergy faced when they criticized the government. Perhaps this is the reason why Kwaku Asante, unlike Bosomtwe Ayensu would not criticize the government unless what they were doing was explicitly against the spirit of the word of God.³⁹

However, neither the Clergy nor the Laity preferred a partisan position to be encouraged in the Church. Kwaku Asante compared the position of the Clergy to that of a chief who is supposed to unite all his subjects for development.⁴⁰ The survey confirmed that partisan politics would not be countenanced in the Church in Ghana. As the results showed, over 72 percent of the Clergy themselves were not ready to go partisan way in the discharge of their prophetic role. Similarly the Laity would normally not encourage partisanship in the Church. With over 87 percent of the Laity ready to oppose the Clergy should they become partisan when they mount the pulpit, is a clear sign of the fact that majority of the Laity were party fanatics. In such a polarized arena, one would wonder how to effectively and fairly assess the effectiveness or otherwise of the Prophetic Voice.

³⁹ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, the Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church - Ghana, March, 7, 2014. We asked the Presiding bishop to share his thought on a comment Rt. Rev. Bosomtwe Ayensu, the Methodist bishop of Obuasi diocese was reported to have made concerning how the government was managing the economic challenges of the nation. Kwaku Asante responded that it would be very difficult for him to say that “President Mahama is asleep”, because the President was not his cup of tea. He added that it was important for one to develop a tough skin before going that way at the government else the party fanatics would wear him out. He would rather look at what everybody could do to help overcome the crisis. “That would involve educating and encouraging my members to take up their civic responsibilities, and a word to a wise would be enough”. He indicated.

⁴⁰ Kwaku Asante.

The Effectiveness of the Prophetic Voice of the Clergy

The study showed that only 42.5 percent of the Clergy considered their prophetic voice to be effective while 57.5 percent of them differed. The Clergy respondents who thought that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana was ineffective, is very significant since they were not oblivious of the huge responsibility they had toward the nation and God. King Binambo minces no words by saying that the prophetic voice was largely silent.⁴¹ Yinkah Sarfo agrees with Binambo, he says, “The prophetic voice is not very active; Kenya, as well as Rwanda had a blood bath because the Clergy failed to speak.”⁴² According to Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the prophetic voice is undeniably silent because many of the Clergy do not want to be tagged with one party or the other in order to avoid persecution and vilification.⁴³ Nii Armah Akomfrah shares the same sentiment that the Clergy of late had preferred platitudes even though they had the power to rebuke, discipline and correct.⁴⁴

An important component of the prophetic voice is the media. Some of the Clergy explained that the prophetic voice looked largely silent because just a few of them had access to the Media. We are of the view that quality attracts quantity. That is, it does not matter where a Clergy may find himself, if he gives a quality message especially the one that is about the well-being of the nation, the Media will be attracted to take up the story. The few who had access to the Media perhaps did so because of the role they had been playing in the nation –either they encouraged the prophetic voice or discouraged it publicly.

⁴¹ King Binambo.

⁴² Yinkah Sarfo.

⁴³ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

⁴⁴ On the official Website of the CPP <http://www.conventionpeoplesparty.org> September, 14, 2012, [Accessed on 11th January, 2013]. Nii Armah Akomfrah commented that Ghana as a country, appear to be living under the erroneous impression that Christian faith is exclusively a faith of soft-talking, humble-looking and tongues speaking. He further stated that if this is all that our faith offers then our faith is ineffective and incomplete.

Osei Bonsu on the other hand, asserted that the prophetic voice had been effective and proactive.⁴⁵ Citing the role the Christian bodies such as the CBC, CCG, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), NCS and the others had been playing, he hinted that the Church through its leadership has been engaging the government on almost every sphere of the nation, but in many occasions, on the quiet.⁴⁶

Inasmuch as we agree with those who thought that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana was essentially silent, one cannot ignore the immense role the various Christian bodies have played in the democratic processes of the country since Independence especially during the 1980s repressions. However, we anticipate the feat they would have attained if the execution of their prophetic role had been done collectively, not denominationally.

In the survey, only 45 percent of the Laity respondents saw the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be effective while 55 percent of them thought otherwise. Impliedly both the Laity and the Clergy themselves conceded that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana was silent.

The Clergy was expected to do more as far as their prophetic role was concerned. The Laity expected the Clergy to be sensitive and proactive to issues that came to the state. They should know that their silence condemned the society if they claimed to be the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of society. This is in keeping with Osei Bonsu who opined that many of the Clergy in Ghana had diverse intellectual, corporate and social backgrounds spanning from education, law, banking, business, economics, engineering, security, medicine and more. These attributes well qualified them to contribute meaningfully to national discourses.⁴⁷ The background survey of the respondents revealed that 60 percent of the Clergy respondents had other academic and professional qualifications aside the Theological/Biblical certificates they got from the seminary.

⁴⁵ Osei Bonsu.

⁴⁶ Osei Bonsu.

⁴⁷ Osei Bonsu.

This fact cannot be simply ignored. We agree with those who posit that the Clergy is indeed the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of society. They must bring their rich experiences and expertise to bear on the governance process of the nation.

A hypothetical picture on what the respondents thought may be the stance of the Clergy should they face vilifications and persecution after they had executed their prophetic role in the country was created. While only 27.5 percent of the Laity assumed that the Clergy might be silent, 50 percent of the Clergy themselves anticipated that they would be silent completely if they were persecuted for exercising their prophetic role in the nation. Yet, 15 percent of the Clergy and Laity thought that the Clergy would not be entirely silent but they would be inactive under the circumstances. More importantly, over 57 percent of the Laity believed that the vilifications may cause the Clergy to become more active, only 35 percent of the Clergy themselves hoped that their prophetic voice would be more active in the face of the imminent castigations and vilifications.

In their explanations, some of the Clergy indicated that they would be silent or inactive because the democratic dispensation in Ghana just like elsewhere in the SSA was still young and fragile. Hence, some African politicians could be too drunk with power that they saw people who did not agree with them as enemies, and were ready to wipe them out from the surface of the earth. Thus the Clergy under those circumstances ought to be wise in their political involvement. Others were categorical that due to the inconsistent expectations from the Laity coupled with the fact that they were handicapped and ill-equipped on how to deal with political issues in a politically sensitive and polarized nation such as ours, they had no option rather than to keep quiet.

The Anticipated Posture of the Prophetic Voice of the Clergy in the Near Future

The picture painted, seemed gloomy for the nation. Yinkah Sarfo feared that an inactive prophetic voice would plunge the nation into a

plague.⁴⁸ Kwaku Asante also thought that if the prophetic voice became silent, it would not augur well for the nation.⁴⁹ He explained further that if the people who were supposed to be the voice of the voiceless and the voice of God declined to speak, the devil would speak and evil would carry the day.⁵⁰

Consequently, the Laity (57.5 percent) expected the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be more active after being harangued by the politicians. The Laity explained that their anticipation for the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be more active was based on the fact that the Clergy came across as a formidable class in the society who could not easily be scared by any politician through vilifications and propaganda. They believed that the Clergy were powerful and influential people in the society leading a large mass (71 percent) of the people. As a result, one would say that the Laity's point of view that the Clergy ought to be more active in their prophetic role in the face of vilifications was very legitimate.

Some other Clergy declared their intention to damn the consequences and make the prophetic voice more active in the face of any persecution from the politicians. With those sampled, 35 percent of the Clergy in Ghana was poised to make their voices louder on national issues in order to ensure the total well-being of the larger society. Kwaku Kwarteng was of the view that if the prophetic voice was not contested then it ceased to be the voice of God.⁵¹ He added that the Clergy who spoke the truth were not perturbed by what people said about them.⁵² According to Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the Clergy would continue to confront the state to ensure that the populace especially the middle-class and the down-trodden were

⁴⁸ Yinkah Sarfo.

⁴⁹ Kwaku Asante.

⁵⁰ Kwaku Asante.

⁵¹ Kwaku Kwarteng, '2012 Ashanti Regional Moderator for Civic Forum Initiative, interviewed by the researcher, Emmanuel Methodist Church- Suame, March, 24, 2014.

⁵² Kwaku Kwarteng.

fairly treated.⁵³ He added that any Clergy who attempted to exercise his prophetic role in a state such as ours should have the guts to withstand the vilifications and the persecutions from the leaders of the state.⁵⁴ King Binambo too said “The insults and the vilifications should cause the clergy to speak the more as Jeremiah did.”⁵⁵ This accordingly implies that to a segment of the Clergy, they considered their continued activeness in the political arena from a moral and social justice point of view.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that the Clergy in Ghana who were leading the various Christian bodies were gradually becoming more assertive in the political arena. However, an individual Clergy's prophetic voice seemed essentially silent or inactive due to the vilifications and bashings that sometimes came with it. We encourage the Clergy to be more active in their prophetic role. However, the Clergy, engaging in partisan politics would not be countenanced in Ghana.

Conversely, some Clergy have indicated their desire to influence the Laity to make decisions during national elections as well as get affiliated to political parties in the country. This undoubtedly, implies that the perception from a section of Ghanaians that some clergymen in Ghana indeed indulged in partisan politics in camera was quite material. But it is a fact that in Ghana, politicians do and will treat with contempt clergymen perceived to be partisan in their political participation. This is because Politicians have conflicting view about the Clergy's criticism of the government which culminates to inconsistent expectations from the Clergy. The Clergy are likely to use the pulpit to address national issues; a posture, repugnant to the politicians. This makes one foresee a show down in the ensuing years.

⁵³ OseiSarfo-Kantanka.

⁵⁴ OseiSarfo-Kantanka.

⁵⁵ King Binambo,

The posture of the politicians and the clergy arguably, has serious implications for the nation. If the prophetic voice becomes silent, witty politicians would always have their way to subject the people into serious hardships. It will also give room for corruption to wear its ugly head in the state. The Church will eventually lose its relevance in SSA. Much the same way the politicians stand to lose a lot of their monopoly should they give the Clergy a field day in the political arena.

We recommend that Theological/Religious Institutions should consider introducing Public Theology as one of the core courses to help train the Clergy to function effectively in the nation. Also, there should be a Ghana Bishops' Conference to speak for the Church. More importantly, the Clergy should research, consult, and discuss issues with one another before coming out on controversial national issues.

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An Analysis of Law and Gospel in God's Salvific Plan

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ABSTRACT

In Christian theology, there is evidence of universality of humans in fullness, which clearly means that all are in need of salvation. Related to the salvation of humankind are two distinct but inseparable doctrines — the doctrines of law and gospel. Christians frequently ask questions like: Has the gospel replaced the law? Or are believers required to adhere to the law? Or what is the place of the law and the gospel in one's salvation? Even though much has been written of this important subject, renewed interest in this subject in current theological debates is not out of place. In this paper, we argue that the law was never intended to be a means of salvation, and that God's method of salvation of people has always been by grace through faith, whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. The law, which revealed the will of God for his people simply prepared the way for a more complete and comprehensive dealing with sin which came with the gospel.

Introduction

Anyone who reads the Bible carefully will come to the realization that

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the doctrinal contents of the entire Bible can be put into two inseparable yet different doctrines—the doctrines of law and gospel. These doctrines are such that one cannot be fully appreciated without considering the other. Close to the end of his prologue to the Gospel according to St. John, the evangelist mentions the law and alludes to the gospel when he writes, “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17). We can deduce at least two facts from the text. First, grace and truth did *not* come through Moses and second, the law was *not* given through Jesus Christ. That is, in the Old Testament (OT), God gave the law through Moses but in the New Testament (NT), he gave the gospel—which is the message of salvation by grace through the sacrificial death and physical resurrection of Jesus. Here there is clearly a distinction between the law that serves as a rule of human conduct and the gospel which saves people by grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus. In contemporary Christianity, there are not many issues more pressing to believers than those related to law and gospel (grace). Even though almost all groups of Christians admit the centrality of the gospel in Christianity, not much agreement has been reached concerning the relevance of the law to people's lives after the death and resurrection of Christ. Consequently, most Christians often get confused as to the role of the OT law in their everyday lives. This paper discusses the relevance of the law and the gospel in the light of God's salvific plan.

The Law: Its Meaning, Nature and Significance to Israel

Out of the several Hebrew words that are translated 'law' in the OT, the word *torah*— which comes from the root word *yarah*, meaning “to throw” arrows or “to shout”²— appears most frequently, about 220 times in the Masoretic text. *Torah* comes from the *hiphil* of the stem, and “the verb in the *hiphil* is strictly cognate in use to the noun, so that the two

² Dan Liroy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount* (New York: [Peter Lang Publishing](#), 2004), 13.

ought to be studied together.”³ Dan Lioy observes that the noun form of the word *torah* “denotes ethical imperatives that are more concerned with how people should live, rather than with abstract concepts about morality.”⁴ Some scholars argue that, in the OT, the word *torah* “does not refer so much to commands (to keeping of commands) as it does to *instruction* (to teaching).”⁵ In this sense, the word *torah* does not focus on admonitions, commands, and requirements but rather to God's instructions as a whole. Even though we believe that such a definition is too broad, we admit that *torah* has a wide range of meanings in the OT. Its meanings include instruction as from a parent to a child or “principles of behaviour that are derived from God's ordinances, but are not explicitly declared as God's law”⁶ (Prov 1:8; 3:1; 4:2; 7:2); doctrine/instruction through the prophets (Is 1:10; 8:16,20; 42:4,21); legal instruction as in the law of sacrifice (Lev 6:7; 7:7); the Pentateuch/Mosaic revelation (Joshua 1:8). However, as we have said earlier, the word *torah*, more often than not, refers to what human beings are commanded to do according to the Mosaic Law. Generally speaking, the term *torah* refers to the law (s) of Yahweh in both general and specific contexts. (E.g. Gen. 26:5)⁷

The NT equivalent of the word law is the Greek word *nomos* which basically means a standard or general recognized rule of civilized conduct,⁸ tradition, the status quo or law. By the time of Jesus Christ, the term “the law” had a wide range of meanings, including the following: (1) The Pentateuch or the first 5 books of the Bible (Matt 5:17; 7:12; Luke 16:16); (2) The scribal law — the 613 rules (*mitzvot*) formulated by the

³ Willis J. Beecher, *Torah: A Word-Study in the Old Testament*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1905), 1-16, 2.

⁴ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 13.

⁵ Thomas R. Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law* (Grand Rapids, MI: [Kregel Academic](#), 2010), 19.

⁶ Stephen D. Renn (Ed.) *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2014), 578.

⁷ Renn, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*, 578.

⁸ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 15.

scribes that everyone was expected to obey; (3) The OT Scripture as a whole or the entire *Written Torah*, meaning the entire canonized Scripture (Matt. 22:36; Luke 10:26; John 12:34; 1 Cor. 9:8-9; Gal. 4:21); (4) The commandments in the Mosaic Law (Matt. 5:18-19); (5) Law in general ([Rom. 3:27](#) and possibly [Rom. 5:13b](#)). This quote from Schreiner's *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law* aptly summarizes our discussion on the usage of the term law in Scriptures:

In both the Old and the New Testaments, the word *law* focuses on the commands and regulations of the Mosaic covenant. In most instances the word *law* does not refer to instruction in a general sense but concentrates on what God demands that his peoples do. In both the Old and the New Testaments this is apparent, for verbs like 'keep' and 'do' are linked with the law.⁹

The law is a reflection the holiness of a personal God and his purpose for the crown of his creation, humankind.¹⁰ For this reason the law should be regarded as “a transcript of the will of God” rather than a “mere record of ordinances and decrees.”¹¹ It is the exact expression of the pure and perfect moral standard of God and hence “the measuring stick by which the Lord evaluates all human actions (cf. Rom. 3:20).”¹² In this sense, to violate the law is tantamount to rebelling against God himself.

Are there clear cut divisions in the law? Many evangelical scholars have answered this question in the affirmative, suggesting a tripartite division of the Mosaic Law into moral, civil (or judicial), and ceremonial components.¹³ The great reformed theologian, John Calvin, for example, writes, “We must attend to the well-known division which distributes the

⁹ Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law*, 23.

¹⁰ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 16.

¹¹ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 16.

¹² Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 16.

¹³ Jonathan F. Bayes, *The threefold division of the law* (Newcastle: The Christian Institute, 2012), 3. (pdf)

whole law of God, as promulgated by Moses, into the moral, the ceremonial, and the judicial law.”¹⁴ Similarly, Francis Turretin, also classified the law into three species: moral, ceremonial and civil laws.¹⁵ In such a classification, moral laws refer to those that deal with universal and timeless truths regarding God's intention for human ethical behaviour. “Love your neighbor as yourself” falls under this category. Civil laws refer to those that deal with the legal system of Israel including the issues of land, economics, and criminal justice. The command “At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts” in Deut. 15:1 falls under this category. Lastly, ceremonial laws are those that deal with sacrifices, festivals, and priestly activities. An example of ceremonial laws is in Deuteronomy 16:13, which instructed the Israelites to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days after they have gathered the produce of their threshing floor and their winepress. Most scholars generally agree that moral laws still apply to believers but non-moral laws applied only to ancient Israel and not to today's believers.

Even though the above categorization represents the traditional view on the law, the legitimacy of such clear cut divisions has been questioned by recent scholarship. Schreiner, for instance, is of the view that even though the traditional tripartite division of the law “is appealing and attractive” and “has some elements of truth, it does not sufficiently capture Paul's stance toward the law.”¹⁶ For him, Paul convincingly argues that the coming of Christ brings to an end the entirety of the law and so to regard the so called moral laws as still authoritative because they appear in the Mosaic law “blunts the truth that the entire Mosaic covenant is no longer in force for believers.”¹⁷ We, like Schreiner, acknowledge the difficulty one encounters in an attempt to put a wedge

¹⁴ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* as quoted by Jonathan F. Bayes, *The threefold division of the law* (Newcastle: The Christian Institute, 2012), 3. (pdf)

¹⁵ F. Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* as quoted by Jonathan F. Bayes, *The threefold division of the law* (Newcastle: The Christian Institute, 2012), 3. (pdf)

¹⁶ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 90-91

¹⁷ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 90.

between what is “moral” and what is “non-moral” in the law. How do we categorize the law forbidding the taking of interest in [Exodus 22:25](#)?¹⁸ Even though this law has a moral mandate, it may also fall under the civil law according to the traditional categorization. J. Daniel Hays concedes that the traditional approach has the potency of helping believers to know which law applies to them.¹⁹ Yet at the same time he points out three major weaknesses of this approach. “It is arbitrary and without any textual support, it ignores the narrative context, and it fails to reflect the significant implications of the change from Old Covenant to New Covenant.”²⁰ Clearly, the traditional approach of distinguishing what is moral from what is non-moral suffers from some weaknesses.

The Purpose of the Law in Salvation

What was the purpose of giving the law to the Israelites? The reasons for which the Mosaic Law was given to Israel include, but are not limited to, the following. First of all, the law was given to Israel to serve as a principle to guide their relationship with God and with other nations. Thus, the law marked Israel as a theocratic nation — nation ruled by God — distinct from the rest of the nations ([Lev. 20:26](#)). Secondly, the law was given as an insight for the Israelites regarding God's holiness and purity. In this regard, God demanded his followers to conform to the law and be holy, because He is holy (Lev 11:45). Thirdly, the law was meant to diagnose sin and reveal transgression. Paul succinctly stated that “through the law we become conscious of sin” (Rom 3:20) and also aware of the sinfulness of sin (Rom 7:7-13). Fourthly, the law served as an indication of the manner by which God's people “might continue to experience the temporal blessings associated with the divine promises once they arrived in Palestine.”²¹ Fifthly, the law was given to restrain

¹⁸ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 89

¹⁹ J. Daniel Hays, “Applying the Old Testament Law Today”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (January-March 2001): 21-35, 22.

²⁰ Hays, *Applying the Old Testament Law Today*, 30.

²¹ Liroy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 16.

evil by laying out boundaries for people. Even though the law cannot change the wicked heart, it can use its threats of judgment to inhibit anarchy in people, more “especially when those threats are enforced by civil codes that administer punishment for confirmed transgressions (cf. Deut 13:6-11; 19:16-21; Rom 13:3-4).”²²

Did the law confer salvation? Was the Mosaic Law legalistic? By legalism, we mean the belief that one can do something meritorious and thereby be rewarded in some way by God for doing good works or following some religious system of customs, laws and/or rituals. It is the idea that humankind can merit right standing before God. Some scholars believe that the law promises eternal life and salvation, the very promise of the gospel. The Bible says, “You shall therefore keep my statutes and my ordinances, by doing which a person shall live: I am the Lord.” (Lev 18:5) Calvin begins his discussion on this verse by stating that it serves as the basis for Paul's concept of the righteousness of the Law in Romans 10:4.²³ He then goes on to suggest that the text also gives hope of eternal life to all who keep it. He further expressed his dissatisfaction with those who limit the promise in the law to earthly and this-worldly blessings.²⁴ Arguing further, he contends that, the cause of such an erroneous view is the fear some exegetes have that “the righteousness of faith might be subverted, and salvation grounded on the merit of works.”²⁵ In that case, only those who keep the law, and no one else, shall be saved by the law. It seems that the Lord in Luke 10:26f-28 teaches that if salvation is to come by way of the law, only he who fulfills it completely can obtain salvation through it.

Thomas Schreiner analyzes the issue as follows. In Romans 7:10, Paul says that “the commandment was intended for life.” From this restricted

²² Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 28.

²³ John Calvin, *Harmony of the Law - Volume 3* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, nd), 149. (pdf)

²⁴ Calvin, *Harmony of the Law*, 149.

