

**PROPHETISM IN GHANA:
A CASE STUDY OF SOME CHARISMATIC CHURCHES**

**BY
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LEGON

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is in no way a reproduction, in part or in whole, of any work ever presented for the award of a degree. It is my own original research work.


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Superior


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Supervisor

DEDICATION

This work is respectfully dedicated to

My wife, Elorm Annabel A. Stiles-Ocran, two sons (David and Daniel), Rev. Prof. Elom Dovo, a Historian of Religion and Associate Professor of the University of Ghana, Rev. Dr. Cephas N. Omenyo, Senior Lecturer of the University of Ghana, Rev. Abamfo Atiemo, Lecturer of the University of Ghana and, Rev. P. M. K. Annor, Founder and President of Global Agape Chapel.



ABSTRACT

NEO-PROPHETISM IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF SOME CHARISMATIC CHURCHES

BY DAVID BLANKSON STILES-OCRAN

Prophetic Movement has been part and parcel of various forms of Christian renewals in Ghana. Focusing on Elisha Salifu-Amoako and Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku as a case study, it has been realized that the phenomenon of prophetism is not new to Ghanaian Christianity. The main approaches used in this study include historical, phenomenological, and theological. Today, there is tremendous proliferation of neo-prophets and their respective churches referred to in this study as the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*.

Prophet-led Charismatic Churches refer to some types of charismatic churches that are founded and organized under the leadership of individuals popularly called by their followers as "prophets", whose beliefs and practices are termed "Prophetic Ministry". The messages of these prophets centre mainly on the well-being of the individual.

The contemporary prophets believe and maintain that any experience of pain and suffering, especially ill-health and poverty, in the person's life is not of God. Prosperity, which is understood in terms of good health and acquisition of abundant wealth, is offered as a 'here and now' affair. And the best way of dealing with one's ill-health and poor situations is to identify one's *atanfo* or enemies who may be a close relative, and seek their total destruction through prayers. These prophets condemn the African Independent Churches and the use of candles, holy water, holy sand, holy oil, among others, for ritual bathing and healing, but they also use items like lime, honey, salt, soap, eggs, and others for healing and deliverance purposes.

Relevantly, the study brings to light the existence of these prophets who are securing an increasing following in the country, and also introduces a new typology into the Christian renewal movements in Ghana. Further, it serves as a background study on 'neo-prophetism' in Ghana.



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I am indebted to many people who have supported me in diverse ways to complete this work. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Rev. Prof. Elom Dovi, who actually guided in the choosing of this topic. Also, I sincerely acknowledge Rev. Abamfo Atiemo and Rev. Dr. Cephas Omenyo who are my supervisors, especially, for their immense scholarly contributions and encouragement.

I also acknowledge Rev. Bradford Yeboah who helped in the supervision of the work but had to leave for further studies outside the country. I am grateful for all your initial inputs and corrections. Mrs. Nana Aba Bentil-Mawusi, I am grateful for all your financial, material and moral support.

I also express my deep sense of gratitude to Ms Cynthia Dapaah for proof reading. Also, I thank Mr. Kokina Ayitey for your material and moral support. Kobina, your room became a place for me to lay my head when the son of man had no place to lay his head. God richly bless you. Also, my gratitude goes to Sister Harriet for allowing me to use her computer, Mr. Ampadu of the Samaritan Strategy for your material and moral support, and Stella for helping in the area of typing. Finally, but not the least, I am grateful to the entire leadership of the Global Agape Chapel.

My dear lovely wife and son had to stay apart because of my regular absence from home for research on the field. I thank them for their encouragement and co-operation.

D. B. S. O.

Legon, Ghana

July, 2004

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

It is worth noting that the phenomenon of prophets or prophecy is no new thing in the history of Christianity in Ghana. Scholars have done some work on prophets like William Wade Harris, Samson Oppong, and John Swatson.¹ Prof. Christian G. Baeta's seminal work, on '*Spiritual Churches*'², is a major study of the subject. These works, as most scholars would acknowledge, give some historical background to the emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana.

One of the latest additions to the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal movement in Ghana is a group of churches that may be properly called '*Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*'. This is a phenomenon that involves 'prophets' whose mode of operation is quite similar to that of the earlier prophets studied by Baeta between 1914 and 1960. Though the beliefs and practices of these contemporary prophets are significantly similar to those of the prophets studied by Baeta, they prefer their churches to be identified as '*Charismatic Churches*'.

¹ Some of these scholars are *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (1967) by Hans. W. Debrunner, *The Prophet Harris* (1971) by G. M. Haliburton, *African Indigenous Churches, An Historical Perspectives* (1997) by Ayeboyin Deji & Ishola Ademola, and others.

² Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of some Spiritual Churches* (London: Charles Birchall & Sons Ltd, 1962).

Despite the fact that there are prophets in the older Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, the emergence of the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*, particularly, since the 1990s, has been rapid in Ghana.

A careful observation of their 'prophetic' meetings reveal that the 'prophecies' of these prophets centre, mostly, on the socio-economic needs of their clients - marriage, wealth, and riches. It is interesting to note that most of these churches are filled with people who believe that seeking greener pastures outside the country is the only solution to their economic problems. This is reflected in the high percentage of clients who carry their passports with them for prayers to be said over them for easy acquisition of visas.

Furthermore, the prophets, who are mostly founders of their churches, use the electronic media (i.e. Radio and Television) as evangelistic platforms (that is, arena or grounds) to propagate their beliefs and practices. Through these means, it is believed they are able to address individuals in their homes *prophetically*; for example, calling out names that are naturally unknown to them, as well as describing a particular situation of the person. Most people, out of excitement and astonishment, get attracted to them especially when they are '*prophetically*' ministered to.

The study of Baeta, though was done in the 1960s, throws light on the on the contemporary phenomenon under study. Here, he observed that irrespective of the events or developments in the society,

The individual endowed with a striking personality and the ability to impose his will on the others, believing himself, and believed by others to be a special agent of some supernatural being or force, will emerge from time to time and secure a following.³

According to him, for some people, such individuals are seen to possess powers of healing, of revealing hidden things, predicting the future, cursing and blessing.⁴

Another notable feature about these prophets is the way and manner they relate and interpret dreams and visions of people who consult them for help. They tend to attribute the main cause of their woes to what is commonly known in the Akan dialect as *otanfo* or *atanfo* (i.e. enemy or enemies). In offering their advice, they appear 'to have access to privileged information about principalities and powers and how to outmanoeuvre them'.⁵

With respect to practices, for instance, some of the prophets demand that the clients take in limejuice or porridge sold to the clients for healing and deliverance, during their services. There are instances where these

³ Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of some Spiritual Churches*, (London: Charles Birchall and Sons Ltd, 1962), p. 6

⁴ Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p. 6.

⁵ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, (Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), p. 8

people are made to literally 'lash at imaginary demons' with canes when offering warfare prayer.

The above and many other features point to the fact that the group of churches encountered in this investigation may be a prototype of the prophets who emerged between 1914 and 1950. The researcher also has observed significant differences and similarities between the churches of the contemporary prophets and the older Charismatic Churches. Since they prefer to be identified with the latter instead of the Spiritual Churches, the name *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches* is suggested in this work.

The general public has also expressed their concern to this effect. The editor of a Christian magazine called *'The Watchman'* comments on the phenomenon and sees the emergence of the "young prophets" in, especially, Accra as one of the disturbing issues confronting Christianity in the country. The paper laments that these prophets have established themselves as "*demigods with great spiritual capabilities that enable them to tell you "everything" about yourself*".⁶

The following is another quotation from *The Watchman* that is deemed relevant to the problem raised:

⁶ Divine P. Kumah, 'The Prophetic "All-Nights" And Anointing For Sale', *The Watchman* 18 (10-23rd November, 1996).

The sudden rise in the use of titles, hitherto not common to us, gets many people confused at sight... Now, all of a sudden, the title PROPHET is becoming the dominant one, only second to Bishop. Why everyone is becoming a Prophet now is just strange. Just sit by your TV set at the time of the evening's announcements and you'll not be able to count the number of Prophets... The paradox is that, in the 70s, when the Evangelist was the leading title the mention of the Prophet... quickly tuned your mind to Musama Disco, Alladura, Twelve Apostles, etc. With the titles also comes a common phenomenon associated with the Churches mentioned-holy water, florida water, etc. Today, the Cinema-Hall Prophets are talking about olive oil and anointing, could there be a link.⁷

Similarly, *'the Spectator'*, a popular Ghanaian weekly newspaper, published an article entitled, "Beware of these False Prophets" which also points out that "prophetic ministry has become a big time profession for all who want to make money".⁸ The writer laments what he sees as the inequality that exists between the Biblical and the contemporary prophets. The article claims that the prophets of today are totally different in nature and attitude compared to the biblical ones. "They seem so sophisticated and stylish in their activities that eyebrows are raised at them. Their love for money has heightened to the extent of extorting money from their members."⁹

These and many other concerns have been raised, but how can one pronounce 'judgments' on these prophets without primarily having some organized information about them? This investigation seeks to unravel the origins, beliefs, and practices of these prophets. Also, the study discusses

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *The Spectator*, 787, ISSN 0855-1499 Saturday, Feb 22-Feb 28, 2003, p. 2

⁹ Ibid.

certain related concepts, which reveal the perspectives and perceptions of the contemporary prophets. This would provide some background information to further theological analysis.

Furthermore, this work discusses the all-embracing reason(s) for the emergence of these prophets in these contemporary times. Is it because the Mainline Charismatic Churches as well as the earlier renewals cannot still meet the wishes of their members? Are the contemporary prophets filling a vacuum?

Other issues raised include the question of who these prophets are, their origins, beliefs and practices; how they are organized, controlled, nurtured and maintained. What do they teach? What promises and hopes do they give? Who go to them? What challenges do they pose to the existing churches? Finally, in what ways are they different from the prophets of other Christian groups?

The issues raised demand scholarly attention and investigation primarily because of the high degree of concern the phenomenon has raised from the general public and Christians of other persuasions. The second reason is that, because of its spectacular nature, the phenomenon seems to flourish and proliferate in the face of the various criticisms from the

general public and some Christians with respect to doctrine, belief and practices.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this work are as follows:

1. To construct a history of the development of the prophetic movement in Ghana;
2. To discuss some popular concepts in the ministry of the contemporary prophets;
3. To discuss the similarities and the differences between the prophets within the Spiritual Churches and *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches* in Ghana;
4. To evaluate the role of the contemporary prophets in the Ghanaian society.

METHODOLOGY

The main approaches used in the study have been historical, phenomenological, and theological. The historical analysis is used because the contemporary phenomenon has to be compared with the older one. This would result in capturing the differences and similarities between the two eras, namely, the old prophets and the contemporary prophets in Ghanaian Christianity.

The analysis is said to be theological in the sense that the group under discussion is a Christian group whose beliefs and practices ought to be analysed. The interpretation given of certain biblical texts have resulted in the way they perform certain practices.

The phenomenological approach is used because the phenomenon under investigation, though historical, is contemporary, and requires the researcher to enter people's experience to give an objective description of it.

Fieldwork including participant observation has been necessary in gathering the information. Other primary sources used in the collection of data include sermons, audiotapes, pamphlets and newspapers on the phenomenon, testimonies from clients, and also through interviews. The interviews were conducted with prophets, reverend ministers, church leaders, and clients from the Greater Accra Region.

For secondary sources, books or literature have been consulted and reviewed. This has enabled the researcher to ascertain the historical setting of the phenomenon.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The main focus of the study has been on prophets in the Ghanaian Charismatic Churches, particularly those who are founders of the type of churches designated in this work as *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*. This group started springing up in the 1990s up to date. The study is confined to Greater Accra Region because there is a high concentration of the movement there. The following prophets, among others, are chosen for the research:

1. Prophet Elisha Salifu-Amoako
2. Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apreku

These prophets were chosen for this investigation because of their popularity in the practice of the phenomenon

Furthermore, the two prophets have some peculiar features that attracted the researcher's attention. That is, the fact that the two prophets come from poor economic backgrounds and denied formal education. Interestingly, Salifu-Amoako, irrespective of his unpromising beginning, has risen to lead hundreds of people who look up to him for inspiration. When he started as a young prophet and lay evangelist, Salifu used the Akan language as a medium of communication, but now he speaks through an interpreter. This is evident in his usual television-

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broadcast program on Tuesdays, 5: 30am on TV3. He is also noted for organizing what they refer to as "anointing services" to empower his clients to get wealth, thus, laying emphasis on acquisition of wealth as a very important aspect of Christian life.

Apraku, on the other hand, still maintains his mother tongue, the Akan language, as the medium of communication. He is noted, particularly, for his prescription of the use of lime and soap for healing and deliverance. This is also a distinct characteristic compared to other older renewals. Hundreds of people troop to his church premise in search of healing, deliverance, and also what they call 'breakthroughs' in their businesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is not much literature available on the phenomenon under investigation because of its new nature. Baeta's work, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of some Spiritual Churches* (1962), provides a historical background for this investigation. The book has been reviewed extensively in this work to serve as both the historical background and the focus of this work.

The introduction of the book explains why Baeta preferred the term 'spiritual' churches to 'spiritist' or 'separatist' churches. According to him, the term spiritual churches is used to signify that,

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In their worship, the groups concerned engage in various activities which (by their own assertion) are either meant to invoke the Holy Spirit of God, or are to be interpreted as signs of his descent upon the worshippers... these activities and 'signs' include rhythmic swaying of the body, usually with stamping, to repetitious music (both local and instrumental, particularly persuasion), hand clapping, ejaculations, poignant cries and prayers, dancing, leaping, and various motor reactions, expression of intense religious emotion; prophesying, 'speaking with tongues', falling into trances, relating dreams and visions, and 'witnessing', i.e. recounting publicly one's own experience of miraculous redemption.¹⁰

Concerning the background to the subject "Prophetism", Baeta makes a distinction between prophetism and messianism, and establishes the point that much of prophetism is messianic. According to him, the motivation for the prophet's vocation is often provided by intolerable social, political, or religious conditions, or a combination of them. The messianic message, which comes with threats, usually proclaims the imminent arrival of supernatural help. This can be in the form of a personal deliverer who would overcome all their enemies, or by supernatural intervention.

Prophetism, for Baeta, arises from the dream or vision of a prophet, which is not necessarily, or always, related to prevailing conditions. This may be entirely a matter of a personal internal, usually religious, experience or development. He referred to the summary of Katesa Schlosser, *Propeten in Afrika*, that "Apart from purely personal ambition, the reason for the appearance of prophets is predominantly of an economic and political nature, exclusively religious only in the rarest cases".¹¹

¹⁰Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p. 1

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¹⁰Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p. 1

¹¹Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p. 5

Furthermore, Baeta sees prophetism as a perennial phenomenon of African life whose basic operative element appears to be personal in character. He emphasizes the fact that independent of events or developments in the society, the prophet considers himself endowed with a striking personality and the ability to impose his will on others. They seem to possess powers for healing, revealing hidden things, and predicting the future curses and blessings.

The case study of Baeta's work focused mainly on Spiritual Churches, namely:

1. The Church of the Twelve Apostles;
2. The Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC);
3. The Memend Gyidifo (The Saviour Church);
4. Apostolowo Fe Dedefia Habobo (The Apostolic Revelation Society);
5. Etodome Nyannyuie-Presbiteria Hame Gbedoda Kple Doyo-Habobo (The Prayer and Healing Group of Evangelical Presbyterian Church at Etodome);
6. The African Faith Tabernacle Congregation;
7. The Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim.

Furthermore, Baeta sees prophetism as a perennial phenomenon of African life whose basic operative element appears to be personal in character. He emphasizes the fact that independent of events or developments in the society, the prophet considers himself endowed with a striking personality and the ability to impose his will on others. They seem to possess powers for healing, revealing hidden things, and predicting the future curses and blessings.

The case study of Baeta's work focused mainly on Spiritual Churches, namely:

1. The Church of the Twelve Apostles;
2. The Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC);
3. The Memend Gyidifo (The Saviour Church);
4. Apostolowo Fe Dedefia Habobo (The Apostolic Revelation Society);
5. Etodome Nyannyuie-Presbiteria Hame Gbedoda Kple Doyo-Habobo (The Prayer and Healing Group of Evangelical Presbyterian Church at Etodome);
6. The African Faith Tabernacle Congregation;
7. The Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim.

In his conclusion, Baeta established some differences between the historical churches and the spiritual churches as well as some common features of the latter. These are discussed to in the final chapter of this work.

This investigation is different from that of Baeta in several aspects. Whereas the main focus of Baeta is the spiritual churches, which was then the contemporary movement, the present investigation is focused on the 'Prophets' of the present-day *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*. Baeta's work gives a historical pattern of prophetism in Ghana. The groups investigated in this work do not only exhibit some similar characteristic, but also demonstrate some new features, which make them distinct from the Spiritual Churches. A typical example of the new features of the contemporary group is the use of lime and soap as points of contact to minister healing and deliverance to their clients, resulting in the title "neo-prophetism".

The prophets under investigation oppose the spiritual churches as *agents of Satan*; they claim the use of incense, candles, Florida water etc. are meant to invoke *demonic spirits*. The work discusses differences between the *Spiritual Churches* and the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*.

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Another scholar whose work partly describes the contemporary prophetism is Gerhardin C. Oosthuizen. His book, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches* (1992), deals with the role of the healer-prophet in the African Independent Church (AIC). It observes that the prophet in the AIC has replaced the important role of the diviner in the traditional society. To the writer, the prophet understands the worldview of his people, especially the natural diseases.

Oosthuizen asserts that whereas the AIC healer-prophet emphasized healing, the Old Testament prophet's task was to bring the Word of God. From the context of healer/prophet in the AIC and in Southern Africa, the writer makes a striking remark that is of enormous interest to the present work. He states that:

The prophet/healer can meet this world of insecurity, often of misfortune and look into the future in order to be better prepared for what is approaching. The prophets take seriously the worldview in which their people live. The emphasis is never on "pie in the sky when you die", the emphasis is on what is needed in here and now. Theologically, there are issues which need close scrutiny but from a socio-psychological point of view, the prophet's position is firmly established in many AIC and is a tremendous source of scrutiny to many.¹²

This has been one major reason why these prophets are able to secure a following, especially in Africa. They are very sensitive to the socio-economic needs of the people.

¹² Gerhardin C. Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), p. 193

A book entitled *The Rise of the Charismatic Movement in the mainline Churches in Ghana* by Abamfo O. Atiemo is worth looking at. The author sketches the history of the charismatic movements from the movement called Montanism to the emergence of Classical Pentecostalism in Ghana.

On prophetic movements, the author argues that healing and casting out of demons marked the manifestation of charismata in the country in 1914. He attributes this mostly to the ministry of William Wade Harris, an African prophet. He further states that the charismatic phenomenon was seen with 'some little prayer groups, which sprang up spontaneously in certain parts of the country as a reaction to the influenza epidemic which broke out after the First World War'¹³. The prayer groups were led by "Prophets" or "Prophetesses", examples of which were William Wade Harris and Sampson Oppong who have been referred to extensively in this work, as well as Prophet Jehu-Appiah, founder of the Musama Disco Christo Church.

The author thus gives us some historical idea of the group under investigation. This study seeks to discuss a continuation of the phenomenon in the contemporary times.

¹³ Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, *The Rise of the Charismatic Movement in the mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1993), p. 17.

African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspective, by D. Ayegboyin

& S. Ademola Ishola, discusses indigenous churches with a focus on problems of terminology, factors responsible for their emergence, characteristics, and precursors in Nigeria and in Ghana. The authors also present the life history and activities of prophets like Wade Harris and Garrick Braide. Other topics discussed are the Precious Stone, Faith Tabernacle and the Apostolic Churches, Cherubim and Seraphim Movement, Church of the Lord, Aladura, Celestial Church of Christ, Nachabah, The Church of the Twelve Apostles, Musama Disco Christo Church, Kimbanguist Church, Prophetism in South Africa, and Prospect of Africa Indigenous Churches.

The authors intimate that some scholars prefer to describe the indigenous churches as "Prophetic-Healing Movements" and point out that this is so "because virtually all these Churches are focused upon the charismatic personality of a prophet. Also, they emphasise and depend very much on visions and prophecies."¹⁴

On the factors responsible for the emergence of the indigenous churches, the authors note the case of the Aladura leaders and their followers, which has to do with "a desire to reform existing Mission Protestant Christianity and make it more relevant to the needs of the daily African

¹⁴ Deji Ayegboyin & S. Ademola Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspectives* (Nigeria: Greater Heights Publications, 1997), pp. 15-16



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life."¹⁵ They argue that a number of factors ranging from spiritual, cultural, political, social and circumstantial contribute to the emergence of the indigenous churches. Discussing Mass Movements as one of the factors, the following views are expressed:

Another agency, which stimulated the rise and growth of AICs, was the emergence of charismatic figures that led mass movements towards Christianity. These prophetic figures organized evangelistic crusades in several localities. They did not intend to establish churches of their own rather, they perceived themselves as prophets raised by God to make people "turn unto Jesus".

These prophets include Garrick Braid (from Niger Delta in Nigeria); William Wade Harris (A Kru from Liberia); Walter Matiffa (Lesotho), Simon Kimbangu (Belgian Congo) and Samson Oppong (Ghana, formerly Gold Coast). They were all evangelists with special charisma. A number of indigenous churches, which claimed to have inspiration from them were established soon after their demise.

Furthermore, the authors point out the main characteristics of indigenous churches as the emphasis on prayer, emphasis on the 'Spiritual', interest in Divine Healing, attention given to women, affection for freer form of worship, stress on African worldview, dedication to Evangelism and Revival, and absence of elaborate administrative structures.

The authors predict that the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) would survive so long as they continue to aid people who face difficulties in life, that is, heal sicknesses, serve as haven of rest to those in distress, and exorcise the 'spiritually' bound. They believe that the AICs would survive the odds once they continue to serve the purpose of their existence.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 21

As a historical study, the book contributes immensely to this work. It has helped the researcher to do a historical sketch on propheticism in Ghana. The book did not take into account the current trend of the neo-prophetic movements in Ghana since the author mainly focused on the older Spiritual Churches.

Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity by E. Kingsley Larbi is mainly about tracing the history of Pentecostalism in Ghana. The author makes mention of two major periods (1900-1970 and 1970-1990) that produced six major Christian renewal movements, namely:

- The Spiritual Church Movement;
- Mainline or Evangelical Pentecostal Movement;
- The Charismatic Movement within the Mainline Churches;
- The Para-Church Movement;
- The neo-Pentecostal Movement (or the Charismatic Movement in Ghana);
- The Prophet/Healer-centred Pentecostalist Prayer Camp.

The book is relevant to this study because it provides some historical sketch on prophets, namely, Prophet Harris, Prophet Swatson and Prophet Opong, and also forms part of the historical background of this investigation. The author, however, did not investigate the present-day prophets and their ministries, the focus of this research.

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Pentecost outside Pentecostalism (2002), by Cephas N. Omenyo, is a study of the development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana. The Study is divided into four (4) parts. Part one, which is entitled "Ghana: Ghanaian Churches, Ghanaian Revival Movements", deals with the general introduction to the book. Also, in this part, the author looks at the Ghanaian socio-political and religious setting. Here, the author underscores the fact that there had been a failure of historical Christianity to enter into a constructive dialogue with African traditional cultures and religions. He asserts that the "consequences of this theological deficit is the inability of most African Christians to reconcile their worldview with the type of Christianity professed by Western Christian Missionaries in Africa"¹⁶.

The author again emphasizes scholars' view that the emergence of the African Instituted Churches on the religious scene in Africa since the end of the 19th century is interpreted as a protest against and a challenge to the Eurocentric disposition of the mainline churches in Africa. Also, the author outlines various themes and styles of ministry which one way or the other influenced the mainline churches in Ghana, namely, African Independent Churches, Classical Pentecostals, Evangelical/Para-Church Fellowships, and Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic Ministries.

¹⁶ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2002), p. 3

Chapter Two gives a general background to the Ghanaian socio-political and religious setting in the context in which the mainline churches and the charismatic renewal groups operate. Chapter Three traces the history of Christianity in Ghana. The author looks at the historical works of the various Western missionary agencies, namely, Roman Catholic Mission Societies, Moravian United Brethren Mission, Netherlands Reformed Mission, the Church of England's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), Basel Evangelical Mission Society (BM), Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), North German Missionary Society (Bremen Mission) and the United Free Church of Scotland. The author then discusses African initiatives in Christianity in Ghana in two main waves, namely: some developments in mission-founded churches mainly between 1926 and 1960, and the development of African charismatic renewal in Ghana, which had no direct or known impact from the worldwide phenomenon. Here, the author discusses the African Prophets, namely, William Wade Harris, John Swatson, and Kwame Sampson Oppong, which has informed our discussions in Chapter Two of this study.

On the African Independent Churches (AICs) in general, the author underscores the point that former members of the mainline churches who broke away from their mother churches founded them and others came

into existence by migrants from Nigeria. Also, the "AICs exhibit revivalist tendencies and emphasize faith healing"¹⁷.

Part Two of the book is on the charismatic renewal in the mainline churches including Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and the Baptist Church respectively.

Part Three of the book has to do with spirituality, doctrine and practice of the charismatic renewal groups in the mainline churches in Ghana. The author describes spirituality as "the whole of one's religious experience, attitudes, beliefs, and convictions, patterns of thought, emotions and practices in respect to what is super-sensible or the ultimate or God"¹⁸. Some of the practices that invoke the spirituality of the charismatic renewal movements include prayer, praise, and fasting. According to the author, the charismatic renewal groups are creating opportunities for spiritual needs of members of the mainline churches to be met within the 'framework' of their respective churches.

Furthermore, the author highlights some of the fundamental emphases and teachings of the charismatic renewal movements in the mainline churches in Ghana. These include Bible Study, Christology, Pneumatology,

¹⁷ Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, p. 73

¹⁸ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 201

Spiritual Warfare, Divine Healing, New Birth, Ecclesiology (church and sacraments), Mission and Evangelism, and Eschatology.

The author notes that the initial undermining of the charismatic renewal by the mainline theologians has created a big gulf between charismatic experiences and academic theology. As a result,

One outcome was that Charismatics were left on their own for a long time and were tolerated at most in the margins of the mainline churches, if they were not attacked and virtually pushed out and engulfed with hostility. On the part of the Charismatics, these polemics were not conducive to sober reflection, and contributed to them taking more radical theological positions than was helpful for integrating their spirituality into that of the mainline churches.¹⁹

The book is helpful to the present study, especially in tracing the historical background of the charismatic renewal in general. However, the author's main areas of concentration were the mainline churches, while the focus of this study is particularly on the prophetic movement in the neo-Charismatic/Pentecostal Churches.

