

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**NEO-PROPHETISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY PRESIDENTIAL  
ELECTIONS IN GHANA**

**BY**

**VICTOR WASHINGTON**

**(10599217)**

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of literature cited, which has been duly acknowledged, is the result of my own research work carried out in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, under the supervision of Rev. Dr. Nana Opare Kwakye and Rev. Dr. Abamfo Ofori Atiemo.

.....  
VICTOR WASHINGTON  
(STUDENT)

.....  
DATE

.....  
REV. DR. ABRAHAM NANA OPARE KWAKYE  
(SUPERVISOR)

.....  
DATE

.....  
REV. DR. ABAMFO OFORI ATIEMO  
(SUPERVISOR)

.....  
DATE

## ABSTRACT

Over the last two decades, presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana have been interspersed with prophecies mainly from the prophets of the neo-prophetic churches in Ghana. The neo-prophetic churches are one of the Pentecostal strand of churches in Ghana. These prophecies seeks or attempt to give an advance declaration of a presidential candidate whom God has chosen to win an impending presidential elections. This study, thus focuses on prophecies regarding presidential elections. The study captures and analyses some selected prophecies in both the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections in Ghana. The aim/objective has been to find or investigate whether or not prophecies affect the voting pattern of presidential elections in Ghana. In carrying out this objective, the study employs Georg Fohrer's typology of prophecy in Ancient Israel.

Methodologically, the study employed a phenomenological approach. The study also relied on both closed and open ended questionnaires to solicit the views of respondents on issues that remained central to this study. The study argued that current influence of political prophecies and the attempt of political parties or presidential candidate to solicit the help of prophets for electoral fortunes can be explained in the context of spiritual causality. That, in the broader context of *abisa*, aspirants to the Ghanaian presidency have the inclination to know their fortunes due to their belief in the supernatural and its causative factors.

This study found out that though prophecies in general are believed and accepted by most Ghanaian Christians, political prophecies in the context of elections do not influence the voting pattern of the electorates. Rather, electorate concentrate on issues such as corruption, integrity of the leader or good leadership traits, party affiliations and other factors such as political party's economic policies to vote during elections. The study recommends that in looking at the strife and tension during elections years in Ghana, prophets should exercise a caution and restraint regarding the manner and ways in which prophecies are given towards impending elections.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my dear wife Mrs. Elia Washington and our children Victorene, George and Hans who have been of a great support throughout these years of study. They did not only endure my long absence from home, but gave me all the help I needed to make me realise this dream. The Lord bless you richly.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Contents	Pages
DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	8
1.3 Research Questions .....	9
1.4 Aims/Objectives of the Study .....	10
1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study .....	10
1.6 Theoretical Framework: Fohrer’s Typology of Prophecy in Israel.....	11
1.7 Methodology .....	14
1.7.1 Methods of Data Collection .....	15
1.7.1.1 Primary Sources .....	15
1.7.1.2 Secondary Sources .....	16
1.7.2 Samples and Sampling Procedure/Techniques .....	17
1.7.3 Data Analysis .....	17
1.8 Literature Review .....	18
1.8.1 Pentecostalism in Ghana .....	18
1.8.2 Religion and Politics in Ghana.....	29
1.9 Significance of the Study .....	37
1.10 Organization of Chapters .....	37
CHAPTER TWO.....	39
POLITICAL PROPHECIES IN GHANA’S FOURTH REPUBLIC.....	39
2.1 Introduction .....	39
2.2 Biblical Prophecy and Prophetism in Ghana.....	39