²⁵ Calvin, *Harmony of the Law*, 150.

perspective, it seems the law was meant to give life to those who kept it.²⁶ Yet, Paul repeatedly emphasizes that God sovereignly intended the law to reveal transgressions and to bring about death²⁷ (e.g. Rom 7:7; 2 Cor. 3:6). Schreiner clears misconceptions about any apparent contradiction when he draws attention to two perspectives from which we can consider the law —immanent perspective and transcendent perspective. Viewed from an immanent perspective, the law was meant to give life; but from a transcendent perspective, it was given to increase sin. “The former is not falsified or trivialized by the latter.”²⁸ Schreiner cites the proverb, “The more Torah the more life” (M. Aboth 2:7) in Judaism to support his contention that the Jews held on to the immanent perspective.²⁹ While Paul's Jewish contemporaries thought the law was given to counteract sin which Adam had introduced into the world, Paul contends that the law was not brought as a solution but as part of the problem,³⁰ in the sense that the law operates to unveil sin and to point it out as deserving of punishment. That is what Paul wanted to teach when he wrote: “Now the law came to increase the trespass” (Rom. 5:20). Schreiner summarizes his position as follows: “The purpose of the law is to reveal human sin so that it will be clear that there is no hope in human beings. The law puts us to death so that life is sought only in Christ and him crucified,”³¹ It prepares us for the righteousness and life that come only through the Spirit and Christ.

The Mosaic Law was not legalistic in nature. It was scribal and pharisaic expositions on the law that tended to make it burdensome and ultimately legalistic. Religious legalism or legalistic religion is therefore human creation. Salvation was by faith right in the OT. All the OT saints mentioned in Hebrews 11 are people who pleased God through faith. Abraham's offer of Isaac as a sacrifice to God does not precede but was

²⁶ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 81.

²⁷ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 81.

²⁸ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 81.

²⁹ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 81.

³⁰ Schreiner, *40 Questions*, 81.

³¹ Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law*, 84.

preceded by his righteous standing before God. Abraham was counted righteous in Gen. 15:6 long before Isaac was even born. The Mosaic covenant itself does not give us a different way of salvation from salvation by grace through faith. This fact becomes clearer when one considers God's deliverance of Israel prior to the giving of the Decalogue. God's gracious deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian bondage preceded the institution of the Mosaic covenant and hence the giving of the Decalogue. In view of this, Schreiner states that "Their redemption is an act of divine grace and cannot be ascribed to the obedience of Israel." This means that God's choice of Israel was independent of Israel's righteousness. In order to make it known to the Israelites that he did not save them based on their righteousness, God spoke to the Israelites through Moses saying:

After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you. It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people (Deut. 9:4-6)

On the basis of the fact that the sending of Israel to the Promised Land had nothing to do with her accomplishments, we can confidently say that Israel was saved by God's grace and not on her merit. Not only that, Israel's election was also based on God's grace (Deut. 7:6-8). From the foregoing, it is clear that God gave the law to redeemed Israel to show them how they should live as his chosen people. The call to obedience then, functions as Israel's response to the Lord's saving of his people from bondage.

The Gospel

Appearing over 75 times in the New Testament with different meanings, the fundamental meaning of the word gospel— derived from the Greek noun *euangelion* (from the root *angelos*, “messenger”) — is “good news” or “glad tidings.”³² Like the word law, the word gospel has a wide range of meanings. It may refer to the content of the proclamation of the Christian faith. (Rom 1:16). It may also refer to specific books in the Bible that set forth the life and ministry of Jesus: the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. As the culminating concept of the entire Scripture, the importance of the gospel in Christianity cannot be overemphasized. It is the foundation of Christian theology and the doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from other all other religions.³³ The gospel is epitomized by Christ in his proclamation that: “The time has come, '... 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!’” (Mark 1:15). It is about God redeeming his people and his creation from their rebellion against him. Better still, it is “the joyous proclamation of God's redemptive activity in Christ Jesus on behalf of people enslaved by sin.”³⁴ The gospel is good news of the consummation of the salvific plan of God, forgiveness from sin and the promise of eternal life and reconciliation with God through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.³⁵ This means that the gospel message is founded on the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Simply put, the gospel is the fact that Christ died for our sins so that anyone who believes in him will be saved. The following quote from Daniel J. Coleman throws further light on the discussion:

The central truth of the gospel is that God has provided a way of salvation for men through the gift of His son to the world. He suffered as a sacrifice for sin, overcame death,

³² Daniel J. Coleman, *The New Day Experience: Using The Shield of Protection, Part 2* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011), 261.

³³ <http://www.theopedia.com/gospel>. Assessed on 27/10/15.

³⁴ *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, edited by Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 472.

and now offers a share in His triumph to all who will accept it. The gospel is good news because it is a gift of God, not something that must be earned by penance or by self-improvement ([John 3:16](#); [-Rom 5:811](#); [-2 Cor 5:1419](#); [-Tit 2:1114](#)). The gospel presents Christ as a mediator between God and men, who has been ordained by God to bring erring humanity back to himself.³⁶

The gospel is based on grace. By grace, we mean “that which is freely given by God, received by faith, without being earned or deserved.”³⁷ Two deductions are made. First, we cannot earn it, and we can never deserve it. Anything that we can earn or deserve is not given to us by grace. Second, grace is normally received by faith. Thus Paul wrote: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2:8–9)

Distinction between Law and Gospel

Paul Timothy McCain has profoundly asserted that, “The distinction between the Law and the Gospel is a particularly brilliant light” because it “serves the purpose of rightly dividing God's Word and properly explaining and understanding the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles.”³⁸ The work of the great Lutheran theologian, Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, is a monumental work on the distinction between the law and the gospel.³⁹ In

³⁵ Renn, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*, 578.

³⁶ Coleman, *The New Day Experience: Using The Shield of Protection*, 262.

³⁷ Derek Prince, *By Grace Alone: Finding Freedom and Purging Legalism from Your Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2013), 11.

³⁸ Paul Timothy McCain, ed., *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord*, Second Edition, Translated by William Hermann Theodore Dau and Gerhard Friedrich Bente, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 552.

³⁹ C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel* (Concordia: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), 14- (15). (pdf)

this book, Walther explains the distinction between the law as God's demands upon his creatures, and the gospel of God's free grace in Christ.

Walther's method of distinction can be summarized as follows. Before discussing what we consider as the 'proper' distinctions between the law and the gospel, we wish to first of all outline some false ways by which people have often attempted to distinguish between these doctrines. First, it is erroneous to regard the gospel as a divine doctrine and the law as a human doctrine, based on human ideology. Each doctrine is scripturally and divinely sanctioned. Second, to distinguish the law from the gospel on the basis that the former is the teaching of the OT and the latter is the teaching of the NT is a mediocre argument.

A careful reader of the Scripture does not struggle to realize that both Testaments contain contents of both law and gospel. Third, it is wrong to see a distinction between the law and the gospel on the basis of their final purposes. Said differently, it is biblically unsound to think of the two doctrines as though the gospel aimed at our salvation and the law at our condemnation, because even though the law alone cannot save us, it prepares us to become ripe for the gospel. Moreover, while the gospel does not require obedience to the law before offering salvation, it gives us the ability to fulfill the law to some extent. The law was given not to be the means to salvation. Yet it forms part of God's salvific plan. In this and some other sense, both doctrines are geared towards our salvation. Furthermore, it is wrong to regard the law as contradicting the gospel. Though distinct, the law and the gospel are in the most perfect harmony with each other because both of them come from one Spirit "who is not in conflict with himself."⁴⁰ Finally, it is theologically suicidal to assume that only one of these doctrines is meant for Christians. Both are equally necessary to the believer's life. As a matter of fact, we cannot appreciate the gospel if we ignore the law. Neither, can we obtain any benefit from

⁴⁰ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 1:814 (3.17.11).

the law without recognizing the gospel. As we shall see in this paper the law still retains significance in the life of Christians. As a matter of fact, there is no Christianity if we reject any of these two doctrines.

According to Walther, true points of difference between the law and the gospel may fall under six main categories.⁴¹ The first distinction between the law and the gospel can be seen in terms of the manner in which they are revealed to us. In the case of the law, it was implanted in the heart of humankind at creation but was dulled—not completely wiped out—at the Fall. Because it was implanted in the heart, even the most ungodly person acknowledges the law in his/her conscience when it is preached to him/her. That the requirements of the law are written on our hearts is contended by Paul who writes:

Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them (Rom 2:14-15)

In this passage, Paul's argument is that the law of God has been revealed in creation so that we are all without excuse. Even the blind and ungodly pagans have the moral law with them in their heart and conscience. Thus, no supernatural revelation was needed to inform them concerning the moral law. On this passage, Wayne A. Grudem rightly opines that, even though the “consciences of unbelievers bear witness to God's moral standards,” the “knowledge of God's laws derived from such sources is never perfect, but it is enough to give an awareness of God's moral demands to all mankind.”⁴² Clearly, Grudem admits that the moral

⁴¹ Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 15.

⁴² Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 94-95. (pdf)

demand of the law is available to all humankind. Why then was the Decalogue given? Walther suggests that it was given in order to print out in bold outline the dulled script of the original law written on humankind's heart.⁴³ The same cannot be said of the gospel. Unlike the law which is acknowledged even by the unbeliever when preached to him/her, the preaching of the gospel rather makes the ungodly angry. Thus, while the requirement of the law is a general revelation, the gospel is a special revelation for it is mystery hidden for years. Concerning the gospel, Paul wrote:

Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the **revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God**, so that all nations might believe and obey him (Rom 16:25-26, our emphasis)

Paul states in no uncertain terms that the gospel was hidden from the beginning of the world and for that reason it was impossible to discover it. To make it known required that the Holy Spirit inspired people to write its message. In fact, there is no religion that does not have portions of the law. Yet at the same time, there is no religion, apart from Christianity, that contains a jot of the gospel.

Secondly, the content of the law differentiates it from the gospel. The content of the law reveals to us what God requires us to do but that of the gospel shows to us what God has done and is doing. By this we mean, the law focuses on our works while the gospel focuses on God's works. Walther posits that the law has nothing to say to us beyond the tenfold demand, "Thou shalt."⁴⁴ The Bible says, concerning the Law, "The law is

⁴³ Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 15.

⁴⁴ Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 16.

not based on faith; on the contrary, 'The one who does these things will live by them'"(Gal. 3:12). This passage argues that the law has nothing to say about forgiveness and about grace. And the law can do nothing about the fact that people break the law habitually. Disobey the law once and that is your end. As we have seen earlier, "...the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17). The gospel, in this sense, contains nothing but grace and truth, making no such demands of the law. When the gospel demands faith, it is just like the kind of demand that one makes by inviting a hungry person to join a dining table and eat. What is it that the hungry person contributes to the preparation of the food? Absolutely nothing! That is what the gospel does — it invites us to partake of heavenly blessings without demanding that we do anything to contribute to these blessings. Therefore, the gospel gives us what we need without taking anything from us. The following quote from Martin Luther sheds further light on this point:

The Law makes demands of things that we are to do; it insists on works that we are to perform in the service of God and our fellow-men. In the Gospel, however, we are summoned to a distribution of rich alms which we are to receive and take: the loving-kindness of God and eternal salvation. Here is an easy way of illustrating the difference between the two: In offering us help and salvation as a gift and donation of God, the Gospel bids us hold the sack open and have something given us. The Law, however, gives nothing, but only takes and demands things from us. Now, these two, giving and taking, are surely far apart. For when something is given me, I am not doing anything towards that: I only receive and take; I have something given me. Again, when in my profession I carry out commands, likewise when I advise and assist my fellow-man, I receive nothing, but give to another whom I am serving. Thus the Law and the Gospel are distinguished as to their formal statements (*in causaformali*): the one promises, the other commands. The Gospel gives and bids

us take; the Law demands and says, This you are to do.⁴⁵

Thirdly, we can distinguish the law from the gospel based on the reasons for their promise. All promises of the law are conditional, namely, on the condition that we fulfill the law perfectly. The promises of the law can be compared to offering someone food without handing it down to a point where he/she can reach it. Unlike the law, which comes with a conditional promise, the gospel offers the grace of God and salvation without attaching any condition (s) whatsoever. It asks nothing of us but this, “Open your palms and take what I give you” - not a condition, but an invitation. The instruction, “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15-16), shows that no condition whatsoever is attached to the gospel; it is a promise of grace (cf Rom 3:22-24; Eph. 2:8-9).

Fourthly, the gospel contains no threats at all, but only words of consolation while the law contains basically threats. Almost in all cases, a threat in the Bible is related to the breach of the law. In Deut. 27:26, for example, all those who do not confirm the words of the law are threatened with a curse. On the contrary, the gospel comes with words of consolation. In 1 Timothy 1:15, Paul gives words of consolation when he says “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Paul's point is that if he, foremost among sinners could be saved, then, everybody can be saved too.

The fifth difference between the law and the gospel concerns the effects of these two doctrines. What is the effect of the preaching of the law? Walther identifies a threefold effect of the law.⁴⁶ First, the law instructs us without enabling us to comply with its instructions. In so doing, it causes us to become more reluctant to keep it. The second effect is that the law uncovers sins, but offers no help to get out of them and thus throws

⁴⁵ Luther's Sermon on the Distinction between the Law and the Gospel as quoted by Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 24.

⁴⁶ Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 20.

people into a great despair. Lastly, the law conjures up the terrors of hell, of death, of the wrath of God without producing repentance. Paul explains further:

What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead.... but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died (Rom 7:7–9; see also 2 Cor. 3:6).

What about the gospel? First, the gospel, bestows the faith which it demands. When we preach to people: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ”, God leads them to faith through our preaching. Second, the gospel takes all terror, all fear, all anguish, from the listener and fills him/her with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It does not at all reprove the sinner as the law does. Furthermore, the gospel does not require anything good from the sinner: “not a good heart, not a good disposition, no improvement of his condition, no godliness, no love either of God or men.”⁴⁷ It issues no orders, but it changes the sinner and makes him/her capable of accomplishing good works through God's enabling grace. It demands nothing, but gives all. The effects of the gospel can be seen in Acts 16, in the case of the jailer of Philippi. He asked Paul and Silas: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16: 30) and received this answer: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved— you and your household.”(Acts 16: 31). The following quote from Luther's *Lectures on Romans* aptly summarizes the whole point: “The law uncovers sin; it makes the sinner guilty and sick; indeed, it proves him to be under condemnation . . . The gospel offers grace and forgives sin; it cures the

⁴⁷ Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, 21.

sickness and leads to salvation.”⁴⁸

Finally, the target audience of the law is different from that of the gospel. The persons on whom either doctrine is to operate, and the end for which it is to operate, are completely different. The law is to be preached to secure sinners and the gospel to frightened sinners. In 1 Timothy 1:8-10 Paul writes:

We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers — and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine.

Paul's point is that only the law is to be preached to persons who are at ease or are comfortable with their sins and unwilling to quit some particular sin. The gospel, on the other hand, is meant for sinners who are frightened about their condition and are no longer identified with secure sinners. Such people are ripe for the gospel. In line with the above view, Jesus said he had come to preach the gospel to poor sad-hearted sinners (Luke 4:16-21).

The Mosaic Law and the New Testament

The role of the Mosaic Law in the life of a believer is a question of great debate. To what extent does the law apply to the NT believer? That Salvation is by grace and grace alone is a biblically established fact (Eph. 2:8-9). Where does the law fit in all of this? In Matthew 5:17 Jesus taught

⁴⁸ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, ed. Wilhelm Pauck, vol. 15 of The Library of Christian Classics, ed. John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. van Dusen (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 301

that he had come not to abolish the law but to bring it to fulfillment. Unfortunately, this issue sometimes leads people to reason that if the Bible teaches that salvation is by grace, then it means the law is of no use. But “even though the Old Testament law is not literally binding upon believers, we see principles and patterns and moral norms that still apply to us today since the Old Testament is the word of God.”⁴⁹ First of all, the law serves as a standard by which Christians measure their actions. By it they determine whether they have sinned or not. Lioy observes:

...Christ on one hand has abolished the civil and ceremonial aspects of the law. On the other hand, He has affirmed the continuance and authority of the moral law as the expression of God's will. Those are indwelt by the Spirit and energized by God's love are enabled to do what the moral law requires. They behave in a way that was rarely ever seen in the Old Testament.⁵⁰

Even though we have already demonstrated our uneasiness regarding the kind of classification Lioy has in mind, our interest is in the fact that the entire law (all aspects) preserves divine principles that are of timeless value. These are still applicable in the NT and beyond. After conversion, Christians need to measure their lives by God's standard to know if they are living lives worthy of their calling.

Secondly, the law not only shows people's sin, but also drives them away from their sin and towards the Saviour. Paul contends thus, “So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law” (Gal 3:24-25). This purpose of the law is achieved “when one comes to faith in Christ, who is the goal, or fulfillment, of the law (Rom 10:4)”⁵¹ Lecturing on Galatians 2:17, Luther observed:

⁴⁹ Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law*, 99.

⁵⁰ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 29.

⁵¹ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 28.

The proper use and aim of the Law is to make guilty those who are smug and at peace, so that they may see that they are in danger of sin, wrath, and death, so that they may be terrified and despairing, blanching and quaking at the rustling of a leaf (Leviticus 26:36) ... If the Law is a ministry of sin, it follows that it is also a ministry of wrath and death. For just as the Law reveals sin, so it strikes the wrath of God into a man and threatens him with death.⁵²

After the law has revealed the sinfulness of sin and the danger ahead of the sinner, it leads the repentant sinner to come to Christ for salvation.

Thirdly, as standard of God's rule, the law helps the believer to know when he/she is wrong. In this regard, the law is like a mirror that reflects God's perfect righteousness and humankind's sinfulness and shortcomings. As such the Lord uses it as a tool for creating awareness of sins in people (cf. Rom 3:20, 4:15; 5:13).

Fourthly, by revealing God's holiness and purity the law not only makes people aware of how God expects us to live but also announces to us the good works God has planned for us. (Eph. 2:10) On this, Lioy states:

It is true that believers are no longer under the condemnation of the law (Rom. 6:14, 6; 1 Cor. 9:20; Gal. 2:15-19; 3:25), for Christ has freed them from it. (Rom. 6:15) Nevertheless, the law still plays a viable role in the lives of believers. Its moral demands are worthy to be studied and heeded. The law continues to reveal whether believers are living for God as much as they should. The righteous commandments intended by the law may be

⁵² "Lectures on Galatians, 1535," *Luther's Works*, ed. Jeroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1963), 26:148, 150.

fully met in believers when they allow the Spirit, rather than sinful nature, to control them Rom. 8:4.⁵³

Fifthly, the purpose of the law for the believer is that the law serves as a reminder of what believers were like before they came to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This will lead them to appreciate the grace that God bestowed on them. Consequently, no one can boast of his/her salvation. (Eph. 2:8-10).

One more issue needs to be addressed. From Hebrews 8:13, we know that the whole of the laws in the Mosaic covenant is obsolete now that Christ has come. Indeed Paul makes it clear that Christ is the end of the law. That being the case why then do we insist that the moral requirement of the law is still in force today? For example, why do we say stealing is wrong for believers today but mixing fabrics is not wrong, even though both prohibitions are found in the Mosaic Law? If we claim there is nothing immoral about mixing fabrics we go back to the same arbitrary classification that we mentioned earlier. Schreiner aptly answers the question:

It is perhaps instructive to note that in most instances Paul does not argue that the moral norms from the Old Testament are authoritative *on the basis of their appearance in the Old Testament*, though in some instances he does cite the Old Testament command (e.g., [Rom. 13:9](#); – [Eph. 6:23](#)). ... They are not normative merely because they appear in the Mosaic covenant, for that covenant has passed away. It seems that *they are normative because they express the character of God*. We know that they still express God's will for believers because they are repeated as moral norms in the New Testament. It is not surprising that in the welter of the laws

⁵³ Lioy, *The Decalogue in the Sermon on the Mount*, 28.

we find in the Old Testament (613 according to the rabbis) that some of those laws *express transcendent moral principles*. Still, the mistake we make is trying to carve up neatly the law into moral and nonmoral categories.⁵⁴

Schreiner is right. The reason why certain OT commandments are normative for believers today is not merely because they show up in the OT. Rather, it is because they express the transcendent, unchanging character of God. They express moral principles which originate from God himself and in the NT Paul refers to them as the law of God (I Cor. 9:21) or the law of Christ. This law of God or law of Christ contains moral standards that are of divine origin and because of that they point to perfect righteousness which only God's grace enables people to reach and its demand is of universal applicability.

Conclusion

In this paper we have discussed, among other things, the biblical usage of the terms “law” and “gospel”, the distinction between the two doctrines and the relevance of each doctrine in the light of God's salvific plan. “Law” and “gospel”, as we have discussed, are two seemingly antithetical concepts that run throughout the Bible. The true points of difference between them were established in terms of the manner in which they are revealed to us; their contents; the promises held out by either doctrine; their relationship to threats; the function and the effect of each doctrine and their target audience.

We wish to state that Christianity can only be completely understood when we are able to distinguish between the law and the gospel. Thus, our understanding of the law and the gospel and the distinction between them is very crucial not only to our understanding of the entire Bible but also to our understanding of the Christian faith. This assertion is also found in the words of Martin Luther, the great Reformer of the 1500's,

⁵⁴ Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law*, 93-94.

whose thoughts and initiatives launched the Protestant church: “Virtually the whole of the scriptures and the understanding of the whole of theology depends upon the true understanding of the law and the gospel.”⁵⁵ Even though grace is closely associated with gospel, we have maintained throughout this paper that the law is also a manifestation of God's grace. God's gracious deliverance of Israel from their Egyptian bondage before they received the Decalogue, as we noted, is of great importance in this connection as a matter of grace.

Of a truth, law and gospel are *God's* two words spoken to us since creation. They should therefore not be considered as abstract theological categories formulated by theologians in their studies. Sharing the same view, Derek Prince asserts that Christians are not able to live up to God's expected lifestyle or to fully enjoy God's salvation because of misunderstanding regarding law and grace (or perhaps law and gospel).⁵⁶ The point is that our full enjoyment of God's salvation depends on our understanding of the law and the gospel. Thus, a defective understanding of these doctrines will lead to a defective understanding of the salvific plan of God. Against this backdrop, we are of the view that Christians must endeavour to understand these doctrines very well. To ignore either of them is to ignore God's word for his Church. The law is a means by which God's will is revealed to people to guide the covenant relationship between them and their God as well as among themselves. The gospel presents the ultimate revelation of God's plan of salvation of humankind and the law prefigures the gospel.

⁵⁵ Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 111.