The above chronological review reveals two stages of the prophetic movements in Ghana, namely, the silent and pronounced or popular stages. The prophetic phenomenon is said to be silent or dormant when the leaders or the practitioners and the followers are few and unpopular. The typical example of this is the case of the spiritual churches studied by Baeta. Some of the latter still exist and there are new ones with almost the

¹⁹ Ibid p. 302

same features, an example of which is the Church of Bethsaida. They are said to be unpopular because of the new wave of the phenomenon – neo-Charismatic/Pentecostal Churches – which seems to attract the attention of the society more than the former.

On the other hand, the prophetic movement is said to be popular when the attention of quite a significant section of the populace seems to be drawn towards them. Here, the leaders (usually prophets) and the followers appear to be on the increase within a short period of time.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To avoid any ambiguity, the following terms are clarified:

1. **Prophet:** A prophet, generally, is a person who speaks for God and who communicates God's message courageously to God's chosen people²⁰. For the purpose of this investigation, however, a prophet is a believer²¹ who claims to have been filled with the Holy Spirit and the revelation gifts (which include word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, word of wisdom, dreams, visions, and prophecy) to execute his ministry. Through healing, deliverance, and "miracle" or 'prophetic' services, the prophet is able to meet the needs of the clients. The term

²⁰ Ronald F. Youngblood (ed.), *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), pp. 1035-1036

²¹ A believer, according to Christian doctrines, is one who has believed in and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

'prophetic' is used in this study to describe the utterances of these prophets that are more of foretelling of events that are happening or yet to happen. Thus, a '*prophetic service*' refers to a service or worship whereby the prophet, following a short exhortation, proceeds to call out individual participants and pronounce some 'prophetic' words over their lives. It is sometimes also referred to as 'prophetic ministration'.

2. **Spiritual Churches:** The term '*Spiritual Churches*' or '*Sunsum Sore*' refers to churches in Ghana that are also known as 'Prophet-healing Churches' or 'Aladura prayer types'. In this work, they refer to churches that are noted for the use of florida water or holy water, candles, holy sand, among others, for ritual purposes. They are also noted for the use of special uniform for both the leaders and members. Footwear is not permitted in their places of worship. Examples are the Twelve Apostles Church, the Church of the Lord Mission (or Aladura), and Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC). They are also known as 'African Independent Churches' (AIC's), or African Initiated Churches, or African Instituted Churches.
3. **Pentecostal Churches:** Pentecostal Churches, using Omenyo's definition, refer to the "classical Pentecostal movements, which

began in the West in 1906 and appeared on the Ghanaian religious scene in the 1920s", and which were later organized as churches.²²

4. **Charismatic Churches:** This refers to a group of churches that emerged from the evangelical/charismatic renewal fellowships in the 1960s and 1970s.²³ And according to Omenyo, they are different from "the Classical Pentecostal Churches and African Independent Churches by features such as their predominantly youth membership, use of English language predominantly, their adoption of American Pentecostal worship styles in terms of music, preaching..."²⁴ A typical example of a charismatic church is the Christian Action Faith Ministry.

5. **Neo-prophetism:** Prophetism, according to Baeta, arises from the dream or vision of a prophet, which is not necessarily, or in fact always, related to prevailing conditions. Here, the phenomenon is marked by the use of paraphernalia such as holy water, holy oil, holy sand and candles for ritual cleansing or bathing. The purpose is to administer healing and deliverance to the clients. The contemporary practice of the phenomenon is different because, first, it is contemporary and more recent. The second reason is that the contemporary prophets studied do condemn African

²²Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 94

²³Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 96

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Independent Churches and the use of holy water, holy oil, holy sand and candles, but they also use items like lime, soap, and salt, among others, for healing and deliverance purposes. The third thing that makes the present prophetic movement different is the reliance on and use of the electronic media to propagate their ministries. These and other practices unravelled in this work constitute a new type of prophetism, hence the designation "neo-prophetism". The churches of these contemporary prophets are designated, in this work, as the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

The study is structured into six (6) chapters:

Chapter One is the General Introduction, which includes Statement of Problem, Aims and Objectives of the research, Hypothesis, Methodology, and Scope of the Study, Literature Review, Definition of Terms, and Relevance of this work.

Chapter Two discusses the Historical Background of Prophets with the aim of identifying the features of the phenomenon in the past. The chapter treats the following topics: *History of Prophets in Ghana*- Prophet William Wade Harris, Prophet John Swatson, Prophet Samson Opong; *Prophets in the Spiritual Churches*; *Prophets in the Classical Pentecostal Churches*- Church of Pentecost, Apostolic Church, Ghana, and Assemblies of God;

and *Prophets in the mainline Charismatic Churches*. It points out briefly the nature or concept of prophet within these groups.

Chapters Three and Four present the *prophets* of the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*, their backgrounds, beliefs and practices. This will enable us to trace the life history and the ministries of the present-day prophets. The chapters treat the following sub-topics under each Prophet: The Life History of the Prophet; The Call of the Prophet; The Prophet and the history of his Church, Church Organization, Finance, and Discipline, Church Branches, Beliefs and Practices, Sacraments; and Some Major Teachings of the Prophet. The following is the outline of this part:

Chapter Three (3): Prophet Elisha Salifu-Amoako

Chapter Four (4): Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku

Chapter Five deals with the discussions of the findings as presented in Chapters Three and Four, i.e., the Analysis of the contemporary Prophets and their Ministries in Ghana. The chapter is titled *PROPHETISM IN GHANA: A VIEW POINT*, and the topics discussed include the *Concepts of Otanfo and Akwankyerε* in the Ministry of the Contemporary Prophets; the chapter also includes the evaluation of the differences and the similarities between Ghanaian earlier prophets (as mentioned in Chapter Two) and the contemporary ones (in Chapters Three and Four).

The final chapter, **Chapter Six**, is made up of the Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at contributing to the knowledge on the phenomenon of Pentecostalism, since there is comparatively little research work on it, especially, in Ghana. It brings to light the existence of these prophets who are securing an increasing following in the country, and also introduces a typology into the Christian renewal movements in Ghana.

Furthermore, the work also enables us to do further comparative and theological study on the phenomenon. It serves as background study on 'neo-prophetism' in Ghana.

CHAPTER TWO

PROPHETISM IN GHANA: A HISTORICAL SKETCH

Introduction

As already noted in the preceding chapter, the phenomenon of prophetism (designated in this investigation as the whole notion of prophets and their ministries) is not new in the history of Christianity in Ghana. As far back as 1914, there were certain individual prophets whose works have been noted by scholars. In this chapter, attempt is made to demonstrate a historical sketch of prophetism in Ghana. This is done, firstly, by looking at a typology of Prophets that can be traced in the various stages of Christian renewal movements (Examples are spiritual Churches; classical pentecostalism; the rise of non-denominational charismatic fellowships; the Bible study and prayer groups in within the mainline churches; Catholic charismatic renewal movements; and the rise of the charismatic churches). A historical background of Prophet William Wade Harris, Prophet John Swatson, and Prophet Sampson Opong will be further explored.

Furthermore, the chapter briefly observes Prophetism in the Classical Pentecostal and the 'Mainline' Charismatic Churches.

The following is a suggested typology of the prophets used in this investigation:

1. The Early Prophets in Ghana;
2. Prophets in the Spiritual Churches;
3. Prophets in the Classical Pentecostal Churches;
4. Prophets in the Mainline Charismatic Churches;
5. Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches.

Presently in Ghana, the fifth category needs to be in a class of its own since it is clearly distinguishable from the Mainline Charismatic Churches of the fourth category.

The Early Prophets in Ghana

The period of the earlier prophets in Ghana dates as far as the era of the European Missionaries in Ghana and particularly the appearance of William Wade Harris in 1914 in the Gold Coast, now Ghana. The ministry of Prophet Harris is said to be non-denominational in the sense that he never thought of founding or establishing a 'Church' or a 'denomination'. *For He had always told his converts to join churches where these were established, and where there were none, he told them that missionaries would one day come.*²⁵

²⁵ G. M. Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1971), p. 207

Beginning from 1910 there was a sudden emergence of a group of African evangelists with special charisma.²⁶ "These African prophets led mass movements towards Christianity without intending to establish churches of their own."²⁷ The objective of this section⁵⁴ of the work is to discuss three typical Prophets in this category, namely, Prophet William Wade Harris; Prophet John Swatson and Prophet Sampson Oppong, whose ministries are seen in this work as the earliest recorded cases of prophetism in Ghana.

Prophet William Wade Harris

His Early Life

William Wade Harris, a Kru man of the Grebo tribe, was born at Cape Palmas, Liberia, and educated in the American Episcopal Church²⁸. He served as a ward to Rev. Josse Lowrie of the mentioned Church²⁹ and later became a catechist in the same Church³⁰. He then got involved in the practice of his tribesmen in working aboard ships along the coast of West Africa. Having taken part in English Christian services in Lagos, he became a fervent believer in the British colonial system, something that he

²⁶ Deji Ayegboyin & S. Ademola Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspectives* (Nigeria: G. H. P., 1997), p. 49

²⁷ Ayegboyin & Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspectives*, p. 49

²⁸ H. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 269

²⁹ Ayegboyin & Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches*, p. 50

³⁰ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 269

considered more “beneficial for the African aborigines than the rule of the Afro-Americans in Liberia”³¹.

As a result, in 1910 Harris demonstrated his dissatisfaction with the Afro-American rule, which at that time gave little room to the aborigines of Liberia in political matters³². He showed his political affiliation and went ahead to hoist the British Union Jack. This brought about his arrest and he was thrown into prison³³. The prison experience led to his call into the “prophetic” ministry.

The Prophet's Call into Prophetic Ministry

In 1911, whilst in prison, Harris claimed to have had a vision where he was charged by the angel of the Lord, namely, Gabriel, to preach the Word of God. According to Ayegboyin and Ishola, the following were the words of angel Gabriel to Harris: *Harris, you are not in prison, God is coming to anoint you, and you will be a prophet, you are like Daniel.*³⁴ The scholars record further that on hearing these words, Harris related “the spirit descended on him with a sound like a jet of water”, an experience which

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 270

³² Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 270

³³ *Ibid*.

³⁴ Deji Ayegboyin & S. Ademalo Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches*, p. 51

occurred three times³⁵. He then saw himself as a Prophet who has been given a charge as a watchman described in the book of Ezekiel 33³⁶.

Harris began his missionary work as soon as he came out of prison. He dressed in a 'white gown and a turban, carrying a bamboo cross, a Bible, and a calabash for baptism'³⁷. He was also said to be a modest man³⁸. The content of his preaching centred on the need for the people to abandon "traditional religion" in order to believe in God and the Cross, to be baptized, to organize Christian congregations under church leadership like elders and apostles, to keep the Sunday holy, to respect the Bible and to wait for the missionaries³⁹. The ministry of Harris involved evangelistic activities from place to place preaching and leading people to God.

The ministry of the Prophet was also said to have been marked by signs and wonders. For Harris, Jesus is the Supreme God and therefore allegiance to him gives the converts all the protection required against all the machinations of evil spirits⁴⁰. He was endowed with power to carry out his mission on earth. From Larbi's book⁴¹, Haliburton is cited as indicating that

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 270

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Ghana: Blessed Publications, 2001), p. 59

⁴¹ Ibid.

Harris claimed to be a prophet with all the special powers that God bestows on those He chooses. These powers enabled him to drive out demons and spirits, the enemies of God. He cured the sick in body and in mind by driving out the evil beings preying on them. Those who practiced black magic had to confess and repent or he made them mad... He believed God had given him other powers, more dramatic assertions of their relationship, notably the power to call down fire and rain from heaven⁴².

Thus, Harris did not lose focus of his calling, which is, converting people from the 'kingdom of darkness' to the kingdom of God, insisting on total surrender of one's life to God. Furthermore, as a prophet, Harris was constantly inclined to the Divine in order to know what to do at a time.

Casely-Hayford describes him in the following words:

The angel Gabriel's name is constantly on his lips, and he talks of receiving telegrams... "I received a message that I must turn back. I am not to go forward. If I go to Secondee the people there will not hear... God is making use of me, a Kru man, for his purpose, yet men will not hear⁴³.

It is evident from the above that the Prophet was aware of the opposition that awaited him yet he held on to the 'prophetic word'.

Harris' attitude towards Prosperity

Prosperity in the contemporary Charismatic theology connotes financial and material empowerment. This, however, has to do with the attitude of the Prophet towards materialism or wealth. It has been noted earlier on that Harris was a man of modesty. He saw material gain as not important

⁴² Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, p. 59

⁴³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 271

since they may make one spiritually deficient and carnal. Debrunner

attests to this fact in the following words:

William Waddy Harris wants nothing. He has nothing. He has everything. He is neither a mediant friar nor an aggressive toll collector. So urgent is the king's command that he has no time to think of silver and gold. He is the oasis in the desert of an age of greed. That is why he may help to save Africa. According to him money can degrade. It can cause nausea to those spiritually minded. That is why he passes by to the amazement of the hungry and thirsty ones after the good things of mammon⁴⁴.

Unlike what is pertaining among the contemporary 'Charismatic Prophets', Harris' attitude towards wealth was that it was unspiritual to pursue it since it can entangle one and prevent the spiritually minded Christian from staying as such.

The Outline Teachings/Preaching of Harris

It should be noted that Harris's ministry was not that of a teacher but a Prophet-Evangelist with the main aim of converting people into Christianity. However, we can outline the contents of his preaching; the very emphasis of his evangelistic mission.

The first thing to be observed is that Harris hardly read the Bible to his audience because they were dominantly illiterates⁴⁵. He actually recited some memorized passages from the Bible, which had to do with salvation, expatiated and challenged the people to destroy their fetishes and give

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ayegboyin & Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches*, p. 52

themselves to God⁴⁶. Thus, calling on the audience to heed to the salvation message was a major doctrine of Harris. Those who responded to the invitation to give their lives to God were asked to confess their sins whilst kneeling in front of the audience before the bamboo cross⁴⁷. The converts at this time were taken through deliverance from demons by touching their heads with the Bible.

Harris, as an itinerant preacher, emphatically told people everywhere he went "to abandon fetishism, to believe in God and the cross, to be baptized, to organize Christian congregations under Church elders called apostles, to keep Sunday holy, to respect the Bible and to wait for the missionaries".⁴⁸ This is more or less the mission statement and the tenet of faith of Harris.

The Effects of the Prophet's Ministry on the Existing Churches and the Society

Harris's ministry did not lead to formation of a denomination of his own though some of his converts, namely, Tani and John Nachabah, later decided to establish their own churches. Rather, his ministry could be described as a sort of revival to the then existing churches, particularly,

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 53

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 270

Methodist and the Seventh Day Adventist⁴⁹. It is said that men, women and children who were drawn by irresistible power to surrender to God found their way to the churches of their own accord and remained there⁵⁰.

Furthermore, it is on record that there was, particularly, a general religious awakening throughout the length and breadth of the Appolonia (Nzima) district. Debrunner quotes from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Report, 1915, the following observation:

Now people have rushed with feverish haste into churches... Everywhere, bamboo chapels and churches were built. Their thirst for the word of God and for the songs of Zion is insatiable. They pounced on travellers, timber clerks and any man of letter either to preach to them or teach them a Christian song... Others came to the principal stations on the Sabbath, hear the preacher, and returned to repeat what they have heard to their fellow villagers.⁵¹

The assertion attests to the infectious and spectacular nature of the message preached by the Prophet. The hearers, having experienced the power of the Word, could not keep it to themselves but to spread it. Baeta argues that

It was admitted that in a mission lasting two years he brought more people to profess Christian faith than all orthodox missions in the area had done over two generations. His inspiration was a conviction that he had received from the Holy Spirit; accordingly he spoke with a conviction of immediate authority, which few or no missionaries of the older churches would claim.⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 272

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 271

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 272

⁵² Christian G. Baeta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 112

Thus, the prophetic-evangelistic ministry of Harris brought about a refreshing and an awakening in the existing churches and the society at large.

Concerning his preaching, Harris was apparently orthodox but simple, but his baptismal formula and ritual included laying his Bible on the head and saying, "This is God's book, you must obey it".⁵³ He did recommend monogamy as the ideal; he also acknowledged the *special virtues of monogamy saying that is good for Africans*.⁵⁴ The argument has to do with the fact that Harris did not strictly insist on monogamous type of marriage for his converts, whereas the missionary churches did.

It is also worth noting that even though Harris did not found a church, most spiritual churches trace their roots to his movement, notably Grace Tanni's Faith-Healing Church and John Nachabah's Twelve Apostles Church, about whom Baeta has written a lot.

Finally, another outcome of Harris Ministry is his influence on John Swatson, who as a disciple followed the steps of his master, Harris.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 112

⁵⁴ Ayegboyin & Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches*, p. 53

Prophet John Swatson

His Early Life

John Swatson was a mulatto, born to a European father attached to the court of Omanhene Amakyi I of Beyin, Nzima, and a mother who was a member of the royal house.⁵⁵ He was educated at the local Methodist School at Cape Coast⁵⁶, Central Region of Ghana. After marriage, he became a clerk at Axim, in Benin and Nigeria.⁵⁷

Swatson then came to Ghana as a Methodist teacher-catechist and worked in the Axim Circuit, which included Bassam, Aboisso and Assinie in the Ivory Coast.⁵⁸

The Call and the Ministry of Prophet John Swatson

It is evident that John Swatson was inducted into the missionary and prophetic-evangelistic field when he met Prophet William Wade Harris. His calling came through the command of Harris to him to become a member of the Church of England and the imposition of the commission to evangelise.⁵⁹ Swatson started his evangelistic crusade in 1915. "Early in

⁵⁵ Debrunner, *A history of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 276

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, pp. 63-64

⁵⁹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 276

1915 John Swatson took up his cross and started off on his evangelistic tour, and performed the same wonders as Harris."⁶⁰

Furthermore, Larbi reports that Swatson actually begged Harris to teach him about the "powers of baptism".⁶¹ According to him, it was after this tuition that he believed the Holy Spirit had fallen on him.⁶² It is probable that Harris called Swatson into the prophetic ministry after his encounter with the Holy Spirit as well as the commission. He first of all taught the converts that it is wrong to swear by the fetish.⁶³ The converts were also made to understand at the stage of their conversion that the Bible and the Cross-should be seen as being more than the whiteman's fetish.

The Effect of the Ministry of Prophet John Swatson

Indeed, Swatson moved as an itinerant preacher in carrying out his commission as a servant of God. He actually made converts who were said to have joined the existing churches and others combined to form a denomination called Christ Church or Church of England.⁶⁴

According to the accounts of Haliburton, Swatson, in 1915, felt that his ministry would be successful if it was connected to the Church of

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, p. 64

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ G. H. Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris* (), p. 220

England.⁶⁵ He stayed with this denomination, known as Christ Church Mission - Beyin⁶⁶ and carried out the bishopric responsibilities.

In 1916, Swatson started to encounter difficulties with the authorities of Aowin District as a result of his association with the new denomination. The Acting District Commissioner, J. P. Ross, is said to have reported that:

an itinerant preacher called Swatson or Nianghia, calling himself 'Bishop', was holding meetings and taking collections ... He told the DC that he was going to hand his converts to the Church of England, but it appears that that Church has not accepted the responsibility and Swatson claims to collect the money on behalf of an institution called "Christ Church", Beyin.⁶⁷

The movement of Swatson, furthermore, is said to have been characterized by fraud.⁶⁸ This depicts how a section of the public antagonized the ministry of Swatson. These people, particularly the authorities, saw his ministry as a destruction of native property. This is portrayed in the word of the Wiawso District Commissioner recorded by Haliburton as follows:

I told him that I would tolerate no smashing of fetishes or any procedure likely to lead to rioting, that every person was entitled to his own beliefs and that his angelic visitations could not be made an excuse for breaking up people's household gods.⁶⁹

Despite this caution, Swatson is said to have shown "a lack of tact by interfering in the household matters and fetish affairs pertaining to stool

⁶⁵ Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, p. 220

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 221

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, p. 218

rights".⁷⁰ For fear of being poisoned, Swatson was advised to leave the town. The D.C. had to go to Enchi to persuade Swatson to leave Wiawso on the same day; otherwise he would be worried about the safety of his life and all his activities in other communities.⁷¹

Again, the ministry of Swatson was seen as violating certain traditional values of the society. It is said that in many cases that were brought before the authorities, it was obvious that the people's "conversion to Christianity was used as an excuse to indulge in casual amours without that fear of consequences which, in their fetish faith, constituted the sum total of their morals".⁷²

Some Christian leaders, on the other hand, saw the ministry of Swatson as having had a positive effect on the society or the communities he visited. One Archdeacon Morrison is said to have found Swatson to be "an extraordinary man".⁷³ This is because the latter had handed over to the Archdeacon a list of over one thousand names who were baptized by him in the Denkyira and Sefwi areas.⁷⁴ There were certain places where the whole village led by the chief virtually burnt their fetishes, washed their stools and were baptized.⁷⁵ His preaching was characterized by great

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 219

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ Ibid, p. 222

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Ibid



conviction and power to convert. Thus, for some people Swatson was successful in his ministry despite the adverse effects of his ministry.

The Aftermath of Prophet Swatson's Ministry

In 1943, long after his death in 1924 (having been considered as one who had lost his sanity), Swatson's Movement was described in the following words:

John Swatson was a rather undisciplined and very ignorant self constituted missionary... people were stirred up by him out of Heathenism, but he did not give them much else... among the converts, there was great zeal, vast ignorance, some indiscipline, a tendency of some, especially young men, to flout the local chief's authority, and much moral laxity, with a natural hesitancy in accepting and practical difficulties in putting into effect, the Church's rule about having only one wife.⁷⁶

Thus, Swatson's ministry ended on a sad note discolouring all his successes in the past as far as *prophetic* or *evangelistic* works are concerned.

Prophet Sampson Opong

Background of the Prophet

Sampson Opong is a Ghanaian born to a Grushi slave who was captured by Samori and sold to a man at Dormaa, Brong-Ahafo Region.⁷⁷ He worked at the railway construction, Ivory Coast, and later became a cocoa-labourer in Ashanti-Akim and Akim-Abuakwa.⁷⁸ He is also said to have been a sorcerer who prepared and sold magic medicines and

⁷⁶ Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, p. 222

⁷⁷ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 310

⁷⁸ *Ibid*

charms to harm others.⁷⁹ Thus, concerning his religious background, Sampson Opong could be said to have indulged in the “indigenous traditional religion”.

His Call into the Prophetic Ministry

It all started after Sampson Opong had escaped from prison and made his way to Akim Abuakwa.⁸⁰ He met one Rev. Ofosehene of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and was baptized.⁸¹ It was after this experience that he felt the call to preach.⁸²

In 1920, this man, wearing a long black robe with the design of a red cross on both shoulders and a larger red cross in the centre, this criminal turned evangelist, tall, strongly-built, with long matted hair over his shoulders and the back of his neck, entered Ashanti.⁸³

Thus, it is probable that Opong had the strong inner urge to spread the gospel among those who had not heard about it.

Another spectacular thing about the call of Opong is the fact that, as an illiterate adult, he is believed to have had “a greyish oval-shaped flat stone in his hand”⁸⁴ from which he read or quoted accurately “the

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ F. L. Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism* (Ghana: The University Press, 1965), p. 188

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, p.188

⁸⁴ Ibid

scriptures from Genesis to Revelation".⁸⁵ Larbi quotes a report of a local newspaper when Oppong visited Cape Coast in 1923:

This man, an uneducated peasant... saw the vision of the cross of the Risen Jesus, and was compelled to preach to the Ashantees. He carried a wooden cross and a Stone wrapped in a handkerchief. From looking at the Stone, he cites with great exactness and precision every text from the Bible of Life. He surprised Cape Coast.⁸⁶

The Effect of the Ministry of the Prophet

The ministry of the Prophet had great impact on the growth of the Methodist Church in the Ashanti Region. Hundreds of souls sought enrolment in the Church under his fiery preaching.⁸⁷ Larbi reports of the incredible harvest that took place in the period: "Chiefs and people have confessed their faith in Christ in such numbers that for the moment, my colleagues are at their wits' end to find either accommodation or teachers. They have enrolled over a thousand during the past week."⁸⁸

According to Omenyo, it was the ministry of Sampson Oppong, which paved way for the gospel in the Ashanti Region.⁸⁹ Omenyo adds:

This was at a time when there appeared to be insurmountable difficulties in the preaching of the Gospel in Ashanti. Where converts were made in trickles, his ministry produced converts in torrents, to the extent that the missionaries could hardly cope with the numbers.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 311

⁸⁶ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, p. 67

⁸⁷ Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, p. 188

⁸⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, p. 67

⁸⁹ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* (The Netherlands, 2002), p. 71

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 71-72

Apart from the positive impact his ministry had on the Church and the society of Ashanti, some were not impressed but doubted him. For instance, the Basel Missionary Church (Presbyterian Church) in Dormaa-Ahenkro looked on the ministry of Sampson Oppong with caution and considered him as a “big fetish man” who used Christianity as a camouflage.⁹¹ This may be attributed to the unfortunate end of his life. His moral life was impaired and marred. He is said to have become a drunkard during the latter days of his life.⁹² Also, Oppong is said to have raped a small girl, which led to a heavy fine, by the Paramount Chief of Dormaa, and his exclusion from the Methodist Church.⁹³ Despite these negative records, Oppong later made peace with the Methodist Church and became a local preacher at Akuntanim, his hometown.⁹⁴

Reflections

Though these three Prophets had negative reports, they shook their generation with their ministries, which they claimed to have been given by the Holy Spirit. They understood their commission and did not allow the principles of the existing churches to influence them or misdirect them. A further analysis is made on them in the fifth chapter of this work.

⁹¹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 311

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Ibid

The early Prophets were fully aware of the African worldview, which is mainly about belief in the supernatural realities. These realities are so much connected to the living and normally make their sentiments known to them (the living), should the abominable happen. The Prophets, knowing that the people actually believe in those entities, did not undermine the ability to believe but aided them to put their belief in God who is more powerful.

The earlier Prophets really carried out the Christian evangelisation resulting in mass conversion; people willingly gave out their amulets, charms and other ritual objects to be burnt. They actually made an impact on their generation and lifted the face of Christianity in Ghana as well as in Africa. Omenyo underscores the point that "the prophets discussed understood the African worldview and operated in such a way as to make Christianity relevant to their followers."⁹⁵

The ministry of the above Prophets also led to the springing forth of the *Spiritual Churches*. This was due to the fact that some churches doubted the "direct inspiration and charisma of the prophets and therefore were prepared to work in equal partnership with them."⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 72

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 73

Prophets in the Spiritual Churches

This is considered, in the investigation, as the second strand of a typology of prophetism in Ghana. The pioneers of the Spiritual Churches were the converts of Prophet Harris who refused to join the existing missionary churches as stated earlier on in the first chapter. Critical study reveals a significant difference between the ministry of the earlier prophets and those of this strand.