2.3 The Popularity of Prophetic Politics in Ghana.....	46
2.4 Prophetic Politics in Ghana’s Fourth Republic .....	48
2.5 Human Causalities: Electoral Prophecies .....	49
2.6 Prophecies directed to Regimes of Government .....	54
2.7 Doomsday and Negative Prophecies.....	60
2.8 Conclusion.....	64
 CHAPTER THREE.....	 66
GHANA’S 4TH REPUBLICAN ELECTORAL PROPHECIES: THE CASE OF .....	66
2012 AND 2016 ELECTIONS.....	66
3.1 Introduction .....	66
3.2 Prophecies and Elections in Ghana .....	68
3.2.1 Apostle Owusu Bempah and the 2012 and 2016 Elections .....	72
3.2.2 Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi and the 2016 Elections .....	83
3.2.3 Prophet Akwasi Agyemang Prempeh .....	85
3.2.4 Prophecy by Emmanuel Kofi Enim .....	86
3.3 Conclusion.....	87
 CHAPTER FOUR .....	 88
ANALYSING THE INFLUENCE OF PROPHECIES ON GHANAIAN ELECTORATES .....	88
4.1 Introduction .....	88
4.2 Religious Prophecies and its Influence on the Ghanaian Populace and Politicians..	89
4.3 Prophecies and its Influence on Elections in Ghana .....	93
4.3.1 Emerging Issues from the Views of Respondents.....	98
4.4 Prophecies Concerning Elections in Ghana: Views of Respondents .....	100
4.5 The Impact of Prophecies on Presidential Elections in Ghana .....	104
4.6 Electoral Prophecies as Spiritual Warfare.....	106
4.7 Conclusion.....	109
 CHAPTER FIVE.....	 111
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	111
5.1 Summary .....	111
5.2 Conclusion.....	112

5.3 Recommendations .....	114
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	116
APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE .....	127

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Age of Respondents .....	94
Table 2: Educational Attainment.....	95
Table 3: Believe in Biblical Prophecies .....	95
Table 4: Do prophecies influence elections?.....	96
Table 5: Registered Voters .....	96
Table 6: Voted in the 2012/2016 Elections .....	96
Table 7: Heard any prophecy about the elections .....	97
Table 8: Votes influenced by the prophecies heard .....	97

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Tagged over the years, as either apolitical or leaning to spiritualizing political issues, Pentecostals seem to have gradually taken the position of publicly engaging themselves in national politics.<sup>1</sup> Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, who notes this new shift in attitude, observed that “Pentecostals have moved from the era of political passivity to the era of direct political involvement. More than ever, they are awakened to their political duties.”<sup>2</sup> That is to say that the Pentecostal churches have now “moved beyond their sole focus on church affairs and the private life of church members and ventured into debates about the state of the nation.”<sup>3</sup> Various factors are attributable to the Pentecostal attitude toward political engagement since the early 1990s. Some of these factors can be traced directly to changes in the previous situations that made them stay away from politics, while others are not. Key among the former is Ghana’s return to democratic rule and the subsequent liberalisation and commercialisation of the media landscape. The latter include demographic changes within the Pentecostal churches and the socio-economic variables in Ghana and the parallels between Pentecostal theology and practice and Ghanaian primal worldview.

However, it is worth noting, that these factors are not mutually exclusive, but are interrelated, with one factor leading or giving rise to the other. Again, these factors were and are still

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, (London: Hurst and Co., 1998), 111.

<sup>2</sup> Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, “The Development of Ghanaian Pentecostalism” (PhD., University of Edinburgh, 1999), 231.

<sup>3</sup> Meyer, “‘Praise the Lord’: Popular Cinema and Pentecostalite Style in Ghana’s New Public Sphere,” 97.

significant in explaining the Pentecostal outlook which has fostered greater connections between them and the political sphere since the inception of the Fourth Republic.

### ***Religious Demographic Factors***

Elom Dovlo has observed in reference to the Ghana Evangelism Committee's National Church Survey Report (1989) that the Evangelical and Charismatic wing of the Christian grouping in Ghana constituted less than 3% of the Christians in the country as of 1989.<sup>4</sup> The 2000 Population and Housing Census reported a Pentecostal affiliation of 24.1%.<sup>5</sup> With sustained evangelism and church planting and reports of dwindling numbers in the MCs due to a drift to Pentecostal Churches,<sup>56</sup> the 2010 Population and Housing Census' religious demography figures were not surprising as it emerged that the Pentecostals were not only the largest Christian denomination, but also outnumbered other religious groups in Ghana.<sup>7</sup> The figures as sourced from the 2010 Population and Housing Census *Summary Report of Final Results* are as follows: Christian -71.2% (Pentecostal/Charismatic-28.3%, Protestant - 18.4%, Catholic - 13.1%, other - 11.4%), Muslim - 17.6%, traditional - 5.2%, other - 0.8%, and none - 5.2%).<sup>8</sup> These figures are evident in the number of branches of Pentecostal churches scattered across the length and breadth of the country. With previous presence in the capital alone, most of these churches like, International Central Gospel Church, Action

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<sup>4</sup> Elom Dovlo, "Religion and the Politics of Fourth Republican Elections in Ghana (1992, 1996)," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 1, no. 1 (2006): 8-9. <sup>5</sup>Ghana Statistical Service, "2000 Population and Housing Census" (Ghana Statistical Service, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Elom Dovlo, "African Culture and Emergent Church Forms in Ghana," *Exchange* 33, no. 1 (May 19, 2004): 6-53. See also Elom Dovlo, "Studying New Religious Movements & New Churches In Ghana," *African Association for the Study of Religions-News Letter* 18 (November 2002): 5.