⁵⁶ Prince, *By Grace Alone: Finding Freedom and Purging Legalism from Your Life*, 11.

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The Blind Leaders and the Blind Victim: A Theological Reflection on Matthew 15:12-14 in the Context of Ghanaian Christian Mission

Daniel Berchie¹

ABSTRACT

The harsh logia (sayings) of Jesus in Matthew 15:12-14 addressed the ineptitude of the Pharisees and the scribes. The reason for such harsh logia has received a little attention. And the fact that only Matthew has the logia raises concerns in synoptic discourse. This paper reflects on the logia theologically in Matthean context. It subscribes to the view that the Pharisees and the scribes had lost their mission for existence because of their neglect of the written law and embracing of oral law which blurred the true meaning of the written law. In view of their new theological stance, Jesus employs the logia to indicate God's intention to remove them from their leadership position. Jesus underscores the point that any religious leadership that loses its missional responsibility needs not to continue to exist. By disregarding the law of God as leaders, they have placed themselves and Israel under the judgment of God. In the context of Ghanaian Christian Mission, the missional focus of the Christian mission educational units has been lost. Handing over these units to non-Christian-missional oriented leadership has numbed the values imbedded in the missional focus of these units. This paper shares the view

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that all the Christian mission educational units be returned to the respective Christian denominations in order to effect their missional vision.

Introduction

One key element that appears to have impeded the meaning and growth of Jesus' ministry was the attitude of the Pharisees and the Sadducees among the Jewish religious sects. Both of the history of the origins and the theological tendencies of the Pharisees and the Sadducees were intricately uncompromising. However, the Gospel accounts highlight how these opposing sects work in unity to oppose the ministry of Jesus (e.g., Matt 16:1, 6; 27:62). It has been observed that the belief system of the Pharisees was closer to Jesus' than that of the Sadducees (22:23).² While the Pharisees were the moral barometers of the Jews, the Sadducees were largely the political face of the Jews in matters of Jewish law.³ In other words, the Sadducees were, in modern terms, the liberals (progressives), while the Pharisees were the conservatives in matters of preserving the religious identity of the Jews (9:11, 14; Luke 18:11). 'The common people of the land' loved the Pharisees for their religiosity and moral consciousness more than the Sadducees.⁴ Despite the religious telepathy shared by both the Pharisees and Jesus, the Pharisees are mentioned more than the Sadducees in their endeavor to question and at times challenge the moral decisions of Jesus (e.g., Matt 9:11, 15:1; 19:3). The Sadducees appear only once to have quizzed Jesus on the matter of resurrection in the gospel of Matthew (22:23). In one of His encounters with the Pharisees, he was accused of not upholding the tradition of the elders in relation to the washing of hands before meal. He berated them as blind leaders or guides of the blind (Matt 15:12-14). It even seems in

² Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H, 1997), 36-38.

³ Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.4; Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 567-69.

⁴ Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 47; Raymond F. Surburg, *Introduction to the Intertestamental Period* (Missouri: Concordia, 1978), 55.

this passage that Jesus appeared angry and snobbish. This account is unique to the first canonical Gospel (cf. Mark 7:1-23; Luke 6:39). Why only Matthew has the *logia* among the synoptic? Why did Jesus employ such harsh *logia* against the Pharisees and the scribes? Did the *logia* intend to be a personal attack on the Pharisees? Some think that Jesus used the *logia* because the Pharisees and the scribes misunderstood the law.⁵ Others feel that Jesus intended to confirm the Pharisees in their opposition⁶ or to discredit the view that every Jewish person was in a saving covenantal relationship with the God of Israel.⁷ However, the purpose of this study is to do a theological reflection on Jesus' sayings (*logia*) in response to the leadership attitude of the Pharisees (and the scribes) in Matthean context. It will also relate the relevance of the *logia* to Ghanaian Christian mission, specifically the Ghanaian Christian mission educational units. The study is presented in four phases, namely, (1) Setting of the text, (2) Historical-Theological disposition of the Pharisees (and scribes), (3) a Theological reflection on Matt 15:12-14, and (4) the meaning and implications of leadership in the discourse as well as Ghanaian Christian mission.

Setting of Matt 15:12-14

In Gospel studies and particularly the synoptic, the setting of the sayings

⁵ D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 8:350. Cf. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary 33b (Dallas, TX: Word, 1995), 436, thinks that the harsh words were due to "the special relationship between Jesus and God that enables Jesus to speak with incomparable authority and thus to exclude the viewpoint of the Pharisees so absolutely."

⁶ Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Matthew 11:2-20:34*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia, 2010), 771; David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008) 382-383.

⁷ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol., 2, *International Critical Commentary* (Edinburg, UK: T & T Clark, 1988-1997), 533.

and the deeds of Jesus is paramount in understanding a text. Three settings have been proposed:⁸

- Actual life setting of Jesus' ministry
- The situations in which the stories were shaped to address the needs of the church before the time of writing
- The setting during which the Gospels were written.

It is becoming a general consensus that the actual life setting of Jesus' ministry and the setting at the time of writing seem to have more historical credence than the period during which the stories were shaped.⁹ Matthew 15:12-14 may be more appreciable in these two settings¹⁰ as found in the final text of the gospel of Matthew. Therefore, tracing the frequent confrontations between the Pharisees and Jesus from the preceding events to Matthew 15:12-14 is contextually appropriate to be able to appreciate the logic of the author in context.

After the forty-day fasting and the imprisonment of John, Jesus went back to Galilee to preach the Gospel (3:13; 4:12). While in Galilee, he delivered His longest didactic Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7). He healed and cast out demons in Capernaum in Galilee (chap. 8). After freeing two demon-possessed, he was begged to leave the city. He crossed over to his own city and healed a paralytic by forgiving his sins (9:2). Scribes present accused Jesus of blasphemy (v. 3). He also ate with tax-collectors. This act was questioned by the Pharisees (v. 11). The Pharisees attacked and accused him of employing evil spirit to cast out demons (v. 34; 10:25). He continued to teach and preach in the cities of Galilee (11:21, 23). During his evangelistic activities in these cities, the Pharisees questioned his moral decision on plucking heads of grain on the

⁸ William F. Warren, "Interpreting New Testament Narrative: The Gospels and Acts," in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, 2nd ed. ed. Bruce Corley, Steve W. Lemke, and Grant I. Lovejoy (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2002), 319.

⁹ Warren, "Interpreting New Testament Narrative," 319.

¹⁰ For the purposes of this study, these two settings constitute Matthean context.

Sabbath (12:1-2). After answering them, he moved into a synagogue and healed a leper. This healing attracted the wrath of the Pharisees who sought to kill him (vv. 9-14). They accused him again of healing with the power of evil spirit when they heard that he had healed many people (vv. 23-26). In view of this accusation, Jesus made the infamous statement that sin against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven (v. 31). Immediately after this pronouncement, some of the scribes and the Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign, he pointed to his death and resurrection as the sign (vv. 39-42). On the same day, he moved from his house to preach in a boat on a sea (13:1ff). After he had heard of the death of John and fed the five thousand, he crossed over to Gennesaret, and healed many (14:34-36).

In Gennesaret, scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to ask Jesus why his disciples were not washing their hands as per the tradition of the elders (15:1-2). In response, he also posed a question as to why they transgress the commandments of God because of their tradition (v. 3). Verses 4-6 demonstrate how they have flouted the commandments of God with their traditional Midrash of the law of God. Jesus draws on Isa 29:13 to lambast them as hypocrites because they rendered empty and meaningless worship to God and teach the commandments of human beings (vv. 7-8). He did not address the question in providing a satisfactory answer as he has been doing in the preceding discourse. In v. 10, he intentionally ignored the scribes and the Pharisees and addressed the multitude to hear and appreciate his real answer to the question of the scribes and the Pharisees. As he usually did, he gave a parable to address the question (v. 11). The disciples felt that Jesus had offended the scribes and the Pharisees with his response to them. One can appreciate the respect the disciples had for these leaders. But their Master did not share the same feeling. He rather responds: "leave them; they are blind leaders of the blind' and if a blind leads a blind, both will fall into a pit" (v. 14).¹¹ Jesus explains the parabolic response, emphasizing the inner spirituality (vv. 15-20). After this episode of confrontation, he moved to the region of

¹¹ All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Tyre and Sidon (v. 21). It is clear that Jesus' ministry in Galilean region was punctuated with hostile responses from the scribes and Pharisees from Galilee and Jerusalem. There has been a geographical significance in the movement of the ministry and the opposition to the ministry. The tenor of Matthew 15:12-14 indicates a high tension between Jesus and the religious leaders. In what follows, the historical-theological disposition of the Pharisees (and scribes) is considered to help situate the *logia* in context.

Historical-Theological Disposition of Pharisees (and Scribes)

Matthew 15:1 reads, “Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying.” Prior to the simultaneous visit of these religious leaders from Jerusalem, some scribes and Pharisees, probably from Galilee, addressed Jesus as teacher and asked for a sign from Him (12:38). He pointed proleptically to his death and resurrection (vv. 39-40). It appears these Galilean scribes and Pharisees showed interest in learning, as suggested in their simple vocative address. However, the scribes and the Pharisees from Jerusalem were accused of being blind leaders. Jesus recognized them as leaders. This means that they had assumed leadership responsibility over Israel. A brief historical-theological disposition of the scribes and the Pharisees may help appreciate Jesus' attitude to them in Matthean context.

There is a general scholarly consensus that the Pharisees are linked in their theological disposition with the *chasidims* who fought for the moral uprightness during the Maccabean period.¹² The *chasidims* upheld the law of Moses and helped the Maccabeans enforce the dictates of the commandments of God, which gave Jewish identity after the religious revival of Ezra-Nehemiah.¹³ Following this period was the Hasmonean era during which the Pharisees, as a sect, stood up against any compromise of the commandments of God.¹⁴ It is noteworthy that

¹² Surburg, *Intertestamental Period*, 47.

¹³ Surburg, *Intertestamental Period*, 42-43.

¹⁴ Surburg, *Intertestamental Period*, 47; Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 514.

characteristic of Pharisaism is the belief that in addition to the written law which Moses received from Sinai, he also “received the oral law from Sinai, and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and these to the prophets, and these to the men of the great synagogue.”¹⁵ The purpose of this oral law was, according to the Great Synagogue, to make “a fence around the Torah,” that is, to explain what various Mosaic laws meant and how they applied so that devout Israelites would know exactly how to obey God in any situation they might confront.”¹⁶ In the time of Jesus' ministry, this law was not codified but was to regulate the religious life of the 'common people of the Land.' These common people were accused for not knowing the law (John 7:49).

The spirit of the movement of Pharisaism gradually died out when the members themselves become institutionally moral barometers of the ordinary people. While the progenitors/founders of the Pharisaic movement were basically concerned with the keeping of the written law of God, the succeeding members institutionalized the movement, overemphasizing the obedience of the oral law and neglecting the moral responsibility to the written law.¹⁷

It is important to note that the scribes/lawyers are not classified among the religious sects in Judaism. They are often pictured with the Pharisees as sharing one interest when quizzing Jesus on any moral decisions ([Luke 5:30](#); [Acts 23:9](#)). The appearance of scribes in the Gospels as teachers of the law dates back to the pre-exilic period (Judg 5:14; 2 Kgs 22; Jer 36:10,32). Prior to the exilic period, the priests studied the law and guided the people to know and to do the will of YHWH (2 Chron. 15:3; Jer 18:18). In the post-exilic era, Ezra, who was a priest, continued to teach the law and guide the people on how to please YHWH (Ezra 7:6, 10, 12; 8:1-18). The Levites served as scribes (1 Chr 24:6; 2 Chr 34:13).

¹⁵ Pirke Aboth 1.

¹⁶ Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 47.

¹⁷ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 437.

As time went by, non-priests demonstrated enormous interest in the study of the law. The term 'scribes' came to refer to devoted scholars, though not priests, who showed interest in the study of the law.¹⁸ The scribes became defenders of the law when the priests considered themselves as the upper class and assimilated, acculturated Greek culture in the intertestamental period.¹⁹ The scribes gradually appreciated the oral law in the application of the written law. This may explain the theological affinity of the Pharisees and the scribes. During Jesus' ministry, the teachers of the law were appropriating honorary titles such as rabbi 'my Great one' (Matt 23:7). The spirit of the movement of being scribes gradually faded away and became an institution of piety. In short, a historical-theological disposition of both the Pharisees and the scribes has demonstrated religious conviction which was predicated on the written law of God but gradually lost its reason for existence and identity. In the next section, we look at the meaning and implication of religious leadership in Matthew 15:12-14 as well as Ghanaian setting.

A Theological Reflection on Matt 15:12-14

In Matthew 5:20, Jesus recognizes the special place of the scribes and the Pharisees in the moral barometer of the Jewish religious economy. However, he urges his audience on the Mount to do better than the scribes and the Pharisees in their quest to obey the will of God to be able to enter the kingdom of God. This suggests that the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees falls below the required standard of God. That may be why Jesus strongly urges His audience not to do what the scribes and Pharisees do but obey their words ([Matt 5:20](#) [15:4,8](#) [23:3,14,23,25](#); [John 8:7](#)). Their religious experience was basically a form and nothing more. They appear to have lacked the consciousness of their reason for

¹⁸ Anthony J. Saldarini, "Scribes," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:1012-1014; Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 44.

¹⁹ See Bruce M. Metzger, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content* 3d ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 57-58.

existence.²⁰ Jesus rightly says, “Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: ‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with *their* lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men” (15:7-9, NKJV). Both of them have elevated the oral law above the written. It seems their double dealings with the word of God and the oral law have rendered them empty and hypocritical leaders who have little or no impact on people they were to inspire to please God.

Jesus calls the scribes and the Pharisees the blind leaders of the blind (Matt 15:14). The Greek word ἡοδ γοι (Masculine plural) may be rendered “leaders” or “guides.” It is derived from the verb ἡοδ γεο “to lead a way” or “to guide.” Morphologically, it is a composition of ἡοδος “way” and ἡ γεομαι “to lead”. In both the extra-biblical text and the LXX, it literarily expresses the idea of guiding a person(s) to a specific destination.²¹ In the NT, both the noun and the verb occur ten times (Matt 15:14; 23:16, 24; Luke 6:39; John 16:13; Acts 1:16; 8:31; Rom 2:19; Rev 7:17). In all their occurrences, the guide(s) is presumed to be knowledgeable of where he/she intends to bring his/her follower/companion. For example, Acts 8:31 reads, “And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.” Again, Revelation 7:17 reads, “For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Unfortunately in the passage understudy, ἡοδ γοι is qualified with an adjective τυπηοι “blind.” This suggests that the scribes and the Pharisees

²⁰ Metzger, *The New Testament*, 51.

²¹ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adopted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 2ded. rev. and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. “ἡ γεομαι,” “ἡοδ γε ,” “ἡοδος”; Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, based on Grimme's Wilke Clovis Novi Testamenti (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977), s.v. “ἡ γεομαι,” “ἡοδ γε ,” “ἡοδος.”

metaphorically have little or no perceptive knowledge of the destination. Jesus calls their followers also as τυπηοι, indicating their need for ηοδ γοι, that is, leadership that knows its mission. Per their interest in the tradition of the elders, the scribes and the Pharisees have made the will of God null and void. Consequently, Jesus does not see any positive and assured end of both the leaders and Israel.²² Jesus frequently labels them as blind in several places to underscore their ignorance in reference to their double dealings with the will of God (23:16, 17, 19,24,26). They give mixed signals to their followers. What they say is not what they do! Also, they sometimes overemphasize the tradition and downplay the written law of God. These conditions may have metaphorically rendered them blind leaders. Robert H. Mounce observes that “not only has allegiance to the oral tradition led them to dishonor the law of God, but it has placed them outside his favour as well.”²³ It seems they themselves were not transformed in their religious experience. If so, they could not have made any significant impact on their followers. Their attitude might have worried Jesus so much that he had to ignore them and focus on the multitude (Matt 15:10). This gesture might have questioned the socio-religious status of the Pharisees and the scribes. In verse 12, the disciples expressed concern on how Jesus talked to the leaders. He replied affirmatively, “Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit” (vv. 13-14). From Jesus' perspective, the scribes and the Pharisees had lost their sense of mission and the true meaning of their existence and that they cease to be the leaders that God intends to use for His glory. The use of the imperatival clause *aphete autous* “leave them alone” suggests his disdain towards them and that he did not care about their feelings. In fact, in Matt 23, the author dedicates a considerable space for Jesus' evaluation of the scribes and the Pharisees to reinforce his feelings towards them. He repeatedly

²² See also Willougby C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, International Critical Commentary, 3d. ed. (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1912),166.

²³ Robert H. Mounce, *Matthew*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 151.

brands them as “hypocrites,” “blind leaders,” “serpents,” “blind fools,” “blind men,” “brood of vipers.” He pronounces judgment on them (v. 38).

The first canonical gospel highlights significant interest of the author. Comparatively, only Mark has the same story in the same literary context. Luke possibly presents a parable in a rhetorical fashion to underscore the inevitable damaging end of blind leadership (6:39). It is noteworthy that this parable is used in the didactic section in Luke. The intended addressees of this parabolic saying are the disciples (6:20). This suggests that the scribes and Pharisees may not have been intended as the referent point for the blind leadership. If so, in Luke, this parable of blind leadership may be a cautious advice for the disciples.

However, Mark shows some remarkable, albeit some similarities, differences from Matthew. Before highlighting the differences, some comments should be made about the similarities between them. Both Matthew and Mark registered the ignorance of the disciples (Matt 15:16; Mark 7:18). In both accounts, Jesus ignored the Pharisees and the scribes and addressed the disciples and the multitude (Matt 15:10,15; Mark 7:14,17). However, it is only the gospel of Matthew that has the *logia* in vv. 12-14 about Jesus' disdainful attitude towards the religious leaders.²⁴ It is noteworthy that only Matthew indicates that Peter, on behalf of the disciples, asked Jesus about the meaning of the parable (Matt 15:15). Mark does not identify any specific disciple for inquiring about the meaning of the parable (7:17). In this regard, the minutiae of the account of the gospel of Matthew betray an author with interest in missing details. It can then be said that the insertion of the *logia* in Matt 15:12-14 may be significant. In these *logia*, Jesus hints at his father's removal of the leaders, and its consequence on their followers.²⁵ In other words, the fortunes of Israel were tied to those of the leaders'. According to Matt

²⁴ V. Taylor, “The Original Order of Q,” in *The Two-Source Hypothesis: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. Arthur J. Bellinzoni (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), 315.

²⁵ Carson, “Matthew,” 350.

23:33, the Pharisees and the scribes cannot escape the judgment of God because of their disregard for God's will. Chap. 23 is cast in a *prophetic* judgment speech against the Pharisees and the scribes, mimicking the *prophetic* judgment speech of the OT prophecies (see Amos 5:18-20; Isa 5:8-24; Mic 2:1-4; Hab 2:6-8).²⁶ In short, the *logia* in Matthew 15:12-14 present a gradual picturesque judgment of the religious leaders who had failed to lead Israel to perceive the true will of God.

With the first advent of Jesus, the leadership of the Pharisees and scribes had been proleptically suspended.²⁷ R. T. France keenly observes that “their failure to perceive the true nature of God's will is disastrous not only to themselves but to those who follow their teaching and share their approach to religion.”²⁸ The blind leadership of these religious leaders may have accounted for the most detrimental ordeal experienced by the Jewish nation known to the author (chaps. 23-24). David L. Turner similarly notes that Jesus' words were intended to announce the impending judgment of the Pharisees (cf. Isa 60:21; 61:3; Ps 28:5; Jer 1:10; 11:17; 24:6; Matt 3:10).²⁹ Unless they repented, their situation was irremediable.³⁰ Elsewhere Jesus told the leaders that the kingdom was going to be taken away from them and be given to people who would bear fruits (Matt 21:20-43). This paper subscribes to the view that the author of the first canonical Gospel shared the understanding that the Pharisees' disregard for teaching God's written law may have brought God's judgment on themselves and the Jews in the first century. Again, the author seems to stress the fact that the success and stability of a nation is

²⁶ Rick Byargeon, “Thus Saith the Lord: Interpreting the Prophetic Word,” In *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*. 2d ed. eds. Bruce Corley, Steve W. Lemke, and Grant I. Lovejoy (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2002), 303-04.

²⁷ Allen, *According to St. Matthew*, 166.

²⁸ R. T. France, *The Gospel according to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1985), 244.

²⁹ Turner, *Matthew*, 382-383.

³⁰ Gibbs, *Matthew 11:2-20:34*, 771.

largely dependent on its leaders.³¹ Throughout her history, Israel suffers national shame and defeat whenever her leadership became blind in discharging their religious guidance roles (1 Chr 21:1-15). This may explain the presence of the text in the gospel of Matthew.

In sum, the scribes and the Pharisees, who persistently questioned the moral decisions of Jesus, were not morally upright. Jesus disdainfully reacted to their formal religious altitude because they had missed their mission-oriented responsibility as leaders. Even when Jesus wanted to remind them of their duty, they resisted and maintained the status quo. The gospel of Matthew may have included the *logia* in 15:12-14 to hint at God's judgment on the supposed religious leaders. Their followers cannot escape, but share the disastrous end of their leaders; it is not far from right to think that the destruction of Jerusalem was as result of blind leadership.

Implication of Matt 15:14 in the Context of Ghanaian Christian Mission

Transformational leadership can be positive or negative. The presentation so far has shown that the scribes and the Pharisees inherited evolutionary theological dispositions. While the motivations for their movements at their early formations were integral to their existence, they transformed themselves from guiding Israel in the ways of YHWH to hypocritical masters who guide without missional focus. This negative transformational leadership blurs the reason for existence. This paper seeks to address the missional consciousness of religious institutions in Ghana. It suggests that any leadership strategies adopted and employed in any context may have to be done in view of their mission of existence. How far can they go with transformation?

³¹ Daniel Berchie, "The Recipients of the Kingdom of God: An Exegesis of Matthew," *Insight: Journal of Religious Studies* 5, nos. 1 &2 (2009): 1-11.