One significant difference is the use of items like *florida* water, candles and incense, among others, as essential for their worship. These items actually form a core part of their rituals. They are used all the time in all that they do, namely, deliverance, healing and worship. This is a peculiar feature of prophetism in the Spiritual Churches, but not of the earlier Prophets. The use of the title 'prophet' became so popular at the emergence of these Spiritual Churches, the root being traced, particularly, to Prophet Harris. The use of water for baptism in Harris' ministry became the basis for ritual healing in these churches.

Most of these spiritual churches have prayer centres where the sick are kept and the prophets or prophetesses minister healing to them. Here, the patients are taken through ritual bathing or washing and fasting and are

also given blessed water (which is popularly known in Akan as *kronkron* nsu or holy water) to drink.⁹⁷ Omenyo makes the following observation:

Most of the AICs exorcise evil spirits and cure confessed witches. In the course of exorcising the evil spirits or "cleansing" witches, victims sometimes make confessions of their witchcraft activities that create tension, and subsequently instability, in some families.⁹⁸

Further discussions are made in the work to establish a contrast between the *Spiritual Churches* and the present-day *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches* in Ghana.

Prophets in the Classical Pentecostal Churches

The notion of prophets and prophecy is a delicate subject, which has generated a lot of debate among Christian groups, churches and theologians. The Pentecostal Classical Churches are no exception to this fact. Whereas some of the latter uphold prophets and their ministries and acknowledge them in the leadership, others do not.

A typical example of a Pentecostal Classical Church, which does not acknowledge prophets in the church's leadership system, is the Assemblies of God (AG). This is so, partly, because of the numerous problems or 'confusions' they claim the so-called prophets can create in the church. Inquiring about their interpretation of Ephesians 4:8,11, the church believes that one can possess the prophetic gifts and minister as

⁹⁷ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 74

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

such, but can not be accepted and ordained as a prophet in the church.

Thus, the AG believes in the operation of the 'prophetic gifts' or 'ministry' but does not accept and believe in the 'office' of a prophet.⁹⁹

The AG recognizes ministers as certified, licensed, or ordained.¹⁰⁰ Presbyters and superintendents oversee the work of district councils and the General Council. Local churches appoint deacons. The AG believes this practice is consistent with apostolic practice provided in the pastoral letters of 1 and 2 Timothy, as well as in Titus. They believe that the pastoral letters do not make provision for the appointment of apostles or prophets, nor does the Book of Acts indicate that provision for such offices was given to the churches established on the missionary journeys.¹⁰¹ They also explained that the apostles appointed not apostles or prophets but elders (Acts 14:23). At the end of the missionary journeys, Paul met with the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38). Clearly, according to the AG, elders are also given the functions of bishops ("overseer") and shepherds ("pastor") (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).¹⁰²

⁹⁹ An interview with Rev. Stephen Sakyi, a District pastor of Assemblies of God, on Saturday, June 22, 2003, 3pm, at residence in Sogakope.

¹⁰⁰ An Official Assemblies of God Position Paper on *Apostles and Prophets* copied from the internet on Saturday, 10th May, 2003, at http://www.ag.org/top/beliefs/position_papers/4195_apostles_prophets.cfm, 1/3/00, p. 9.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

Thus, within the AG, persons are not recognized by the title of apostle or prophet.¹⁰³ However, many within the church exercise the ministry of apostles and prophets. Prophetic functions occur when believers speak under the anointing of the Spirit to strengthen, encourage, or comfort others, however, these are weighed carefully from scriptural point of view (1 Corinthians 14:3, 29). The AG further argues that whoever claims to have been called to the 'office' of a prophet, especially among them, is invited to defend and explain why he thinks so.

On the contrary, the practice of the phenomenon is more pronounced in the *Church of Pentecost*. Expatiating on Ephesians 4:8,11, the church believes and upholds the ministry of prophets as a close associate of the apostle. That is to say, the apostle and the prophet are seen as the highest-ranking officers in the leadership of the church.

The church holds the view that the prophet is actually a pastor or a teacher, in charge of a congregation, who also possesses a special grace of seeing (that is, in vision and dreams) and hearing from God, sometimes audibly. Thus, the prophet receives messages from God through visions, dreams and hearing.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

According to the tenets of the church, when a prophet comes up with a message from God for the church or concerning an individual in the church, the General Council of the church or the elders will examine whether it is from God. This enables the individual who claims to operate as a prophet to weigh himself and the message to ensure that indeed the 'Lord' had spoken or revealed something to be delivered to the church or an individual.

Another important thing to note about the notion of prophets in the Church of Pentecost is that it is the General Council of the Church that confirms and ordains one (that is, a pastor or a teacher of the church) as a Prophet. Thus, one can only be ordained a Prophet after he has served as a full time Pastor or Teacher in the church, and as soon as he is ordained a Prophet, he moves into the administrative role of the church. Thus, hardly would one see a prophet of the church organizing 'prophetic services' or 'ministering prophetically' as compared to prophets of other groups.

The Church of Pentecost has many prophets (who are mainly men because they do not ordain women into the 'ministerial office'). One of such is Prophet M. K. Yeboah; a founding father and former Chairman of the Church.

Prophet Martinson Kwadwo Yeboah

Background: Prophet Yeboah was born to Opanin Gideon Kwame Dapaah and Madam Martha Abena Fosuah on the 24th of November 1924 at Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana. He had his elementary education at St. John's SPG School at Aduamoah, Kwahu (1933-1937), and continued at Nkwatia Presbyterian Junior Secondary from standard one to three (1937-1939). He completed Presbyterian Senior Secondary School, Mpraeso, from 1940-1943.

Prophet Yeboah, having studied stenography, moved into petty trading business. He was employed by CFAO as assistant storekeeper for five and a half years and became a wholesale keeper for two years at the Eastern regional branch.

Prophet Yeboah's Conversion and Call into Ministry

A convention held at Koforidua by the Apostolic Church led to the conversion of Prophet Yeboah. On that day, he moved forward to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal saviour and was baptized with water. He received the Holy Spirit baptism three months after his water baptism in October 1947.

Prophet Yeboah was called to be an overseer or an elder at the church's branch at Winneba in 1950. This led to his resignation from a company he was working with. He was ordained a Pastor and a Prophet in 1954.

During his full-time ministry, the prophet is said to have given lots of prophecies about the Church, which came to pass. One of the retired apostles¹⁰⁴ intimated that the Prophet prophesied about the future expansion of the Church of Pentecost all over Africa and beyond. According to him, the Prophet actually lived to see most of the prophecies come through. Some of the prophecies given by Prophet M. K. Yeboah concerning the Church of Pentecost are presented in the Appendix V.

Furthermore, Prophet Yeboah had an advanced leadership course at Haggai Institute, Singapore, in 1981. He also attended the Bible and Tract Society (1952-1953) and took a four-week course at the Trinity College of Ghana and other courses as well.

The effect of Prophet Yeboah's ministry is seen in the various leadership capacities he served in the Church of Pentecost as the chairman of the General Council of the Church. His ministry as a prophet was more of internal than external, in that, he communicated what was revealed to

¹⁰⁴ An interview with Apostle Ampomah (rtd) of the Church of Pentecost on Saturday, June 26th, 2004, at Accra, Ghana Museums, 10:30am.

nim by the Holy Spirit to the leadership who 'judged' and carried it out when necessary. The Prophet's ministry was more of internal in the sense that the healings, deliverances, and prophecies were all performed within the arena of the Church of Pentecost. This is because the leadership of the Church believes that the latter is never for those outside the church or "unbelievers". Unlike Prophet M. K. Yeboah, the new prophets' ministries are more open to the public, in that one needed not to be a Christian before being ministered to.

Notwithstanding, Prophet Yeboah's ministry involved more of administrative work than 'prophetic services'.

Prophets in the Charismatic Churches

The phenomenon of prophetism is more pronounced in the Charismatic Churches. This is connected to their numerous programmes held on the various media stations. Some of these are: the Holy Spirit Campaign, the Hour of Deliverance, the Hour of Visitation, the Hour of Miracle, Your Miracle Encounter, Prophetic Encounter, Prophetic Service, Anointing Service. Almost all Charismatic Churches are noted for these practices.

The group here is divided into two, namely, the mainline Charismatic Churches and the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*. This section briefly

discusses the phenomenon of prophets in the mainline Charismatic Churches.

The difference between the two is not so much stressed in this investigation since it is a matter of leadership style. The mainline Charismatic Churches are noted for having their founders and leaders mostly referred to as 'Bishop' or the 'General Overseer'. These bishops have prophets who are seen as co-workers and who actually serve under them. Like the Church of Pentecost, these prophets serve as resident 'pastors' of the branches of their churches. The difference here is that the prophets in the Church of Pentecost mostly perform administrative role at the regional level of the church (that is, mostly as the regional head of the church instead of the district level). Also, the latter observes the office of the apostle as highest in the church's leadership hierarchy.

Example of the Bishops of the Charismatic Churches is Pastor Mensa Otabil (formerly 'Bishop') of the International Central Gospel Church who also has a popular prophet under him. The resident 'pastor' of the Frafraha branch of the church in Accra, is Prophet Yaw Annor. The ministry of the latter involves deliverance, prophetic and anointing services. He also has a monthly prayer conference for all believers and also for ministers of churches.

The style of ministering of Prophet Yaw Annor is more related to that of the prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches whose detailed information is found in the following chapters.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the chapter has observed the phenomenon of prophetism from a historical perspective, particularly focusing on the early Prophets, Spiritual Churches, Pentecostal Churches, and the *mainline* Charismatic Churches. It has been noted that the phenomenon is not new in Ghanaian Christianity.

A major characteristic of the early prophets is that they were not denominational, in the sense that they did not establish churches of their own as compared to the other strands after them. The early prophets "perceived themselves prophets raised by God to make people "turn unto Jesus"."¹⁰⁵ This also suggests the respect the early prophets had for the existing churches, though they were not ready to be controlled by them. This is a lesson to be noted in considering the contemporary practice.

Furthermore, we can also realize a significant difference between the Spiritual Churches and the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches with regard

¹⁰⁵ Ayegboyin & Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspectives*, p. 23

to prophets, and beliefs and practices. The former have their founders and leaders referred to as prophets¹⁰⁶, but in the case of the latter, the founders and leaders are popularly called apostle, bishop, and reverend¹⁰⁷. Also, the Spiritual Churches, particularly noted for the use of items like candles, incense, holy water, holy oil, and holy sand for rituals and healings, are often considered 'demonic' by the leaders and followers of the Pentecostal /Charismatic Churches. In fact, these two groups are never bedmates.

The Charismatic Churches are currently experiencing a new breed of prophets with a high rate of proliferation and with particular emphasis on visions, dreams and prophecies. The notable ones, among others, who have founded their own churches are Prophets Elisha Salifu-Amoako of Alive Chapel International and Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku of King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry. The ministries of the two are discussed in the next two chapters.

¹⁰⁶ This is with the exception of the Apostles Revelation Society who refer to their founder and leaders as apostles and prophets.

¹⁰⁷ In the Church of Pentecost, it is only the apostles and the prophets who are illegible for the chairmanship of the church.

CHAPTER THREE

Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoako

Background

Elisha Salifu Amoako was born in 1966 and was raised in Kumasi by a muslim family who could not afford to send him to school in his early age. His mother's name is Emma Kande, and his adopted father's name is Akwesi Amoako (an evangelist). Thus, he started school when he was already grown and did not even know his age. Salifu had passed the pre-school age before he was enrolled into regular school. Embarrassed about his age, he stopped after class one. Salifu thus took to the street; he began to smoke, drink and get involved in other forms of deviant behaviour.

During the 1983 economic crises¹⁰⁸, he came close to death when he and his friends went to steal petrol. The colleagues escaped, but he was arrested and tied to an orange tree in the bush. But for the timely intervention of a farmer, he would have been burnt alive. Tired of his kind of lifestyle, he sought to earn some income through pushing of trucks and carting goods. He was later employed as a pantry boy at Cambridge International School, Kumasi.

¹⁰⁸ The economic crisis in 1983 was a period when there was serious food shortage in Ghana such that people with money had to queue to buy food with much difficulty.

Salifu, now Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoako, is married to Mouhe with one child, and is also the Founder and General Overseer of Alive Chapel International, a church which also has branches across the country and in Israel, Canada, Europe, and USA.

Elisha Salifu Amoako and Francis Akwasi Amoako

Evangelist Francis Akwasi Amoako, from Kumasi, the Ashanti Region of Ghana, was a member of the Assemblies of God Church. He believed he was called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and deliver people from hell and demonic holds. He had a strong conviction of being called by God as an evangelist who was not supposed to start or establish church/denomination under his leadership; this he pledged to all his followers.¹⁰⁹

Akwasi Amoako, having felt the call of God upon his life, went to the Assemblies of God Bible School at Saltpond, in the Central Region of Ghana. He stopped the schooling after one year claiming that the three-year training for him was too long. He then went and joined the local church as an evangelist and eventually started a purely evangelistic ministry called the Resurrection Power Ministries, a ministry which attracted lots of young men who felt called into the service of God.

¹⁰⁹ See the 10th Anniversary (1988 – 98) Brochure of the Resurrection Power and Living Bread Ministries International, Accra, p. 5

Further, Akwasi Amoako is one of the most radical preachers Ghana had of our time. His messages in the past were characterized by lots of 'insult' against the political leaders (particularly, the then ruling People's National Defensive Council, PNDC, government), Christian leaders, and the traditional priests and priestesses. He insisted on national repentance and duty to God since sin and wickedness were prevalent in the country.

It is strongly believed that the ministry of Akwasi Amoako has tremendous impact on the present-day prophets. He, at best, can be described as the father of neo-prophetism partly because he has influenced the prophets studied in this work.

Conversion and Call into Ministry

It all began on a Friday afternoon, when one of the teachers of Cambridge International School, Mr. Awuah, having noticed his diligence at work, expounded the gospel to him. That simple approach led him to accept Christ. The teacher then introduced Salifu to the Assemblies of God Church at Bantama in Kumasi. Because Salifu Amoako neither speaks nor understands the English language, which was the medium of instruction of the Assemblies of God Church at Bantama in Kumasi, he left to join the Resurrection Power Evangelistic Ministry at Santasi.

Salifu observed the leader of the Resurrection Power Evangelistic Ministry, Evangelist Francis Akwesi Amoako, and decided to under-study his ministry. In the church, Salifu served as one who set-up and arranged the instruments and the equipments. In addition to this, Salifu also did the house chores for his mentor. Salifu stayed in the house of the late Evangelist Amoako's until his death in March 1990.

The turning point of Salifu's life came a week before his mentor, Evangelist Amoako, died. According to him, it all happened one night when he was sleeping in the Evangelist's car parked in the house. The Evangelist, at dawn, came out three times and laid his hands on him. On the third occasion, the Evangelist prophesied that the anointing on him would come upon young Salifu that God would use him in the nations. The evangelist blessed him again and went away never to return alive.

Narrating the story in his book¹¹⁰, Prophet Salifu said when the news of Evangelist Amoako's death got to him, he felt miserable and devastated until one day he locked himself up in a room for hours to seek the face of God in prayers. According to him, it was during this period that God spoke to him in the very words of the late evangelist. God promised to use him all over the world and take him to his spiritual father. He claimed that although he was convinced of the call, he still did not know how it could

¹¹⁰ Elisha Salifu-Amoako, *Your Angel Will Come* (Accra: Alive Publications, 2000)

be fulfilled since he was virtually an illiterate- unable to read, write, and speak English.

Some of the Major Teachings of the Prophet

As a 'prophet' and the leader of a church, The Prophet has preached and taught his adherents various spiritual messages. Some of these messages, which are more or less emphasized in the church, have been published as books bearing the title: *Your Angel Will Come* and *Vision And Provision*.

The first book: *Your Angel Will Come*

In this book the Prophet stresses the importance of the ministry of angels in the day-to-day life of a Christian. According to him, the time has come for the church to reconsider her attitude toward the operations or activities of angels. As he puts it:

In these last days the glory of the Lord's temple shall be greater than that of the former. Miracles, signs, and wonders are going to be the order of the day. The young people shall see visions, while the old men dream dreams as a sign of the end-time. More and more of the spectacular things that shall happen in these last days shall be accomplished through the ministry of angels.¹¹¹

Salifu-Amoako holds the view that the purpose for the creation of angels is that they would minister to human beings who are the heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1: 14). He asserts that the angels are not to be worshipped

¹¹¹ Salifu-Amoako, *ibid* p. 3

(Colossians 2: 18), and whenever we worship or attempt to worship the angels, we abuse the purpose of their existence. Also angels are purposely made to worship God and to serve the saints; they stand before God day and night; they also go ahead of the believer to prepare a way and bring the believer where God expects him to be. For him, anytime there is an angelic appearance, there comes the glory of the Lord, and strange and spectacular things happen.

The Prophet considers the following as the characteristics of angels:

1. Angels are heavenly spirit beings who can assume human form when sent on a particular assignment (Gen. 18:2,8; Heb. 13:2). They can appear in a human form to deliver a message and for specific purposes.
2. Angels possess personalities and express emotions (Luke 15:1-10); Passion (Gen. 6:1-4); Appetite (Gen. 18-8; 19:3); Anger (Rev. 12:13); Desires (1 Pet. 1:12); Intelligence and Wisdom (2 Sam. 14:20; Matt. 24:36; Eph. 3:10); Patience (Num. 22:22-35); Meekness (2 Pet. 2:11); Holiness (Mk. 8:38); Obedience (Psa. 103:20; Matt. 6:10); Knowledge (Matt. 13:2; 1 Pet. 1:12); Will Power (Isa. 13:12-14); Ability to speak (1 Cor. 13:1).

He relates that angels were created before the earth was formed. They are organized in a hierarchy, innumerable and are obedient in carrying

out any responsibility assigned to them. They are subject to God and are interested in earthly affairs.

On the appearances of angels, Salifu holds the view that the Bible, especially the Old Testament, displays several instances of angels appearing to people with divine commission and message. An example is drawn from Genesis 16 where the angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar while she was running away from Sarah and asked her to return. The angel assured Hagar of God's blessing upon the child, because God had made a covenant with Abraham.

Angels also appear to be so powerful and mighty that nothing can stop them from performing any assignment. They are very sharp and can appear anywhere and at anytime. Because they are so ubiquitous and powerful, they sometimes take human bodily form to relate to man so that we can accept them. In addition, they also speak any language. They can communicate with one specifically in one's local dialect.

In their invisible form among believers, the angels ascend and descend to the presence of God with our prayers. They see us at all times but if there is the need for us to see them, they can appear to us visibly. They can engage in human activities like eating, as is described in Genesis 18.

Also some angels have appeared to people as doctors, mechanics, drivers, lawyers, etc. They can at times disguise themselves into paupers or beggars and come to us (Hebrews 13:1-2).

Furthermore, Salifu stresses the need for one to be aware of his or her angel. This is because angels never appear until they have a divine message to deliver. And so one must be aware of angelic presence so as to receive them as God's messengers sent to us.

To be aware of angelic presence one should be able to "see". This is because angels will never work mysteries for you until you are aware and knowledgeable of their presence. For example in Genesis 18:1-2, we read:

And the Lord appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the doors in the heat of the day. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo three men stood by him and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself towards the ground.¹¹²

Here, Abraham was able to see the angels and ran to them. According to Salifu, one of the ways to recognize your angels and be able to entertain them is bearing the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

Salifu, discussing the work of angels in the end-times, asserts that the work of angels will not cease or end with the present generation; angels will have part to play in God's end-time events. In these end-times, the entire

¹¹² King James Version

church of God shall experience great and mighty things that will bring about surprise in the minds of people. And the main instruments the Lord will use to accomplish some of the things shall be angels on assignment (Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16; Matt. 13:46). Many diverse miracles shall take place, and there will be signs and wonders to magnify the ministry of angels.

In sum, Salifu is of the opinion that angels have been and are actively involved in his ministry as a prophet. He, as a result, encourages his adherents to yearn to perceive or "see" their angels since they have been coming to them with answers to their various requests.

The Second Book: *Vision and Provision*

In this book,¹¹³ Salifu spells out what a vision from God entails, and possibly how to fulfil it. Here, he defines vision, literally, as "the phenomenon of seeing beyond the natural, either through a trance, a dream, or one's imagination. It can be used figuratively to represent an ideal to which one aspires; a goal, or future achievement."¹¹⁴ In this context, he asserts that God must give the vision.

He argues that if the source of the vision or goal is God, then that vision is divine. If it is divine, then it is supernatural. If it is supernatural, then it is

¹¹³ Elisha Salifu-Amoako, *Vision and Provision* (Accra: 2000)

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. viii

achievable because the supply of provision will also be supernatural. And for him, divine provision refers to everything it takes for the vision to be accomplished.

Divine provision includes material things such as money, buildings and other property; social favour and recognition; health and strength; human resources; spiritual gifts and anointing. All these and others contribute to the fulfilment of divine vision.

Salifu holds the view that all Christians have what it takes to achieve their God-given visions in life, which leaves no room for failure. For failure is never in the plan of God. Yet we see many so-called children of God struggling through life. The secret is *where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.* (Proverbs 29:18)¹¹⁵

Furthermore, on vision and time, Salifu asserts that many people in the world today are not living a fulfilled life because they have missed the 'timing of God' for their lives. People are fond of putting blame on others because of their failure in life. For him, some normally fail not because of witches or demons, but because they do not recognize the importance of time.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. x

The fact is that men and women who are successful in life are those who discover their God-given time and make profitable use of all opportunities.

The following is a long quotation on 'vision' and 'tower' from the book in question for the purpose of analysis in the discussion chapter:

I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. Habakkuk 2:1

"Setting yourself upon your tower" is to position yourself at a place where God's vision can reach you. A tower is an elevated part of a building, the part that stands out for all to see. It is a structure that often symbolizes protection and defence. It also has to do with superiority or elevation, in this case, spiritual upliftment. When a person sets himself on a tower, he becomes sensitive to God's voice and develops spiritual eyes that make him see the extent of his vision.

In Proverbs 18:10, the Bible states that *the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe*. For the vision to be safe and secure, we ought to be strategically positioned. We must make the name of the LORD your ground and source of strength. We need to upgrade our spiritual antennae by watching through prayer and the study of His Word.

At the temptation of Jesus, when the devil took Him to a high mountain, (Matt. 4:8) he made it possible for Jesus to see the extent of His vision and purpose. Jesus saw all the kingdoms of the world from that level of His elevation. I believe that

Jesus was strengthened by what He saw, was able to resist the devil even more vehemently.

Since we are determined to fulfil our God-given vision, there is the need to position ourselves strategically. Where necessary, we may even have to build the tower for ourselves. We need to sit down, count the cost, and build a strong tower for fruitfulness in all our endeavours.¹¹⁶

Salifu also maintains that every vision should be written down, and outlines three reasons why this should be the case:

1. That what you write down becomes a point of reference for the development of your divine vision;
2. That the record serves as remembrance of what God has told you concerning the vision;
3. That the record serves as a motivating factor any time you remember the vision.

These reasons are supported with the following Biblical references: Hab. 2:2; Galatians 6:11; Deuteronomy 27:8; and Joshua 8:34-35.

Furthermore, Salifu maintains that the church of God is made up of 'specialists' who have received visions with precision from God, and that one does not have to cross the vision of the other visionary. He thus

¹¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 12-14

encourages everyone to pursue his/her own visions in life without being disturbed by another person's vision.

In summary, Salifu maintains that angels play an important role in his ministry since he claims to see or perceives them all the time in his ministrations: he sees angels touching and healing people, revealing hidden things to him, the prophet. Again, he holds the position that his ministry is successful because of his understanding of divine vision and provision.

Prophet Salifu Amoako and Alive Chapel International

Salifu, with much conviction, started a small fellowship in Kumasi. He claims, one day, he fell into a trance in which God showed him the Orion Cinema house (in the city of Accra, located at Kwame Nkrumah Circle) where he saw himself in the midst of multitudes, ministering and performing signs and wonders. Following this, in early 1990, Salifu moved from Kumasi to Accra to pursue what God had revealed to him. In Accra, he stayed at Adabraka where he gathered a few people and began to pray in the Achimota forest.

In 1994, Salifu started a fellowship at Mataheko, a suburb of Accra. According to him, it was here that he was directed by God to a '*10-Day Ghana For Christ Believers' All-Night*'. And to him, the programme served

to announce his ministry to the nation, with signs, wonders, and prophetic manifestations.

In addition, he narrates that these signs, according to God's word to him, were to prove that "Jesus Is Alive". He thus named his church accordingly: 'Jesus Is Alive Evangelistic Ministry' at Orion Cinema Hall in 1994. On the 10th of January 1998, the 4000-member Alive Chapel International was inaugurated.

Doctrines of the Church

The vision of Alive Chapel International is to win lost souls for Christ and to plant churches and establish God's people through teaching and preaching of God's word and the prophetic ministry. They also believe God has given them the mission of establishing God's people through God's prophetic word. This and the details of what they believe and teach are published in a booklet¹¹⁷ form. The doctrine is summarized as follows:

1. They believe and teach salvation by repentance and faith in God (Jesus) (Acts 2:38; 16:30-31);
2. Water baptism by immersion (Acts 2:41; 8:38-39);
3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:38-39; 10:44-46);

¹¹⁷ Kwadzo Bempah (ed.), *Fortified Foundation: A Discipleship Course Handbook For New Converts and All Believers* (Accra: Alive Publications, 2000).

4. Gifts of the Holy Spirit and laying on of hands (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7, 11; 14; Acts 13:3);
5. Resurrection of the dead (Acts 9:36-40);
6. The judgement of God (Acts 5:3-6; 13:10-11);
7. The second coming of Christ (2Thess. 1:7; Zach. 14:4,5,8). They also believe in rapture (1Thess. 4:17; John 14:3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, etc).¹¹⁸

The church also has detailed doctrines on Salvation, The Word of God (Quiet Time), Prayer, Water Baptism, and The Holy Spirit/Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Tithing, Christian Fellowship, Victorious Christian Living, Holy Communion, and Evangelism. This can be found in the appendix IV of the work.

The Organizational/Leadership Structure of the Church

The following is the functional organizational structure of the Alive Chapel International:

Founder & General Overseer

The founder and General Overseer, Prophet Salifu-Amoako, is the highest authority in the leadership of the church. According to the structure, the Founder and General Overseer delivers vision and direction of the church.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.