<sup>7</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, "2010 Population & Housing Census: National Analytical Report" (Ghana Statistical Service, May 2013), 63, [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/National\\_Analytical\\_Report.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/National_Analytical_Report.pdf). See also Ghana Statistical Service, "2010 Population & Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results" (Ghana Statistical Service, May 2012), 6, [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010\\_Summary\\_report\\_of\\_final\\_results.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, "2010 Population & Housing Census: National Analytical Report," 63.

Chapel, Lighthouse Chapel, are now nationwide, with overseas branches on the continent and elsewhere in Europe, the Americas and Asia. The increase in the Pentecostal membership has also led to financial stability of most of these churches.

### ***Socio-Economic Factors***

They have used these finances not only to develop and promote their ministries, but have also invested them into the Ghanaian economy. Today, Pentecostals have investments in Higher Education, Banking, Tourism (Hospitality) and Health. These investments have generated direct and indirect employments for many Ghanaians. To some extent, the current involvement of Pentecostals in politics in Ghana holds sway for Peter Berger's observation that "Pentecostalism, as it existed [then] among mostly poor and uneducated people, [was] unlikely to retain its [former] religious and moral characteristics unchanged, as many of these [churches] experience upward social mobility,"<sup>9</sup> as was witnessed in the United States. The Pentecostal investments have become necessary because successive governments have had difficulties in managing the Ghanaian economy over the years due to internal issues like, corruption and other external shocks like, increases in the world prices of crude oil and the fluctuations in export commodities. Despite various policy interventions like, the International Monetary Fund's Structural Adjustments, the Economic Recovery Programme, signing up for the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) among others, the Ghanaian economy is still challenged; making the provision of social services and infrastructural development a difficult task for an elected government to grapple with alone.<sup>10</sup> Pentecostals are thus filling the gaps seemingly created by governments' failure to meet the basic needs

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Berger, *The Desecularisation of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1999), 12.

<sup>10</sup> Meyer, "'Praise the Lord': Popular Cinema and Pentecostalite Style in Ghana's New Public Sphere," 97. See also Mahamudu Bawumia, "Restoring the Value of the Cedi" (Visiting Professor of Economic Governance, Distinguished Speaker Series Lecture, Central University College, Ghana, March 25, 2014).

of the populace just as mainline Churches, and para-church groups and civil societies have been doing over the years. Conversely, Pentecostals, just like the mainline churches, are now stakeholders in the national economy and development. This means that in as much as governments still held power, it is evident that local movements such as the Pentecostals are also asserting their place in civic affairs.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Democratic Factors***

The democratic setting within which Pentecostals operate is another factor for their involvement in political issues or national affairs. Ghana's present democratic culture guarantees freedom of association and worship, unlike the era of military dictatorship, which clamped down on religious groups and even attempted to regulate religious activities through decrees.<sup>12</sup> The 1992 Constitution guarantees, freedom of religion and association and this has enabled all faith-based organisations to worship freely and peacefully without any fear of state interference and intimidation.

### ***Media Liberalisation***

Media liberalisation and commercialisation have also contributed to the public presence of Pentecostals.<sup>13</sup> Previously, it was mainly the mainline churches that had access to national radio and television. However, all these changed with the privatisation of the media in

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Wuthnow, "Introduction," *Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2007), xxx.

<sup>12</sup> ElomDovlo, "Religion in the Public Sphere: Challenges and Opportunities in Ghanaian Lawmaking, 1989-2004," *Brigham Young University Law Review* 2005, no. 3 (2005): 642. See also Africa Watch, "Ghana: Official Attacks on Religious Freedom," Religious Freedom (United States of America, May 18, 1990)., U.S. Department of State, International Religious Freedom Report, Ghana (1999) available at [http://www.cesnur.org/testi/irf/irf\\_ghana99.html](http://www.cesnur.org/testi/irf/irf_ghana99.html), Government of Ghana, *Religious Bodies Registration (PNDCL 221)*, 1989. In the early years of the Provisional National Defense Council, (PNDC) some religious groups were banned from operating. The military regime even attempted to regulate religious groups and their activities including finance.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Arthur, "Democratic Consolidation in Ghana: The Role and Contribution of the Media, Civil Society and State Institutions," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 48, no. 2 (2010): 209.