The missionaries of the colonial masters started the formal education in Ghana. After independence, the government took over the management of these mission schools. Initially students and pupils in these schools were given holistic education which laid emphasis on religious and moral obligations to society in these schools which were known as 'mission schools'. The clergy were there to ensure this particular course was attained. With time, these mission schools and many other secular schools built later by the government have all lost the original focus on holistic education and have now concentrated all the attention on passing examinations and getting higher academic rankings. Moral decadence has escalated in the schools and they have become a haven for the learning of all kinds of vices.

In 2014, Kwabena Opuni-Frimpong, the General Secretary of Christian Council of Ghana, bemoaned the conditions of the mission schools. In his assessment, when the schools were being managed by the churches, the churches were able to instil their values in their students. However, with the schools now being managed by the Government, not only the values are intentionally neglected, but also the physical structures of these schools are not well maintained.³² He strongly appeals to the Government to return the management of the schools to the churches in order to instil the values in the students. To him, this call, if headed, would help the churches achieve their missional vision.³³ If the missional vision is not reinstated in each mission schools, the moral depravity may continue to disintegrate the cohesive Ghanaian society.

Conclusion

This paper attempted to reflect on Matthew 15:12-14 theologically in

³² Kwabena Opuni-Frimpong, "Statement: Return Mission Schools to Churches – CCG," accessed February 4, 2016, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Statement-Return-Mission-Schools-to-Churches-CCG-299737>.

³³ Opuni-Frimpong, "Statement: Return Mission Schools to Churches – CCG."

Matthean context to determine Jesus' intent for using such harsh *logia* against the Pharisees and scribes. It can be said that he spoke the way he spoke because these religious leaders had lost their missional existence in guiding Israel in the path of YHWH. By failing to give prominence to true spirituality as reflected in the written law of God, they have brought judgment upon themselves and their followers. By implication, any transformational leadership style which departs significantly from its missional existence and focus loses its identity and blurs its original missional destination. This paper departs significantly from previous studies in that it highlights the neglect of the written law as a standard for guidance as the possible reason for such harsh *logia*. By implication, the relevance of the *logia* in Ghanaian Christian mission is uncontested. The original missional vision for establishing Ghanaian Christian mission schools has been defeated since the leadership was transferred to non-Christian missional leadership. This paper shares the view that all Christian mission educational units must be given back to the Christian churches so as to fulfil their missional visions to avoid a moral weakening.

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Overcoming Paternalism in Missions: Issues and Strategies

Deji Isaac Ayegboyin and Abraham Adebo¹

ABSTRACT

The fortitude and passion of most of the missionaries and church workers, who came to Africa and other lands, to spread the Gospel were beyond explication. Their labour of love eventually yielded much harvest in the areas of mission and church planting. Tactlessly, there were quite a number of missionaries, who exhibited obvious weaknesses and faulty strategies in their vocation. One of the notable shortcomings in some missionaries' agenda which had negative effects on mission was the practice of extreme paternalism that manifested in their bid to consolidate their mission in Africa. Although paternalism has some benefits, yet an extreme manifestation or rehearsal of such technique often results in some debilitating consequences. It is well known that Financial Paternalism heightens frustration and also it serves as a Clog in the wheel of Indigenization. The major objective of this paper is to discuss how the problem of paternalism may be overcome in missions. Various approaches to solving the problem of paternalism are discussed. It is proposed in this submission that one of the best tools for handling the problem of extreme paternalism is cooperation. The paper makes the case for missionaries to be trained cross-culturally, doctrinally and thoughtfully to enter the mission field with the goal of leaving at the right time. It concludes by recommending that pioneering missionaries should also follow the Pauline model, which articulates that founded, bona fide churches, should be indigenized and made autonomous at the propitious instance.

Introduction

The missionaries who traversed land and sea in the nineteenth century, bringing the gospel to Africa, Latin America and Asia, must be commended for their boldness, adventurous lives and, most of all, their immense sacrifices even to the point of laying down their souls. From William Carey, who sold all his belongings for the sake of taking the gospel to the sub- continent of India, and Lottie Moon, who starved herself almost to death because there was so much poverty around her, among the Chinese, to Mother Teresa who followed her calling to assist the poor, help the lepers and restore life to the dying and the abandoned children in the slums of Calcutta, words of sincere commendation must be given. Africa cannot forget anytime soon, the exploits of David Livingstone, the missionary and explorer who opened up some parts of Central and Southern Africa to the influence of civilization and Christianity. In Nigeria, the pioneering but tortuous adventures of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionary, David Hinderer, Thomas Jefferson Bowen of the Baptist mission,² Thomas Kent, David Bingham and later Tommie Titcombe of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), all of who played significant roles in the transformation of the Nigerian society, continue to be appreciated till today. In the city of Calabar, in Nigeria, the prodigious memories of Mary Slessor lingers on, because the efforts of this beloved woman resulted in the saving of lives of babies and twins who would have been sacrificed to idols as well as her role in the cessation of homicides, and slave raiding in that region. Perhaps, we could, as we exult the heroes and heroines of faith carefully penned out in Hebrews chapter 11, celebrate the heroes and heroines of faith of the modern world. The determination of most of the missionaries to accomplish mighty things for the kingdom of God were beyond explication, their fortitude and daunting spirit in the face of great adversities of life cannot be over emphasized. It is well known that inclement weather and tropical diseases like malaria took its toll on the personnel sent by missionary bodies to the coast of West Africa. In fact, most of the earliest missionaries sent to the Guinean coast died prematurely. Others were compelled to return to Europe on account of ill health. These sacrifices and labour of love eventually yielded much fruit

in the areas of mission and church planting, in educational development as well as health through the establishment of dispensaries and hospitals among others. For all these noticeable achievements, Africans must eternally remain grateful. Unfortunately, as lofty as the achievements of most of these missionaries have been, there were quite a number of missionaries and church workers, who exhibited obvious weaknesses and faulty strategies in their vocation. Some of them achieved some level of successes while others failed in their evangelistic ventures for lack of focus.

In some cases, the attitudes of missionaries towards local leaders were characterized by lack of respect for the local leaders, they exhibited an air of superiority over the local people and disdain for the culture of the people being evangelized. In the Gold Coast (Ghana), for example, in order to consolidate and sustain their hold on the converts, the early missionaries established Christian communities for their converts, who were segregated from the rest of their traditional societies.³ The Methodist Mission Society established Bethel. The Basel Mission, on the other hand, established a model Christian community called Salem as experimental encampments for their converts at Akropong and later in Accra. These quarters had their levels of authority and standard code of social and religious behaviour. In some communities in West Africa, what the Protestant missionaries did only slightly fell short of the Portuguese Missionaries' militant ideology called *Requerimiento*. It was an ideology which stated in part thus: "We demand that you submit to Christ, or there will be hostilities". Consequently, a number of people who accepted the faith did so possibly under duress. The historical method of reporting the achievements of the missionaries on the field also portrayed bad historiography. It extolled the virtues and achievements of the Western missionaries while the support and involvements of the natives in mission, were overlooked. Another flaw in some missionaries' agenda which had negative effects on mission was the extreme paternalism that manifested in their bid to consolidate

³J D K Ekem, *Priesthood in Context* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2007), 72-84.

their mission in Africa. For example, many young missions in West Africa have been critically stalled by the denominational affiliation when grants or personnel have been withdrawn or severe conditions have been imposed by the foreign or outside partners on the grounds of new church order or change in focus..

In the face of the picture painted above, the question is: how can paternalism be managed in missions to reduce the tension between local leaders and missionaries on the field?. This paper seeks to answer this question by taking a critical look at the issue of paternalism in missions. It proceeds by providing a working definition of key terms, such as paternalism and cooperation. It undertakes an overview of paternalism, its negative consequences and cooperation as a solution to the problem. The paper asserts that cooperation between the pioneering missions and the indigenous leaders will be a good antidote to the problem of paternalism in missions.

Definition of Terms

As pointed out above, two key words need to be defined in this work viz: Paternalism and cooperation. The words are hereby defined.

Paternalism: *The Britannica Dictionary* defines the term as a system under which an authority undertakes to supply needs or regulate conduct of those under its control in matters affecting them as individuals as well as in their relations to authority and to each other. Generally, paternalism has to do with situations of interference of the state, or of an individual with another person or persons against their will, and defended or motivated by a claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm.⁴

It could be said, in essence, that paternalism is “the treatment of people

⁴ A S Morau, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000), 730.

in a fatherly manner, especially by caring for them, but sometimes being stern with them.”⁵ In missions, paternalism occurs when the pioneer missionaries ostensibly handles indigenous leaders as “children” or novice, taking care of them, and at times indirectly injecting their values and norms into them, insisting that certain things must be done in their own prescribed ways. It connotes a situation in which missionaries relate to indigenous leaders the way babes-in-arms have to be doted over and taught how to do almost everything.⁶ It also connotes, a situation where missionaries feel uncomfortable to pass on position of responsibilities to the local leaders for fear that they may not succeed in continuing from where the missionaries stopped.

Cooperation: *The Collins Dictionary* provides four shades of meaning for cooperation as follows:

- The act of cooperating or being cooperative,
- Active help from a person, organization *et cetera*
- An orderly sharing of space or resources
- Association for mutual benefit, such as for purposes of production or purchase.

The third and fourth definitions above are more helpful in gaining an understanding of what cooperation in missions is all about. They suggest a situation in which both pioneer missionaries and indigenous people attempt to work together in mutuality of trust seeking to understand one another's point of view and operating as partners in order to ensure the growing work of missions and evangelism rather than one party lording it over the other. This paper particularly adopts the Southern Baptist Cooperative' (SBC) approach to missions as a paradigm for explaining the notion of cooperation in missions. The SBC's approach follows the concept introduced by Paul in Acts, whereby money was collected from

⁵ Morau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 730.

⁶ D Harper (2001), *Online Etymology Dictionary*, www.etymonline.com; accessed 29 April, 2015.

churches weekly and such funds were sent to help the brethren or the church in Jerusalem.⁷ The basic principle to be learned from here is that there is a unified purpose among the pioneer churches to raise offerings in order to meet the needs of the indigenous churches. The need for unity enables them to see each other as co-laborers in the ministry and, as such, members of the same extended family. Such a cooperative approach between missionary organizations and indigenous church leaders is expected to instill mutual trust and respect one for another over time.⁸

Paternalism : An Overview

The task in this section is to have an overview discussion of the justification and negative effects of the concept of paternalism. Conrad Mbewe notes that paternalism has come to acquire such a negative connotation in missions that it is almost considered a curse word.⁹ Nevertheless, it is our opinion that paternalism need not acquire such negative connotation, its approval or condemnation depends on the way it is actualized. Indeed, both scripture and sociological conditions ostensibly imply that paternalism could be essential for the success of missions, but an extreme application of paternalistic principles by missionaries can be disruptive and harmful to the process of the Great Commission as instructed by Christ in Matthew 28:18-20.

Justification:

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself provides, in essence, the first justification for paternalism. In his sojourn on earth Jesus Christ, actually related with His disciples in a kind of paternalistic manner—showing them all things as a father would to his children, at times, He upbraided them or opened their eyes to see some mysteries involved in His work or mission

⁷ Todd Starnes, “Co-operative Program”, on-line em-cooperative program.pdf, accessed 2 May, 2015.

⁸ This point will be further discussed later in the paper.

⁹ See Conrad Mbewe, “From Paternalism to Partnership: The Sensitive Handover of Missions Work to Indigenous Leaders,” www.eaptc.com/2012/05, accessed 29 April, 2015.

on earth. Such relationship is indubitably necessary in the mission field. The missionaries are the experts in evangelism saddled with the task of bringing people to the knowledge of Christ, so to say. In this way, it is essential that the bringer of this new knowledge seeks to find ways and means of ensuring that his/her purposes and objectives are achieved. This may be tenable only if the missionary is directly involved in the process of this assignment, showing the local leaders how to go about the work to ensure its proper footing and eventual solidification.

The notion of paternalism can also be seen in the way parents relate to their children at home. In the beginning children are assumed not to know much, while parents at this time are held to possess a monopoly of knowledge. They teach the child how to eat, talk, walk relate to others etc. However, as the child grows he/she acquires some survival skills and gradually becomes weaned off all parental control and direction.

In scriptures, paternalism may be perceived in the relationship of Paul with the churches that he founded. Mbewe, for instance, points out that, “Paul speaking about the early days of his church-planting work in Thessalonica indeed wrote that he related to them as a father would to a child (2 Thess 2:11-12).¹⁰ In this circumstance, it could be seen that there was a genuine and appropriate need for paternalism in order for the mission work that commenced among the people of Thessalonica to survive.

Similarly it should be remembered that no one matures in a single day. Maturity and proficiency in mission evidently require some training, discipline and perseverance. These qualities may not come without a sound paternalistic/mentorship relationship. In this wise, one may argue that paternalism is desirable and justifiable at some stages in the mission enterprise. However, as time goes on, efforts should be made by the pioneering mission to involve local Christians in the process of missions

¹⁰ See Mbewe, “From Paternalism to Partnership: the Sensitive Handover of Missions Work to Indigenous Leaders”.

and evangelism as a way of preparing them to become independent in the future.

Some Negative Effects of Paternalism

Although paternalism has some benefits, an extreme manifestation or practice of such often results in some debilitating consequences. Both Mbawe and Sungro Lee allude to this dangerous element in extreme paternalism when they referred to it as being an “epidemic” in world missions¹¹ Extreme paternalism can be illustrated with a situation where a father, time and again, sees his son as a child. Even after the son has become an adult and begins his own family, the domineering father believes he should know everything going on in his son's family seeking to guide or to control. This may be tolerated at the beginning or probably for some time, but in time the son may soon realize and gripe about his freedom that is being curtailed. This may snowball into a rebellion against the father, and consequently terrible relationship problems may ensue over a long period of time.

Excessive control signals vulnerability

In missions, funding has always been a means by which mission organizations exercise paternalistic control over the indigenous churches. In most cases, Mission Boards believe that once they have established a mission and injected their funds, they must also determine, as astutely as possible, how the mission is managed. Funds spent outside the prescribed blueprint are termed undesirable “misappropriation”. The problem emanating from this is that usually the missions end up withdrawing their financial support to the local churches abruptly. Such withdrawal, as J.W.C. Dougall has observed, would often have debilitating consequences on the local churches.¹² Unfortunately, this tendency portends lack of trust between the missionaries and the

¹¹ See Paul Sungro Lee, “Missionary Paternalism: Ultimate Peril or Mission,” www.eaptc.com/2012/05/missionary-paternalism-ultimate-peril-htm, accessed 29 April, 2015; Conrad Mbewe, “From Paternalism to Partnership,” 246

¹² J W C Dougall, *Christians in the African Revolution: The Alexander Duff*

receiving local churches. Sungro Lee attests to this fact when he notes that a “missionary may say that he does not have trust yet in his national leaders and their capability to carry on the work he started years ago.”¹³

Financial Paternalism heightens frustration

Tangential to the first point is that financial paternalism has the tendency to create a damaging effect for the growth of mission work. As M. Hodges has mentioned “practically all of the difficulties that have arisen in our field between missionaries and native workers can be traced back to money.”¹⁴ The point, several times, is that the indigenous worker who often starts with obtaining modest salary eventually feels he/she should be paid more since he/she eventually sees him/herself as doing the same job as the missionaries.¹⁵ Eventually, what suffers is mission work itself. However, where paternalism is properly managed, it can ameliorate some of the problems or conditions painted above. Thus, it could be said that while paternalism plays a crucial role in mission work and in fact, an essential ground on which effective mission work germinates and thrives, extreme paternalism creates more negative impacts on mission work than the problem it is intended to solve. Indeed both Rosch and Allen observe that paternalism often breeds frustration for new indigenous church leaders.

Denial of or Inadequate Training

Apart from the problem of excessive control, missionary paternalism may also breed inadequate training for future leaders. This stems from the fact that paternalism denies the “potential and capability of the local Christian.”¹⁶ The point here is that since paternalistic mission often looks

Missionary Lectures, (Edinburgh: The St. Andrew Press, 1963), 100. Notice that Dougall's concern here is not limited to financial resources, but also to supply of personnel.

¹³ Sungro Lee, “Missionary Paternalism,” 1. Also see Dave English, “Tentmaking: Antidote to Paternalism.” (www.globalops.org/tentmaking-antidote-to-paternalism, accessed 2 May, 2015), 9.

¹⁴ English “Tentmaking,” 12.

¹⁵ M Hodges, “The Indigenous Church,” 76.

¹⁶ English, “Tentmaking,” 11.

at their local church leaders as being inferior and lacking the ability to manage the activities of the mission, the missionaries directly or indirectly impinge on the ability of the local leaders to come to maturity. Local leaders are made to look inferior and always having a feeling of inability or lack of the needed knowledge to successfully takeover. This tendency creates a sort of psychological problem on the local leaders by which they continue to see themselves as lacking the necessary ability to handle the affairs of the church after the missionaries. This may eventually lead to the collapse of the system already established because local leaders may not be properly prepared to take-over from the missionaries.

Pius Wakatama and K.P. Yohanen provide us with two examples of the negative effects of paternalism on the local church. First, was the case of a mission established private radio station in one African country. The radio station took off and was soon embraced by the majority of the local people. In fact, the activities of the radio station attracted so much government attention that the director of national radio station wrote a glowing tribute to missionary director of the radio program. After a year, however, the missionary had to travel abroad on a furlough. Apparently, he was the only person who could operate the recording console, and since there was no other missionary who could operate the console, the studio was closed down, thus bringing to an end a hitherto beautiful program.¹⁷

Another example as pointed out above was the case of a missionary from New Zealand, who spent twenty five years on the mission field in India. She was said to have been posted to operate a Christian bookstore during her last term. Upon completion of her term, the bookstore was closed down. When the missionary was sought and asked what happened, she simply responded, "I could not find anyone," in other words, she could not find any competent indigene that could carry on the business of the

¹⁷ Lee, "Missionary Paternalism," 2.

bookstore.¹⁸

Clog in the wheel of Indigenization

In the area of contextualization, paternalism acts as clogs in the wheel of indigenizing the church. Missionaries often look down on the culture of the local church. They attempt to impose their culture, which is often considered to be superior, to that of the local people. The problem with this is that failure to contextualize always has assumed a serious issue in missions. Several leaders of the church/theologians in Africa and Asia are clamouring for the need to contextualize the Gospel in a way that will make it cater for the needs of the local people. Where there is extreme paternalism, contextualization cannot take a solid root. Sungro-Lee corroborates this fact when he observes that, “the way people view scripture is culturally screened and often deteriorated. It is noticeable that the Westerners occasionally fail to differentiate the [between] culture and scripture.” The result, most of the time, is the attempt to foist a particular culture on the local people, thereby preventing them from effectively contextualizing the gospel in their own countries. Little wonder then that William Wilberforce, leader of the anti-slavery movement in England, said that some Christians confused the Bible with culture, noting that “the result is that in the Christian world in the West, we settle for a cultural version of Christianity that is far from the real thing.”¹⁹

It makes mission to become suspect

Arising from the above point is that extreme paternalism may become so much filled with extraneous matter that the mission church becomes foreign and a suspect to the nationals.²⁰ As Dave English observes, it is

¹⁸ Pius Wakatama, *Independence for the African Church: An African's Perspective on Missionary Work* (Downers Grove, Intervarsity press, 1976), 63.

¹⁹ William Wilberforce, *Real Christianity* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 24. Lee, “Missionary Paternalism,” 2.

²⁰ K P Yohanen, *Revolution in World Missions* (Carrollton, Tx: GFA Books, 2004), 164-65.

often believed among some nationals that missionaries are CIA agents operating in another country.²¹ Little wonder, that Latin American priests often tell their people that workers who were paid by missions are secret agents and should never be trusted. For such people, especially the non-believers, the message of the church, its music, programs and building are foreign and, as such, should be avoided.

Restraining the Free flow of the Holy Spirit

Another serious problem emanating from excessive paternalism is that ultimately, it curtails the free work of the Holy Spirit among the indigenous people. It may be recalled that an essential part of the Lord Jesus Christ's promise and instruction was that the Holy Spirit would take-over from where He stopped (John 14). On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did come down to empower the disciples, from where they took an active continuation of the work of Christ. Christ's model, no doubt, should be an example to follow by missionaries and their sending agents. Any attempt to exercise undue control hinders the ability of the Holy Spirit to move freely and act among the local people. In other words, excessive control imbues the spirit of little or no responsibilities in the local leaders, making the missionaries put themselves in the position of the Holy Spirit rather than allowing the Spirit to steer the affairs of the church and to provide the needed wisdom for the local leaders.²²

Overcoming Paternalism

The pertinent questions that arise from the discussions on the limitations of paternalism include these: First, should paternalism be avoided completely in mission? Second are there some plausible ways to manage paternalism? Third, what could be done to have workable paternalism in mission? The view in this paper is that paternalism may sometimes be desirable and should be managed. If so, what could possibly be the good

²¹ English, "Tentmaking," 12.

²² English, "Tentmaking," 11.

option that can serve as effective tool in handling the problem of paternalism? It is proposed that one of the best tools for handling the problem of extreme paternalism is cooperation that is, that there should be effective association of missionaries and the local folks for common benefits. By adopting the cooperative method, we do not suggest that there are no other options, rather it is believed that cooperative methods, to some extent, takes an integrative approach, taking a broad perspective and can cut across the various approaches that have been suggested by scholars.

Dichotomy Stance

One of the approaches to resolving the problem of paternalism has been referred to as the dichotomy method. In this approach both the mission and the local church operate as separate entities. Missions are not allowed to interfere in the affairs of the national church and *vice versa*. The means of relationship is via communication. Without a doubt, while this approach may be plausible in some circumstances, in the sense that it has a minimal level of interference, a critical review of this method, however, shows that it does not give room for proper training, mentoring and preparing the necessary foundation for the take-off of the local church.