Thus, it is the role of the Prophet to give vision and direct the church as a whole. The Financial Control Committee and the Executive Board follow directly.

Financial Control Committee

The Financial Control provides financial information (budget, actual and forecast profit & loss account, balance sheet, & cash flow as well as requirements for significant expenditure). The board reports directly to the Founder & General Overseer, that is, Prophet Elisha Salifu-Amoako.

Executive Board

The Executive Board comprises Chairman, (appointed by the General Overseer), Finance Director, Marketing & Events Director, Resident Pastor, and two other persons as determined by the General Overseer. The board is supposed to report to directly to the Founder and General Overseer, the Prophet. Details of this are in the appendix of the work.

Annual Programs

The church holds two major programs annually, namely, "Back to the Bible", and "Catch the Fire". The main purpose for organizing the program captioned "Back to the Bible" is to remind the adherents that the Bible is the final authority to everything they do and the foundation of Christianity. According to the interviewee who is also the resident pastor of the church

at Orion, Circle, they believe that all the various activities that go on in the church (that is, universal) shall come to an end, and so there is the need to let the clients hold on to the Bible, which abides forever.

Leaders of other Charismatic Churches are called upon to teach the congregation about the importance of the word of God. The program is organized for one week in the month of June.

The annual program captioned "Catch the Fire" is held for a week in every December. With the Prophet Salifu-Amoako being the main speaker, other prophets are invited from other Charismatic Churches to teach. Here, the main aim of the program is to impart spiritual gifts to the lives of those who attend the services.

Other Practices

The prophet makes use of items like oil, handkerchiefs and honey to administer healing and deliverance and as a means to empower the clients for wealth or prosperity. The Prophet, as well as other ministers in the church, claim that the former is solely carried out by 'prophetic or divine direction. That is, the Prophet or the minister in the course of preaching uses a particular item for ministration as the Holy Spirit directs. The term 'prophetic' simply refers to their alleged ability "to foretell the hidden events of an individual or a group."

Anointing Service

The anointing service is also a time of 'impartation' of spiritual gifts and to empower the clients to make wealth. Here, oil is mainly used on the clients. On one hand, the church provides oil in a bowl for the prophet to use to anoint the clients, while on the other hand, clients are asked to bring oil to service. The Prophet, after preaching, asks that the oil be lifted up for him to pray. After this the clients may be asked to pour the oil on themselves in order to be prayed for instantly or to take it home.

Sometimes, during the anointing service, one identifies two forms of oil, namely, the 'bottled or bowled oil' and the 'horned oil'. The 'horned oil' is oil poured into an animal horn and this is used by the Prophet to pray for clients. The Prophet tells them that the oil in the horn enables one to possess power to become richer. It can be alleged that the bottled oil or the oil in a bowl is used to pray for clients who are unable to give big money to the church.

It must be noted that the anointing service is also considered as 'prophetic service'¹¹⁹. Thus, the clients take all that goes on in this meeting as 'prophetic'.

¹¹⁹ See explanation on 'prophetic service' under definition of the term 'prophet' in chapter one.

The prophet holds the view that the 'anointing' brings about material prosperity, that is, the 'power to make wealth'. During this period, the Prophet or the speaker raises huge funds. There is a notion that the bigger amount one gives the more anointing one receives. It was observed that the 'rich' are anointed first before the 'poor', apparently because those who are rich are able to give more money.

On the issue of the use of handkerchiefs, the Prophet gives them out freely to the clients, and they claim 'silver collection' is taken after service to help to defray the cost. Clients are sometimes asked to come along with handkerchiefs for prayers. Here, the Prophet tells the congregation that prayers have been said over the handkerchiefs and that the client should expect miracles as they use them.

Leadership Training

The church organizes a one-year training program for lay leaders of the church. During the period, teachers are invited from other theological seminaries to teach the students. The students are taken through basic pastoral training after which they are ordained to work as lay pastors in the church. At the time of the study, the number of enrolled students was fifty.

The Prophet and the Media

Prophet Salifu Amoako and the Alive Chapel International hold a media program dubbed "This Is Your Day" on TV3, a Ghanaian television station. The purpose of this media-broadcasting program is to extend, particularly, the healing, deliverance and miracle ministry of the Prophet to a greater audience in the country. As he puts it, "this program is designed for you, for God has a plan for your life"¹²⁰. The program was started in the late 2002.

The process here is simple. Salifu Amoako delivers a short exhortation for about fifteen to twenty minutes and then moves on to 'ministration', a stage where the Prophet 'prophetically' prays¹²¹ for people to receive their miracles. There are clients who testify to the 'positive' impacts of such programs on them. See more on this in the next chapter.

Ecumenism

Prophet Salifu Amoako and the Alive Chapel International acknowledge the ministries of other Ministers of the gospel. This is demonstrated in annual and occasional programs of the church during which invitations are extended to other ministers endowed with particular gifts in the knowledge of the Bible. Here, ministers from the mainline Charismatic

¹²⁰ Except from Alive Chapel TV Broadcasting programs at GTV on Tuesdays, 5:30am.

¹²¹ Here the Prophet calls out people who are hurting on any part of their bodies and prays for healing from them. People who are normally touched by the prayers offered by the Prophet visit the church to report to them of the healing or deliverance experience.

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Churches are called upon to teach the whole congregation on particular topics designed by the leadership of the church. The invited ministers include Bishop James Saah of the Christian Action Faith Ministry International, Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah of the Royal House Chapel International, Rev. Christy Doe-Tetteh and others from Nigeria.

As noted earlier, the idea behind the "Back to the Bible" annual program is to create a platform whereby other gifted ministers have the opportunity to impact their gifts to the members of the Alive Chapel International. Also, such programs enable the members to interact with other ministers of the gospel thereby bridging the gap of denominational differences.

Salifu Amoako has not much to do with the Classical Pentecostal Churches and the Mainline Historical Churches because of the kind of orientation received from his mentor, Evangelist Francis Akwasi Amoako. In his days, Akwasi Amoako considered the leaders of both the Historical and Classical Pentecostal Churches as pastors or preachers whose ministries were not backed by the power of the Holy Spirit and so needed to repent for a renewal from God. This attitude resulted in a lack of respect for the then Christian leaders, especially, by the followers of Akwasi Amoako. Thus, till now, Salifu Amoako and his followers consider

these older churches as not capable of engaging in healing and deliverance ministry.

Conclusion

One interesting thing we need to note is that, despite the fact that he had no formal classroom education, Salifu uses the English language in preaching and teaching which is interpreted into the local language by an interpreter. Of late, Salifu uses a laptop computer to preach and despite the several criticisms about his practices, Salifu can be commended for the effort and determination to learn to have command of the English language, though one can also not overlook the numerous grammatical errors.

Another important observation is the ostentatious interior decorations of their place of worship. The seats of the Prophet and his wife are made from expensive materials set against a background of expensive and flamboyant curtains.

Concerning his personality, Salifu Amoako is a simple and approachable man. However, a careful observation reveals a wide gap between him and the members of the church. He wears expensive clothes and puts up expensive adverts during his public or outdoor crusades.

We have looked at his background, conversion and call into ministry, and some of his teachings published as books (*Your Angel Will Come* and *Vision and Provision*). Also, we have learnt how the Alive Chapel International begun, the doctrines of the church, the organizational structure, annual programs and other practices of the church.

Concerning the future, the Church has plans of establishing a secular school (from primary to university) as its contribution to national development. This is seen in the leadership's effort to come out with the constitution of the Church. Also, to make this vision a reality, Salifu Amoako has been recruiting Christians with first-degree qualifications to work with as administrators and pastors to harness their skills to achieve the church's objectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku

Background

Kwaku Apraku was born in 1968 at Berekum in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. His parents, who were 'traditionalists', could not afford to give him formal education and as such he dropped out of elementary school. Apraku is married with three children.

Apraku, now popularly known as *Odumgya Tutugyagu*¹²² Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku, is the Founder and the General Overseer of King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry, one of the New Charismatic Churches in Ghana, which has its headquarters in Accra, Manet Court, Spintex Road.

Conversion and Call of Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku

Apraku comes from a 'traditional' home where he was forbidden to attend church. He joined vagabonds in the area and, became a juvenile delinquent. This naturally led him into lots of deviant practices such as stealing, drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, etc.

On the January 21, 1982, Apraku stole somebody's fowl, which led to his arrest. He was sent to Berekum Police Station, Brong-Ahafo Region. Whilst

¹²² The literal meaning of *Odumgya Tutugyagu* is 'one who is able to quench fire and also able to exorcise the evil effects of the enemy's fire from its roots, such that it cannot be put together again'.

in custody, a routine preacher, Pastor Kwabena Paul, visited and, according to him, 'prophesied' that Apraku was going to be used by God for His work.

He, however, continued the deviant behaviour after his release from prison. Two weeks later, Apraku had a dream. In this dream he saw his father and himself entering the shrine. But at the entrance, he also saw a beautiful city, which had the inscription "King Jesus". He also saw Jesus being crucified on the cross with blood dripping down. And while watching this scene, he heard a voice saying: "this is the blood I shed for you and mankind, if you will believe in this blood and the name 'Jesus' I will perform signs and wonders through you."¹²³ He claimed he saw Jesus telling him if he did not repent he would go to hell.

Apraku woke up from sleep and decided to give his life to Jesus by confessing Him as Lord and Saviour. According to him, the name 'Emmanuel' was given to him in the dream. He maintains that though he was a bad boy, God loved him, called him, forgave his sins, and anointed him to heal and cure all kinds of diseases.¹²⁴ He then began to move with Evangelist Kusi Beko, a popular Christian gospel musician, as a lay preacher. To translate his words, Apraku stresses that "Dr. Jesus is the

¹²³ Apraku testifies during Sunday church service on 6th June, 2003, at the Church premise.

¹²⁴ Apraku gave personal testimony in the course of preaching on Sunday, July 20th, 2003, morning service at church premise.

master and he Apraku is the servant of the church. I am a preacher, a defender and a witness to the gospel of Christ."¹²⁵

In his early Christian experience, Apraku attended Christ Redeemer Church in Kumasi. Whilst in this church, he became an itinerant preacher. He preached at markets, car parks, roadsides or junctions in Kumasi and other districts of Ashanti Region. He later moved to Central Region, particularly, Swedru, Winneba, Ajumako, Oda and Besiase.

At Oda, Apraku worked with the Oda Presbyterian Church deliverance group. Here, the church encountered some problems with him relating to the way and manner he conducts his deliverance services, particularly, the giving of oil to the victim to drink as a means of expelling evil spirits from the body. The Church saw his practices as more akin to 'witchcraft' activities. This compelled him to move from the town to Ajumako.

At Ajumako, it is said that Apraku prayed for someone who had been in coma for days and the person got healed. The natives of the town vehemently opposed this and as a result they beat and threw him out. The natives of the land believed that such an act was against their "traditional religion" or practice since the victim allegedly might have been summoned to appear before the "ancestral court" to respond to some

¹²⁵ Ibid.

charges or serve as a witness to a pending case. The prayer of Apraku to restore the victim could result in serious punishments of the entire community by the ancestors or the gods of the land.

Apraku later moved to Besiase where, according to him, he prayed for a sick child of a woman and the child was healed. The mother of this child, out of excitement and surprise, asked Apraku to move to Accra where he could reach out to more people who are suffering from many diseases and sicknesses. He agreed and finally moved to Accra in 1995.

Some Major Teachings of the Prophet

Apraku is more of a preacher than a teacher. His messages centre mainly on healing, deliverance, miracles, and prosperity. Mostly, the biblical texts are selected at random without expatiating on them. A typical example of his messages is titled: "*Moayi nam anaa*" ("Have you caught any fish?").¹²⁶

Apraku begins to call out the characters in the passage, 'Kwabena Peter, Yaw John and James' tried 'all seas from Ivory Coast to Ghana to South Africa to India and Egypt but there was no catch. He continues to say that the fishermen moved to 'Britain seas, Holland, Germany and the very cold seas of Russia, but they caught nothing.' 'Then, *Owura Yesu* (or

¹²⁶ Apraku was preaching from Luke 5: 1-11 on Wednesday, 21st May, 2003, morning service, at church premise.

Master Jesus) asked them to cast the net at a place and this caught plenty fish.¹²⁷ The messages are combined with intensive prayer whereby a particular time is dedicated to the 'binding and loosing' of Satan and other enemies of progress.

Another message preached or taught by Apraku is titled *Osoro mu Soro* (Heaven of Heavens). The message has to do with what enables one's giving to ascend to the throne of God. The Biblical reference is taken from the story about the sacrifice of Cain and Abel in the book of Genesis.¹²⁸ He illustrates that Abel gave his best to God and so his offering ascended to the heavens. Cain gave the worst or the spoilt of his produce to God leading to a curse upon him.

Apraku continues that the clients are cursed because of their wickedness, stinginess and inability to give out their best to God. He preaches that most of them are suffering from sicknesses and diseases because they find it difficult to let go their money for the work of God. Again, demons and witches from their families are able to plague them because of their stinginess.

Prophet Apraku then calls on the clients to break from the curse upon them by giving their best to God. In the process of breaking the curses, an

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Genesis 4: 1-15

amount is demanded from the clients as a means to free them from every form of witchcraft activity over their lives. Thus, the teaching always ends with a form of offering.

Prophet Apraku and King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry

Apraku had always envisioned his own church as he went round as a lay evangelist. The church existed in a form of fellowship (that is, a non-denominational group), particularly at Winneba and Besiase. However, the church was fully established in December 1998, in Accra. King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry has its headquarters in Accra. It also has various branches scattered all over the country.

Church Organization/Administration

An interview with a former presiding elder of the church reveals the following organizational structure of the church:

1. Board of Governors
2. General Manager
3. Council of Elders/Deacons Board

Board of Governors

The church has a Board of Governors, made up of five members, which is the highest governing body, and of which Prophet Apraku is the

chairman. The body is responsible for the general running of the church. They are also responsible for devising strategic plans for the growth of the church.

The members of the board serve as an advisory body for Prophet Apraku, the founder and the general overseer of the church. The Prophet is known to be a person with distracting or offensive mannerisms. This includes, the use of abusive words and frequently repetition of such phrases as "I say unto you," and so forth. As a result, as part of their responsibilities, the advisory board is supposed to advise him on issues concerning the use of language or expressions that are not edifying to the hearers, particularly when preaching.

Asked about the readiness of the prophet to accept corrections and accept advice offered by the board, the interviewee said this has not been easy since the prophet would always want to have his way. He stressed that sometimes the prophet listens to what they offer as advice and go by it, but other times he bluntly refuses. Further, the board member said that the prophet mostly stresses his position as the prophet, founder and general overseer of the church. This tends to limit responsibilities as the governing body of the church.

General Manager

The church has a general manager, a pastor, who is responsible for the running of the headquarters of the church in Accra. He co-ordinates the activities of the various groups, (namely, Women's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Prayer Group, etc), in the church.

Council of Elders

The local branches of the church are governed by the Council of Elders, normally known as Deacons' Board among the Pentecostal Churches. The Council of Elders is responsible for the running of the local branches of the church. They are also accountable to the Board of Governors.

Beliefs and Practices

The church does not have any formal or written document that spells out their beliefs and practices. However, members interviewed claimed that like any other Charismatic Church, their beliefs are as follows:

1. Belief in One God and the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit);
2. Belief in the Bible (Old and New Testaments) as the standard and the final authority of the Christian Faith;
3. Belief in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ;
4. Belief in Baptism by immersion;
5. Belief in Divine Healing;
6. Belief in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit;

7. Belief in the 'Prophetic Ministry'.

Apart from these basic beliefs, the church is noted for various practices. These practices are divided into two forms, namely, those not associated with daily worship and those associated with daily worship.

Concerning practices not associated with daily worship, the church organizes annual conventions at the headquarters in Accra. At each convention, a 'Big' fundraising ceremony is organized in support of running of the church, and sometimes this fund goes into building of chapels.

The church is also noted for some practices associated with daily worship. These include certain items, which are given out or literally sold to the adherents for prayers during church service. The items include bottled oil, toilet soap, lime, bottled honey, salt, handkerchiefs (normally white), porridge, and others. The following is a further report on how these items are used:

1. Bottled Oil

The bottled oil, normally known in the church as 'anointing' oil, is prepared oil (that is, the popular medicinal olive or borges oil), which is poured in small 50ml bottles each. The bottled oil is brought in and sold in the course

of preaching by the Prophet or after a 'motivating' testimony by a client. The cost of each bottle starts from five thousand to one thousand cedis. The Prophet calls the amount from five thousands in descending order to one thousand cedis, and people buy them depending on their financial strengths. However, the fixed price of the bottled oil as at the time of the study was five thousand cedis.

The oil is normally applied in several ways. In the first place, in the course of service, the people are called forward to put down the money and take one bottle of oil. And as the Prophet directs, the bottle is opened and half of the content is poured on the head, and the other half is used to wash the feet. After this the Prophet leads them to pray in Twi:

Ewurade,

Efiri èndɛ èko yi,

Atanfo a wɔmma meho nntɔ me no,

Sɛ mebo mennsa mu bo mpae a,

Atraanaa ntse mfiri soro ngu amoso ma amo nwu.

O Lord,

From today onwards,

All the enemies who are the cause of my suffering



As I clap my hands to pray,

May thunder strike them dead.

An intensive and aggressive loud prayer follows the confession, after which the Prophet asks them to pronounce prosperity and progress on themselves. After the prayer the empty bottles are collected for refilling.

Apart from the above, the oil is also sold during counselling and consultations. Here, the oil is given with specific direction to the individual who takes it home for use. Again, the individual is instructed to apply the oil to the affected area whenever they are in pain. One is also asked to drink the oil if the problem of pain is internal (example, stomach-ache).

It should be noted that the adherents are not supposed to buy oil from any other place. They claim that prayers are said on the oil before they are sold and that it is not ordinary oil bought straight from the store. Thus, sometimes people travel from various places to the church premise just to buy the oil.

2. Toilet Soap

Another item that is popularly associated with the church is toilet soap with an inscription "Kriss Soap" or "Premier Soap", manufactured in Ghana. According to the prophet, God gave him directions that the soap can be used to cure all kinds of diseases both internal and external. He claims the user can apply it by faith to the ailing part and the expected result shall happen.

The soap is sold for five thousand cedis as at the time of this study. The prophet, in the course of preaching, asks that the soap be brought. He then pours them out on the floor and asks those gathered to put the money down and take the soap. It is a regular practice in the church.

Sometimes, the selling takes place after testimonies from the adherents concerning the effectiveness of the soap. Here, one who has applied the soap and claimed to have experienced a change is called upon to give testimony to that effect. This is what they normally do to motivate other people to buy the soap. There are various ways of applying the soap. The client is instructed to dissolve the soap in water and drink it, especially, if the problem is internal. Again, one can smear it on the affected parts (that is, external). Others actually use it as bathing soap.

One interesting thing to note here is the enthusiastic and aggressive attitude with which the soap is bought. That is, people literally rush for it. It is also sold during consultation times.

3. Lime

The use of lime for healing and deliverance is very much peculiar to the ministry of Prophet Apraku as compared to other prophets. The adherents are normally asked to come along with lime to church or sometimes the Prophet sells the lime to them at a price during 'ministration'. The lime is applied according to the prophet's direction during 'ministration'. It is smeared on the body before bathing. The client is supposed to smear the limejuice on the body 30 minutes before bathing. The lime is mostly used for healing and deliverance purposes. Clients are told that the application of the lime brings about tremendous positive effects – heals sicknesses and other desired breakthroughs in all areas of life.

4. Bottled Honey

A small bottle containing about 50ml of honey goes for five thousand cedis or more. The Prophet sells the honey in the same way as the oil. Those who buy it are to use it for their porridge or beverage. They are not to use sugar when administering the honey. Unlike the oil, the honey is

sent home for use. Clients are assured that their 'miracles' will definitely come if they use it by faith.

5. Porridge

It is a usual practice of the church to give out porridge (prepared with corn dough) to clients or members after church service at a price. After church service members are asked to form a queue for the porridge. The porridge is also believed to be a means by which one can be healed or delivered. Again, this could literally be taken to mean a "breaking of fasting" for the congregation due to the lengthy nature of the service – from morning to evening – and the high possibility that some might need some food to give them strength to go back to their various homes.

6. Salt

During Sunday morning service on August 3, 2003, the Prophet announced a new direction received from God concerning salt. The Prophet declared that they had fasted and prayed over the salt for 28 days. He added that the salt would not be given out for free because he used his money to buy it and so clients had to pay for it. The salt is supposed to be used for cooking for days consecutively, after which the expected miracle will happen.

7. Handkerchiefs

The Prophet, as common practice in his ministry, from time to time sells out new white handkerchiefs to the adherents at a price, which usually varies depending on the season. For instance, these handkerchiefs are sold to raise funds for particular purposes. Here, the Prophet calls out an amount, for instance, five hundred thousand cedis, and whoever gives such an amount is given one handkerchief.

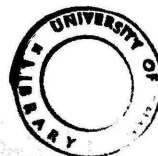
The handkerchief is expected to enable the user obtain favours. The client is supposed to wipe the face with the handkerchief whenever they are asking for favour from any superiors or individuals who are in positions of authority, for instance, a diplomat for a visa to travel.

8. Others

Apart from the above items, the Prophet sometimes, in his ministration, gives out certain items like sugar cubes, toffees, raw eggs etc, at a price. This is normally done at the fund-raising ceremonies of the church.

Counselling and Consultation

The counselling and consultation sessions are periods during which individual clients relate their problems to the Prophet as well as other pastors of the church for prayer and what they normally call



“*akwankyere*”, that is to find “direction”. The following are the counselling

hours:

Wednesdays: 6.30am – 9.00am

Sundays: 6.30am – 10.45am

Apart from the above days, the Prophet sometimes calls for counselling on Mondays, Thursday and Sundays after church service. Counselling and consultation is considered to be very essential for the clients, since that is the time they meet the Prophet personally to share their problems with him.

The Prophet arrives and takes his seat to begin the counselling and consultation session, The clients are then given the opportunity to see the Prophet one after the other. The client sits before the Prophet who, through dialogue, diagnoses the cause of the problem and gives out a bottle of oil or a cake of soap, at a price, depending on the nature of the problem. He then prays for the client. Usually, each client does not take more than 10-15 minutes in counselling since there are usually a lot of people to be attended to.

It must be noted here that, mostly and strictly, one needs to receive a number in order to be attended to by the Prophet. Again, this is because

of the large number usually present for counselling and consultation. The Prophet mostly does not attend to all the clients waiting at a time for counselling and consultation. He sometimes ends the counselling as and when the Spirit asks him to or he feels like. The Prophet is much concerned about orderliness in counselling. He therefore does not hesitate to reprimand the clients in the event of a rush or disorganization in the sitting arrangements.

Worship/Service

The church does not follow a strict order of service. The service, as usual, starts with about 30 minutes of opening prayer, sometimes that is followed by one and half hours of teaching or preaching by the Prophet. Also, the opening prayer is followed by praises and worship, which is often led by the Prophet. The teaching is followed by what they call 'seed offering' which has to do with one's faith in the message preached. Here, the prophet calls to the front of the congregation as many as are prepared to give special offering, sometimes the amount is specified. Persons who respond to this call are prayed for and also prophesied to as the 'Spirit' leads, the prophet.

Praises and worship or adoration comes after the time of teaching. For most worshippers, this is a very lively time in the service. The local Ghanaian gospel songs are sung with stringed and other instruments.

For the Prophet, the praises and worship time must be taken seriously by all gathered to worship with them. Because of its importance, the Prophet is mostly seen rebuking vehemently those who are spotted seated during this time. Everyone is supposed to be up standing except the disabled.

The Prophet narrates to the congregation the importance of “respecting” the time of praise and worship. He tells the gathering that no one is too big in the presence of God, for before Him everyone is nothing. Further, he says:

*Adebaako nna Onyankropon nntum me nnyé,
éne ayéyie ne osom. Na eno na Onyame
Pésé yéyé ma no. Sé yébé som no.*

There is one thing that God cannot do for Himself,
and that is praise and worship. And that is what He
expects us to do for Him. To praise
and worship Him.

The belief is that God literally comes in there during the praise and worship to receive adoration and also to bless His people. As such the people get very much involved expecting answers to their problems.

Days of Worship/Service are as follows:

Sundays: Normal Service (7am-2pm)

Mondays: Normal Service (7am-1pm)

Tuesdays: Prayer Service (7pm-10pm)

Wednesdays: Miracle Service (7am-2pm)

Thursdays Power Service (7pm-10pm)

Fridays: Morning-Deliverance/Healing Service (7am-1pm)

Fridays: Evening-All-Night Prayer Service (8pm-4.30am).

The Prophet, in addition to the above has fixed days of service, sometimes or more often calls for continuous meetings of the whole congregation, which is mostly in the day. There are 'special fasting and prayer' meetings. When I asked whether such meetings are discussed and agreed at the leadership level, the interviewee responded that the Prophet insists that such meetings are called based on 'divine or prophetic direction'. As the Prophet and the leader of the church, he claims, he does not need to consult anyone on such matters.

Interestingly, the people respond to such meetings without hesitation and, for them, such meetings are deemed as an opportunity to be 'ministered' to by the Prophet.

Prayer, Healing, and Deliverance Service

Prophet Apraku sees prayer as not only communion with God but also an opportunity to set oneself free from the grip of the *otanfo*, that is enemy (or Satan) through the use of the weapons of God. Prayer is the warfare of the Christian against the enemy who must be dealt with in an aggressive manner. As such the clients are asked to come along with whipping sticks or cains to whip their *otanfo* or Satan.

During this time of warfare, the people gather in groups around the building pillars. Names of people who are believed to be the enemies of the clients are mentioned and whipped in the course of the prayer. Thus, the pillars or poles are used as the symbols for representing the enemy. Furthermore, in the course of the prayers, the clients are asked to mention the names of people who pose as hindrances to their healing and prosperity. They are then asked to 'shoot' them one after the other, of course without a real gun. This is characterized with sounds of "poo...poo...poo"... This is usually done with an attitude of seriousness and aggressiveness.

Clients testify about the death, insanity, confusion, or destruction in the lives of their 'human enemies' after 'whipping' and 'shooting' them in their warfare prayers. Some also report of having progress in business, peace in marriage and family, and obtaining a visa to travel outside the

country after several attempts had failed. This serves to authenticate the effectiveness of these practices.

Fridays are set aside for deliverance/healing services. The clients who need deliverance arrive at the church premises as early as 7am to consult the prophet before deliverance. As usual the clients are given numbers on a first-come first-served basis. When the prophet arrives, the clients are made to buy oil (in bottles or plain polytene bags). They are then taken through the process of deliverance one after the other.