Integrative Method

Another approach is where the mission is integrated into the national church. In this case, the mission adopts a servant-leader position in order to accomplish its purposes. It is not clear when exactly the mission becomes integrated. However, it starts by establishing the necessary foundation which may include reaching out to the indigenous leaders, so that an alliance is formed and the mission elects some members to be servant-leaders. The problem, however, as Vajko has noted, is that the church, several times, uses missionaries in non-missional ways.

Modified Dichotomy Approach

Another plausible approach includes the modified dichotomy approach. This is the approach adopted by the Evangelical Alliance Mission (EAM). This approach allows for separation between the local church

and the mission, but the mission works for the local church based on invitation from the latter. This depicts a situation of less interference with the affairs of the local church. The disadvantage here is that there may not be the desirable holistic training and preparation for the take-off of the local church.

Sodality and Modality Models

Ralph D Winter, a seasoned missiologist, suggests the sodality and “modality” models as a way out of extreme paternalism. The sodality model suggests a situation where volunteers come together to work as a group for missions. They are mobile and they serve as a means of bringing people of diverse backgrounds together for mission work.²³ The advantage here is that the approach reflects a situation of quality of joiners with a concerted goal. Members are also free to either belong to the volunteer or stay out of the group. Such a principle could be useful in mission because it allows both the missionaries and the local churches to see themselves as equals or partners in the vineyard of God rather than one seeing itself as superior to the other.

The second, which is modality structure, has to do with those who are not originally volunteers, but “who come to faith along with their children.”²⁴ The model depicts those who come to faith as adults in the company of their children. The children often come to faith within the same type of group and they live in the same area. Both structures are essential one of another in the work of mission.

As good as these approaches may be, however it is our view in this paper that co-operation between missionaries, their agencies, and the local leaders is the ideal method for overcoming the problem of Paternalism in missions. It becomes necessary at this juncture to remind ourselves that

²³ See Ralph D Winter, “The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission,” 224; English, “Tentmaking,” 13.

²⁴ D J Busch, *Transforming Missions: Paradigm shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll:Orbis, 1991), 369-370; R Allen, *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 144-45.

cooperation is defined in this paper as an “orderly sharing of space or resources” or “association for mutual benefit, such as for purposes of production or purchases”. These two definitions imply the working together of a group of people or several groups of people in order to ensure the achievement of certain goals. Be that as it may, it could be said that the major objective of mission is obedience to Christ's command that Christians should go to the world and to make disciples of all nations. As illustrated at the beginning, many missionaries were persuaded by this command to set out to the unappealing mission fields. But the issue here lies in the problems created by the need for missionaries and local leaders to work together for the achievement of this important goal.

Mbewe, for instance, argues that missionaries ought to create the enabling environment for the work of mission to thrive.²⁵ How then does this work? Essentially, Mission Boards sending out missionaries into foreign lands must realize that their agents will not be in a particular place actively forever. To this end, there must be phases of their operation as well as the exit plan from inception. A good example could be seen in the cooperative agreement between the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC) and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), U.S.A. In this arrangement, the two conventions agreed from inception as to a definite time of commencement and exit time, that is, 2001 to 2011 for the partnership program.²⁶

Phases of Engagement in Cooperation

Basically, three phases are identifiable in the cooperative agreement, these include :

- the point of initial Paternalism,

²⁵ See Winter, “The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission,” 224.

²⁶ A A Ayandokun, *Partnership in Missions: Exploring world Evangelization through Partnership in Mission* (Lagos: Gloryline Christian Publications, 2013), 2.

- cooperation and sharing of leadership and
- the exit stage.

The Initial Stage

This first stage is very crucial to the survival of missions. At this stage the missionary is the repository of knowledge about his intentions. The missionary has all the tools for establishing and fulfilling the mission's purpose among the foreigners. At this point, he/she is expected to be quite in control. The missionary gathers the local people, shares the word of God with them, and organizes them from inception, teaching them, and guiding them on how to live the new life. In a manner akin to the way the Apostles organized the new believers in the Jerusalem church and began to teach them until some of them came to maturity, so also does the missionary at the inception of his/her work in foreign land organizes his converts for teaching until the work becomes properly rooted. A good example could be seen with the situation in the church in Antioch, where Barnabas, having commenced work, also went down to Tarsus and brought down Paul to continue in the work (Acts 13-15).

Leadership Sharing Phase

As the missionary continues in his/her work, some indigenous workers are likely to distinguish themselves. The missionary observes or pays attention to such people and assigns them responsibilities.²⁷ A good example could be seen in the works of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) missionary, Tommie Titcombe. Soon after founding his mission among the Yagba People of the present day Kogi State of Nigeria, Titcombe learned the language, and began to firmly establish the mission. In course of this, David Adeniyi of Ogga was discovered, and appropriately disciplined. David Adeniyi later assumed some leadership position along with Titcombe.²⁸ During this phase, a gradual process of sharing leadership and cooperation ensued among the missionaries and the

²⁷ Winter, "The Two Structures," 223-24.

²⁸ Sophie de la Haye, *Tread Upon the Lion: the Story of Tommie Titcombe* (Ontario, Canada: Sudan Interior Mission, 1973), 24-25.

indigenous people. The missionaries are not only expected to evangelize but also to conscientiously embark on the training of the people in anticipation of future takeover. It is the point at which the recognition of the worth of the indigenous people comes to bear. The missionary sees him/herself as God's viceroy to accomplish certain things carefully and prayerfully in order to fulfill his/her mission. Keddie argues that this method of cooperation was demonstrated by Paul and Barnabas in Antioch. For him, although it is always very difficult, Paul and Barnabas showed the example of what missionaries should be. They began the mission, trained the indigenous people and then began to share responsibilities with them; to the point that they went to Jerusalem Council with some of their converts and trained leaders.²⁹

Winter underscores this point also adds a crucial dimension when he explains that in the work of the missionary, he/she works assiduously among the indigenous people in order to win them but continues to allow them to keep their culture. Using the example of Jewish proselytization method, which in fact was built on by Paul in the continuation of mission work, he notes that Greeks were allowed to remain Greeks “and not circumcised and culturally assimilated into the Jewish way of life.”³⁰

Relinquishing leadership roles before exit

A very crucial stage is the time that missionaries begin to withdraw from the field. At this point, trained indigenous leaders are encouraged to run the affairs of the founded church—to preach, administer, and manage the finances of the church. The problem at this stage, according to Allen, is that, it is very difficult in the sense that the indigenous leaders who may have acquired some skills and become mature to certain extent, may make some mistakes at inception.³¹ The problem here is that, it may be extremely difficult for the missionary not to interfere at the point that

²⁹ Mbewe “From Paternalism to Partnership,” 247.

³⁰ Mbewe, “From Paternalism to Partnership,” 248.

³¹ G. Keddie, *Welwyn Commentary: You are my Witnesses (Acts)* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2003,)173. Also see R. Allen (1991) *Missionary Methods*, 143.

he/she begins to see some of the errors of the indigenous leaders. However, in a cooperative system the missionary is expected to see him/herself as a fellow-laborer in the field, and must seek to correct carefully and not capriciously or rudely. At times, it may even be expedient for the missionary to allow the indigenous leaders to make mistakes and gently guide them to rectify those mistakes by themselves. It will be recalled that Barnabas and Paul, having founded the church in Antioch, allowed the new leaders to continue to run the affairs of the church with little or no interference. In fact, they both (Barnabas and Paul) allowed the church to set them apart to continue the work of missions somewhere else without meddling in the affairs of the church in Antioch. Even at a time when Barnabas and Paul discovered some heretical teachings among the members of the Antiochene church, they did not castigate them, but rather formed part of the party of the people who returned to Jerusalem to arbitrate in the matter.³² This without doubt, reflects a good or classical withdrawal of missionaries from the field in order to continue their God ordained assignment somewhere else.

Toward the Success of Cooperative Package

It should be noted that certain elements are essential for the success of the co-operative approach to overcoming paternalism. Such elements include:

- mutual respect and admiration,
- training of missionaries in the art of cooperation, and
- working in the field for cooperation.

We shall briefly discuss these points.

a. Mutual respect and Admiration

The Southern Baptist co-operative program started in the second decade of the twentieth century as a result of the necessity for the various

³² Winter, "The Two Structures," 221.

Southern Baptist churches of America to pull together their resources in order to salvage the work of missions that was gradually becoming moribund due to financial crisis.³³ While the immediate situation was to meet financial insolvency, the major principle or philosophy behind the co-operative program was the need for partnership in the work of God in line with the example that was set by Paul.³⁴

While pulling together is the hallmark of co-operation, as mentioned earlier, the principle of co-operation will hardly thrive where there is lack of mutual respect and admiration. One important thing that ought to be pointed out here is that handing over the affairs of mission to the indigenous people involves a process and should never be thought of as an event. Where it is considered to be just an event, it will fail in a very short time. Since it is a process, it requires that missionaries and indigenous leaders work hand-in-hand. This very principle calls for mutual respect in the co-operative programme, there is mutual recognition of the worth of the other and admiration among the various churches. The stronger church does not see itself as essentially better, but sees the smaller church as a partner in the work of the ministry.

In this case, contrary to feelings among some missionaries that putting in place the right systems and agreements are all it takes to secure a good handover process, Lumba feels that it is not always the case.³⁵ Although it is good to have a good agreement and the correct structures, the Holy Spirit is the ultimate in the achievement of a credible and effective handover process. But where there is respect between the missionaries and the local leaders, the process will go on more smoothly. Lack of respect one for another may breed suspicious and acrimony. Where such takes place, the local leaders may forcefully take over the reins of the church rather than allow a due process to take place. In a true co-operative environment, where true mutuality of respect exists, the

³³ H Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), 619-623.

³⁴ Allen (1991) *Missionary Methods*, 143.

³⁵ Mbewe, "From Paternalism to Partnership," 248.

missionaries and indigenous leaders are able to work together against those members who may want to undermine the process of handing over the affairs of the church. Mbewe notes that such a problem may arise because of lack of spirituality, but where it takes place, the local leaders will defend or stand by the missionaries, since they have come to trust them and vice versa.³⁶

With respect to admiration, we often admire someone in whom we find qualities that we lack. Local leaders and missionaries must reach this point in order to be able to foster a good co-operative program. As Wickeri points out, it requires a high level of spirituality and humility for missionaries to admire local or indigenous leaders.³⁷ In several instances, missionaries admire the courage of local leaders who are able to overcome the problem of conflict between the ethos of Christianity and their culture. In the same vein, local leaders may win the admiration of the missionaries where the former humbly and carefully confronts the latter over certain wrong doings.³⁸ The result of mutual admiration is that missionaries actually want to learn some things from local leaders. The import is that mutual respect and admiration act as a good lubricant for cooperation between indigenous leaders and missionaries. Like the sodality structure, partners in the co-operative program look at themselves as equals before God and co-laborers in God's vineyard. With such an attitude, the spirit of paternalism is relegated to the background

³⁶ Todd Starnes, "Co-operative Program", on-line em-cooperative program.pdf, accessed 2 May, 2015. Paul had used this principle to collect offering from the churches of Asia to assist the Jerusalem Church at the time of serious financial crisis. The co-operative program adopted Paul's method of collection of offerings in unity in order to assist a church hit by financial difficulty. While the situation here is not financial as it was in the time of Paul, we are adopting the principles behind the notion of cooperation for use in this paper, which is essentially the need for unity and mutual respect and admiration.

³⁷ T K Lumbia, "A Quest for Authentic Practice of Missions in Africa," Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Baptist Theological Seminary, Rushahlikon, Switzerland, 1995.

Mbawe, "From Paternalism to Partnership," 249.

³⁸ Mbawe, "From Paternalism to Partnership," 249.

and true co-operation is achieved in the work of missions. It must be noted, however, that this cannot be achieved over a short period of time; it takes a while to achieve such by both parties seeking to work together co-operatively over time.

b. Training for cooperation

Training and preparing missionaries for the field is an essential tool in determining how they will operate in order to ensure the success of the cooperative program in missions. Sociologists, however, have taught that a lot of what a person learns comes during the early stages of life that are often passed or acquired from parents. It follows, therefore, that missionaries' parental background plays a crucial role in how they relate to people later in life. For instance, Mbewe alludes to the fact that how parents of a person relate to the underprivileged members of the society often reflects in that person's dealing with the underprivileged later in life.³⁹ In this case, those who come from the background that relates badly with people of lower class as well as people who grew with racial prejudices may find it difficult to function effectively in the mission field. The reason is that in the mission field, missionaries would in most cases come in contact with people living in abject poverty and those from other races. But we cannot deny them their desires to fulfill a life-long ambition of becoming missionaries. How then can this problem be solved? Effective training for missionaries can be an anti-dote to racial feelings and repulsive attitude towards the poor and the underprivileged. Such training, according to Mbewe, should include reading biographical materials of pioneer missionaries who overcame the problem of race, class etc and handed over the affairs of churches to national leaders. He cites the example of Doke a South African Baptist missionary who pioneered the work of Baptist Missions in Zambia. He explained that there existed a situation of mutual respect between the missionary and the first indigenous leader, Paul Kasouga.⁴⁰ It was further

³⁹ Mbewe, "From Paternalism to Partnership," 249.

⁴⁰ Mbewe, 249; R F Kemp, "South African Baptist Missionary Society in Zambia: A Missiological Evaluation," Dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1987

observed that the working relationship between the two parties was not achieved overnight; rather, as expected, co-operation in that mission required time to mature. Both missions and the indigenous leaders must exercise caution in their handling of issues, so that they can come to respect and admire each other over time for the purpose of attaining the best in missions.

It needs be stressed here that biographical studies should also include adventures of missionaries such as William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Lottie Moon, David Livingstone, Thomas Jefferson Bowen, Thomas Birch Freeman and many others who pioneered the whole gamut of what has come to be known today as missions.

Besides, missionaries need to be trained doctrinally. A significant aspect of this is the need to let them know that the entire human race came from Adam. Although there may be differences in race, colour, class and status, we are all members of the large family of God. One obvious fact is that racial discrimination, which culminates in looking down on people who are of different status from us, inhibits a proper process of evangelization and also does not allow for effective co-operation. A cursory look at Paul's missionary strategy indicates that he never discriminated based on race and status. This is supported by the fact that when one takes a look at the list of names in the salutation section of Paul's epistles, one sees a mixture of names which cuts across racial boundaries. Dave English states that, "the book of Acts and greeting sections of the epistles make clear how attached Paul became to indigenous leaders and his genuine partnership with them."⁴¹ This was no doubt demonstrated by people's name and the various ethnic and national backgrounds of such people. Paul construed each person who genuinely came to faith in Christ as belonging to the larger family of God.

Paul's model provides a good example in cross-cultural relationship. Missionaries, who would work in foreign land, must be trained cross-

⁴¹ English "Tentmaking," 13.

culturally. Such training enables the missionary to have an understanding of the host culture and world view. In cross-cultural Christianity, Atchenmeou Clement *et al* underscore this problem when they assert that, “some people do not communicate with people of different cultures... but for the missionary there is no option because of the crucial nature of his work.”⁴² In essence, the kind of training the missionary receives plays a significant role in preparing him or her for proper collaboration or co-operation with the local leaders.

c. Working on the field for Cooperation:

Although it is a good thing for one to set his/her mind on the mission field, an obvious fact that the missionary needs to put at the back of his mind is that there should be a plan for exit. A missionary should go in with the view that his/her work in that particular location is for a while. He/she should be ready to train, prepare local leaders and co-operate with them on the future of the ministry so established.

As H. Masters and W. E. Masters recommend, the missionary should know that “the keys of the tools to the ministry must be handed over to the indigenous leadership at some stage.”⁴³ This suggests that the exit for the missionary ought to be done carefully and deliberately over time. It calls for proper training and instructions to the local leaders and careful process of integration and building of cordial relationship with the indigenous people.⁴⁴ More importantly, it is incumbent upon the missionary himself to live a transparent life in all aspects of life with the indigenous people. As mentioned earlier, such behaviour makes the missionary gain the admiration of the indigenous leaders. The consequence is that local leaders will be able to engage in co-operation with missionaries in the accomplishment of their God-given task.

⁴² H C Atchenmeouet *al.* (1989). *Cross cultural Christianity*, 202: (Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Institute, 1989), vii.

⁴³ H Masters and W E Masters, *In Wild Rhodesia: A Story of Missionary Enterprise and Adventure, in the Land where Livingstone lived, labored and died* (London: Francis Griffiths, 1920), 199.

⁴⁴ See Moreau ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 286, 365-66.

Paul no doubt, is our practical example. In all his missionary endeavors, Paul did not over stay his welcome in a particular place. He practiced immediate indigenization principle—that is, he always finds local leaders with whom he worked everywhere he went and having worked closely with them, he disciplines them and gives them responsibilities and leaves the church after a few months for the local leaders to continue from where he stopped (Acts 14:21-23). The only place where Paul stayed extensively was in Ephesus where he spent about two and a half years. Paul probably did that deliberately in order for Ephesus, to serve as headquarters from where he moved around to strengthen the surrounding churches. Although Paul had some form of authority over the churches that he founded, he did not approach it from a rigid perspective. He allowed a measure of autonomy for the churches by not enforcing his will on them. This is a demonstration of a good co-operative approach to missions. In this, we can still refer to the NBC/BGCT partnership earlier mentioned as a worthy example, since the partnership went on without a direct intervention of the BGCT in the affairs of the NBC. The two worked along as partners and colleagues without any attempt to lord things over one another. The nature of the partnership yielded much fruits sociologically, economically and in terms of mission outreaches.⁴⁵ In this case, undue paternalism is eschewed because there is no form of coercion—subtle or physical. The importance of this is that, the churches that Paul founded saw themselves as being responsible for the running of the affairs of the church. This suggests a situation of true autonomy, which was also instrumental to their growth.

Paul always ensured that the churches founded by him were “self-governing, self-funding and self-feeding,”⁴⁶ and self-perpetuating. He ensured that upon founding of the churches, he gave them the necessary tools that will make them stand. He did this by co-operating with the local people and training them to be independent in order to avoid Paternalism

⁴⁵ For details see Ayandokun, *Partnership in Missions*, 192-95.

⁴⁶ English, “Tentmaking,” 14.

or dependency syndrome. Paul's approach provides a good paradigm for missionaries in order to overcome the problem of paternalism.

Dave English adds an *addendum* which may be contested. He feels that one of the ways to avoid paternalism is to avoid putting missionaries on salary. Citing the example of Paul, he observed that even though initial offerings were collected, it was meant to strengthen the weaker churches. He added that Paul did not instruct that the elders should be supported (1 Tim 5:17-18), until the various home churches had grown into a viable network of churches.⁴⁷ While English's view appears plausible, it should be remembered that the world today has become more complex and complicated to act in the same way that Paul acted about two thousand years ago. Nevertheless, Paul unarguably provides a good paradigm for modern missionaries if we must avoid paternalism in missions.

Conclusion

The major objective of this paper is to discuss how the problem of paternalism may be overcome in missions. The paper explains paternalism, which is a state of dependency often created by extreme interference in the affairs of churches founded by missionaries. Although this problem has been considered endemic in some circles and appears almost insurmountable, it is our view that the problem can be solved or its effects mitigated. Various approaches to solving the problem of paternalism are discussed. It is observed that co-operative method, that is, co-operation between missionaries, their agents and the indigenous leaders as a way of overcoming paternalism is considered most helpful. While we suggest co-operation based on the style of the Southern Baptist Convention of America, co-operation here is not only in respect of funding. It suggests a relational approach where missionaries see local leaders as partners and seek to collaborate with them as a means of overcoming paternalism. Dougall indeed has noted that gone are the days

⁴⁷ English, "Tentmaking," 14.

when missionaries held tenaciously to their mission churches. We agree with Dougall that undue possessiveness of mission churches by their foreign missions would have negative effects on the growth of the local churches. Therefore it is suggested that efforts should be geared more towards cooperation and allowance of freedom for the local church to operate with support from the mission churches.⁴⁸ In so doing there should be mutual respect and admiration between local leaders and missionaries. It is also strongly recommended that missionaries should be trained cross-culturally, doctrinally and thoughtfully to enter the mission field with the goal of leaving at the right time. They should also follow the Pauline model, where *bona fide* churches were indigenized and made autonomous.

⁴⁸ Dougall, *Christians in African Revolution*, 96.

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Dynamics of “Amen” in Ghanaian Adventist Churches

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ABSTRACT

A non-Ghanaian Adventist's first visit to any Ghanaian Adventist church will notice the interesting usage of the benedictory word Amen. The word is used in prayers, after announcements, after singing groups' rendition, during and after sermons, even after a person has been introduced, and in all other aspects of public worship wherein congressional response is required or expected. The prevalence of this practice poses theological and cultural problems. Can this misnomer be explained by a lack of the theological understanding of the word Amen? Or is it due to the Ghanaian worshiper's innate desire to express his/her worship experience? It is at this backdrop that this article first seeks to analyze the use of the word Amen in the Bible to reveal its semantic meanings and motifs in scripture. In addition, to review the word's usage in the Ghanaian context from a cultural standpoint. It then proffers some suggestions on the way forward in solving this unique problem. The paper argues that Amen's usage in Ghanaian Adventist worship is an

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exaggeration of the Biblical usage because there is no alternative way that worshiper's can respond to worship experience.

Introduction

Growing up in the Ashanti region of Ghana where Adventism had thrived, there were three identifying marks that could help you identify a person as an Adventist or not, and by extension whether they have understood the Bible or not. The commonest of such criteria was, if the person is a woman, she would not have ear rings. Beyond that, the style of Adventist music differed greatly. Furthermore, when a person began to pray, it would be glaring the denomination he/she belonged to. In Ghana, Adventists in those days were taught never to call Jesus Christ “father”, but most of the non-Adventist churches in their prayers would call Jesus *Paapa Yesu*, to wit, “father Jesus.”

Then again, there was something unique about Adventists' response to prayer and the worship experience. In the Adventist sense, members would respond to prayer only when the *prayee* has called them in or has finished. On the other hand, non-Adventists' prayers, were full of syncopated shouts of “Amen” at every turn of a word in the prayers so much so that in unison, all that one could hear during their prayers would sound like “Amen, Amen, Amen...” as if they were singing a chorus. It implied that they did not understand first of all what prayer is, and what the word amen signifies.