In the course of the deliverance, the client takes in some of the oil and the attendants pour the rest on the head and the face, as it is believed the 'evil spirit' is cast out. Serious cases are taken to the Prophet for further diagnosis, direction and prayer. The whole process is more of a doctor and patient relationship. Serious cases are referred to the "theatre" (a room purposely used for deliverance) for operation. That is to say, clients with serious spiritual problems are normally taken to a room for deliverance.

It must be noted again that in all the prayer, healing and deliverance services, the *otanfo* or the "enemy" is seen as the cause of the client's suffering and struggling in life. The client is therefore urged to make every effort to get rid of the enemy irrespective of who they are. The client is

taught not to care for even the death of a relation, if that will bring about the freedom or prosperity sought.

Ecumenism

As the saying goes, "birds of the same feather flock together" Prophet Apraku normally invites other Prophets to minister in his church. Some are Prophet Opoku Afriyie-Amoako (popularly called Jesus *Abrantie*) of the End-time Resurrection Power Ministry and Prophet Seer Toner Asamoah Boateng (also known as *Apae-live*), founder and leader of the Great Light Worship Centre. These prophets are seen to be involved in the same type of "prophetic ministry". They exchange pulpits with one another other and share almost the same beliefs and practices.

Unlike Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoako, Apraku does not involve preachers from the mainline Charismatic Churches in the Church's programs. Because some of the mainline Charismatic Churches consider some of the beliefs and practices of Apraku to be deviation from Biblical practice.¹²⁹

Nevertheless, some leaders of the mainline Charismatic Churches are making the attempt to create a room for dialogue with Apraku. Apraku once related in the course of preaching that he was pleased to have

¹²⁹ See discussion on the concept of *gyarifo* in chapter five of this work.

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¹²⁹ See discussion on the concept of *otanfo* in chapter five of this work.

been invited by Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare (the general-overseer of the Word Miracle Church International with headquarters in Accra) to have a conversation with him and also to advise him on some mannerisms in ministry. This, to him, was a welcome gesture, which aims at creating a cordial relationship between them.

Furthermore, Bishop Agyin-Asare is well known, particularly, in Ghanaian Christianity as a healing and evangelistic minister, especially within the Pentecostal/Charismatic circles. Thus, the latter's invitation of Prophet Apraku could serve as the commencement of a kind of dialogue between the mainline Charismatic Churches and the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches. This more or less would aid the reduction of "quakes" in the contemporary Ghanaian Christianity captured by some newspapers noted in the earlier chapters.

Concerning attitudes towards the Mainline Churches, Apraku holds the view that the pastors of these churches have no power to heal, deliver and perform miracles. He demonstrates this attitude by insulting people who go to these churches but run to him for help when they encounter "spiritual" problems. He particularly calls on people who attend these churches to withdraw their membership and join his church since he has the power to attend to their problems.

Conclusion

We have observed, the ministry of Prophet Emmanuel Kwaku Apraku, the founder and leader of King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry. We have looked at his background, conversion and call into the prophetic ministry, some of his teachings, how his church was founded, the leadership organization of his church, beliefs and practices, and his relationship with other prophets.

It is noteworthy that the ministry of Prophet Apraku, and his colleagues mentioned above, has generated a lot of debates and discussions particularly among the various Christian churches and associations in the country. The General Secretary of the Ghana Pentecostals Council¹³⁰ (a council of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches), the President of the Trinity Theological Seminary and Prophet Apraku were presented on "Asem Sebe"¹³¹, a TV3 program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30am to 11am. The topic for discussion centred mainly on the beliefs and practices of the contemporary charismatic prophets. The program was organized as a response to some of the perceived 'excesses' of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches, with specific reference to Apraku and his church.

Some of the issues raised in the course of the discussion had to do with the use of porridge, lime and soap, among others, for healing and deliverance. Apraku responded by referring to some Biblical narratives. He

¹³⁰ A council of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

¹³¹ The program was held on July 8, 2003



said that he was following the example of Jesus Christ who mixed saliva with sand to heal a blind man and that of the Apostles who used handkerchiefs and aprons to heal the sick. In effect, Apraku was emphasizing the use of "contact" (referring to the oil, soap, salt, sugar and other items mentioned earlier in the chapter) to administer healing and deliverance, a characteristic feature of the African Independent Churches. The rest of the panellists were of the view that Apraku should put a stop to such practice since they consider them to be unbiblical. This did not go down well with Apraku who said that his ministry and other prophets in the same circle were different. They were endowed with the gifts that enabled them to see hidden things and to prescribe solutions to their clients, a dimension of ministry, which is lacking in the ministry of other Christian leaders.

Prophet Apraku and King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry display some significant features, which need further discussion. These include the concept of *ɔtanfo* and *akwankyerɛ*, the use of items such as of porridge, lime and oil for healing and deliverance.

Thus, in practice, Apraku's ministry can be related more to the African Independent Churches than Charismatic Churches, particularly when it comes to the use of contacts for healing and deliverance, and also the important role of prophecy in the church. However, in ethos, Apraku

condemns the African Independent Churches for the use of candles, holy water and holy sand, among others, and usually calls for intensive deliverance for people who visit such churches.

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CHAPTER FIVE

NEO-PROTHETISM IN GHANA: A VIEW POINT

This chapter concentrates on the analysis of some of the beliefs and practices of the contemporary prophets in Ghana as presented in the previous chapters. These practices raise certain theological issues that call for discussion.

The chapter, thus, looks at certain issues emerging out of the concepts and attitudes of the contemporary prophets. Two of such concepts and practices are:

1. The concept of *Qtanfo* or 'enemy', and
2. The concept of *Akwankyerε* or 'guidance'.

The Concept of *Qtanfo* in the Ministry of the Contemporary Prophets

One of the issues that attracted the researcher regarding interpretation of the Christian Scripture is what in Akan is referred to as *qtanfo* (singular) or *atanfo* (plural) meaning 'enemy' or 'enemies'. It is worth noting that the concept is a traditional one appropriated by Christianity in general but has been revisited by the group investigated or studied. The analysis looks at the Akan, the Biblical and the contemporary concepts of *qtanfo*.

The Akan Understanding of *Ofanfo*

Etymologically, the word *ofanfo* comes from two Akan words *ofan* meaning 'hatred' or to hate and *fo* meaning 'one'. The word *ofanfo* literally means "one who hates". In the traditional Akan religion, the *ofanfo* is synonymous to 'enemy'.

To the traditional Akan person, it is the wish of the Supreme Being, the gods and the ancestors for the living to prosper. This is, however, not always the case since there are evil spirits or *ahonhomfi*¹³² who are poised to impede and destroy any progress and well-being of the individual, family and, in some cases, the whole community. The *ahonhomfi* normally use a human body to carry out destructive activities and also inflict pain on people. The 'possessed' human being, with *honhomfi*, thus becomes an enemy to human well being. The most common or popular and well known example, especially, in Africa, is witchcraft.

The *ofanfo* (enemy), from the traditional Akan perspective, is more of a human being, usually one's relative or a close friend. Such a person is 'possessed' with *honhomfi* (evil spirit) to oppose, manipulate, hinder and destroy the good fortunes of others and to inflict pain on them. To the

¹³² Abamfo Atiemo, 'Mmusuyi and Deliverance: A Study of Conflict and Consensus in the Encounter between African Traditional Religion and Christianity', MPhil thesis (University of Ghana, 1995), p. 81

latter, the physical and the spiritual events are inseparable. This reflects in the following Akan¹³³ maxim:

Sɛ aboa bi baka wo a, nna efiri won ntoma mu.

The insect that will bite one is from inside/entangled in one's own cloth.

The maxim means that one's enemy is within one's circle, that is, family. Thus, one's enemy can be one of the grandparents, parents, siblings, close relatives and or a close friend. For instance, the *otanfo* of, say, a couple's unpleasant marriage is mostly from either paternal or maternal sides or the two. The following Akan saying further explains this point:

*Nea oyɛ wo no firi w'ebusua mu.*¹³⁴

The one who is the cause of your woes is from your own family.

Being aware of the existence or presence of *otanfo* or *atanfo* who seek one's downfall, the traditional Akan seeks protection from the 'spiritualists' (that is, the individuals who serve as mediums to the traditional deities). This is done because the *otanfo* is also perceived as one who possesses a supernatural power or force to attack the vulnerable. In seeking protection and solution to a predicament, the victim goes to the *akomfo* (traditional priests¹³⁵) in a shrine, *mallams* (muslim diviners), *abosomfo*

¹³³ Akan is one of the Ghanaian local languages or dialect.

¹³⁴ Another popular Akan maxim.

¹³⁵ Traditional priests who act as intermediaries

latter, the physical and the spiritual events are inseparable. This reflects in the following Akan¹³³ maxim:

Sɛ̃ aboa bi baka wo a, nna efiri won ntoma mu.

The insect that will bite one is from inside/entangled in one's own cloth.

The maxim means that one's enemy is within one's circle, that is, family. Thus, one's enemy can be one of the grandparents, parents, siblings, close relatives and or a close friend. For instance, the *otanfo* of, say, a couple's unpleasant marriage is mostly from either paternal or maternal sides or the two. The following Akan saying further explains this point:

*Nea oyɛ wo no firi w'ebusua mu.*¹³⁴

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(traditional priest or priestess), *adifo* (prophets or prophetesses) and other spirit mediums. The victim moves from one place to another until they find satisfactory answer to the problem – the *otanfo*- and the possible steps to overcome the enemy.

The traditional Akan believes that the death of the perceived *otanfo* or *atanfo* (enemy or enemies) marks their freedom and prosperity or well being. Therefore, once a 'spiritualist' or a diviner reveals the particular *otanfo*, what follows is how to deal with them. Mostly, the victim asks the diviner to destroy, kill or disgrace the *otanfo* at all cost.

Biblical Understanding

From the traditional Akan meaning of *otanfo*, the closest English word is 'enemy' or 'adversary'. The *New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary* defines 'enemy' as "a person who bears another ill will and actively works or fights against him; someone who opposes, disapproves, or works against (ideas, beliefs, etc...)." ¹³⁶ Thus, generally, the 'enemy' is one who cherishes hatred, who wishes or seeks to do ill to another; in a less malignant sense an adversary, antagonist, and opponent. More specifically, "the enemy" is "the Devil". The Biblical meaning is not far from this.

¹³⁶ Bernard S. Cayne & Doris E. Lechner (eds.), *The New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, Encyclopedic Edition* (New York: Lexicon Publications, Inc., 1990), p. 312

In the Old Testament, "the enemy of Israel (or the godly) was *ipso facto* the enemy of God".¹³⁷ The enemy of God is portrayed as one who opposed God as well as His people in the religious and political sense. Here, the enemy is personified, and so the attitude of God's people towards him is more of direct confrontation-(the Old Testament is full of wars between Israel and their enemies). The enemy is the adversary, opponent, particularly, in battle. The people of God always sought to defeat their opponents in battle. The picture here portrays the enemy as people the Israelites hated and opposed, sometimes with the consent of God.¹³⁸

Thus, in the Old Testament, "the enemies of God, who are also reckon as the enemies of the people of God, were mainly the Gentiles or the heathen (or the non-Israelites who opposed the Hebrew religion and God)".¹³⁹ They were best described as 'adversaries'. An adversary is "a person who opposes or fights against another; opponent; enemy; ... the adversary, Satan."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Everett F. Harrison and Geoffrey W. Bromiley (eds), *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (London: Pickering & Inglis Ltd, 1960), p. 112.

¹³⁸ 2 Samuel 30:1-19

¹³⁹ David B. Guralnik & Joseph H. Friend (eds.), *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1966), p. 21

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

In as much as God wants the destruction of his enemies, He also admonishes that people should not gloat over the fall of their enemies.¹⁴¹ This suggests that it is not always the case that one seeks the destruction of the enemy. To a large extent, one is urged to go further in relating well to the enemies by feeding them.¹⁴² Further, the following Old Testament reference reflects the concept of *ɔtanfo* in the traditional Akan religion:

Monnye admfo nnni, mommfa mo ho nnto *ɔyanko* so; *ɔbaa* a *ɔda* wo koko mu no, ne ho na wen w'ano. Na *ɔbabanin* bu n'agya *ɔsesani*, *ɔbabaa* *sɔre* tia ne nā, aseɛ *sɔre* tia n'ase, onipa fiefoɔ ye n'atamfo.

Do not trust a neighbour; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words. For a son dishonours his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; *a man's enemies are the members of his own household.*¹⁴³

In the New Testament, the Greek Word *echros* is an adjective "denoting hated or hateful".¹⁴⁴ In the active sense, the term denotes hating, hostile. It is used as a noun signifying an enemy and an adversary. It is said to be: a) Devil (Matt. 13:39, Luke 10:19); b) death (1Cor. 15:26); c) the professing believer who would be a friend of the world, thus making himself an enemy of God.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Proverbs 24:17

¹⁴² Proverbs 25:21

¹⁴³ Micah 7:5-6, italics are mine

¹⁴⁴ W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966), p.30

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Thus, 'enemy', in the New Testament, refers to either the Devil¹⁴⁶ or Satan and those who inflict pain on Christians. What then should be one's attitude or reaction towards the enemy or enemies?

The command from God regarding enemies is one of treating them with kindness:

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head". Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.¹⁴⁷

Therefore, it is not in the power of the victim to revenge but to demonstrate love or kindness towards the perceived physical or human *atanfo*.

In the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke, Jesus Christ, the head over everything for the church,¹⁴⁸ admonishes the followers to love and also pray for enemies. This admonition is stated as follows:

You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I tell you: *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ...*¹⁴⁹
But I tell you who hear me: *love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.' (1 Peter 5:8)

¹⁴⁷ Romans 12:19-21 (NIV).

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Christ Jesus acknowledges, in the above references, that in the old times the attitude of God's people toward their enemies had been more of hatred and revenge. However, in the new dispensation He calls on the followers to leave vengeance to God alone and instead show them kindness.

Thus, in the scriptures, the term 'enemy' refers to the Devil or Satan, the Gentiles or non-Israelites who opposed the God and religion of Hebrews as well as the opponents of the Christian faith. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were urged by God to deal with their enemies in battles and also sometimes show kindness to them. The people called for the destruction of their enemies. The Psalmist says "may God arise, may his enemies be scattered; may his foes flee before him."¹⁵¹ On the contrary, the author of the book of Proverbs states that "if your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat."¹⁵² The New Testament view is not far from the latter. The followers of Christ Jesus are to demonstrate love towards their enemies and also pray for them.

In summary, the 'enemies' of the Hebrew people were thus regarded as God's enemies, and the reverse was also true.¹⁵³ In the New Testament, by contrast, the enemies to be overcome are primarily spiritual in nature'.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Psalm 68:1 (New International Version)

¹⁵² Proverbs 25:21

¹⁵³ Psalm 139:20-22

¹⁵⁴ Ronald F. Youngblood (ed.), *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), p. 402

Contemporary Understanding

The concept of *ɔtanfo* in the ministry of contemporary prophets is not much different from that of the traditional Akan beliefs as well as the practice in the Old Testament. One scriptural verse that serves as a premise to Akan's understanding of *ɔtanfo* is quoted as follows:

*'Odofo, meyi mpae se
ade nyinaa mu, ensi wo yie,
na nya ahogden
sedee asi wo kra yie no'* (Akan traslation.)¹⁵⁵

*Dear friend, I pray
that you may enjoy health and
that all may go well with you,
even as your soul is getting along well.*¹⁵⁶

The contemporary prophet maintains that the ultimate will of God for the believer is physical or material prosperity and good health. Now, everything contrary to this prosperous wish is not from God but attributed to the *ɔtanfo* or what Atiemo calls *ɔbonsam* (Devil).¹⁵⁷ Prosperity, for the latter, is the well being of the individual here and now.

The *ɔtanfo ɔbonsam* (the enemy the Devil), the first form of enemy, is the ultimate foe behind the woes or sufferings of the followers of Christ. As a

¹⁵⁵ 3John 2, Twi translation

¹⁵⁶ The corresponding reference in the English NIV

¹⁵⁷ Atiemo, M.Phil thesis, p. 81

result, particular times or meetings (especially in all-night services) are dedicated to the "whipping" of the Devil. Here, the adherents are told to come along with sticks to church. The prophet gives a form of exhortation mainly about Christian warfare and then leads the congregation through what may be called 'prayer of confession'. He then tells them to stand in-groups around each pole in the building where they have gathered to pray.

The Prophet tells them that they are going to whip Satan who is the ultimate cause of all their problems and a particular verse in the book of Ephesians is read:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.¹⁵⁸

This reference becomes the basis upon which they "whip" the Devil. At the instruction of the Prophet or whoever is leading, they lash the pole as they mention Satan's name. Not only do they call Satan's name but also call names of other evil spirits like *maame water* (water spirit) and *abayifo* (witches or wizards). It is believed that Satan and the other evil spirits also use human beings to hinder the progress or success of individuals.

The second classification of *otanfo* is a close relative or friend. Here, the prophets agree with the traditional Akan concept that a close relative or

¹⁵⁸ Ephesians 6: 12, NIV

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friend may be the cause of the downfall of an individual. Thus, they hold the view that one's *q̄tanfo* or enemy may be either associated with one's grandparents, parents, siblings, relative and or even close friends. The Prophets, therefore, teach that such *atanfo* or enemies ought to be eliminated before the victim can be free. How then do they deal with such *atanfo*? Again, during their warfare prayer sessions, after a short exhortation by the prophet, the congregation is invited to repeat a confession after the prophet. The confession usually goes like this:

Ewurade,

Q̄tanfo biara a omma me nnye yie no

Sɛ me b̄q̄ mennsa mu b̄q̄ mpae a

Apranaa ntse ngu q̄moso

"Car" mb̄q̄ no enku no

Sɛ q̄te "Tico car" mu a "atakureta" mmoa no

Sɛ q̄ye me maame-o, sɛ me paapa-o...

Ma q̄mo nyinaa ntsetse ngu.¹⁵⁹

O Lord,

Any enemy, who is hindering my progress or prosperity,

As I clap my hands to pray,

May thunder strike him/her,

May he/she be involved in a car accident and die,

¹⁵⁹ Observed at Sunday church service with the End-time Resurrection Power Ministry, July 13th, 2003. Also, almost the same confession was noted at the King Jesus Evangelist Ministry particularly on Friday, November 7th, 2003 around 11.30am at church premise.

May a heavy truck crash him/her in a smaller car.

Whether she/he is my mother or father,

May all of them be stumble and perish.

After the above confession, the congregation is asked to pray fervently to destroy the *otanfo*. The problems for which the *otanfo* is seen to be treacherous are related to the spiritual, physical and socio-economic.

The contemporary prophets address the physical and socio-economic needs of the clients by creating the awareness and attributing the cause of suffering to the *otanfo* in one's family. Some of the physical needs that the clients seek redress are health-related problems. The clients usually relate that they have sought help in several places including medical and 'spiritual' (shrines, etc) attention but all to no avail. One client related her situation to the congregation:

She was normal and healthy until one faithful afternoon she felt as if someone hit her with a heavy stick. She fell down at that moment and she could not rise up on her feet again for about three years. Her children sent her to the hospital and several places but all to no avail. Later, they heard about Prophet Apraku through a friend who also suggested that she should be sent to the church.

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While sitting on the floor in front of the congregation, Prophet Apraku intimated that '*Maame atanfo a oye no firi w'ebusua mu, na ende wobe sore egyina wonanso!*' (Woman, the enemy who is the cause of your sickness comes from your family, but today you will rise and stand on your feet!). The Prophet then commanded the spirit to free the woman and the sickness be sent to the 'sender' (the *atanfo* who caused it). He then commanded her to rise and indeed she was able to stand up and walk.¹⁶⁰ Here, the prophet attributed the problem to a spiritual source, particularly an enemy in the family who sought the ill health of another family member. These new prophets, thus, consider *atanfo* as being more of a physical human being than just a spiritual entity.

The socio-economic needs of the individuals who go to these prophets are more of marital and business problems. About eighty percent of Apraku's church members are women who are either unmarried or married with what they perceive as insurmountable problems. The latter complain of their partners being unfaithful or not taking care of the family. All these problems are said to be the work of the *atanfo* in the family and as such the believer is urged to pray and destroy them to bring about their liberty.

¹⁶⁰ Personal observation and interview at King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry on Wednesday, October 29th, 2003 between the hours of 10am and 4pm.

The third category of *otanfo* is one's neighbour. The contemporary prophets hold the view that one's *otanfo* may be a neighbour that is those you are living in the same house with or next-door neighbours. This refers, particularly, to those living in rented compound houses. A woman came forward to give a testimony concerning how she discovered her *atanfo* whom she believed to have been the cause of lack of progress in her business and also her marital problems. She related that for a long time she had been experiencing setbacks in her trading business and knew not what the cause was. She heard of Prophet Apraku preaching on radio one day and decided to pay a visit to fellowship with them in the King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry. She saw people buying oil and decided to buy one. She went home and sprinkled the oil on her door clandestinely and entered her room to pray. The following morning she heard a next-door neighbour quarrelling and raining insults on her without cause. Then she realized the latter was the *otanfo* who had been hindering her progress and marriage. She thus believed that the application of oil with prayer revealed to her the cause of her problems.¹⁶¹

The attitude of contemporary prophets towards the *atanfo* is likened to Akan pronouncing curses on the person who is said to be the cause of victim's problem. Out of pain, the traditional Akan while pouring libation pronounces the doom or destruction of persons responsible for their

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problems. The Prophets likewise lead their clients to pronounce the elimination of their *otanfo*.

Furthermore, the attitude of the contemporary prophets toward the *otanfo* is similar to what pertains in some Church of Pentecost prayer camps. Rita Acquah designated the whole practice as "muttering imprecations"¹⁶². According to Acquah,

This practice basically has to do with cursing everything believed to have been assigned demonic forces to hinder one's blessing. It is believed this opens the way for one's prosperity and peace of mind.¹⁶³

In these prayer camps "the target of these curses are usually witches and wizards¹⁶⁴... because they are believed to be the cause of one's misfortunes."¹⁶⁵ Here, the *otanfo* or enemy is perceived to be more of a supernatural entity compared to the understanding of the contemporary prophets. The latter, as already noted, perceives the *otanfo* or enemy in the sense of a physical human being and deals with him as such. There is, however, a thin line between them.

Note should be taken again that before the warfare prayer against the *otanfo*, an offering is taken to be used as point of contact between the client and the *otanfo* hindering their progress. The amount taken as

¹⁶² Rita Acquah, 'Church of Pentecost Prayer Camps: A Study of the Macedonia, Paradise and Salvation Prayer Camps', Long essay (University of Ghana, Legon, 1997), p. 34.

¹⁶³ Rita Acquah, *ibid.* p. 35.

¹⁶⁴ Witches and wizards are 'humans who are believed to possess magical or extraordinary powers to build or cause harm and injury...to make people sick, and cause them to die, they can make and unmake business success.' K. Appiah Kubi, *The Akans of Ghana, West Africa* (Inc. South Windsor, CT, EPS Printing, 1999), p. 49.

¹⁶⁵ Rita Acquah, *ibid.*

offering varies from group to group in the case of the prayer camps. The adherents are usually made to believe that the amount given determines the outcome of one's blessing.¹⁶⁶

Thus, the contemporary prophets believe that the effective way of dealing with the *otanfo* or *atanfo* is to symbolically and practically attack them. That is to say that one has to literally 'whip' or 'shoot' them dead.

The Concept of Akwankyerε in the Ministry of the Contemporary

Prophets

Consultation is an essential part of the church. It is a means by which individuals with peculiar problems or cases meet the leaders for advice. Counselling in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches is a period or time assigned for the leaders (mostly Pastors) to meet individuals for various cases or reasons. The cases for which people seek counselling vary from one client to the other. These include pre-marital issues, unusual dream experiences, marital problems, business or work issues and sickness.

In some Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, counselling for individuals in courtship or who are planning to marry is mandatory. Here, counselling is the process by which the unmarried partners are made of aware some of the challenges in marriage and the possible ways of handling them. It is

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a period when biblical facts about marriage are taught such that the individuals are fully aware of the biblical injunctions on the institution that they are about to enter. The counsellors, mostly married people with experience in marital affairs, also take the opportunity to ensure that the right procedure is followed in bringing the two together.

Consultation, on the other hand, has to do with the client seeking advice about a pressing issue. For instance, a young Christian woman who meets someone who proposes marriage to her at first sight will want to 'consult' the leadership or Pastor for advice. Here, the Pastor or the consultant takes the opportunity to counsel the client. Counselling and consultation, however, are used interchangeably in this work since the groups under discussion do not differentiate between the two.

Consultation is one of the notable features of the contemporary churches in Ghana. The reason is that the Prophet meets the clients on one-to-one basis to listen, give guidance or *akwankyerε*, and pray for them. Clients who have their problems addressed and solved automatically get 'converted' to the church of the prophet. It is a means by which the prophets increase membership of their churches. The investigation reveals that the main purpose of consultation organized by the contemporary prophets is to give *akwankyerε* to clients.

a period when biblical facts about marriage are taught such that the individuals are fully aware of the biblical injunctions on the institution that they are about to enter. The counsellors, mostly married people with experience in marital affairs, also take the opportunity to ensure that the right procedure is followed in bringing the two together.

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The term *akwankyerɛ* is an Akan word which literally means 'directions' or 'giving directions'. It is a popular saying among the group under discussion. But the practice has its origin in Akan belief system, particularly the concept of "abisa" or consultation, or "a divinatory consultation or the desire to know the supernatural causalities of affairs"¹⁶⁷. Onyinah intimates that *abisa* is an integral part of Akan religious life and that the attraction of most religious revivals among the Akan has been the religion's or the leaders' ability to divine (*bisa*) and relate his counsel to people's practical needs.¹⁶⁸ He also underscores the fact that 'abisa' is an Old Testament concept, particularly associated with the Seers.¹⁶⁹ And for him, people "who do not have direct relationship with God often consult the prophet or his representative who can hear from and speak for God in many situations".¹⁷⁰

It is, therefore, a normal practice for the Akan, in difficult times as well as times of misfortunes, to consult the spiritualist or the diviner. For instance, sudden or accidental deaths are considered serious misfortunes, which call for 'spiritual explanation'; that is, who is the cause? Unlike the spiritualists or the diviners, the contemporary prophets usually announce the times for consultation, mostly expressed like "*endɛ me'bɛyɛ "kanselin"*,

¹⁶⁷ Opoku Onyinah, 'Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost', Ph.D thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002), p. 115

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 367

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¹⁶⁷ Opoku Onyinah, 'Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost', Ph.D thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002), p. 115

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 367

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 367-368

me'berma akwankyerε nso", which translates as "today I will be counselling, I will also give directions".