The scenario seems not to be the same today, since all the above issues especially the use of *Amen* has transposed into thinner lines of differences. Today Adventist churches are almost out classing other church in the usage of *Amen*. The use of the word *Amen* has taken over every facet of worship in Ghanaian Adventist churches both home and abroad. It got to a time that people thought clapping would be a good substitute to the frequent use of *Amen* in the churches. However, the use of strong polemical writings that has been clouded thereby creating a good platform for even a misuse of the invocation.

Currently, at every point in worship where congregational response is needed, the use of *Amen* is the more seemingly spiritual rejoinder. Therefore, at introductions of people to read scripture, preach or read Missions appeals, they are welcomed with an *Amen*. In Churches where the English language is used as the medium of worship, the person doing the introduction of personalities officiating would ask the congregation after mentioning of each name, “what do you say to him” and they will respond, *Amen*. This phenomenon is seemingly evolving into a different semantic understanding of the Biblical word “Amen” in Ghanaian churches worldwide.

This paper therefore, first seeks to situate the meaning and usage of the word *Amen* in scripture and secondly, try to find the reasons behind the current happenings in Ghanaian Adventists Churches. Thirdly, it offers suggestions on how to curb this growing menace in the congregations. The study is important, in the sense of that it is the first time this issue is being put up for academic discussion. Furthermore, the study aims at helping non-Ghanaian Adventists to be aware of the cultural dynamism in the Ghanaian Adventists Churches. The study begins with the first section of the paper that looks at the meaning and usage of the word *Amen* in scripture.

***Amen* in the OT**

Amen is one of the commonest words in human history to which all the major world religions such Christianity, Judaism, Islam and even African traditionalists identify with. Etymologically, the word derives from the Hebrew root *AMN* that denotes, “stability, steadfastness, or reliability.” The word was originally an adjective meaning “true” which later became an indeclinable interjection/particle.² It is found about 30 times in the *Masoretic* text and an additional 3 times in the *Septuagint*.³ It usually stands alone, but is followed by a more explicit prayer formula as found

² It has even been used as a noun in Isa 65:16: בְּאֵלֵהֶי אָמֵן

³ See Tob. 8:8 and 1 QS 1:20, 2:10, 18

in I Kings 1:36 and Jer. 28:6. In its treatment of the Hebrew word, the *LXX* translates *Amen* into the Greek as *genoito* eight times and with *alhqos*, once in the Pentateuch, the prophets and Psalms. However, *Amen* is transliterated in the book of Chronicles as *amhn*. The Greek Old Testament usually translate *amen* as “So be it” in English.

There are about three usages in the OT as follows:

Before Oaths

The earliest reference to *Amen* in scripture is found in the court procedure prescribed by Moses in scripture for a woman suspected of adultery. After the priest administered the oath, “the woman shall say *Amen, Amen*” (Num. 5:22). Similarly, when Nehemiah, the governor, assembled the rulers during an economic crisis, he administered an oath to the priests whereby real estate was to be restored to its rightful owners and tax collection ceased; “And all the assembly said 'Amen' and praised the Lord” (Ne. 5:13). Assent of the congregation to the law is a responsive '*Amen*' in unison (Duet 27:15-26; Nah 8.6).

In Doxologies

Another common use of *Amen* is in the doxology (1 Chr. 16:36; Ps 41:13; 106:48).

Doxologies of the first three books of the Psalms are concluded with *Amen* (Ps. 41:13; 72:19; 89:52). The last two have the double emphasis in the unusual phraseology, *Amen* and *Amen*. It was also customary to respond to good news with Amen (Jer 28:6). Benaiah responded to David's appointment of Solomon as the next heir with a hearty Amen (1 Kings 1:26).

As Divine Title

Finally, *Amen* is used as a divine title or attribute of God, e.g. “the God of truth” (Isa 65:16). H. W. Hogg has long categorized the frequency of the occurrences of *Amen* and their placement in the OT into three main groups as follows:

- **Initial *Amen*** in which it serves as a conversational particle standalone, prefixed to an exclamatory sentence expressing a

- wish (Jer 28:6, 1 Kgs 1:36).
- **Detached *Amen***, in this group, the sentence introduced by *Amen* is left to be understood from the situation (cf. Deut 27:15-26 and Neh 5:13).
 - **Final *Amen*** which occurs in liturgical passages in which response is required.⁴ In this usage the *Amen* may be two, standing in apposition to each other with a conjunction linking them (Num 5:22; Neh 8.6; Ps 41; 72:19; 89 & 89:52).

In all these usages one common implication is that *Amen* is regarded as an acknowledgment of a word that is valid and binding. Hence, the inherent desire to affirm a word or something as authentic, trustworthy, or true is retained in the entire OT usages. Its function in the OT ranges from an individual and a community confirming the acceptance of a task allotted in which the will of God is needed (1 Kgs 1:36), to a confirmation of the personal application of divine threat or curse.⁵

***Amen* in Rabbinical Writings**

The use of *Amen* in Judaism seems to have reached its zenith through rabbinical commentary in the *Talmud* and the *Mishnah*. Responding *Amen*, was the main form of participation in worship service, not merely, because congregations were unfamiliar with the prayer texts but because public worship mainly took the form of someone speaking and the rest of the community responding.

During *synagogue* worship, *Amen* was the communal response to the detailed praises which the leader uttered with the prayers or on other occasions and to each of the three sections into which the priests divided the Aaronic blessing of Numb 6: 24-26. Moreover, *Amen* was the response to all prayers and blessings. In the big *synagogue* of Alexandria

⁴ H. W. Hogg, "Amen.' Notes on Its Significance and Use in Biblical and Post-Biblical Times," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 9, no. 1 (1996): 1–23.

⁵ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 335.

for instance, an aid signaled with a flag from the central reading platform to the congregation when to respond *Amen* after blessings (Suk 51b). In the service of the Second Temple, *Amen* was the response to the songs chanted by the Levites (Ps 41:14; 72:19; 89:53; 106:48; Neh 8:6; I Chr 16:36).

The saying of *Amen* to a doxology therefore, was equated to reciting it and much religious value had been attached to it so much that it had assumed superiority over the benedictions themselves that required it. A person should not usually respond with *Amen* to a blessing he himself has recited, except during the third blessing of the Grace after Meals.

This prohibition might have been a reaction to the Christian custom to conclude every prayer with *Amen*.⁶ Again, *Amen* was used as a response to blessings recited both privately and in the synagogue liturgy. The congregation also responded *Amen* after each of the three verses of the Priestly Blessing (Sot. 7:3, 39b). In some rites, the response after each verse is *Ken yehi razon* (Let this be [His] will). After each paragraph of the *Kaddish* and after a number of other prayers, such as the *Mi she-Berakh* formulas in the Sabbath morning service, the reader invites the congregation to respond *Amen* by saying *ve-imru Amen*, or *ve-nomar Amen* (and say Amen or let us say Amen).⁷

Numerous rules are given concerning how *Amen* should be in Rabbinical writings, e.g., Amen should be said with a strong, clear voice but not too loud; not too quick and not too slow. Types of *Amens* are described, such as “snatched,” “mumbled,” and “orphaned” (Ber. 47a). Other problems discussed in the *Talmud* are whether to respond to the blessing of a Samaritan or of a non-Jew (Ber. 8:7; Ber. 51b; TJ Ber. 8:1, 12d).⁸

⁶ Cf. Ber. 53b; Maim., Yad, Berakhot 1:11 See Ber. 45a and Tos.

⁷ Cf. Sh. Ar., OH 127:2).

⁸ “*Amen* | *Jewish Virtual Library*,” accessed July 28, 2015, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0002_0_00956.html.

The *'aggadah* stresses the great religious value of responding *Amen*: it prolongs life (Ber. 47a); the gates of Paradise will be opened to him who responds with all his might (Shab. 119b); his sins will be forgiven, any evil decree passed on him by God will be canceled⁹ and he will be spared from Hell (Pseudo SEZ 20; 33:1; Yal. Isa. 429).

The *Talmud* (Shab. 119b; Sanh. 111a) also offers a homiletical etymology of *Amen* by explaining it as made up of the initial letters of *El Melekh Ne'eman* (God, faithful King). This phrase precedes the reading of the *Shema* when it is recited other than in congregational worship. However, in the older prayer orders (*Amram*, *Saadiyah*, and *Vitry*) the original *Amen* appears before the *Shema*. Even God Himself “nods” *Amen* to the blessing given to him by mortal man (Ber. 7a and Rashi).

Legendary history has it that, two angels accompany each Jew on Friday evening to his home, where they either bless him for welcoming the Sabbath properly or curse him for neglecting it, and they confirm their curse or blessings with *Amen* (Shab. 119b). Any good wish offered should be answered by *Amen, ken yehi razon*, as can be inferred from an incident going back to the Second Temple period (Ket. 66b).

***Amen* in the New Testament**

In the NT and its emergent Christian world, the Hebrew form of *Amen* is usually taken over and used in three ways. In the first usage, *amhn* serves as liturgical acclamation in Christian worship. A typical example of this usage is in 1 Corinthians 14:16 where the Apostle Paul counsels the Church members to use intelligible language in their prayer during public worship so that even the unlearned/ outsider can say '*Amen*' to your thanksgiving" A synonymous passage is found in Revelation 5:14 where the four living creatures are reported to have been saying *Amen* during worship.

⁹ *Amen/ Jewish Virtual Library.*

Secondly, *Amen* is used to end Christian prayers and doxologies. In these instances, *Amen* marked the end of prayers and blessings because they were thought of as prophetic messages. Though this practice naturally occurs at the end of prayers or doxologies, they sometimes appear at the beginning of epistolary materials in the NT (cf. Rom 15:33; Gal 6:18 & Rev 19:20). Reminiscent to Isaiah 65:16 where God is called *Amen*, in Rev 3:14, Christ Himself is called *Amen*.¹⁰

The last and most intriguing usage of *Amen* in the NT is found on the lips of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels and John. Though the use of *Amen* in this context varies, it must be understood that the general context within which it is used is that of worship but to show the reliability and truth of His message.

Summary of the Survey

The survey of the Bible and its immediate Jewish and Christian world has revealed that *Amen* as derived from the Hebrew *mn* seem to have retained its character of response, a confirmation of what is true, trustworthy, or steadfast throughout scripture. Even where it is used in reference to the person of God or Jesus, it adjectivally describes them as true and faithful. It occurs 30 times in Matthew, 13 in Mark, 6 in Luke, and 25 in John.¹¹

Again it is evident that its usage in the Bible is mostly in relation to God Himself or His message of which an individual or a community affirms and acclaims as faithful, true and binding even if it is the results of a

¹⁰ For further examples of this type of usage see Rom 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 16:27; Gal 1:5; Eph.3:21; Phil 4:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 6:16; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; 5:11; Jude 25.

¹¹ Kittel and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 338. See also James Hastings, *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels: Volume I (Part One -- Aaron - Excuse)* (The Minerva Group, Inc., 2004); Samuel Tobias Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1987); Nicholas P. Ginex, *Amen and Jesus' Revelation* (Xlibris Corporation, 2012); Hastings, *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, 49–52.

curse. Hence the modern derivative “let it be” is closer to the OT usage than the NT. Said differently, to utter *Amen* in Christian prayer or Doxology or worship is to surrender one's will to that of God.

The Ghanaian Phenomenon

As stated above, the use of *Amen* in Ghanaian churches has taken a dynamic turn from the explored Biblical usages. The word is used in prayers, after announcements, after singing groups' rendition, during and after sermons, even after a person has been introduced, and in all other aspects of public worship wherein congregational response is required or expected. Even the correct pronunciation of *amen* is sometimes debated. It has now become a mode of expression in worship response.

The concern at this point is to explore factors that have influenced the divergent use of *amen* among Ghanaian Adventist church members. Two main factors may be identified as the cause of this phenomenon namely, Akan libation practices, storytelling culture.

An analysis of Akan libation indicates that it is a coded verbal performance, which is a formalized, coordinated poetic enactment. The language of libation is quite different from the ordinary, everyday speech. The libator plays with words and invokes a number of great spirits such as the sky god (*Onyankopon*) the Creator, mother earth (*Asaase Yaa*), national or household gods, and the spirit of the ancestors and those spirits believed to be hovering around the place.¹²

The prayer involves addressing to each of these deities a special request, asking them to come and drink through the application of rich and witty interplay of verbal resources, competence in the complex Akan system of metaphysical thought, and familiarity with the contextual situations.

¹² Joseph K. Adjaye, *Boundaries of Self and Other in Ghanaian Popular Culture* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 2004).

The officiant through his/her ingenuity makes conscious efforts to carry his/her audience along with his utterances to get them emotionally charged. He/she does this by eliciting or stimulating spontaneous responses from the participants. The group throws in, at different intervals, words expressing approval or giving assent to what was being prayed for and at times even gives the libator suggestions and reminders of what more to add. With the assistants leading the way, any member of the audience can interject interlocutory responses such as *sio*, or *wiee* meaning “yes” and “true”.¹³ Libation is a form of prayer (*apayee*) or (*mpaeyi*) in the Akan society which involves an individual or group of individuals. What comes out of the coded verbal performance of libation is the human ingenuity of the *Akans* using critical thinking and analytical skills. The pouring of libation is, therefore, not only agent centered but also, it reveals the active participation of the audience as a knowledgeable group even if their participation is minimal.

The context of libation indicates where two sets of experiential engagements intersect: one from a cultural perspective about the nature of human relations with the invisible forces of the spiritual world, the other derives from ability and the oratorical skills of the performer to stimulate the spontaneous reaction of the audience. This spontaneous reaction of *sio* or *wiee* is an indication of support, affirmation, and agreement of whatever has been said by the officiant/libator. This is quite synonymous to *amen*, an idea of “may it be so” or “may whatever has been said come to pass.”

It is interesting to note that before the inception of Christianity on the African soil, there were occasions for prayers either individually or corporately. This African traditional religiosity, more or less, resonates in the various Christian worship centers today. Intermittent shouts of *amen* in Christian prayers are not by chance. It is by intuition, duly contextualized to conform to Christian modes of worship.

¹³ Owusu Brempong, University, 1986).Peter Sarpong, *Libation* (Anansesem Publications, 1996).

Though this traditional libation practice does not directly connect the Adventist usage, it reveals a very important point that Ghanaians are innately active rather than passive worshipers. Regarding the second factor, traditionally, the Akan tradition has a long folklore of storytelling. On evenings of storytelling, an elder of the family or town would gather all the members of the community by the fireside to share several stories. The participants usually remain active throughout the storytelling process with call, response pauses such as story story, and the people will respond *story*. Sometimes the listeners will interject the story with songs to keep them awake.

The bare fact in all these is the fact that African and for that matter the Ghanaian perceives participation in worship as being responsive in the worship experience. As a result, prayers said in the local languages, when the pitch of the person praying goes higher to the extent of ending in a *daa* sound, it is indicative of a call for the congregation to respond with *Amen*. Similar call for response in worship occurs in all facets of the worship. It is worthy to note that the desire to be active in worship especially with the connecting word *Amen*, lies behind the founding of Ghanaian Churches abroad.

Conclusion

The paper indicates that in the OT, *Amen* was used both by individuals and the community either in response to words being proclaimed or before a prophetic utterances. In these categories *Amen* belongs to the realm of God's Truthfulness as opposed to that of man. Again, the NT continues in the trend of the OT usage except in the Gospels where it is primarily used by Jesus to authenticate His speeches. The word seem to have put on a different connotation in *rabbinical* writings in which a person who responded with *amen* was either seen as being at equal level as the one praying or above him/her. With this background, the spiritualization of *Amen* was born.

The cause of the Ghanaian Adventist misuse of *Amen* rightly stems from the Ghanaian personal innate desire to be *active* rather than *passive in*

his/her reportage, be it in church or in other social gatherings. Within this cultural milieu of be interactive in worship, presupposes that the misuse of the Biblical particle can be checked only when an alternate is provided. This paper therefore proposes the following: first, proper teaching on the place of *Amen* in worship or prayer should be given to members, upon which alternates such as *God bless you*, after introduction of the people on the rostrum during worship can be done. On the extreme, clapping in situations where human contributions in the service are recognized can be considered.

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Mother Tongue Literacy, Bible Translation and Church Planting among Northern Migrants in Southern Ghana

JOSEPH N. TETTEH¹

ABSTRACT

Education and Christianity were introduced to the then Northern Territories very late; hence northern Ghanaians did not have the opportunity of early education. However, with the coming of the British to the area in 1960, coupled with the opening of churches by the Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and Assemblies of God, churches and schools were opened in the various towns and villages. In spite of this, many people did not have the benefit of formal education, and therefore could not read the scriptures when they were converted. In 1962, the Summer Institute of Linguistics and later the Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation started literacy work in the Northern region, but not many took advantage to learn how to read and write in their mother tongues till they travelled to the South. To change this trend the Ghana Evangelism Committee and the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade decided to reach out to these migrants and later started funding the planting of mono ethnic churches which resulted in the conversion of many northern migrants to Christianity through learning of how to read and write in their mother tongues. Many have stopped anti-social activities and have stuck to the Bible and Christian principles of good neighbourliness. Many denominations

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have used evangelization through mother tongues to plant churches among many northern migrant communities in Accra and Kumasi.

Introduction

The paper examines the extent to which literacy in the mother tongue and bible translation had helped in the spread of the Gospel among Northern migrants in southern Ghana. Missionaries who arrived in the country to evangelize had to impart literacy skills in the mother tongue to converts so that they could read the Bible since it was assumed that one understood any literature better if one could read it in one's own mother tongue.

Since 1962, the Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation had been engaged in mother tongue literacy and Bible translation in some areas in Ghana among which are the Konkomba, Bimoba, in the Northern and Frafra in the Upper East Regions respectively. Besides being able to read the Bible and understanding it better, it was expected that literacy would bring changes in attitudes, values and concrete behaviour of the people of the study areas. It was expected that understanding the biblical message better would as well help in its propagation which would culminate in many more people being converted and consequently many more churches being founded. It was also expected that the social and economic circumstances of the converts would improve considerably.

The paper discusses the correlation between mother tongue literacy, church growth, the understanding of Christianity and the quality of life of the people. How has mother tongue literacy infused African values and norms into Christianity? In what ways have the cultural orientations localized Christianity? How has Bible literacy skill acquisition enabled people to read other literature? How has it helped them to better understand their environment? How has mother tongue literacy allowed people to contextualize Christianity? The study used the qualitative research methodology. Unstructured interview guide and participant observation were used in generating data.

Much work has been done on translation and how it has helped in the spread of the Gospel. It is true that no one can translate into a target language without knowledge of the language, and this was demonstrated clearly by all missionaries who engaged in the translation of the Bible from one language to the other. Pfann² states that the Catholic Fathers arrived in Elmina in 1880, they opened schools for the children of the local people because schools are the best places to teach religion to the children and through these children attract the parents. They spent many hours a day memorizing vernacular and eventually succeeded in translating the Bible and other religious material which eventually helped in the propagation process.

Duthie³ indicates that when it came to reading the Bible “Only professional clergymen are expected to open and read from the 'English Bible' of the 'Authorized Version.’” It means a large majority of the people may not have access to the Bible since they could not open let alone read it. How could one be sure that the interpretation put on the Bible is not skewed such that it favoured only those who read it? It was only when many people could read and identify with the worldview of the Bible that they became convinced of the benefits to be derived from it. Bishop Neil cited in Barrett⁴ gives reasons for the rebellions that plagued the mission churches as the missionaries' loss of absolute authority over biblical interpretations. He says, with the advent of literacy, Africans began reading the Bible, especially the Old Testament, where they discovered that the Bible contained issues that were not different from their own perceptions of religion, and that the worldview the Bible presented was more related to their own, than to the worldview of the Europeans. Indeed since the new converts could not read the Bible in the original languages, the message of the Bible would have been put

² H M Pfann, *A Short History Of The Catholic Church* (Catholic Press: Cape Coast, 1965), 14.

³ A S Duthie, *Bible Translation and How to Choose Between*. (Exeter: Paternoster, 1985), 9.

⁴ D Barret, *Schism and Renewal in Africa, an Analysis of thousand contemporary Religious Movements*. (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968).

beyond the reach of the people,⁵ and this would have affected their intellectual achievement as well as their spiritual growth. The question of the importance of language in the propagation of the gospel crops up again and again. For instance Debrunner says, apart from Philip Quaque who had to speak to his countrymen in Cape Coast through an interpreter, because he had lost the command of his mother tongue Fanti, Fredrik Pederson Svane, a Ga, also found it difficult to explain the more important Christian terms in Ga. Even though Svane did not lose his language as Philip Quaque did he believed that his inability to explain things in Ga to his countrymen became a hindrance to their “being converted in masses to Christianity, as he had hoped to see them when he went out as a self-appointed missionary.”⁶ Everything pointed to the fact that the only way to speed up the evangelizing process was for the missionaries to learn and translate what literature there was into the local language. In fact, Rev. Capitein and Catechist Protten found a way out of this problem. Capitein and Protten were said to have translated a simple catechism into Elmina Fanti and Ga respectively. Debrunner states that both translations were printed into booklets that contained the Dutch or Danish text as well as the vernacular. The idea was that, after being able to learn to read the Ga or Fanti, the children would automatically learn to read the Dutch or Danish.

According to Clark⁷ the Basel Mission Committee had sent out missionaries to the Gold Coast to open schools and in general live in brotherly love with the Africans. But the real intent of the missionaries for setting up schools was to teach the local people how to read and write. Formal education in the mother tongue in Ghana began with the efforts of these early Christian missionaries. They realized that the only means to spread their religion, as effectively as possible, was to teach the converts to read the scriptures in their own languages, and to show through the

⁵ Duthie, *Bible Translation and How to Choose Between*, 17.

⁶ H W Debrunner, *A History Of Christianity In Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing, 1967), 70.