In the case of Prophet Apraku, he usually sits on one-to-one basis with the client, listens to the problem, and depending on the seriousness of the situation, prayer is said over a bottle of oil or honey or a piece of the soap for treatment. In some cases, the client is referred to the deliverance team for deliverance. The whole process can be likened to a medical doctor and a sick patient where the former listens to the latter, diagnoses the problem and then gives prescription to the patient. In cases where the doctor diagnoses a serious problem that demands operation, the patient is then referred to the appropriate room for it. In most cases, it is the doctor that carries out the operation with the help of others. In the case of deliverance, the prophet hands over the client to his assistant or a team to do that. One would pose the question: why should people go for *akwankyerε*?

People go for *akwankyerε* for socio-economic reasons. For instance, the contemporary prophets can best be described as "spiritual visa contractors". There are testimonies that people who encounter difficulty in acquiring visas to foreign countries get through most times when they consult some of the contemporary prophets. This is because the latter believe that as God's servants they have access to God and so can

petition Him on behalf of their followers. Also, they appear “to have access to privileged information about principalities and powers and how to outmanoeuvre them”.¹⁷¹ They build up the confidence of the clients through testimonies from individuals who have had experience from their ministry. For instance, on one Wednesday, an elderly man of about 40 testified concerning his acquisition of U.S. visa.

The man related that he had been to the U.S. Embassy on four occasions to apply for a six-month visa but he was refused. He then decided to consult Apraku who prayed for him and told him to go for the visa. To his surprise, he was given a five-year visa instead of six months.¹⁷² A point of interest is the question, which has to do the reasons or the grounds on which such individuals were/are refused visas? Though the research did not take into account the response to the latter issue, what was realized was that most of these “visa-seekers” did not have the right papers to guarantee them the certification of the embassy of concern.

The contemporary prophets present themselves as those who have the power to break all forms of curses and misfortunes, heal sicknesses and diseases, deliver the oppressed, contract marriages and also identify the

¹⁷¹ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Sheffield Academic press, 2000), p. 8

¹⁷² A man illustrates when called upon to testify to how he obtained a U.S. visa, among many others.

root (or spiritual) cause of one's problem. These, among others, attract people to the latter for *akwankyerε* or direction.

Prophets in Ghana: Differences and Similarities

A prophet, by *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* definition, is "a person who spoke for God and who communicated God's message courageously to God's chosen people – the nation of Israel."¹⁷³ Christianity in Ghana has somehow worked with this definition but with novelty and, again, with the exception of some historical churches. The term "prophet" used in this thesis refers to an individual who claims to have received a divine calling and endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit such that through visions and dreams they are able to predict the hidden or unseen and future lives of people. Such individuals, also, claim to possess the power to avert any negative consequences.

A careful study of the contemporary prophets has revealed lots of beliefs and practices which can be contrasted with the other category of prophets in Ghana, namely, Early Prophets of the Spiritual Churches, Prophets of the Pentecostal Churches and Prophets of the Charismatic Churches. It should, however, be noted here that the differences and the similarities between these groups are not to be stretched too far since the

¹⁷³ Ronald F. Youngblood (ed), *NELSON'S New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (1995), pp. 1035-1036.

contemporary phenomenon is on-going. We should, therefore, envisage further changes and developments to occur.

Contemporary Prophets and Early Prophets in Ghana.

The Early Prophets in Ghana, particularly Wade Harris, Samson Oppong, and John Swatson are noted for their remarkable work of evangelisation and especially helping the numerical growth of the historical churches. Atiemo noted in his work that these prophets "maintained close connections with the mission churches and never personally founded any church."¹⁷⁴ Omenyo also made the observation that:

The prophets made the effort to establish rapport with the existing mainline churches, despite the fact that they had their respective calls quite independent of the Churches. The prophets saw the work of the Churches as complementing their own ministries. Nevertheless they were conscious of their direct commissioning by God, with its concomitant spiritual power, which made it difficult for them to submit to the control of the mainline Churches.¹⁷⁵

We may say that the early prophets were more concerned about 'conversion of souls' or people into Christianity than planting of churches. They believed in the unity of the Christian faith, that is, all denominations were serving the same purpose, the spread of Christianity. The contrary is the case in the ministry of contemporary prophets.

¹⁷⁴ Rev. Abomfo Atiemo, 'Mmusuyi and Deliverance: A Study of Conflict and Consensus in the Encounter Between African Traditional Religion and Christianity' Mphil thesis (University of Ghana, 1995), p. 85.

¹⁷⁵ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverjiboekecentrum, 2002), p. 72

The rate of proliferation of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches appears to be higher than other churches, that is Historical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Churches. The interesting thing about these prophets is that they are networked and usually team up in carrying out their various programs. What this means is that a team of these prophets usually come together to hold, say, a month's 'prophetic service' in one prophet's church. This teamwork is also seen in their electronic media programmes. For instance, a team of about five or more prophets from different denominations could hold an All-night service through the media. This is popular on the FM stations in Ghana, a specific example being Channel "R" (92.7 FM). The dominant groups who hold programs on this station are the contemporary prophets.

Unlike the early prophets, the contemporary prophets do not consider the existing older churches as possessing the power to cater for the needs of their members. They criticize the pastors of these churches for being lazy as a result of their inability to fast and pray for the people who go to them for help.

On the other hand, the reason for the proliferation of the contemporary prophets is blamed on the older churches (that is, Historical, Pentecostal and some Charismatic Churches) that seem to doubt the 'power' with which the prophets prophesy and perform miracles. The General

Secretary of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), for instance, admits that the council is careful in accepting these prophets as part of them because the source of their power appears to be a deceptive one.¹⁷⁶ Again, Prophet Apraku recounted that he was once a member of a deliverance team of Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Besease Congregation. He was thrown out of the team when the leadership became dissatisfied with his way of handling deliverance issues. That is, the church doubted Apraku's ministry. The other reason has to do with the prophets' claim that they are also called by God to fulfil a mission. They portray their calling as an irresistible divine commission, which is more "prophetic" than that of the existing churches. As a result, they consider themselves to be independent and with a different mission. They also consider themselves as having been called to mark an era popularly known as "the prophetic time".

The "prophetic time" refers to the present period of increased emergence of new prophets, particularly in Ghanaian Christianity. These new prophets consider themselves as representing a dispensation of prophets in the church who are called by God to bring about a revival of the spiritual gifts, particularly the ability to foretell the future of individual believers or followers.

¹⁷⁶ This came up in the course of discussing the need to bring together the contemporary prophets with other ministers of the gospel for interaction and also encouraging them to join the GPC on the February 26th 2004, at 2 p.m.

The contemporary prophets accuse the existing churches of neglecting the office of the prophet mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 which reads: "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers." They consider the church as having reached the dispensation of prophets and prophecy. To them, we are in the period when the 'prophecy' has become an indispensable practice in the church. Thus, any denomination, which does not give way to 'prophecy', is classified as a 'dead church'.

The early prophets were more concerned about the evangelisation of the indigenous traditional people. They appeared simple, moving from place to place destroying the idols that were handed over to them by certain individuals who believed and converted to Christianity. This made them more popular in the villages. The contemporary prophets, on the contrary, are mostly located and popular in the urban cities rather than rural areas of the country. All their activities are mostly concentrated in the cities. This is because most of them consider the "gifts" they have as being mostly needed in the towns with high populations. Prophet Apraku, for instance, as indicated in Chapter Four, migrated from Besease to the city of Accra, the capital of Ghana, based on advice from a woman whose daughter got healed by prayers offered by him. The woman told Apraku that there were more sick people in Accra who could be delivered through him.

Contemporary prophets are more popular in the capital cities also because of the use of the electronic media, which are mostly located in the cities. The electronic media has become a major tool of evangelisation in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Most electronic media presentations are mostly about preaching or teaching programs by these churches. The case of the Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches is more pronounced in the sense that they normally take turns in their preaching programs. They hold all-night prayers through these media, particularly Channel of Righteousness (Channel "R") FM station, a contemporary popular radio station in Ghana.

The contents of the message presented to the public via these electronic media houses by these prophets are more of publicity of how 'powerful' they claim to be than preaching the Christian message. The contemporary prophets appear to be more strategic in order to attract more people to them and the various 'packages' they have for the individuals with peculiar problems who would consult them for help. From observation and interviews at various times of visit, Apraku records not less than fifty new clients after every media-preaching program. This is because he usually presents to the listeners what he is capable of helping them to overcome in, say, their finances, business or work, sickness, marriage, and general spiritual challenges. This has been an effective means of attracting them.

Another reason why the contemporary prophets are mostly located in the urban centres or the capital cities is economic. Financial prosperity seems to be the main orientation of Charismatic Churches, particularly the Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches. Prophet Apraku of the King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry, as narrated earlier, sells lots of items at prices above the usual market price. The following table presents the picture clearly:

The table below indicates some of the items sold by Prophet Apraku with market prices, church prices and the profit made on them:

Item	Market Price	Church Price	Difference
Soap Kris or Premier, (small size)	₵1500	₵5000	₵3500
*Oil (50ml content)		₵5000	
Lime (5 balls)	₵500	₵5000	₵4500
Handkerchiefs	₵2000	₵100,000,plus	₵98,000 plus
*Honey (50ml content)		₵5000	
*Porridge		₵2000 plus	

* The market price cannot be determined

It must be noted that each of the items tabulated is sold at every church service (held 5 times a week). Apart from the above items, there are other items, which are also given to the clients at a price. Again, almost every "prophetic healing" or "deliverance" ministration¹⁷⁷ goes with giving of money. This is done preceding the ministration, or in the process of ministration, and after the ministration.

Concerning the giving preceding the ministration, the prophets usually throw a challenge to the congregation that anyone in need of a particular thing (marriage partner, child, visa, money, healing, etc) should give a certain amount, starting from one million cedis down to about one hundred thousand cedis. The people who take up the challenge are made to take a cube of sugar or a piece of toffee or even raw egg instantly or any other item of contact given by the prophet.

The prophets strategically call on the congregation to give some sums of money in the course of ministration. This usually happens after the occurrence of what can be described as undeniable miracle or accurate prophetic word to an individual. The latter normally stirs up surprises and astonishments in the congregation and thereby registers the clients'

¹⁷⁷ Ministration is a period in which the prophets usually pray for or ministers healing, deliverance, and prophetic word to the congregation or individual clients.

confidence in the prophets. The miracle induces the clients to give bountifully to them with the confidence that their needs would be met.

It is also the case that the ministrations of the contemporary prophets never end without taking an appreciative offering. This type of giving is meant to support the prophet for what God used him to do. Some of the prophets literally make an appeal for funds from the congregation to support their ministry. The question as to whether these forms of giving are right or wrong or biblical is philosophical and theological which cannot be dealt with in this work. But it is clear that the groups under discussion have strategic forms of giving which enable them to support their ministries financially and economically, notwithstanding some criticism from some personalities.

One of such personality considers some of the practices as "disturbing issues confronting Christianity in the country".¹⁷⁸ The writer, Divine Kumah, reports that:

One such disturbing issue is... EMERGENCE OF THE YOUNG PROPHETS ... in Accra; a group of young Christians have established themselves as demigods with great spiritual capabilities that enable them to tell you "everything" about yourselves. Participants at the prophetic all-night prayer meetings that would want to receive "personal prophecies" are subtly coerced, and sometimes, compelled to give various sums of money to the prophets. Not only does one have to pay or at least, make a "donation" to receive prophecy: It has come to the extent that even to be prayed for to receive "The Anointing" one has to pay money.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Divine P. Kumah, 'Prophetic 'All-Nights' And Anointing For Sale', *The Watchman* (Issue 13/96, Sept. 1- 14).

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Indeed, from observation, the above description of the attitudes of the contemporary prophets toward money is the fact on the ground. Apart from the usual offering at service, there is always a form of giving which can be seen as extortion of money from clients who go to them for assistance.

Thus, whereas the early prophets, particularly Harris, considered material gain as less important because of its tendency to render one spiritually deficient and carnal,¹⁸⁰ the contemporary prophets see material and financial advancement as proof or mark of the blessing of God in the life of the Christian. The latter are, in this sense, materialistic in every area of their ministry as compared to the former. This may be attributed to the fact that with the emergence of renewal in Christianity in Ghana as well as Africa, material or financial prosperity has been a major premise on which most of their theologies are built.

Gerrie ter Haar, in commenting on the African Christianity, noted that:

African Christianity may be seen as a continuity of African religious traditions generally in that it is concerned not only with the hereafter, but also with the material needs in this world ... The "prosperity gospel" promises access to "power which will cater for the necessities of life and protect it from its vicissitudes – a life that is full, prosperous, healthy, peaceful and secure".¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ See Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), p. 271

¹⁸¹ Gerrie ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise* (The Netherlands, 1998), p. 57.

Though the assertion is debatable, the point here is that the contemporary prophets, apart from public criticisms, are competing for a fair share of worldly wealth. Their argument is simple. The God they serve possesses all things— They have preference for passages which underscore this, example: “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it...” and “every good and perfect gift is from above (God)....”¹⁸² If this is the case, then why consider the things of God as “evil”. The Christian who is saddled with misfortunes as well as poverty is, thus, seen as being under a curse; he or she needs to be set free to enjoy the true blessing of God, material and financial prosperity. This is notwithstanding the possible extremes in emphasis placed on materialism.

The early and the contemporary prophets, however, share some common features with the early prophets. Their doctrines are simple and centre on salvation and deliverance from demons as well as other spiritual forces. The contemporary prophets, in addition, extend their doctrines to cover the material and financial rehabilitation of the Christian, that is, what some scholars referred to as “prosperity gospel”. They all condemn African religious traditions, perhaps, unconsciously. Unconsciously, because in carrying out most of their beliefs and practices, one can easily identify traditional religious traits. Typical examples are the concepts of

¹⁸² Popular Biblical references used by the contemporary prophets to establish their theology on the need for material and financial prosperity, namely, James 1: 17; Psalm 24: 1, respectively.

otanfo and *akwankere*, which have their understandings in the Akan traditional belief system.

Contemporary Prophets and Prophets of the Spiritual Churches

The contemporary prophets and the prophets of the *Spiritual Churches* ¹⁸³ share some common features. Like the former, most of the Prophets of the Spiritual Churches, popularly known as African Independent Churches, ¹⁸⁴ established their own churches, after they had been expelled from the mainline Churches. This has not always been the case in the churches established by the contemporary prophets. ¹⁸⁵

The beginning of these Churches was marked by the emergence of a movement of prophets and prophetesses. Among other things, such prophets claimed special powers given to them by the Holy Spirit, by which they were able to "catch" witches, heal diseases, and ward off misfortunes. ¹⁸⁶

The Prophets of the Spiritual Churches (namely, the Church of the Twelve Apostles, the Musama Disco Christo Church, the Apostolic Revelation Society, etc) ¹⁸⁷ are generally noted for their methods of healing which involve the use of some paraphernalia like florida water (perfume), holy

¹⁸³ Prof. C. G. Baeta's understanding of the term is maintained in this work. That, the term *spiritual*,... is intended to signify that, in their worship, the groups concerned engage in various activities which (by their own assertion) are meant to invoke the Holy Spirit of God, or are to be interpreted as signs of his decent upon the worshippers'. *Prophetism in Ghana* (1962), p. 1. Today, the same description fits that of the Pentecostal Churches.

¹⁸⁴ Atiemo, M.Phil thesis, p. 85.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid* p. 84

¹⁸⁷ Baeta, 1962, Contents

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¹⁸⁴ Atiemo, M.Phil thesis, p. 85.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid p. 84

¹⁸⁷ Baeta, 1962, Contents

water, incense, holy oil and holy sand.¹⁸⁸ Here, the clients are usually asked to bring such items for prayers to be said over them by the prophets.

According to Atiemo, the prophets of the Spiritual Churches are "important sources of support and healing for many people, believers and unbelievers alike. People have sought healing, exorcism, and other mundane benefits like security, prosperity, and good fortune from them".¹⁸⁹

Comparatively, the practice in the ministry of the contemporary phenomenon is not with much difference. People go to these prophets in search of healing, deliverance and prosperity, and also visa to travel "abroad". As a result they are made to buy certain items like anointing oil, lime, handkerchiefs, honey, soap, salt, etc (particularly in King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry) to be applied with specific directions.

The differences and similarities between them are presented in the table below:

¹⁸⁸ Atiemo, M.Phil thesis, p. 85

¹⁸⁹ Atiemo, M.Phil thesis, p. 85

* The Table is showing some of the differences and similarities between the Spiritual Churches and the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches

Beliefs and Practices	Prophets of the Spiritual Churches	Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches
Training	Informal	Informal
Church Finance	Through tithing, offertory, and freewill donations	Through tithing, offertory, donations, and other strategic forms of fund-raising.
Sacred Places	MDCC has two, namely, "House of the Holy Well" and "Holy Place". ¹⁹⁰ Also no footwear is permitted in the temple as well as designated places.	No such places.
Sacred Objects	Each group has other different objects ¹⁹¹ apart from the Holy Scriptures	The Holy Scriptures
Sacred Dress	Yes	No
Taboos	Yes	No
Fasts	Rigid	Flexible
Marriage	Polygamy is permitted ¹⁹²	Polygamy is not permitted.

It must be noted here that the Spiritual Churches are much more organized than the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches. This is because the former have been in existence for quite a long period of time and as a

¹⁹⁰ C. G. Baeta, 1962, p. 48. It is out of the "House of the Holy Well" that the "Holy Water" is drawn for healing and for other purposes.

¹⁹¹ The Sacred Objects differ from one to the other, for example, the Church of the Twelve Apostles has 'African dancing gourg-rattle... a calabash with a "neck" covered with strings of white beads'. MDCC has the ark, with the "Book of the Holy Covenants" in it, a "Stone of Courtesy" commanded in a prophecy which must be kept by the entire membership. C. G. Baeta, 1962, pp. 15, 49, respectively.

¹⁹² According to Prof. Baeta, this is with the sole exception of the Etodome Prayer Group. 1962, pp. 132-133. Also, it must be noted that the practise is changing in the contemporary times.

result the leadership have developed several documents, which spells out their beliefs and practices. On the contrary, the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches are still developing and it is expected that there will be changes in their operations.

Contemporary Prophets and Prophets of the Classical Pentecostal Churches

The role of prophets in the Pentecostal Churches (with the exception of Assemblies of God) is clearly defined. Here, the prophet is second to the apostle, and both are entitled to the chairmanship of the church. In other words, one ought to have been a pastor assigned to a local branch of the church before he is ordained to the office of the prophet after a careful observation and examination of the gifts of the person.

The General Council of the church does the appointment and ordination of prophets after series of deliberations and prayers at meetings. The appointment can also be done through prophecy. The appointment is based on the extent to which the individual pastor is able to see into spiritual things, see visions, dream dreams, and interpret dreams and visions concerning the church or individuals in the church. These "prophetic" insights or words are penned down pending their fulfilment. They then confer the divine mantle of prophet on the concerned minister.

In addition, in the classical Pentecostal Churches, specifically, the Church of Pentecost, before one is confirmed as a prophet, he might have served as a pastor for some number of years within which the call is proven. Again, usually, much also depend on the outcome of their various leadership council prayer meetings which is held annually.

The call to the office of prophet in the Charismatic Churches, on the other hand, is by self-appointment and not by a Council as in the case of the Classical Pentecostal Churches. That is, the contemporary prophets claim to have been called to the office of prophet after personal religious experience. They thus ascribe their calling solely to the Divine, and with the demonstration of some power they secure a following. Sometimes, another prophet of the same group confirms the calling to the office of prophet.

What then is the difference between the gift of prophecy and the office of a prophet? For the Classical Pentecostal Churches, the prophetic gift does not qualify a person for a prophetic office.¹⁹³ Far greater gifts than the simple gift of prophecy are needed to make one a prophet.¹⁹⁴ According to Prophet Yeboah, the former chairman of the Church of Pentecost, revelation of things outside the word of God, hidden things of

¹⁹³ An interview with Prophet M. K. Yeboah in June 2003, at his resident at New Gbawe, Accra

¹⁹⁴ From a personal pamphlet of Prophet M. K. Yeboah entitled "*Prophecy and Prophets*".

the past, present or future is necessary to the prophetic office.¹⁹⁵ But this revelation is not included in the scope of spiritual gift of prophecy given in 1 Corinthians 14: 3.¹⁹⁶

For Prophet Yeboah, the test of the prophet is the personal and exclusive revelation as indicated in the following verse:

He said, "Listen to my words: When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in vision, I speak to him in dreams."

The prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches hold the view that anyone who claims to have been called to the office of the prophet will need to operate in not only the gift of prophecy.¹⁹⁷ Such a person, in addition to the gift of prophecy, will have to possess the 'revelation gifts, namely, the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom, and the discerning of spirits'.¹⁹⁸

Furthermore, the prophets of the Pentecostal Churches are not noted for the phenomenon of healing and deliverance as compared to those of the Charismatic Churches. The former is considered to be "seers" of the entire church as well as individual believers but not unbelievers. That is, for the former, prophecy is not meant for the unbelievers but for only

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Had an interview with Rev. Kwadzo Bempah, the resident pastor and personal assistant of Prophet Salifu Amoako of the Alive Chapel International, Orion Cinema at Circle, Accra, on Monday, February 3rd, 2003 at church premise at 2 pm.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

believers.¹⁹⁹ The latter, on the other hand, do not withhold prophecy from anyone, whether believer or not. For them, prophecy is an effective evangelistic tool in reaching out to unbelievers.

In fact, in the Pentecostal Churches, the office of the prophet, apart from spiritual purpose, is also assigned with administrative roles. That is to say, when a pastor in charge of local churches is ordained to the office of the prophet, he is automatically promoted to be an area head of the church, with pastors under him. He then moves from one district to another supervising the work of the pastors under his domain. Thus, the prophet is higher in rank than the pastor. The Prophet-led Charismatic Churches, on the other hand, have the prophets automatically being the highest authority in the Church with no one assigning that role to them. Thus, in the case of the Pentecostal Churches, the prophet is, first, appointed and ordained by a council; secondly, the prophet is assigned with new responsibilities, that is, from a district pastor to an area head. The prophets under investigation assume all these roles automatically.

¹⁹⁹ Had an interview with Prophet Yeboah on Monday, June 23rd, 2003, at his resident at 6 pm.

Prophets of the *Mainline* Charismatic Churches

There are no remarkable differences between the Prophets of the group designated in this work as *Mainline* Charismatic Churches and that of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches. Of course, the beliefs and practices are virtually similar. For example, when we consider the emphasis on the Holy Spirit, all uncompromisingly claim to have had experience with the Holy Spirit. From observation, they operate in the same way relying mostly on visions and dreams and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. All of them condemn the Spiritual Churches and the use of holy water, candles, holy sand, etc for healing and deliverance.

The *Mainline* Charismatic Churches, however, seem to be in disagreement with the prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches when it comes to certain practices. The former condemn the repetitive sale and use of lime, porridge, handkerchiefs and other items for healing and deliverance. While some Charismatic believers do not see anything wrong with these practices and freely consult the prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches for assistance, others as well as some ministers of the Charismatic Churches express their doubts about them, suspecting some foul play somewhere.

Furthermore, the *mainline* Charismatic Churches, though they disagree and doubt the ministry of some contemporary prophets, they are silent on

the issue on the basis of not having the right to judge. But one thing is certain, it is actually difficult to draw a sharp line of distinction between the two groups of churches.

Leadership in the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches

As already noted in the previous chapter, the leadership in the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches is not by council, but can be best described as "single-leadership style". The prophet, founder and General Overseer of the church, wields the highest authority in the church. That is on the church organizational structure, the prophet is at the highest rank or level, followed by the Executive Council and other arms of the structure. The Executive Council is accountable to the Prophet, and also takes instructions and directives from him.²⁰⁰ The explanation for this is that the Prophet always reminds the other leaders under him of his spiritual position in the church, insisting that he carries the vision of the church.²⁰¹

The prophet, who is the founder and general-overseer of the church is usually taken as the mouthpiece of God by the other leaders and the rest of the congregation. As such, the words or prophecies given by the prophet are not examined but taken and practised. The rest of the

²⁰⁰ Refer to the organizational structure of the Alive Chapel International presented in the appendix II

²⁰¹ I interviewed Elder Adakwa Thorp, an elder and a Board member of King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry, Accra, on Wednesday, November 5th, 2003, at church premise around 4 pm.

leaders, seeing the prophet as one who has been directed by God to establish the church, accord him the highest position in the church.

It must be also noted here that the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches' type of leadership is not well organized and the reason can be attributed greatly to their new or current nature as compared to the older churches. They are still adapting and so changes are inevitable in their practices. Despite the changes that are bound to occur with time, contemporary prophets solely control their individual churches in virtually all respect, particularly in the area of finance. This is because some claim to be the sole sponsors of the entire church. A typical example is the Alive Chapel International founder and General Overseer, Prophet Salifu Amoako, made the following statements in the course of church service on the first Sunday of the year 2003:

Your tithes and offerings are not enough to take care of the expenses of the church. Your money could not take care of these things you see in the room (referring to the interior decorations, electronic instruments, etc), for I am the sole sponsor of the church.²⁰²

Interestingly, such statements do not cause any dissent within the congregation. The congregation seems to rather appreciate what can be described as the investments of the leader in the church. The response from Rev. Bempah, the resident pastor and the one who interpreted the message in the local dialect, was a confirmation that, indeed, the

²⁰² The statements were noted on Sunday morning church service, January 5th, 2003, in the course of this investigation.

Prophet uses his personal money to purchase most of the property of the church.

Thus, we can deduce the reason why the contemporary prophets are seen to be in control over their churches. The prophets virtually invest their time, energy, and material resources in their ministries. They consider the success of the church as their own success in life and vice-versa. In other words, the contemporary prophet manages or controls his church like a profit-making enterprise.

The Role of the Contemporary or New Prophets in the Church

Having discussed the differences and similarities between the contemporary prophets and the prophets of other Christian persuasions, we now turn our attention to the issue of why the emergence of these new prophets in this time. Do these prophets have any hope to offer the society?

The definition of the role of prophets in the church has been a thorny issue yet to be resolved. Opoku Onyinah has argued that the prophets and prophetesses in the Church of Pentecost in the past had to go independent possibly because "they felt their roles had not been well

defined."²⁰³ The leadership of the Church of Pentecost in the past had to react to what they refer to as "unscriptural practices"²⁰⁴ of "lay prophets and prophetesses,"²⁰⁵ namely, blessing of water, use of the title prophet/prophetess, and accusing people of witchcraft. These practices were forbidden with the exception of the use of the title prophet, which became prominent under the leadership of Prophet M. K. Yeboah.²⁰⁶

Opoku Onyinah further reports the response of the prophets and prophetesses to the reaction of the leadership of the Church of Pentecost as follows:

1. "That during Conventions of the Church, they (Prophets and Prophetesses) were not provided with accommodation and food, as given to the Pastors;
2. That during prayer for healing at the conventions, the pastors left them alone to handle the session;
3. That many sick people returned to their towns and villages unhealed because "the time allocated to the healing ministry was very limited";
4. That if the Church did not define the position of the Prophets and Prophetesses, they would have to withdraw and be independent."²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Opoku Onyinah, 'Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost', Ph.D thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002) p. 209.

²⁰⁴ Opoku Onyinah, *ibid.* p. 204.

²⁰⁵ Opoku Onyinah, *ibid.* p. 193.

²⁰⁶ Opoku Onyinah, *ibid.* p. 224.

²⁰⁷ Opoku Onyinah, p. 207.

Thus, lack of recognition and undefined roles of prophets and prophetesses in the church actually brought about a separation.

It is worth noting that the emergence of the contemporary prophets is more or less a reaction to the Classical Pentecostal and the Mainline Charismatic Churches who seem not to acknowledge the role of the prophets. The contemporary prophets claim that there is the need for the church to make time available for the prophets to minister 'prophetically' to the individuals in the congregation in every service since God would always want to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the followers. As a result, among the group investigated, 'prophetic ministration' is the core of their program of worship. This is the period during which the spiritual needs of individual clients or followers are addressed. Once they are independent more time, if not all the time, is dedicated to prayer, healing, deliverance and prophesying.

As such, the contemporary prophets have emerged to respond to the socio-religious needs of the society. Through their sensitivity to the spiritual and social needs of their adherents, these prophets help the individual face his or her world of challenges with boldness and courage, and also take hold of every difficult situation and overcome it, since, to them, with God all things are possible. Though not all those who go to them have their problems solved, they command trust from the clients based on the

faith that once the step of faith is taken, it shall definitely be well with them no matter how long it takes. The clients of these prophets thus consider them as "the last stop" of their problems.

Furthermore, the contemporary prophets have emerged to emphasize the *Africanness* of Christianity, which is a characteristic of the African Independent Churches. This particularly has to do with the use of certain contacts in administering healing, deliverance, and other practices. Some of these contacts are the oil, soap, sugar, lime, porridge, and so on. They also put emphasis on the need for the clients to consult the prophets for direction in all their endeavours, which the traditional Akan would refer to as *abisa*²⁰⁸ or consultation.

Conclusion

Indeed, the contemporary prophets are involved in several practices that attract academic investigation and critical analysis. This is because they also influence the society, challenging them to face their world of insecurity and socio-economic hardships. The number of their clients appears to be on the increase from time to time despite the various criticisms from some individuals outside and inside the church. Again, due to the inevitable changes, the groups investigated in the study are developing in the area of documenting their beliefs and practices and

²⁰⁸ Opoke Onyinah, p. 115

coming out with their constitutions. This underscores their hope and determination to survive the future.

Some of the contemporary prophets and their respective churches are putting forward plans to come up with educational institutions and organizations, some of which are already in progress. Despite the odds they face, the prophets keep on assuring themselves and making the effort to stand the test of time.

Neo-prophetism marks a crop of prophets who emphasize a return to African Christianity that focuses on the well-being of its followers. These prophets interpret Christianity in the context of cause and effect. That is, mostly, every misfortune in the life of believer definitely has a spiritual cause. But the spiritual cause usually uses a human being to carry out the evil machinations in the physical. Where these prophets seem to miss the target is that whether the enemy takes on a physical human form or not, the target is more of spiritual in nature.

Also, the pronouncements of curses on the supposed enemy, usually a close relative, as already discussed, indicate the extent to which the whole phenomenon is entrenched in the indigenous traditional worldview, mainly, of the Akan of Ghana. The practice makes one to be suspicious of possible connections between neo-prophetism and indigenous traditional

Akan worldview. That is, it is possible that these new prophets might have consulted the "traditionalists" for some extra power to enable them see-hidden things about the clients and also perform miracles. One main question that came up in the course of this investigation from some individuals from different Christian groups is: "Are these prophets genuine?" This question is asked because of the obvious common feature the phenomenon shares with, possibly, the African religion – all misfortunes are caused by *q̄tanfo*.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

The charismatic renewal phenomenon has been contagious for some time in Ghanaian Christianity. It has moved from one place to another. For instance, it has been embraced by the Catholic Church and practised under a designated name, Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement. It is also found in other mainline churches such as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church of Ghana, the Evangelical Presbyterian Churches in Ghana, the Anglican Church, and the Baptist Church in Ghana.²⁰⁹ The renewal at another stage assumed the form of inter-denominational fellowships in the schools and popularly in the city of Accra.

The phenomenon resulted in the formation of churches popularly known as Charismatic Churches. These churches have proliferated in the country, the continent of Africa and the world at large.

The Charismatic Churches are experiencing a high rate of proliferation of prophets who are also committed to opening up new churches under their leadership. This other forms of churches have been designated in this

²⁰⁹ See Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverli boekencentrum, 2002), pp. 10, 101-198.

study as the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*, the main focus of the investigation.

As the name implies, the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches refer to some type of charismatic churches that are founded and organized under the leadership of individuals popularly called by their followers as “prophets”, and whose beliefs and practices are usually summed up under what they call “Prophetic Ministry”.

The leadership of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches maintains that Christianity is presently experiencing a stage or an era that emphasizes the “prophetic ministry” or the style of ministry that places emphasis on the ability to foretell the hidden things and future events about individuals or a group. They believe that God is raising prophets for the church, who know and understand the times and the seasons, and can tell the sources and causes of the individual woes and fortunes and offer directives to prevent misfortune.

Thus, the messages of the contemporary prophets centre mainly on the well being of the individual. They believe and maintain that any experience of pain and suffering, especially ill health and poverty in a person's life is not the will of God. Prosperity, which is understood in terms

of good health and acquisition of abundant wealth, is offered as a 'here and now' affair.

It must be noted here that the position of the contemporary prophets is more or less established in their set up despite the theological debates. Though from a different context, Oosthuizen best describes the situation as follows:

The prophet/healer can meet this world of insecurity, often of misfortune and look into the future in order to be better prepared for what is approaching. The prophets take seriously the worldview in which their people live. The emphasis is never on "pie in the sky when you die", but the emphasis is on what is needed in here and now. Theologically, there are issues which need close scrutiny but from socio-psychological point of view, the prophet's position is firmly established in many AIC and is a tremendous source of scrutiny to many.²¹⁰

The clients or the followers of the contemporary prophets seem to defend them irrespective of what they refer to as the "weaknesses" of the Prophets. For them, so long as the Prophet is able to help them to overcome whatever difficulty in life, they are all right. In fact, the clients are not bothered about the theological issues involved in the teachings of the prophets. Whether a prophet is a true or false one is not considered; their concern has to do with the search for relief from pain and suffering.

Furthermore, the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches emphasize various concepts that need scholarly and theological attention. Some of these

²¹⁰ Gerhardin C. Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), p. 193.

concepts include the attitudes toward the *atanfo* or *atanfo* (that is, enemy or enemies), the practice of *akwankyere* (that is, directions, a substitute for counselling), prosperity, spiritual warfare and leadership.

The Pentecostal and some Charismatic Churches, which form a council known as the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), are hesitant to accept them into the council because of the fear of 'polluting' the general Christian doctrine of the Council. The Council maintains that they can only be accepted on the condition that they are prepared to go by the rules and regulations of the Council. During one of the television discussions, when asked whether they have any council or association, Prophet Apraku, who was a panellist, responded affirmatively. However, the researcher could not follow up on that.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the objectives of the work is to study the life-history of the contemporary prophets. Though the researcher could not cover many of the prophets, those presented in the work constitute a significant representation. They are the true representation of the *Prophet-led Charismatic Churches*, especially in the area of their beliefs and practices. For scholars and students of Religion, this study has generated some theological debates and also places us in the position to address the excesses in the ministry of the contemporary prophets.

The researcher suggests and calls for a critical and theological reflection on the ministry of Biblical Prophets and contemporary ones. Biblical scholars and theologians, in collaboration with other Christian councils (Ghana Christian Council, Ghana Pentecostal Council, Ghana Association of Council of Charismatic Churches, etc), should use the media to discuss, teach and explain the major doctrinal issues pertaining to Christianity and the Bible. Copies of this work should be available to the leadership of these councils to inform them about what is actually happening in Ghanaian Christianity.

Furthermore, the Ghana Pentecostal Council is called upon to set up a research centre to investigate the background of new Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches that are springing up. This will, perhaps, enable them to discover some strange doctrines and practices that are creeping into Ghanaian Christianity. This can also be taken up as project work in the Department for the Study of Religions.

The researcher is also recommending to the Biblical Studies section of the Department for the Study of Religions to mount courses at both degree and graduate levels to help the students gain some background knowledge about Biblical prophecy. Topics like Prophecy and Prophets and Contemporary Prophets are recommended to be taught. These

courses should be designed to include topics on the Call of the Prophet, the Message of the Prophet and the Character of the Prophet. These can also be taught in the Biblical Studies course offered at Level 100.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed at constructing a historical development of prophets in Ghana and particularly looked at the early prophets, namely, Prophets William Wade Harris, Prophet Sampson Oppong and Prophet John Swatson. We noticed that these prophets were more or less non-denominational in the sense that they did not establish churches for themselves. They could be described as itinerant preachers who moved from one village to the other converting people to Christianity.

Nevertheless, one of the converts of Harris, by name Grace Tani (a Prophetess), did not join any of the existing historical churches but started what scholars see as the first African Independent Church (or Spiritual Church in Ghana)²¹¹. This group of prophets and prophetesses are more denominational and are also noted for the use of candles, holy water, holy oil, incense, holy sand, birds and some animals, among others, for rituals and sacrifices.

²¹¹ See Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of some Spiritual Churches* (London:SCM Press, 1962).

The study has also touched briefly on Prophets in both Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. A detailed discussion on the Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches has been done in the previous chapter. The differences and the similarities between the Prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches and other older churches are analysed. The fact remains that all the various names of prophetic movement are still with us today.

The contemporary prophetic movements continue to attract a section of society despite the odds. This is partly because the prophets are in a way able to help those who approach them for spiritual help. People who go to them seem to have their problems solved or minimized, for as the saying goes, 'half a loaf is better than none'. The movement should, therefore, be considered as a form of renewal in Christianity that needs attention and direction. The excesses are to be checked and controlled rather than undermined and rejected.

The fact is that the ministries of the contemporary prophets are spawning serious 'theologies'²¹² some of which are resulting in the breakdown of family ties. A typical example is the concept of *otanfo* discussed in the previous chapter. With this concept, clients are told that, for instance, a mother or grandmother or sister is the cause of pain or suffering and this

²¹² Concepts, beliefs and practices resulting from their reflections on the scriptures.

sometimes results in withdrawal of family responsibilities, complete cut-off from the family, and even in the murder of the suspected relative.

Is there a future for the contemporary prophets? The contemporary prophets will survive the future so long as they continue to provide answers to the followers – healing for the sick, relief for the distressed, deliverance for the captive and direction to the stranded. Though there are and may be theological issues to be confronted with, if the contemporary prophets are able to continue in the zeal of today, their ministries shall survive. Again, changes and developments in their practices are inevitable. Like the African Independent Churches, the contemporary prophets shall also come out with their constitutions, worship liturgies and possibly hymn books.

It should also be noted that the role of the contemporary prophets in their various churches and in the society could be related to the role of the traditional priest in an indigenous African religious community. Ekem summarizes the role of the latter in the following words:

Akomfo function as intermediaries between their communities and deities into whose service they have been called. In a typical priestly capacity, they present the community's needs to the deities and interpret the deities' wishes to the community.²¹³

²¹³ See John D. Kwamena Ekem, *Priesthood In Context* (Hamburg: Verl an der Lottbek, 1994), p. 45

The role of the contemporary prophet is not so much different from that of the traditional priest stated above. He is usually seen as a spokesman for God and for the people – he relates information from God to the people and gives direction to the people as to how to overcome difficult moments of their lives. He is seen to be more concerned about healing, deliverance and the prosperity of the clients. This is also the same in the light of the traditional priest or *okomfo*.²¹⁴ Onyinah puts it this way:

The *okomfo* gives information with respect to the cause, the type and the treatment of a disease or causes of mishaps, such as barrenness, an accident, a sudden death or origin of conflicts in a marriage. The *okomfo* also may give signals of approaching misfortune, and how to avoid these.²¹⁵

Thus, neo-prophetism should also be considered to be the revival of the authentic African Christianity and also a challenge to African Christianity. It is a challenge in the sense that the church (Mainline, Pentecostal, and Charismatic) would still has to define clearly the role of the prophet or prophetess, thereby giving full recognition to prophetism. The researcher agrees with Onyinah in the following assertion:

It appears that until the churches have been able to absorb “prophetism”, especially abisa into their structure, and offer a theological framework for the operations of healers and exorcisers in the Ghanaian churches, “exorcistic ministry” will continue to be a major problem for Christianity in Ghana.²¹⁶

Neo-prophetism is a phenomenon in contemporary times, which emphasizes and advocates the re-visitation of a form of Christianity that

²¹⁴ The *okomfo* is the person, either male or female, who is possessed by *gbosom* (the god).

²¹⁵ See Opoku Onyinah, ‘Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost’, Ph.D thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002), p. 57

²¹⁶ Onyinah, ‘Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost’, p. 210

specializes in ministering to the spiritual and the socio-economic needs of the adherents or the people. This, in Ghana and Africa as a whole, is an attractive feature to be identified with.

The phenomenon of neo-prophetism underscores the fact that the worldview of a people impacts all aspects of their lives – religious, social, economic, physical and political. The contemporary prophets studied in this work and others are being influenced enormously by the beliefs of the traditional Akan worldview.²¹⁷



²¹⁷ The traditional Akan worldview includes the beliefs in the Supreme Being, Divinities or Deities, spirits, ancestors, and charms and amulets.

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APPENDIX I

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE PROPHETS OF THE PROPHET-LED
CHARISMATIC CHURCHES**

Personal Information:

1. Name of parents, Date and Place of birth of the prophet:
2. Educational background:

Spiritual Encounter:

3. When and where did you become a Christian or converted?
4. Into which church or denomination were you first converted?
5. Please, can you tell how you got baptized with the Holy Spirit?
6. In your opinion or view, what are the following: Holy Spirit, Prophet and prophecy, dreams and visions, healing and deliverance, prosperity, and prophetic ministry?

Church:

7. What leadership title do you possess? Why?
8. When and how did you start your church or ministry?
9. What are your church's tenets of faith, if any?
10. How do you normally organize prophetic services?
11. Do you have other prophets under you?

12. How do you train the up-coming prophets?

13. Do you have branches of the church elsewhere?

14. What are the platforms you use to propagate your message or ministry? (FM or Radio Stations, TV stations, etc).

Funding:

15. Prophet, apart from tithing and offertory, are there any other means or sources of funding your church?

16. Some churches have projects like schools and other business ventures. What about your church?

17. Is there one or a body solely responsible in paying the workers in your church?

18. There have been several times that people think the prophets of these days have been exploiting their followers. These are sometimes expressed in newspapers and in the electronic media. What is your opinion on that?

Organization:

19. How is your church organized?

Others:

20. In your view, is there something about prophets that the older churches are not aware of?

21. What are biblical basis for prophets and their ministry?

22. In your opinion, are there problems with the ministry of prophets in Ghana?
23. How do you relate or co-ordinate with other prophets and ministers?
24. Prophet, in your opinion, what makes your ministry different from prophets of the Spiritual Churches?

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MINISTERS OF PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC CHURCHES

1. Reverend, these days we have unprecedented proliferation of prophets and their churches in the country. What do you think is the cause of this?
2. Reverend, in your view, who is a prophet?
3. Do you have prophet in your ministry or church? What is the role of the prophet?
4. Reverend, in your opinion, do the ministry of contemporary prophets in Ghana pose any challenge to the older churches? What are some the challenges?
5. Reverend, in your opinion, what are the differences and similarities between the prophets of the Prophet-led Charismatic Churches, Mainline Charismatic Churches, Pentecostal Churches, and the Spiritual Churches?

APPENDIX III

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BELIEVERS IN THE PROPHET-LED
CHARISMATIC CHURCHES**

1. How did you get to the prophet?
2. Has the prophet addressed you prophetically before? Could share the content of the prophecy with me?
3. How far has the prophecy gone in your life, i.e., has it come true?
4. Can you explain how the prophecy was given to you by the prophet?
5. Has there been any occasion that the prophecy given by the prophet was said to be true or false? Can you mention some instances?
6. Has the prophet interpreted your dream or vision to you before? What was the dream or the vision. And the interpretation? What is your opinion on that?
7. Have had any healing and/ or deliverance experience in your church before? Can you share with me?
8. What do you think generally about the proliferation of prophets and their churches in Ghana these days?

APPENDIX IV

ALIVE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL

Vision

To win lost souls for Christ and to plant churches and establish God's people through teaching and preaching of God's word and the prophetic Ministry.

Mission Statement

To establish God's people through God's prophetic word.

Doctrine

The word in greek is dedache. It refers to teaching, instruction and the subject taught. In other words. what we believe and teach.

We believe and teach

1. Salvation by repentance and faith in God (Jesus) Acts 2:38, 16:30-31
2. Water baptism by immersion in Acts 2:41, 8:38-39
3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues Acts 2:38-39, 10:44-46.
4. Gifts of the Holy Spirit and laying on of Hands. 1 Cor. 12:47, 7 11, 1 Cor. 14, Acts 13:3.
5. Resurrection of the dead. Acts 9:36-40
6. The Judgment of God (Acts 5:3-6, 13:10-11)
7. The second coming of Christ (2 Thess. 1:7, Zach. 14:4, 5&9).
 - i. Rapture (Latin-Rapio, Greek-Hurpaza, meaning caught up. 1 Thess. 4:17, John 14:3, 1 Cor. 15:51-52, Phi. 13:20-21, Titus 2:13, Heb. 9:28, 1 Peter 5:4, 1 John 3:2.
 - ii. The second coming of Christ (Christ will come to the earth with the saints). Matt. 24:27, Acts 1:10-11, Zech. 14:4, Dan 2:44, Dan. 7:13-14, Joel 3:16, Rev. 1:7, Rev. 19:11-21, 2 Thess 2:8, Issa. 3:4-5.

BENEFITS OF DOCTRINE

Christians need to understand and experience the fundamental doctrines of Christ. We need more of the spirit as well as the teaching of God's word. Here is a true saying If you have the word without the spirit, you will dry up. If you have the spirit without the word, you will blow up. If you have the spirit and the word, you will grow up. Every healthy church combines the spirit and the word.

1. Doctrine gives substance to believer's faith and confession.
2. It stabilizes the Christians in times of testing and troubles.
3. It enables the saints to handle the Bible correctly
4. It equips the believer to detect and confront error

5. It makes Christians confident in their walk.
6. It calms their fears and cancels the superstitions
7. It gives sound objective beliefs that form the foundation of our Christian Life.
8. It protects the Christian faith from false doctrine from generation to generation. It clarifies and defines the boundaries of our faith.

DETAILS OF DOCTRINES/TEACHING

LESSON ONE

SALVATION

There are many parts of building that attracts the eye but the strength of the building lies in the foundation. You are taking this course of study because you have taken steps that lead to salvation. These steps would place you on "Christ the Solid Rock", where you can begin to build your Christian character (Matt. 7:24-27).

STEPS TO SALVATION

1. Admit that you are a sinner Is. 53:6, Rom. 3:23
2. Recognize that the wages of sin is death John 3:36, Rom. 6:23
3. Believe that Christ died for your sins Rom. 5:8, I Pet. 2:24
4. Repent and forsake your sins Prov. 28:13, I John 1:9
5. Invite Christ into your life John 6:37, Rev. 3:20

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

To be convinced in your mind and heart that you belong to God you must be fully persuaded without any doubt about it. Jn. 6:37, II Tim. 1:12.

WHAT FOLLOWS IMMEDIATELY YOU RECEIVE CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOUR?

1. Christ dwells in you Rev. 3:20
 - a. How do you he is knocking at the door? (Rom. 10:17)
 - b. How do you open the door? (Rom. 10:9-10)
 - c. How do you know that He has come in? (Rom. 8:16)
2. You become the child of God John 1:12
 - a. Is everybody God's child?
 - b. What is your relationship with God? (Rom. 8:14)
 - c. Who is your father? II Cor. 6:16-18

3. Your sins are forgiven I John 1:19
 - a. What must you do for your sins to be forgiven?
 - b. How is God described in His forgiveness? Psalm 103:8-13
 - c. What must we do after our forgiveness? Prov. 28:13

4. You have Eternal Life I John 5:11-12
 - a. What is eternal life? Rev. 21:4,8
 - b. Who gives eternal life? I John 5:11

5. Who has eternal life? I Jn. 5:12. You become a new person II Cor. 5:17
 - a. How can one be in Christ? Rom. 8:9-10
 - b. What happens in your desire as a Christian?
 1. Bible studies or reading
 2. Prayer
 3. Church attendance
 4. Love God's people
 5. Sense of forgiveness
 6. Victory over sin (reject the desire for sin)
 7. Bear fruits of the spirit Gal 5:22-24
 8. Inner peace
 9. Love for God

These really happen, though you may or may not feel them at the time of conversation. But this is a fact you must accept, because the word of God says so. You will begin to experience these changes in your life as you, by faith in God's word, accept your new position.

LESSION TWO

THE WORD OF GOD AND QUIET TIME

MAIN TEXT: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path Psalm 119:105.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

It is an inspired word of God (2 Tim. 3:16) written down by anointed people of God (2 Pet. 1:21). It consist of 66 books; 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

BENEFITS OF GOD'S WORD

1. It teaches us the truth - John 17:17
2. It approves us (by studying) - 2 Tim. 3:15

3. It keeps us from sin - Psalm 119:9-11
4. It makes us prosper Joshua 1:8
5. It produces faith - Rom. 10:17
6. It is food - Matt. 4:4
7. It is milk for new converts or Christians - I Pet. 2:2
8. It's a sword but sharper than every sword - Heb. 4:12

HOW TO GET FULL GRIP OF THE WORD

1. By hearing - Rom. 10:17
2. By reading - Rev. 1:3
3. By studying - Acts 17:11
4. By memorizing Psalm 119:11
5. By meditating Psalm 1:12

As you apply these principle, you shall become a good student of the word.

HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME

Quiet time is simply a daily time of personal fellowship with God through the word (Bible) and prayer. If we want to know God better, we must spend time with Him. We take time to read God's word. He talks to us and we spend time in prayer and talk back to him. This is quiet time or morning devotion or morning watch.

WHY QUIET TIME?

1. We need God's word daily to grow - I Pet. 2:2
2. It is God's will that we spend quiet time with Him - Matt. 6:6
3. Jesus did have such a time with God Mar 1:35. Others are Abraham - Gen.19:27, David - Ps. 53:3, Daniel Dan. 6:10, and Moses, Exo. 34:4.
4. It is a command by God - Exo. 34:2,3.
5. It is part of God's call - I Cor. 1:9.
6. We need it for living - Deut. 8:3.

THINGS YOU WILL NEED

1. A Bible in a translation that you can understand.
2. A notebook in which to write down lessons learnt in your Bible reading and prayer request.
3. A pen or pencil to write in your notebook and to mark points in your Bible.
4. A daily Bible reading guide if possible like Daily Bread, Daily Power or Light for Our Path, etc.

WHAT TO DO

1. Begin with praise and worship (thanksgiving)
 2. Ask for the Holy Spirit assistance for better understanding.
 3. Read the Bible passage for the day.
 4. Expect God to speak to you from it.
-
1. As you read, ask yourself questions like:
 - a. What does the lesson teach me about God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit?
 - b. Are there promises to claim or believe? Are there any conditions attached?
 - c. Are there any warnings or bad example to avoid or sins to forsake?
 - d. Are there good examples to follow or commands to obey?
 2. Write down the ideas or revelations you get in your notebook.
 3. Read the passage again to keep it fresh in your mind.
 4. Choose one verse and memorize.
 5. Enter into prayers and thank God finally.

Note: The amount of time you spend during quiet time is up to you but as you grow spiritually your time with God increases, as you want to have more fellowship with him. Remember to talk to God and allow Him to talk back to you everyday before you go out.

LESSON THREE

PRAYER

MAIN TEXT: Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full – (John 16:24). (Matt. 7:7, Jer. 33:3, Is. 59:1,2). Now that you are a new creature, there is a relationship, which makes prayer very wonderful and explains what prayer really is.

1. WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is a communication with God in a solemn manner. It involves the following:

- a. Asking, Seeking, Knocking – Matt. 7:7-11, Jer. 33:3
- b. Praising God – Psalm 103:1-5
- c. Listening inside one's own heart to find what the Lord would say or reveal Ps. 85:8, Acts 10:9-13, 19-20.

2. HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

- a. Pray with assurance and faith - James 1:5-8

- b. To Whom should I pray – Luke 11:1-4
 - c. In whose name should I pray? Jesus – John 14:13-14, 16:23
 - d. How often should I pray? Without giving up - 1 Thes. 5:17, Luke 11:5-13, Hab. 2:3.
3. WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?
- a. Not to enter into temptation – Matt. 26:41
 - b. To be strengthened - Eph. 3:14-16, 6:10-11
 - c. To be healed - James 5:14-16
 - d. That the Lord of the harvest sends forth labourers – Luke 10:2
 - e. For Kings, (presidents) and all those in authority, pastors etc. – 1 Tim. 2:2
 - f. Jesus prayed (Mark 1:35) and He advises us to pray – Luke 18:1-8
4. HINDRANCES OR BARRIERS TO PRAYER
- a. Our sins - Is. 59:1-2, Ps. 66:18
 - b. Lack of faith – James 1:6-8, Matt. 21:12-22
 - c. Unforgiving Spirit Mark 11:25-26, Matt. 18:15-17
 - d. Disrespect of wife or husband (disunity) – 1 Pet. 3:7, Eph. 5: 21-25.
 - e. Self purposes – James 4:3, 1 John 5:14-15
 - f. Keeping idols in the heart - Eze. 14:3, Col. 3:5
 - g. Disobedience – Pro. 1:24-28, 29-33

5. THE FOUR COMPONENTS OF PRAYER (ACTS)

A – Adoration

(2 Chron. 20:21-22, 1 Chron. 29:10-13, Acts 16:24, Ps. 95:6,7

This is the purest kind of prayer. There is nothing in it for you. Worship Him in the presence of royalty. Worship him first. Tell God that you love Him. Reflect on his greatness, goodness, power, majesty and sovereignty.