⁷ P B Clark, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Anold Publications, 1986).

study and use of the African languages that those who spoke the African languages were not less than other human beings.⁸ One event however that posited the importance of mother tongue is the event that unfolded on the day of Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. It is important to note that by the things that unfolded in Acts 2:5-6 that God purposed the message to be preached to all nations and tongues; hence, the apostles, who were to carry the message, were to have a foretaste of the need to speak languages other than their own in order to reach their target groups.

The nineteenth century also witnessed an intense and sustained translation of the Bible into many African languages; and the missionaries were insistent on the mother tongue being used in all religious interactions. The Basel Missionaries, for example, made sure that at all cost, the African heard the word in his own mother tongue.⁹ In fulfillment of this policy, Johannes Zimmerman had translated the Bible into Ga by 1866 and J. G. Christaller also translated the Bible into Twi in 1871. John Tylor, who was born in Sierra Leone of Ibo parents and who did a pioneering work in Ibo, translated the New Testament into Igbo in 1886. Other pioneers were Bishop S. A. Crowther, who worked in Yoruba, Nupe, and Igbo languages; S. W. Koelle who worked on Kanuri and Vai, and compiled the Polyglotta Africana in 1854 (consisting of 283 words in 156 languages) and J. F. Schon who published studies on the translations of Hausa, Igbo and Mende.¹⁰ Indeed all over Africa in the nineteenth century, translation work was vigorously pursued to the extent that Lamin Sanneh concluded that “The African Church movement of the nineteenth century was the result of vernacular forces

⁸ A Bamgbose, “The changing Role Of Mother Tongue Education,” In: Bamgbose, *Mother Tongue Education, The West African Experience* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), 9.

⁹ B Y Quarshie, “Doing Biblical Studies In The African Context, The Challenge of Mother Tongue,” *The Journal Of African Christian Thought* Vol. 5 No. 1 (2002): 7

¹⁰ Bamgbose, “The changing Role Of Mother Tongue Education,” 10.

mobilized by the juggernaut of translation.”¹¹ Quarshie again argues that Western theology has been dominant mainly because it had been produced in languages that have been dominant, citing German, French, English, Portuguese and Spanish that had become known to many people. This fact, Quarshie says, indicates the importance of language for the whole theological enterprise in any given context; he then posits that the role of indigenous languages of Africa in theologizing must be further exposed. He believes that this issue becomes pertinent when it comes to the word of God, the Bible, which is the primary focus of the discipline of biblical studies. He goes further to say that the introduction of Jesus Christ, the logos (word) of God, into any culture may happen without the Bible, but whether Jesus is welcome, feel at home and stay or remain in the culture, will depend upon whether the Bible is also introduced, is also born into the culture, and this means the translation of the Bible into the mother tongue of the culture, of which it is an embodiment.

Literacy

In his introduction to *Methods of Large Scale Literacy Assessment in Adult Education in Africa*, the editor, William Griffith,¹² the editor says, the 3rd International Conference on Adult Education held in Tokyo in August 1972 brought to the fore the problems relating to primary education in Asia, the Arab states, and Africa. According to him, 45% of school age children in Asia, 50% in Arab states, and 60% in Africa do not attend primary school. He argues further that:

If it is valid to assume that the primary school is to be the principal and commonly the sole institution designed to develop literacy in the age group, then the fact that

¹¹ Quarshie, “Doing Biblical Studies In The African Context, The Challenge of Mother Tongue,” *JACT*, 2.

¹² W Griffith, “Methods of Large Scale Literacy Assessment,” In: *Adult Education: Third International Conference On Adult Education* (Tokyo: United Nations Education, 1 Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 1973), 3.

approximately half of the school age children in major areas of the world are not attending such schools leads to the inescapable inference that the number of adult illiterates is constantly being replenished as education struggles to improve the literacy skills of a small percentage of the pool of adult illiterates.¹³

Griffith believes that illiteracy can be appreciably reduced even though he is of the view that it is utopian to think so. One of the objectives of literacy programmes for adults the world over is to teach them to read and write. This has been the main issue in Europe from the eighteenth through to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In many developing countries the drive for literacy is adult education. According to Griffith, the value of being able to read and write lies not in itself, but in other skills and knowledge to which it opens the way. The term 'adult literacy' goes beyond activities designed for adults to read and write simple sentences. It has been observed that such restricted skills are of little utility and so subject to decay. He says further that the aim of literacy campaigns is functional literacy, the achievement of some level of reading and writing, and numeracy adequate for effective participation in the life of one's community. The lack of such technical competence is not, however, seen merely as a cause, but perhaps more fundamentally, in advanced countries, as a consequence, of exclusion from effective participation. This exclusion is seen as a product of social, cultural, economic and political conditions rather than educational ones; but some improvement may be achieved, it is believed, by including training in life skills under the umbrella of literacy and numeracy. Such programmes according to Griffith are generally designated 'adult basic education'.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization's revised recommendation concerning the international standardization of educational statistics makes distinction between literacy and functional literacy. On literacy, it states that "a person is literate who can with

¹³ Griffith, "Methods of Large Scale Literacy Assessment," 3.

understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life.” Functional literacy, however, has to do with an individual who is “engaged in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his own and his community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development.”¹⁴

According to Cipolla¹⁵ with the coming into being of the nation state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe and areas of European settlement, it became necessary to speak of literacy policies. This state of affairs was as a result of cultural, social, economic and technological forces that emerged at this period in time. Socio-culturally, vernacular languages (European languages besides Latin) in written form gradually displaced Latin, and provided the media for popular literacy. This was facilitated by the replacement of the parchment by paper introduced into Europe by the Arabs, and the invention of the moveable type press during the fifteenth century; indeed with this new development, a wide selection of printed texts became available for the first time. The Reformation also served as a source of motivation for literacy by linking the reading of the Bible to religious virtue and ultimately eternal salvation. Indeed, literacy developed most rapidly in Protestant Europe since there was a mass desire to read the Bible in languages that could be better understood than Latin. The Industrial Revolution also provided the motivation for the advancement of literacy. Generally speaking, as human habitation went through the form of metamorphosis from village to city life, and the factory took over from the farm, life went through a transformation that helped in the diffusion of reading and writing.

Indeed Ryan made it clear that “The manner in which these forces of change reinforced one another is demonstrated by the interrelationship

¹⁴ J W Ryan, “Linguistic Factors In And Literacy,” In: V. R. Kavanagh J F *Orthography, Reading and Dyslexia* (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1980), 78.

¹⁵ C M Cipolla, *Literacy & Development In The West* (Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1969), 71.

among literacy, science and technology.”¹⁶ Cipolla argues convincingly, that the spread of literacy in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries rescued science from the sterility of the universities and brought it into the workplace where applied and experimental science, the precursors of modern sciences, came into being. Conversely, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, science was harnessed to technology and provided the motivation for literacy; the nature of work and the manner of life were so altered that the abilities to read and write and calculate became essential economic skills and not merely scholarly attributes. Looking back, it can be said that literacy spread very fast in the “developed” world because intellectual, cultural, political and economic forces associated with a profound transformation of society which had created the need, demand, and means for literacy. Fishman notes that the introduction of writing systems and by extension, the promotion of literacy is, “revolutionary rather than narrow technical acts. They succeed or fail on the basis of the success of the larger revolutions with which they are associated influence.”¹⁷ By these measures and others, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were auspicious for literacy. Incidentally, it is at this period in time, that is, the nineteenth century that serious missionary work started in the Gold Coast. According to Williamson¹⁸ the Basel missionaries arrived in 1828 and settled in the eastern half of the country. They were followed by the Wesleyans who worked in the western part of the country and the Catholics, who had an earlier experience in the country, re-launched their missionary activity in 1880 by sending Father Augustus Moreau and Eugene Murat to Elmina.

¹⁶ Ryan, “Linguistic Factors In And Literacy,” In: V R Kavanagh J F., *Orthography, Reading and Dyslexia*, 78.

¹⁷ J A Fishman, “Adult Literacy,” In: C J Titmus, *Lifelong Education For Adults, An International Handbook* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989), 78.

¹⁸ S G Williamson, *The Akan Religion and the Christian Faith: A Comparative Study of the Impact of Two Religions*. Accra: n.p., 1965.

Mother Tongue Literacy and Bible Translation

According to Edward Sapir¹⁹ language is a purely human and non-mutative method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbol. Devitt²⁰ corroborates Sapir's assertion by positing that language is used for non-informational and social interactions between us and others. Language however is not merely a tool fashioned to achieve limited and temporary goals; it is a dynamic and cultural resource, reflecting the spirit of the people and illuminating their sense of values.²¹ In his contribution to language as a cultural element, Schaefer indicates that "Language is a critical element of culture that sets humans apart from other (animal) species."²² Schaefer states that members of a society generally share a common language which facilitates day-to-day exchange with others. Akrofi²³ agrees with the linkage of language to culture when he states that language is an indispensable factor of national life and it provides the most adequate means of expressing what people feel, think and will. Indeed when a people claim to have heard God spoke to them, it had always been through a language. God speaks to such people in known and comprehensible tongues. Language therefore, plays a significant role in Christian mission. On communication between God and humans, Sanneh intimated that "Languages have an intrinsic merit for communicating the divine message. They are worthy of God's attention. Languages make translation feasible and primarily serve as a vehicle for the consolidation of the Christian message. The debate on church

¹⁹ E Sapir., *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York: Harcourt Brace Company. 1921), 4.

²⁰ M Devitt, *Language and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Language*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1987).

²¹ L Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books. 1989), 165.

²² R T Schaefer, *Socially Around The World* (Toronto: McGraw Hill, 2004), 52.

²³ C A Akrofi, *Twi Kasa Mmara* (Accra: Scottish Mission Book Depot, 1937), VII.

growth in Africa goes with the interest in mother tongue.’²⁴

In 1962 the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) began work in Ghana under an agreement with the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. The Ghana Institute of Linguistics (GIL) was formed in 1970. Membership consisted of interested Ghanaians and all SIL members in Ghana. The original purpose of forming GIL was to identify with the local Christians. In 1971 the Ghana Institute of Linguistics Trust was established to hold the assets of SIL, which had no prior registered legal presence in the country. Three of the original trustees were Ghanaians, and three were expatriates. The trustees were appointed to administer the trust and any donations to it. In 1976 both Ghanaians and SIL members began to consider setting up a Ghanaian infrastructure so that the work of Bible translation would be well established; and in the event that SIL members were asked to leave the country, Ghanaians could be more directly involved in the work. Certainly another catalyst in transferring the work to a Ghanaian organization was the vision of some Ghanaian Christians that they must start organizing themselves to evangelize their own country.

In 1980 SIL in Ghana transferred all its assets and activities to GIL, and subsequently changed its name to the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation (GILLBT). Since 1980 all SIL personnel in Ghana have been seconded to GILLBT, and in 1983 the SIL Ghana Branch was dissolved.²⁵ At the local project level, the translation team has usually tried to enlist the cooperation of all of the area churches. At the regional level, GILLBT endeavours to foster good relationships with church leaders. Formerly, SIL also sent a representative to some of the meetings of the national church bodies, but this is not being done at the present time. GILLBT currently has a full-time staff person who carries

²⁴ L. Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond The West* (Grand Rapids: W. M. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2003), 100.

²⁵ Mary E Holman, “Towards a Bible Translation Strategy for the Chrokosi Church in Ghana,” Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Ghana, 1972.

out public relations activities in various congregations, telling about the work of GILLBT and endeavoring to enlist their financial and prayer support, as well as to recruit members. Courses are usually held at the local project level to train reviewers, writers, and literacy teachers. GILLBT also runs courses at the regional or national level to train mother tongue speakers from several language groups in translation principles, literacy programme planning, literacy supervision and committee work, and exegesis and translation of particular books of the New Testament. The goal of the literacy programme is that they be ongoing when the expatriate team has finished the translation and left the project while the goal of translation programme is to involve the local churches and people as much as possible so that they will recognize the benefit of the translated material and use it.²⁶

Northern Ethnic Groups and Migration to the South

Many northerners, for one reason or the other, migrate to the cities in the south, particularly Accra and Kumasi, as well as the mining and the cocoa growing areas in search of work. McCoy²⁷ indicates that in days gone by (around the 1940s), the Dagabas travelled to work in the mines during the dry season, but returned home to farm during the rainy season. With time however, many more people of northern extraction took up permanent residence in the south, going home occasionally. There were both literates and illiterates among these migrants. The illiterates particularly did menial work. Some southerners however had lived under the erroneous impression that all northerners were Hausa and were therefore Moslems. This belief held by southerners according to Lawrence Larewanu (former volunteer with the WEC Mission), had indeed worked towards alienating northerners and pushing them towards the periphery of society. According to the Ghana Evangelism Committee

²⁶ Holman, "Towards a Bible Translation Strategy for the Chrokosi Church in Ghana."

²⁷ H McCoy, *Great Things Happen* (Montreal: The Society of Missionaries Of Africa, 1988), 37.

findings, some migrants, who were not from the predominantly Islamic communities in the Northern Regions, took the reference to them as Moslems seriously and converted to Islam. It was to change this trend that the Ghana Evangelism Committee took the decision to reach out to migrants from the Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana. This outreach programme targeted the illiterates. The reason for targeting the illiterate was to help them learn to read and write in their mother tongues after which the Bible would be introduced to them. The whole idea was to counteract the conversion of migrants from the Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana to Islam, and to, as it were, use mother tongue literacy as a tool for evangelism among such migrants.

Ghana Evangelism Committee Mother Tongue Literacy Education and Church Planting

In 1988, the Ghana Evangelism Committee undertook a nation-wide survey of Churches in Ghana. The survey was aimed at documenting the number of churches, where they were located, their ethnic composition, and the population of the churches surveyed. The outcome of this survey showed, for the Accra area particularly, that there was very little northern presence in the churches, though northerners and aliens who were quite similar in outlook form about 20% of the population of Accra. According to Lerewanu, the survey showed that not more than a few hundreds of people from the Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana were counted. This situation indeed raised serious concerns and set the executive of the Ghana Evangelism Committee thinking of what to do. The then National Director of the Ghana Evangelism Committee, Ross Campbell, charged a committee with the responsibility of finding out why people of Northern extraction who lived in Accra had been apathetic to Christianity. Some of the reasons which came out were that southerners did not show respect to northerners. Another reason was that northerners who had not stayed for long in the south did not understand southern languages. Indeed the former reason did not make northerners feel at home with southerners, while the latter did not make them derive any benefit from becoming Christians.

The main strategy to deal with the problem posed by migrant northerners (apathy towards Christianity) was adult literacy (mother tongue literacy). As has been said earlier, many northerners who migrated to the south had very little or no education, and because of that they did menial jobs.

One of the objectives of the exercise in adult literacy was therefore to equip them with the necessary skills that would help them to find better employment. It was envisaged further that mother tongue literacy, particularly its functional dimension, would enhance their economic and social circumstances. In the long term, however, the adult literacy classes were geared towards equipping the participants with the reading skills so that they could read the Bible. It was also a way of reminding participants of their languages and traditions, that, though they were away from home, there was the need to continue to cherish their language. After this strategy was identified, the next step was a meeting that was scheduled between the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) and the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) to discuss the way forward. The contact person for GILLBT was Dr. Andy Ring, a sociolinguist, who discussed with the GEC delegation ways by which the envisaged programme could be tackled. Later, Roberta Hampton, also a linguist working for GILLBT, was seconded to the GEC in Accra. In Accra, Roberta Hampton organized the first literacy training programme for northern literates at the GEC premises in Accra. The training involved principles and methodology of adult education. After this training, the group went out to organize literacy classes for peoples of northern extraction in Accra. One of the first places that the GEC organized adult literacy classes was Tesano, a suburb of Accra. The first group of people who were mobilized was Frafra; they were told that the GEC was going to teach them to read and write in their own language. They were told further that, if they were able to read and write in their mother tongue, it would be easy for them to learn to read and write in English. The enthusiasm that greeted this announcement was great. The whole community agreed to take part and the class got started. Since the eventual aim of the literacy classes was to convert participants to Christianity, the classes served as platforms for

introducing pupils to the norms of the religion. After each class, a short message based on the Bible was delivered, after which prayers were said. Most of the pupils worked as porters in the market in the day time; for this reason, classes could only be held in the night. The lessons went on for six weeks, during which time most of the leadership of the GEC had discussions with the leadership of the Tesano Baptist Church to transfer the whole group to the church.

Though the bulk of the people decided to go to worship at Tesano Baptist Church, they would not join the southern congregation who they described as proud and arrogant. Indeed, before this time, the Baptist church had tried several times without success to convert members of this Frafra community to Christianity. Eventually, a classroom at the Baptist Preparatory School was allocated to the group where they have been worshipping since. The group does everything in Frafra. Songs are sung with traditional rhythm and Christian lyrics.

In a bid to contextualize Christianity, they use traditional musical instruments and perform traditional dances at service. The Frafra are a people who do not feel ashamed of their cultural heritage and have shown this attitude in their worship. At the time of this interview, two members of the original group that was transferred to the Tesano Baptist Church had entered Bible Colleges to train as pastors.

The success of the experiment with the Tesano Frafra community convinced the Ghana Evangelism Committee of the efficacy of the mother tongue literacy classes as a tool for establishing Northern churches in southern Ghana. They thought this strategy could also be sold to the churches; if they agreed to use it, then it could lead to a rapid state of church planting among northerners in the south, as happened in the north. Accordingly, the then National Director at the GEC and his assistant visited various churches in Accra and held meetings with denominational heads. At such meetings the strategy was presented and discussed. The next stage of the programme involved the Ghana Evangelism Committee officials visiting the various northern communities in Accra to identify the languages of the most dominant

northern groups. Literacy classes were then held in these languages. Later these literacy classes were turned into churches and handed over to one of the established churches to take care of. According to Lerewanu, the Ghana Evangelism Committee worked effectively among language communities such as the Frafra, Kasem, Balsa and Kusasi; later Dagbani, Mampruli and Hausa churches were established. These churches that were planted among single ethnic groups became known as mono-ethnic churches.

Response of the Churches

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana was one of the few Churches that responded to the idea of reaching out to the people of northern extraction in Accra; later it was extended to cover the Ashanti Region. Indeed, in response to the idea, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana created a department, the Northern Outreach Programme at its head office in Accra and placed the Rev. Solomon Sule Saa in charge. Later the whole country was divided into two, the Accra and the Ashanti zones. The Reverend Ministers, Solomon Sule Saa and John Azuma, were put in charge of the Accra zone and the Kumasi (Ashanti) zones respectively. In setting up the Northern Outreach Programme in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana thus exploited the potential of mother tongue literacy to establish congregations among northern ethnic groups in the Accra and Kumasi areas and beyond. Such churches, once established, were not left on their own, but were nurtured into 'adulthood' and were made to thrive. The Presbyterian Church did this by helping members to attain some level of vocational competency, so that they could fend for themselves, and particularly to lift themselves from the periphery of society to the centre. By equipping them with literacy skills, it was expected that they would also reach out to their northern brothers in the south, and eventually in the north, with the gospel. Later, the Church of Pentecost also selected Pastor Patrick Aseyero to be in charge of its outreach programme. Besides these churches no other church, dedicated ministers to the Northern Outreach Programme; rather, individual congregations showed interest in the programme. For instance, Mount Olivet Methodist Society in Dansoman founded and sponsored the Builsa Church at Sukura in Accra. Round about 1989, the Worldwide

Evangelization Crusade (WEC) missionaries, represented by Joshua Siu from Hong Kong showed interest in starting work among the Frafra. This work was facilitated by the Ghana Evangelism Committee. Interestingly Joshua Siu decided to reach out to the Frafra through mother tongue literacy. A literacy class at Maamobi in Accra later grew into the Evangelical Church of Ghana. The Evangelical Church of Ghana believed that a viable church thrived on the wellbeing, industry and vocation of its members and it therefore established a computer training centre to train the youth in the church. It as well established a vocational school and opened its doors to other members of the community. Located in a densely populated suburb of Accra and in a predominantly Islamic community, the Maamobi Evangelical Church of Ghana has grown to embrace other ethnic groups such as Akans, Ewes and Hausas, thus ceasing to be a mono-ethnic church. In spite of this development, church records showed that 90% of members were Frafra. However, unlike the Frafra Church at Tesano Baptist Church, which could boast of young people, some of whom had bridged over to formal education and were in Bible Colleges at the time of this survey, the membership of Evangelical Church of Ghana was composed mainly of adults. These were people who had migrated to Accra to work for a living. They had neither the capacity nor the desire to go beyond mother tongue literacy to the formal system and then enter Bible Colleges. This is not to say that bridging over to formal education was necessarily an objective for entering Bible Colleges. It however did help interested converts to make that choice. Back in the north, a few people had plucked up the courage and have had Bible College training and had become pastors. A typical example was Pastor Samuel Apeligiba of the Evangelical Church of Ghana; he was the overseer of the church in the Bolgatanga, Tongo and Nabdam areas.

Besides the Tesano and Maamobi churches, there were other Frafra churches in Darkuman, Abeka, Dome, Teshie-Nungua, La, Tema New Town, Ashaiman, Korle Gonno ,which were all started out of mother tongue literacy classes. The Darkuman, Abeka and Korle Gonno Churches were born out of the Tesano literacy classes. The Dome Church however sprang out of the Maamobi Church. It was confirmed

at the offices of the Ghana Evangelism Committee that the Evangelical Church of Ghana was founded by the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (WEC) whose missionary Joshua Siu was. Most of the learning materials were bought from the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation. These materials were supplemented with those prepared by Joshua Siu. Indeed it is not all the mono-ethnic churches in Accra that were planted out of literacy classes; rather, as people gathered to worship, they noticed the void created by their inability to read the scriptures themselves. This realization made them invite people to teach them to read and write in their own languages and then in English

Though the general perception was that, ability to read the Bible in the mother tongue enhances understanding of the scriptures, some respondents at the Maamobi Frafra Church dispute this claim. According to a respondent, English made things clearer to him. He said this, based on the assumption that the Frafra language had limited vocabulary, and did not have lexical items that could be translated directly into English. As a result translators had to engage in meaning based translation. Pupils as a result did not have the opportunity to learn the equivalent Gurene words in English, and vice-versa. While not holding brief for mother tongue literacy, it is important to note that this complaint came mainly from respondents who have had formal education before joining the literacy classes. Some of these people were also recruited as resource persons in the literacy classes. The foregoing phenomenon perhaps was one of the reasons behind pupils calling for lessons in English to be organized for them at the inception of the literacy classes in the 1970s and the 1980s.