C – Confession

(1 John 1:9 Psalm 103)

Having seen Him, You want to make sure your sins are cleansed and forgiven. Do not defend your sins. You call it telling the truth about somebody. God calls it gossiping. In Psalm 66:18 David said 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me'. Confess every sin and seek for forgiveness. Don't cover it. See everything in the light that God sees it and confess. (Prov. 28:13 Confess so that you can obtain mercy).

T – Thanksgiving

(Eph. 5:20). Express or demonstrate your gratitude towards God. Think and remember specific things to thank God for. Your family, your church, marriage, children, business and also thank God for your hardship. In everything give thanks for this is the will of God concerning you. (1 Thes. 5:18).

S – Supplication

(Phil 4: 6-9). This also includes intercession. This is where you ask earnestly and humbly. Here you make petitions known to God. You also pray for other people. Eg. Missionaries, nations students, friends and relatives internationally. You also ask for your personal needs.

- a. Pray everywhere – 1 Tim. 2:8
- b. Pray about everything – Phil.4:6
- c. Style of Prayer: You may pray with your lips loud, in your Mind-meditation, or in your Heart-intuition.

6. THREE KINDS OF PRAYER

1. Private prayer - Matt. 6:6
2. Small group prayer - Matt. 18:19-20
3. Large group prayer - Heb. 10:25, Acts 2:42

FASTING

Fasting is part of our Christian life. We shall take our main text from Isaiah 58:1-14. Here the Bible explains real fasting and its benefits.

Definition: Fasting is the abstinence from food and other activities for a period of time to meditate on the word of God and to seek His face through prayer. Sometimes, people abstain even from water.

Fasting is one of the most powerful weapons used in the Bible. Fasting is for all believers not only for Pastors and Prayer Warriors. - Matt. 6:16-18.

Power and Benefits of Fasting

- It brings ones will in submission to God's will. – Ps.35:13-14
- It ministers to the needs of other people (it is used in intercession) - Dan. 10
- It breaks barriers, chains and every limitation that hinders success. Esther 4:16 and chap.5.
- It destroys yokes and satanic strongholds. - Mk. 9:29; Isaiah 58:6-7.
- It produces good health. – Isaiah 58:8

- It results in different breakthroughs.

WHAT THE FASTING PERIOD REPRESENTS

- It is a time of consecration, confession and worship.
- It is a time of petition (asking for God's provision i. e. needs to be met).
- It's not a human ritual, it is Biblical and a valuable practice. Is. 58:3-4; 1 Kings 21:9.

Note: Prayer and fasting go together. However, one may pray without fasting, but can never fast without praying, because the two combine to release God's power.

- An individual can fast for hour, days, weeks as his strength and spirit may direct. Sometime, God also gives specific directions for people to seek His face in fasting and prayer – Acts 1:1 to end

Fasting simply means abstaining from food and other activities for the purpose of prayer.

Eg.

- a. Moses fasted for forty days on Mount Sinai. – Exod. 34:28
- b. Jesus did fast – Matt. 4:1 & 2.
- c. The Apostles did fast – Acts 13:1-3

Do we have to fast today? Yes. (Pet. 2:21). Believers need to fast and pray especially in difficult situations and also for major breakthroughs. Without fasting such breakthroughs and higher spiritual anointing cannot be achieved – Mark 9:29, Isa. 58:6.

LESSON FOUR

WATER BAPTISM

Many churches and almost every church teach that Christians should be baptized with water but every church does not teach the same things. Some say we should sprinkle. Others say we should submerge. Let's get into this study and answer the numerous questions on water Baptism.

1. IS WATER BAPTISM JUST A FORM OF RELIGIOUS RITUAL TO USHER MEMBERS INTO THE CHURCH?

Water baptism is not just a form. It is the outward sign of an inward work of grace. – Mark 16:15-16, Matt. 28:19.

- a. The Inward work:- is to believe that Christ died for our sins and rose from death to make us right with God. However, we too have died to sin and are raised to walk in newness of life. – Rom. 6:3-6
- b. The Outward sign:- is to be baptized in water outwardly, to publicly show that this work of grace is complete – Acts 8:35-38.

2. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM?

It means to submerge, that is to go under water. Mark 1:9-10. It does not mean to sprinkle or to pour over. The Bible way of baptism is to submerge in water.

3. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

All who have repented and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal saviour should be baptized. Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, Acts 8:36-37. For this reason, it is not advisable to baptize infants. An infant cannot be said to have committed a sin, and also cannot repent and believe the gospel. He or she does not qualify for or is not eligible for water baptism. We therefore hold the believe that, to qualify for water baptism, one must:

- I. be over twelve (12) year of age, that is, one must reach the age of accountability, and age when he knows right from wrong, in order to repent and be converted with better understanding.
- II. be born-again give a clear testimony of sincere faith in Jesus Christ.
- III. be living a consistent Christian life and separated from heathen practices and customs.
- IV. have successfully completed his discipleship course.

Note: Going through water baptism does not make one a candidate of heaven. In Acts 8:9-21, a man called Simon, a witch doctor, was baptized in water but his heart was not right with God. Completing this course would give you a better grounding in the truth so that you would not deceive yourself.

4. HOW TO BAPTIZE PEOPLE

Definition: the word baptize means to immerse.

- A. We are to follow Christ's example – I Pet. 2:21 Jesus was baptized by immersion, i.e., going under water and coming out of water - Matt. 3:15-17.
- B. Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water. Acts 8:38. Therefore, people must be baptized by immersion.

5. CAN A PERSON BE BAPTIZED TWICE?



No, but if the first baptism was not done in the Biblical way it can then be done again by immersion. However, if the person was baptized in the Bible way but later backslided all that the person needs, is reconciliation and rededication to God, but not a second baptism. Finally, we believe that water baptism is a symbol of new life. One should therefore desist from heathen practices and degrading habits and put up a good character so that the public testimony of water baptism would be witnessed by a clean and consistent Christian life.

LESSON FIVE

THE HOLY SPIRIT?

SECTION I: WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

Before Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, He promised His disciples to send them the Holy Spirit. Thus the Holy Spirit was to take His place in the life of the believer. The Holy Spirit is with us today and we have to study to know about Him as our companion. Acts 1:4-8

i. These are the other names of the Holy Spirit.

1. The spirit of God – Roman 8:9, Gen. 1:2
2. The spirit of Truth – John 15:26, 16:13
3. The spirit of Life – Roman 8:2
4. The spirit of Holiness – Rom. 1:4
5. The spirit of Jesus Christ – Phil. 1:19
6. The good spirit - Neh. 9:20

ii. The Holy Spirit is God (the third person in trinity)

1. Matt. 28:19
2. 1 John 5:7
3. Psalm 139:7-14
4. Judges 14:6 & 19

iii. The Holy Spirit is a real person. How?

1. Acts 13:2 He talks (gives instructions)
2. Ehp. 4:30 He feels (have emotions)
3. John 16:8 He convicts sinners (reproves people) Acts 2:37
4. 1 Cor. 12:8 & 11 He gives (share gifts)

iv. The Holy Spirit works in the life of the believer (works of the Holy Spirit)

These are: -

1. He leads or guides us into all truth – John 16:13
2. He is the comforter - John 16:7; 14:16
3. He gives up power to witness - Acts 1: 8
4. He is one but plays many functions 1 Cor. 12:7-11
5. He shares the love of God abroad in our hearts - Rom. 5:5
6. He removes fear and gives us power, love and sound mind – II Tim. 1:7
7. He makes us the sons of God – Rom. 8:14
8. He helps our infirmities (weaknesses) that is He gives us strength – Rom. 8:26a
9. He makes intercession for us Rom. 8:26b (that is he helps us in prayers).
10. He delivers us from the law of sin and death - Rom. 8:2
11. He helps us to bear fruit – Gal. 5:22-23

Note: It's the spirit of God that makes or keeps the believer. Without the spirit you are dead.

SECTION II: THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This is the experience in which the Christian receives the Holy Spirit in its fullness.

* However, the Christian's whole body, mind and spirit are surrendered to the control of the Holy Spirit.

* It can also be called the in filling of the Holy Spirit.

* The evidence of this experience is speaking in other tongues as the spirit gives utterance or inspires.

It may occur or may not occur during conversion. God decides when to give. He comes to abide with us forever (John 14:16) but we should enjoy it again and again.

It could be compared to re-charging of a battery.

Moreover, this experience equips the believer for a deeper relationship with God and empowers him for signs and wonders.(Mark 16:16-17)

Examples of baptism of the holy spirit can be found in the following scriptures: Acts 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 10:44 and 19:1-6.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST ("STEPS")

1. Repent – Acts 2:38, 2 Cor. 4:2
2. Be baptized – Acts 2:38 (note: sometimes God ignores this step and gives it immediately after conversion – Acts 10:44).
3. Believe and obey the word of God – Acts 5:32
Desire Him, be thirsty for the baptism – John 3:37-39
4. Acts in faith – Luke 11:13

5. Receive and accept in faith Ps. 81:10
6. Respond, yield and allow your tongue to speak out the language He gives you – Acts 2:4, Rom. 6:19

Do not be afraid. Initially, you may have just a word or few words. Continue to speak this word (words) which is a heavenly language repeatedly in your prayers. As you pray often the spirit of God will add more words to the few words that you have. Pray with concentration and speak out any word that comes to your tongue as you pray. Pray daily and always in your new language and your love for God will increase and your prayer life will be greatly enhanced or improved.

LESSON SIX

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

(CHURCH ATTENDANCE)

After one is born again, he is introduced into the family of God and this is where the new believer must have fellowship in other that his/her fire would not be quenched.

Fellowship is defined as companionship, a relationship in which parties hold something in common, mutual sharing or friendly association. Fellowship, therefore, is where two or three people or group of Christians meet together with the purpose of worshipping God and sharing experiences together – Matt. 18:20

- i. The basis of Christian fellowship
 - a. 1 John 1:3
 - b. Eph. 2: 19-20
 - c. Heb. 10:25
- ii. The importance of Christian fellowship
 - a. Deut. 32:30
 - b. Eccl. 4:9-10
 - c. Matt. 18- 19-20
 - d. 1 Cor. 15:33
 - e. Heb. 10:24-25

WHAT MADE THE EARLY CHURCH STRONGER (Acts 2:41-42)

1. They did everything together ie. With one accord.
2. They continued in the apostles' doctrine (the word of God).
3. Breaking of bread and prayers.

Each Christian must be a regular participant in Christian fellowship or the church.

This helps the believer to know the ways of God to strengthen his faith and keep the fire burning.

BENEFITS OF GOING TO ZION

(CHURCH OR A PLACE OF WORSHIP)

1. It is a place of cleansing – Obadiah 1:17
2. It is a place of illumination – Psalm 73:17.
3. It is a place of growth – Psalm 92:12-14
4. It is a place of servicing of faith – Roman 10:17

A born again believer must therefore stabilize himself in a local church where he can be a blessing to the church and grow thereby. Zion is a training center.

LESSON SEVEN

TITHING

The principle of tithing is a divine principle ordained by God. Tithe simply means 'one tenth'. This is a spiritual system of giving a proportion of one's income to God to enhance the work of the Kingdom.

WHEN AND WHERE TITHING BEGAN (THE BEGINNING)

Gen. 14:8-20 Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek (the priest of the Most High).

Gen. 28:10-22 Jacob also promise God the tenth part of his blessing. Lev. 27:30-34 – God told the Israelites that all tithes belongs to him.

Num. 18:6-12, 21-26, 31-32 God gave the children of Levi (the priest) all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance.

Note: Bear in mind that in all the example above the givers realized that they were giving to God and not to man.

WHY SHOULD WE TITHE (REASONS)

1. It belongs to God and its Holy unto God – Lev. 27:30
2. It is an honour unto God – Prov. 3:9
3. People of old did it e.g. Abraham – Gen 14:20
4. It is for the Levites (the priest) because they have no inheritance – Numbers 18:24
5. It is a sign of faithfulness – I Cor. 4:2 it is a command from God - Mal. 3:10
6. It is an example that must be followed – Phil. 4:9
7. It causes God to open windows of heaven for blessings – Mal. 3:10
8. It causes God to rebuke the devourer or destroyer of our wealth and peace – Mal. 3:12

9. It makes you a blessing to the nations and enables you to please God – Mal. 3:12

WHY PEOPLE REFUSE TO PAY OR WITHHOLD THEIR TITHE

1. Ignorance people lack spiritual instruction and understanding of its scriptural significance.
2. Distrust and unbelief
3. Selfishness

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE REFUSE TO TITHE

(CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT TITHING)

Refusal to tithe after one has received enough instructions from the word of God can result in serious troubles and curses.

1. God declares you a robber (thief) - Malachi 3:8
2. You are cursed with a curse - Malachi 3:9
3. You will become poor - Prov. 11:24
4. Your heavens (doors) would be shut. You become unproductive and unsatisfied – Haggai 1:2-11.

Note:

1. According to Malachi 3:10, the tithes are for the Lord and should be sent to the storehouse. The storehouse of the Lord is the Local church where we receive shepherding, support, care, fellowship and instructions. God wants us to send the tithe to the church we attend. It should not be sent outside the local church. If one wants to do such a donation, he can do that outside his tithe. The tithe does not belong to us, it belongs to God and should be treated as such.
2. However, as you give the tithe, pray over it – Deut. 26:1-5
3. As you pay your tithe, continue to live right and faithfully in all other areas of your life – Matt. 23:23 so that you attract God's blessing in its totality.

BLESSINGS/BENEFITS OF TITHE PAYING

- | | | |
|--|---|------------|
| 1. You enjoy covenant of peace | - | Mal. 2:5 |
| 2. You enjoy intimacy and defence | - | Mal. 3:5 |
| 3. God defends you against satanic attacks | - | Mal. 3:5b |
| 4. You receive overflowing blessings | - | Mal. 3:10c |
| 5. God rebukes the devourer (waste) | - | Mal. 3:11a |
| 6. Everything you start shall be completed | - | Ex. 23:26 |
| 7. Heaven remembers you | - | Mal. 3:16 |

- 8. You enjoy divine health or healing - Mal. 4:2
- 9. You enjoy restoration in your family - Mal. 4:6
- 10. It increases your income level - Mal. 3:10

LESSON EIGHT

VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING

The Christian life is a life of constant battle. It is spiritual warfare – Eph. 6:12. However, the secret is that Christ has already overcome the devil and has given us the victory Col.2:15.

WHO IS OUR ENEMY?

Rev. 12:9-10.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ENEMY IN THE WARFARE AGAINST CHRISTIAN? – 2 Cor. 11:3.

John 10:10.

SOURCES OF TEMPTATIONS

Mat. 4:1

Gal. 5:16

James 1:13-15

1 John 2:15-17

Note: To In all fields of battle, the believer has been declared a winner even before the battle. Just stand on the word of God and believe what the word of God says about you because you are more than a conqueror. Rom. 8:37. God bless you for going through these studies. You are a stranger to failure. *It is well with your soul (Isaiah 3:10)*

LESSON NINE

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is one of the main ordinances of the Christian faith that Jesus himself commanded for its observation and practice.

Main text: - 1 Cor. 11:23-26

Background History

Every year, the Jewish people celebrate the Passover Feast, which is a remembrance of the night God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and delivered them from slavery. Exodus 12:1-5. This event in history was but a picture of a symbol of deliverance of God's people from the slavery of sin at the cross of calvary. It was while celebrating the Passover Feast that replaced it with the Last Supper. Luke 22:7-10.

The Holy Communion commemorated Christ's death on the cross for our sins. When we partake of it, we show our deep gratitude for His work on our behalf and it strengthens our faith.

Definition of our Lord's Supper

It is the symbolic meal that our saviour Jesus Christ established and commanded its practice. It consists of the bread and wine. The bread signifies or stands for His body and the wine (cup) stands for His blood.

DIFFERENT NAMES FOR THE HOLY COMMUNION

- The Lord's Supper – 1 Cor. 11:20. It commemorates the passover meal Jesus ate with his disciples before his crucifixion, and it points to a future supper that all believers of all ages will once again eat with Christ Rev 19:9, 17.

- Communion because by it we Commune with God other believers 1 Cor. 10:16

- The Lords Table - The table is a place of feasting, love fellowship and sharing 1 Cor.10:21, Lev. 24:5-9

Breaking of Bread – This little reigns to the time Jesus initiated Communion and took the bread, broke it and blessed it. Matthew 26:26, Acts 20:7.

- Sacrament- Its from a Latin word which means holy or "set apart". The Communion table should be holy revered by all believers.

- Eucharist – That is thanksgiving, because in it we thank Lord for his redemptive work for us. 1 Cor 14:16.

MEANING OF SYMBOLS

The Bread: represents the body of Christ broken for sinful man – Matthew 26:26.

The Cup/Wine: represents his blood that was shed or the remission of Sins. Only the blood has the power to cleanse us from Sins. It's the symbol of the new Covenant. – Matt. 26:27, Mark 14:14, Luke 22:20, 1 Cor.11:25, 1 John 1:7.

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE IT?

1. To remember his death and sacrifice – 1 Cor. 10:16
2. Covenant. To celebrate relationship with Christ and other Christians – Luke 22:20
3. To confess Christ as an saviour – 1 Cor. 11:26
4. To bless ourselves. As we do it in obedience with Gods word we receive many
5. Blessing, eg. Healing, strength, grace and divine activities. – Isaiah 53:4

HOW SHOULD WE DO IT (ATTITUDE)

1. We should be sober and meditate on his death and second coming.
2. We should be joyful as we dine with Christ and with other believers
3. We should come in faith believing God for healing and other breakthrough, - Heb. 4:2, Rev.14:23, 1 Cor. 11:29-30
4. We should do it in remembrance of him. - 1 Cor. 11:24-25
5. We should come with thanksgiving – Luke 22:17.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE PRACTICE IT?

Jesus did not spend the number of time. He said do this in remembrance of me. It's not a ritual habit.

Note: Most church do it once a month, some onvr week. Some individual even do it every day but in all these it must be done with understanding.

CAUTION:

1. We have to take it thoughtfully – 1 Cor. 11:26
2. We have to take it reverent in the fear of God. – 1 Cor. 11:9.
3. We have to critically and carefully examine ourselves for any unconfessed Sin to be confessed forgiven before we take it.

Note: It can bring a curse upon any one takes it in Sin and without reverence. Jesus paid the price to save us and so we should not take it lightly but with all seriousness, and respect for God.

May the Lord make you a matured Christian as you go through the pages of this book. You are highly exalted.

LESSON TEN

EVANGELISM

LEADING THE UNSAVED TO CHRIST

(THE BELIEVERS MAJOR MINISTRY)

Introduction: It is the prime duty of every born again Christian to evangelise. We are to preach to the unsaved, pre-believers or unbelievers to come to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Each Christian must recognize and also value the importance God places on evangelism and souls. It is the Heart beat of God, according to Dr. Morris Cerullo.

However through Evangelism we depopulate hell and populate Heaven. The believe must therefore understand that the devil will always try to stop him or her from winning souls but we are more than conquerors through Christ. Every Christian must get involve in Soul winning. He that winneth souls is wise. (Pro. 11:30b)

What is Evangelism: It means to tell good news. It is the act of presenting Christ to the unsaved to get them saved through the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel is not optional. It must be preached to every one.

WHY SHOULD WE EVANGELISE

1. it is the Great Commission given to us by Christ Jesus. – Matt. 28:18-19.
2. It is a comman "Go ye into all the word and preach the gospel to every creature" – Mark 16:15 and II Tim 4:2 & 5b.
3. We are Christ Ambassadors we are suppose to continue the work of Christ. II Cor. 5:20a.
4. We have the Ministry of Reconciliation Christ gave us that ministry so that we may reconciled the World back to him. - II Cor. 5:18 & 19.
5. We have to follow Biblical pattern.
 - a. Jesus evangelized Luke 4:18, - Matt. 11:5 Lk. 8:1
 - b. The Disciples evangelized - Lk 9:6
 - c. Paul evangelized – Rome 1:15
 - d. The early Church Evangelised Act 5:42, 8:4, 12:24, 13:1-5, 14:7, 16:16.
 - e. Every believer is commanded by the Lord to share the Good news. – Matt. 28:18-20, Eph. 3:9-11.

WHY IS EVANGELISM SO IMPORTANT (GOOD NEWS)

- a. People cannot become born again until they are told about Christ. – Rom. 10:14
- b. It shows people that Christ is the only way to salvation. – Acts 4:2
- c. It is God's will that men should be saved and not perish – 2 Peter 3:9
- d. It is to tell people Christ loves them and died for their sin and that they could have eternal life. – John 3:16

WHY DO THE UNSAVED NEED TO BE SAVED

1. All men have sinned and lost their glory – Rom. 2:23
2. The wages or result to sin is death – Rom. 6:23
3. All are under condemnation. – Rom. 3:19b
4. After death is Judgement – Heb 1:27.

THE BELIEVERS TOOL OR INSTRUMENT FOR EVANGELISM (WHAT WE USE TO EVANGELISE)

1. The Word of God, that
 - a. Christ died for our sins and has paid the prize of our redemption – Rom. 5:8, Gal. 3-14
 - b. That through faith in Christ we are saved – Eph. 2:8
 - c. All our sins can be forgiven – I John 1:9
 - d. In Christ we are new creatures, the old is no more there – II cor. 5:17.
 - e. We have been made righteous through Christ – Rom. 4:5, 22-25
 - f. We are no more under condemnation – Rom 8:1-2
 - g. We are transformed into the image of God. - Rom.8:28-30
 - h. We have peace and access to the Father. – Rom 5:1-2
 - i. Christ stands at the door to our hear knocking. – Rev. 3:20

2. Tell your own testimony – Acts 4:20
 - a. What your former life was like before you received Christ.
 - b. How you received Christ.
 - c. What is happening and what has happened after receiving Christ.

NOTE

1. DON'T PREACH YOUR CHURCH BUT PREACH CHRIST. Let all the attention be on Christ.

THE LIFE OF THE WITNESSING CHRISTIAN

1. PRAYER – Prayer is very important in Witnessing.
Pray for:
 - i. Yourself
 - ii. Cover yourself with the blood of Jesus.
 - iii. Intercede for the Lost
 - a. Bind the strong man (devil) – Matt. 18:18, 12:29
 - b. Loose angels to go in front of you. – Heb. 1:13-14
 - c. Loose the ears of the unsaved to make them receptive to the word (Have Understanding) – Ps. 119:130
 - d. Pray for God to send more Labourer preachers.

2. APPEARANCE
POSITIVE

- i. You must dress neatly and modestly.
- ii. You must be friendly, cheerful, polite, tactful, tolerant and courageous
- iii. Smile, it will break the tension and make people interested in talking to you.

3. MANNERS

- i. Don't speak for too long. It is better to leave people wishing you had spoken longer than people wishing & longing for you to finish.
- ii. Don't be dishonest or beat about your experience. Tell the truth.
- iii. Don't say unnecessary things, be direct.
- iv. Don't give the impression that Christianity is a bed of roses i. e. always sweet without challenges.
- v. Don't try to impress people with your own words, preach God's word.
- vi. Don't be rubbing your nose, cleaning your throat or spit.

B. POSITIVE

- a. Speak out loudly and clearly
- b. Be positive (speak with faith)
- c. Maintain eye contact, its very important for good communication. Look at the person or people not windows, ceiling or walls.
- d. Be very humble, be yourself.
- e. Try to be related and interesting in your presentation.

NOTE: Don't force people to accept Christ. Leave them to make willful decision after you have spoken to them.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

1. God's word does not return void. – Isa. 55:11
2. God watches His word to perform. Jer. 1:12
3. His word gives light and understanding. It will surely be truth.

APPENDIX V

**SAMPLES OF PROPHECIES BY PROPHET M. K. YEBOAH TO THE
CHURCH OF PENTECOST (1962-1997)**

Prophecies:

1. 'I have already told you that I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH. As a master-builder uses precious stones to build a permanent house, so do I want you to build on the solid rock of Truth. Those of you who come into my work because of worldly gains will not stay long. Much of the disturbances in the Church might have been saved if my Apostles had appointed the right persons into my work. I henceforth want the Apostles to get closer to me for guidance and directions in all their deliberations. I do not choose a man for his outward appearance but for such qualities that I find in him.' (16-20th April, 1963, Winneba)
2. 'I have called, strengthened and ordained you therefore I will never forsake you. I have laid the foundation of my Church and upon this solid foundation I want you to build. Many a times ye have run ahead of me and have miserably failed. Wait upon me for guidance to solve all your problems. Henceforth, I put greater and heavier responsibilities on each one of you. Lay aside foolish jesting, your own will and wishes. Your calling is heavenly not earthly therefore without you the nation will perish. You have not been called to minister only in Ghana but the whole of Africa in your platform. Extend your pegs and work harder than before. Accept the challenge the world offers you and have wider and broader vision without which the people perish. Rise in faith; obey my voice for I have deeper plans for you which will settle all controversies among you. Be humble.' (16-20th April, 1963, Winneba)

3. 'It is impossible to discern well without an understanding heart. I speak to you about vision. I have arranged all things in wisdom. Be people of divine understanding; I have called you to work with me. Allow me to open your understanding and vision. I called you to save Africa and the world. Wait on me for guidance, for where there is no, the people perish. My work is not built on human efforts but in the might of the Lord. Let my vision dwell with you and guide you, for it is I who will be doing the work and not you.' (16-22nd March, 1967, Ocia)
4. I have called you to share my responsibilities with you so I want to lift you up to hear and see better. This is why I am telling you to wake and stand up. Do you know that the nations are closing their doors to the Gospel and against my Second Coming? But I want you to realize that I have the keys of the nations to open the doors through you, so fear not. Just do what I order you. Those sent abroad should not worry for I have given you power over the nations. Be faithful unto Me for I possess the gold and the silver. I am going to send many of you afar and I want my leaders to give me the correct choice. Teach those whom I have called and train them well to be useful to me in the future. There are difficult times ahead so I will not entertain cowards in the ministry. Be reminded that those have gone before you afflicted themselves, so do away with murmuring and self glories, for I brought you from darkness to shine for the whole of Africa to see my works. I shall supply your needs as you go the nations to minister unto them. Gifts, I have given you, just stay at where I have put you and do what I tell you, otherwise you will know my plans and stand firm in me. It is

infants that often fall and not adults. I remind you that you are not serving a Church or man, but me. Love yourselves as a Church; consider yourselves as one, do away with pride and grow to my full stature and be perfect in all things.' (31st March-6th April, 1977, Kumasi)