Konkomba Yam Market Church

The Konkomba Church at the Konkomba Yam Market did not spring out of literacy classes. Rather, Konkombas who travelled from the Northern and Volta Regions to sell yam, and who over time decided to stay in Accra, had come together to form the congregation. The congregation however comprised men and women who have had training in mother tongue literacy, as well as people who have had formal education in the north. The interesting thing about the Konkomba was that, whenever a

compatriot arrived in Accra, money was contributed to help the person settle and to engage in the yam trade. The newly arrived was then drafted into the church. Two Konkomba churches operate at the Konkomba Yam Market; the first was sponsored by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the second by the Evangelical Church of Ghana. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church had had a very long association with the Konkomba; the church has branches in the Konkomba areas, and has schools (basic) including a Senior High School in Saboba, the district capital. To keep faith with Konkomba, therefore, the church had, 'tracked down' the migrant Konkomba and sponsored a church for them in Accra.

Benefits

Northern converts in the diaspora talked about the immense benefits that they have derived first in learning to read and write in their mother tongue, and in becoming Christians. According to respondents in the Maamobi Church, one of the greatest benefits members the Frafra community talks about is the unity that has been forged amongst members. Before, there were various groups among the Frafra community. These groups occasionally clashed over girls and also over which of them was superior; these led to fights. However, when the literacy classes were started, and particularly when they were turned into churches, the various rival groups came together, and from that time onwards had seen each other as belonging to the same church and therefore the same family. This has resulted in all the members feeling responsible towards one another, especially in times of trouble. A factor that has contributed towards cementing this unity was the end of year parties that the church organizes and to which non-Christian Frafra were invited. Eventually these invitees end up becoming members of the church. This particular phenomenon gives credence to Gyasi et al's assertion that people from the same ethnic groups who find themselves in the diaspora, see themselves as brothers and are ready to go to each other's help in times of trouble.²⁸ Indeed, money was said to be

²⁸ S B Gyasi et al, "Sub-Saharan Africa in Language and Ethnic Identity," In: J. A. Fishman, ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

contributed by members to be donated to members who had had a brush with the law, members who were about to marry, and those who were organizing naming ceremonies.

Before they became literate in their mother tongue and became Christians, some respondents said they misused their resources on cigarettes, alcohol and other women besides their wives (for those who had married). Young men who were not married as well spent their hard earned income on women. They hardly thought of sending their children to school. Men had the belief that, if their wives left them, they (the men) would have no difficulty in getting other women to marry. The exhortation of the Bible that men should love their wives and care for them, however, became a motivating factor in their change of attitude towards their wives and children. Mother tongue literates could read the Bible and understand the Sunday school lessons better. Such people had self-confidence and were able to lead the congregation when they were called upon to do so. Another benefit was the moderating effect that Christianity had had on the behaviour of converts. The adage that cleanliness is next to godliness, according to respondents, had helped them immensely. This was because, since becoming Christians, they, particularly the women, had been taught at the Women's Fellowship to keep their environment clean. They were also taught to keep good personal hygiene. This had brought some happiness to their homes as their husbands had shown appreciation for the effort in keeping the house clean. Even among those who could not read and write Gurene, they were proud that their children could. For example, at the Darkuman Church, a male respondent, who could neither read nor write, proudly pointed at his daughter and said, “she learnt to read and write for me”.

With regard to marriage, some respondents said they met and married their spouses in the Church. They said that, though they still would have married if they had not joined the church, it was a privilege to marry somebody who believed in and shared the same faith with them. One factor that deepened the bond of unity between members of the literacy classes and eventually the church, was the fact that, when there was a problem involving a Frafra, non-Christian compatriots just sent their

contributions and left the place. Christian compatriots, however, in addition to their contribution, stayed behind to give what other support was necessary to minimize the effect of the problem on that compatriot. The numeracy aspect of the literacy programme had as well been beneficial to respondents, particularly the women. According to some female respondents, they kept records of how they used their house - keeping money (chop money) given to them by their husbands. They were able to render a good account of how the money was disbursed when asked to do so. Respondents had also learnt to save their monies in the banks as taught at church meetings.

Challenges

In spite of the foregoing benefits that respondents have had from learning to read and write in their own languages, there were difficult challenges in the social, economic and

religious spheres of the lives of respondent. Economically, it was difficult to measure any upliftment in the lives of respondents. Most of them were still not working or were doing the same kind of work. Most of them were porters at the market, while others were watchmen and houseboys. Though they made the most of what they earned, their circumstances could still be compared to those at the periphery of society. Most of the women and some of the men were still dependent on their husbands and their siblings respectively for their sustenance. As a result it would be difficult to say that mother tongue literacy had helped in the economic improvement of respondents. Even where there was a semblance of economic improvement, respondents say one could not attribute everything to mother tongue literacy. Generally, respondents were advised not to drink, smoke or engage in sexual promiscuity. This advice, rather than literacy, had helped them to save what monies they earned, and made judicious use of.

Religiously, respondents still have challenges relating to non-commitment of some members to the church. These people would normally attend church service, but they left before the service came to an end. The greatest challenge however was posed by relatives back home in the north who were not Christians. On their return home,

converts were most often required to present fowls and goats for sacrifices. Since this was a challenge to their faith, some said they managed to come to terms with such relatives by explaining their changed circumstances. Some other respondents often were not so lucky and this resulted in strained relations with members of their lineages back in the Northern and Upper Regions. For some female respondents, they faced challenges from their husbands who had not converted. Such men went out on drinking sprees, only to come back home to physically assault them. A few who were formerly Moslems had long feuds with their husbands and family members for converting. An example of such a case was a respondent (Ernestina) at the Maamobi Church, who was healed of a disease through prayers. She then enrolled at the literacy classes and became a member of the church. According to her, curses were rained on her, but she stood her ground. Later, when her husband was also healed of some diseases that plagued him through prayers, he joined her in the church. The rest of the family had vowed not to have anything to do with them anymore.

Within the churches, some dance forms were frowned upon, even though members felt there was the need to contextualize Christianity, as seen particularly in the Tesano Frafra Church. These dance forms were war dances, and some people felt it was inappropriate to introduce them into Christian worship. It was worth noting however that, some respondents who used to be Moslems intimated that if indeed the Koran had been translated into Frafra, they would not have converted into Christianity. This assertion gave credibility to the perception that, when a people were taught to read and write in their own language, it facilitated their understanding of what was read and it helped them to make informed choices. For this group of respondents, their ability to read and write had helped to ingrain their faith in the Christian religion.

Not much can be said about respondents' social lives. The fact that some of them were not working made it difficult for them to earn decent incomes. Such people also depended most of the time on their compatriots or their husbands. According to such respondents, life generally was harsh in Accra, something they had not envisaged. To this

assertion however it is important to indicate that mother tongue literacy was neither a means, nor training for one to get employment in the formal sector of the economy. Its main objective was to get people to learn to read the scriptures and understand them in their own languages. It is sad to say that local languages (those being talked about) had not been, “imbued with the necessary ingredients to enable them perform in the social, political and the economic environment.”²⁹ This phenomenon, as well as the lack of employable skills, contributed to the unemployment of respondents.

Finally, it is significant to note that, while some of the churches were trying to contextualize Christianity through the use of indigenous languages and indigenous songs and dances, the Frafra Church in Dome was doing something different. Their children were reciting Bible passages in English, singing songs in English, and performing Western type dances. Indeed this phenomenon was a challenge to the long term projection and objective of the church; since Dome and Achimota are multi-linguistic environments, the likelihood that these children may discard their own language for a more prestigious and an economically viable language was high.

The children at worst could be taught the pride in performing in their mother tongue instead of in a foreign one. On the other hand, as noted earlier the church is located in a multi-ethnic environment. Besides this, English is a medium of instruction in school and an official language of the country. The children therefore needed to imbibe everything that would enable them to function effectively in society as well as help to enrich worship. In addition, it was necessary for the children to showcase what they were studying in school to their parents.

²⁹ C M Eastman, “Language Planning In Post-apartheid South Africa,” *TESOL Quarterly Report* (1990): 26-29.

Conclusion

Language is a dynamic and cultural resource, reflecting the spirit of the people and illuminating their sense of values. Mother tongue literacy and Bible translation has facilitated church planting, economic and social development of northern ethnic group migrants to Southern Ghana. There correlation between mother tongue literacy, church growth, the understanding of Christianity and the quality of life of the people. This paper has demonstrated that when people are confronted with the Bible in their mother tongues the result is a change life and attitude.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Church, Culture and Spirits Adventism in Africa by Kwabena Donkor, editor. Silver Spring, MD 20904: Bible Research Institute, 2011, 239 pages; ISBN 978-0-925675-20-0. Reviewed by Jonathan E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor.

The Church, Culture and Spirits Adventism in Africa is a collection of articles by twelve scholars from the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Africa. The central proposition of the book is that there is a challenge confronting the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Africa which has come about as a result of the Pentecostal and Charismatic backgrounds of many converts into the church; they have introduced deliverance ministries into the churches in Africa, and that has heightened the question of demons and demon possessions, witchcraft, magic, curses and other spiritualistic related phenomena. The book is thus designed to help African Christians, particularly Seventh-Day Adventists, make biblically informed decisions about contemporary trends in Christianity in Africa (p.4).

Kwabena Donkor (PhD), the editor, organized the book into three sections: Seventh-Day Adventists in Africa and the Challenge of Spiritualist Manifestations; The Bible and Spiritualistic Manifestations; and Responding to the Challenge of Spiritualistic Manifestations. Section one which focuses on challenges as they manifest themselves in the African cultural and practical environment, is made up of three papers by Andrews Ewoo, "Spiritualistic Manifestations Challenging the African Church," emphasizes the reality of demons and the manifestations of their activities in a victim's life (pp. 11-21); Philemon O. Amanze and J. A. Kayode Makinde, "Mystical Powers and How Africans Get Involved," focuses on the magic, witchcraft, traditional African medicine, and how crises in peoples' lives and unusual spiritual phenomena, make victims participate in these (pp.23-35); Zaccheus Mathema, "Towards an Understanding of the African Worldview," discusses some aspects of African beliefs and culture that lean themselves toward spiritualistic phenomena (pp. 37-48).

Section two looks at the issue from Biblical perspective. Four papers are presented as follows: Brempong Owusu-Antwi, "Demons and Demonic Activities in the Bible," discusses the origin, nature, reality, and activity of demons from both the Old and New Testament documents (pp. 51-67); Kwabena Donkor, "Ancestor Worship, Biblical Anthropology, and Spiritualistic Manifestations in Africa," examines the anthropology of the African worldview in relation to the biblical view of humanity's origin, composition, and destiny (pp. 69-89); Donkor continues with another paper on "Curses in African Religious Thought and Contemporary Christian Practice: A Biblical Perspective," focusing on curses afflicting God's people, which have given rise to contemporary Charismatic deliverance ministries (pp.91-104); Ekkehardt Mueller, "Evil Powers and Occult Practices in the Apocalypse," looks at the subject of the occult in the book of Revelation and how it relates to spiritualism as history draws to a close (pp. 105-129).

Section three deals with the more practical aspects of spiritualistic manifestation. It has five papers: Nathaniel Walemba, "The Experience of Salvation and Spiritualistic Manifestations," discusses how the genuine experience of salvation in Christ should inform one's response to demonic activities in one's life (pp. 133-143); Vida Mensah, "The Role of the Individual in Coping with Spiritualistic Manifestations," explains how a Christian should respond to spiritualistic manifestations on a personal level (pp. 145-156); Canaan Mkombe, "The Role of the Church Community in Coping with Spiritualistic Manifestations," discusses a local congregation can do to minister to victims of spiritualistic powers (pp. 157-166); Lamech Miyayo, "Casting out Demons: Lessons from the Bible," gives guidance from the Scriptures to those who minister to the people under demonic attack (pp. 167-175); Sampson Nwaomah, "Anointing with Oil in African Christianity: An Evaluation of Contemporary Practices," appraises some anointing practices in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, and draws pertinent conclusions to help the church in Africa on the subject of anointing (pp. 177-191).

The book is full of repetitions which may weigh down casual readers. On the other hand the repetitions were unavoidable since each scholar was

given the free hand to address the issue of demonic problems and related spiritual phenomena that has plagued Christians from different perspectives. The use of “Spiritualistic Manifestations,” may be the editor's way of stitching the articles together into a unified whole. The contexts of the authors is significant; they are from West, East and South Africa; Central and North African writers are missing in the selection; one wonders if there are no Adventist scholars in Religious Studies in these part of Africa.

The spiritual manifestations are not peculiar to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church alone. The other strands of Christianity in Africa – Mission Churches, African Indigenous Churches, Pentecostal Churches, Neo-pentecostal Churches, and Prophetic Movements – also experience these manifestations. The individual scholars are commended for writing on the topics; and the editor for putting the papers into a book. I recommend this book for students of Religious Studies, and for all those who pursue courses in African Christianity, African Pentecostalism and Charismatism; and for all who are called into the deliverance ministry.

BOOK REVIEW

Entrusted with the Word: A History of the Bible Society of Ghana, 1965-2015 by David Nii Anum Kpobi. Accra. Publishers: Heritage Publications, 2015, 147 pages. ISBN 978-9988-2-1971-0. Reviewed by Abamfo Ofori Atiemo.

The publication of this book makes the history of the Church in Ghana more complete than it has been up to this point. The story about the establishment and growth of a society, whose major tasks involve the production and distribution of the Bible in Ghanaian mother-tongues, deserves a place in any history of the Church in Ghana. Its history is as important as the history of the denominational bodies that propagate particular interpretations of the Bible in their bid to win converts to the Christian faith. In that sense, this book fills an unwarranted historical gap that has been allowed to exist for so long.

Histories of the Church in Ghana have, conventionally, been treated according to denominations; and though in a few cases, they have also accounted for the work of para-church organisations such as the Scripture Union (SU), the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), they hardly pay any attention to organisations dedicated to Bible work such as the Bible Society of Ghana (BSG). It is against this background that the significance of Professor Kpobi's book may be seen. Appropriately titled, *Entrusted with the Word*, the book tells the story of the Bible Society of Ghana in a way that links it with Ghanaian Mission and Church history. It connects the history of the origin and growth of Christianity in Ghana with mission-minded Christian groups and individuals on the different sides of the Atlantic, whose decisions and activities resulted in the successful planting of the Church in the country. With an Epilogue written by Mr Michael Farchie, who served as Business manager of the Bible Society of Ghana from 1964 to 1971, the book is organised into five stimulating chapters. The first chapter traces the history of the Bible in Ghana under the topic, 'the Bible in Ghana' and covers events and developments that took place between the fifteenth

and the twentieth centuries. It echoes the speculation by earlier historians that the earliest copy of the Bible in Ghana must have come with the Portuguese explorers in the fifteenth century. The chapter also tells the story of the earliest attempts to convert Ghanaians to Christianity; an attempt which actually brought Ghanaians into direct contact with the Bible for the first time. More relevant developments to note are the efforts in the eighteenth century directed at the translations of portions of the Bible into the Mfantse dialect of the Akan language. This anticipated one of the core mandates of the Bible Society of Ghana - translation. The second chapter sets the historical background which enabled the author to place the history of the Bible Society of Ghana in the context of the global history of Bible Societies as they developed in Britain and spread to other parts of the world. Chapters Three and Four launch the reader into the history of the formation, growth and development of the Bible Society of Ghana. It also analyses how the Society sought to fulfil its mandate through well-calculated activities. Chapter five, the concluding chapter, is dedicated to reflections on on-going projects, current challenges and the prospects of the Society as it positions itself to confront the complex and breath-taking transformations of the contemporary era and beyond.

The book is generously splashed with pictures of historic personalities and events. These pictures have more than ornamental effect. They help bring the past alive and enable the reader visualise aspects of the story told in words in order to appreciate it better. The book is of average size: one hundred and forty-seven pages; but long enough to contain the history of the Bible Society of Ghana from 1965 to 2015. The print-characters are big enough for the eyes and make reading easy; the binding is neatly done; and the simple, but interesting, writing style with beautifully framed phrases, places the book equally within the reach of both the ordinary reader and the sophisticated scholar. Nevertheless, page numbers for the various chapters in the 'Table of Contents' have been omitted. This leaves the reader to flip through the book to find where chapters and sub-headings begin and end. This almost mars the beauty of an excellent work. Yet, that small error takes nothing out of the quality of the fascinating narrative approach the author employs.

Having served notice in the introduction that he would present his material topically rather than chronologically, he is able to do an integrated presentation in most of the chapters, tracing developments, events and personalities as they are related to themes across the different eras. This, for example, allows him to treat activities of individuals and groups, who made efforts to teach, distribute and translate the Bible from the eighteenth century to the early twentieth century under the general topic, 'The Bible in Ghana' (p.21). In chapter two, the reader finds again another example of the strength of this approach. Choosing the title, 'Origins of Bible Society', he weaves the narrative around the formation and subsequent activities of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), and avoids creating the impression that the various regions had developments that were unrelated to one another. This approach also helps to bring into sharp relief, aspects of the history that could have been lost on most readers in a strictly chronological presentation. A case in point is the collaboration between individuals and groups of different denominational backgrounds in Bible work; and the support extended by the state in the initiatives to form a national Bible Society (p. 42).

Then also, the author recognises the important role of the decisions and actions of people- individuals and groups- in shaping societies and institutions. He therefore pays close attention to collective and individual roles played by people at the various stages in the formation and growth of the Bible Society of Ghana. He does not present us with a history of a faceless impersonal mass caught in the irresistible whirlwind of the forces of determinism. Even as a Calvinist theologian, he recognises the role of freewill under the hand of God in the making of history!

Exhibiting the growing and refreshing confidence which has become characteristic of most contemporary African Church historians, the Rev Prof Kpobi is bold to point out more than once, the role played by Africans in Bible work in Ghana since the 15th Century. Yet, he demonstrates a sophistication that does not sacrifice objectivity for ideological romanticism. In keeping with the demonstrable ecumenical spirit of Bible work from its beginnings, he stresses the great sacrifices

and generosity of the foreign and international pioneers whose work formed the foundation on which the Bible Society of Ghana built. As he puts it in the introduction, 'we have tried as much as possible not to obscure the importance of their respective roles' (p. 19). Bible work-translation, production and distribution - has mostly been a collaborative enterprise. The movement toward the formation of an autonomous Bible Society of Ghana, according to the author's interpretation, materialised because the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) consciously prepared the grounds for it. Years of collaboration of local experts with the BFBS had created a 'growing and formidable group of Ghanaians who could efficiently carry on the work' (p. 41).

The author actually, presents Bible work, especially, the aspect of translation in terms of a continuous activity that has been carried on since the 18th Century into the era of the Bible Society of Ghana (ch.4). That continuous activity has also had the support of local communities. He cites the example of the re-launch of the Asante Twi Bible in Kumasi in 1973, which the Asantehene and his chiefs enthusiastically supported. However, the author leaves the reader wondering the possible reasons behind the support from the Asantehene and his council. An attempt to establish the reason for their attitude would have been helpful in understanding the place of the Bible in modern Ghanaian society. Has the Bible in the mother-tongue become a source of cultural pride? Or did their attitude signify the acceptance of Christianity as a local tradition?

In a challenging situation of insufficient sources of data, the author shows admirable patience and skill in making creative use of the limited sources. His sources include important and relevant books such as Ekem's *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast* and Schaaf's *On their way Rejoicing: The History and the Role of the Bible in Africa*. In addition to secondary sources and primary sources such as correspondence, reports and minutes of meetings, the author interviewed persons who were players or living witnesses of the events discussed in the book.

Historians are normally concerned with the past; not so much with the future. Assembling data from the past and analysing, explaining and interpreting them is their duty. They do not normally dream into the

future. But not so for David Kpobi, a Church historian, who does theology from the frontlines Church life. He shows a deep concern for the Church and the nation when in his last chapter he decides to invite his readers to 'Dream Ahead' with him; an invitation I respectfully urge all of us to accept. He dreams about the deliberate involvement of the 'grassroots' in the work of Bible translation; how to ensure a continued commitment to producing mother-tongue translations of the Bible; and how to arrest the perceived decline in the use of Ghanaian mother-tongues. He also raises the issue of absence of attempts to produce Bible helps such as commentaries and dictionaries in Ghanaian mother-tongues; and laments the low commitment to ecumenism by contemporary Ghanaian churches. His other dreams include the production of more special purpose Bibles such as e-Bibles for the youth; Women's Bible and Children's Bible – all preferably, in the mother-tongues.

But the most fascinating three of his dreams, in my judgment, are the ones about the development of archives; the establishment of a Bible library and the building of a Bible Museum for the Bible Society of Ghana. The usefulness of such facilities, if the dream becomes a reality, will certainly be immense. I appeal to the Christian community in Ghana and their international partners abroad to support these initiatives if (or let me say, when) they are ever set in motion.

The research on which the book is based has revealed some significant facts about Bible work in Ghana. First, more than any other factor, Bible work has the power to unite Christians at home and abroad; second, there is no sufficient attention paid to the role of the Bible Society of Ghana in the Church and Mission history of Ghana; third, the state, in some cases, collaborated with the Church to promote Bible work in Ghana; fourth traditional leaders have supported Bible work in the mother-tongues of their traditional areas. Fifth Bible translation can enrich the mother-tongues and promote the proficiency of native and non-native speakers. Over all, the leadership of the Bible Society of Ghana can rejoice in the wise decision to assign Professor Kpobi the task of writing the commemorative history. They cannot feel disappointed by a work so

brilliantly done. They can only feel proud. The book has come to enrich the general history of the Church in Ghana. It is a must read for all who read the Bible as well as those with interest in the history of Christianity and ecumenism in Ghana.