1993.<sup>14</sup> Many Pentecostals now have access to public and private television and radio stations, while others who could afford, have established their own radio and television stations because of the financial stability most of them have attained.<sup>15</sup> What has sustained these media programmes is the ability of PCs to raise funds through donations and sponsorship<sup>16</sup>. Meyer sums up how the Pentecostals have taken advantage of this liberalisation to enhance their ministries, and how this has contributed to the Pentecostal upsurge within the Ghanaian public sphere:

In Ghana Pentecostalism and especially electronic media appear to form an inseparable couple, while other religious groups are much less able to articulate themselves through them. ... the return to constitutional rule in 1992 and the subsequent liberalization and commercialization of media [has] transformed the relationship between state and society in general and between the state and Pentecostalism in particular.<sup>17</sup>

Hence, Ghana's return to constitutional rule was a major catalyst in the shift of Pentecostal attitude toward public sphere and has gone a long way in opening more avenues for Pentecostals' engagement within Ghana's political landscape. It has also made it possible for the public sphere to better appreciate the Pentecostals' dualistic theology that has parallels in Ghanaian primal culture. Pentecostals "are increasingly becoming mainline in African Christianity not merely in numbers but more importantly in spirituality, theology, and practice... setting the agenda for intense theological discourse."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid. See also Act 449 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution. The repeal of the criminal code on 27 July 2001 by parliament guaranteed further media freedom. The repeal did away with sections of the law that made some media reportage libel and constituted criminal offences.

<sup>15</sup> In recent times, CAFM and LHCI have commissioned their own television and radio stations respectively. The CPCs like, the AC-G now has a weekly television and radio programme as well as monthly newsletter. The radio and television programmes are called the Apostolic Heritage Radio and the Apostolic Heritage Television Ministries respectively while the newsletter is called the Apostolic Herald.

<sup>16</sup> William K. Kay, "Pentecostalism and Religious Broadcasting," *Journal of Beliefs and Values: Studies in Religion and Education* 30, no. 3 (2009): 249.

<sup>17</sup> Meyer, "'Praise the Lord': Popular Cinema and Pentecostalite Style in Ghana's New Public Sphere," 97.

<sup>18</sup> Omenyo, "Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian Case," 382.

It is said that Global Pentecostalism and Charismatic Christianity in all its diversity is the fastest expanding religious movement in the world today.<sup>18</sup> The period from the nineteenth century to the present has been characterised by establishment and growth of the African strand of development of Christianity.<sup>20</sup>

The number of distinct denominations which registered with the government, according to David Barrett was over 760 in 1970 but the number increases with each succeeding year.<sup>21</sup> Today, in Ghana, there are various types of faiths all over. However, some that can be easily identified are the classical Pentecostals and the Neo-Prophetic churches. Churches such as the Church of Pentecost, Christ Apostolic Church, The Apostolic Church and the Assemblies of God Church belong to the classical Pentecostal/Charismatic churches and churches such as Prophet Owusu-Bempah's Glorious Word Chapel, Opambour's Ebenezer Miracle Worship Centre and Bishop Obinim's International God's Way Church are examples of Neo-Prophetic Churches. There are those that also belong to the Charismatic ministries such as the Action Chapel International, The International Central Gospel Church, and the Lighthouse Chapel International.

In Ghana, one of the notable precursors of neo-prophetic ministries is the late Prophet Francis Akwesi Amoako.<sup>22</sup> Prophet Amoako surfaced on the Ghanaian religious scene in the early 1980s. Amoako whose early life was shrouded in fear – a terror in the society - was believed to have had an independent conversion at Santase, Kumasi after which he participated in the Santase Methodist Church's renewal meetings as well as the local

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<sup>18</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Assemblies of God Church and the Scripture Union Fellowship.<sup>19</sup> Prophet Amoako used to have solitary retreats in the bush after his conversion experience. He claimed that at one of these retreats God called him and promised to use him to preach and bring healing and deliverance to many throughout the world. As a result, he started an independent itinerant evangelistic ministry which culminated in a group named Bethlehem Evangelistic Ministry (BELAM) around 1977. As the ministry grew, he made use of assistants – eight of them, who only had basic education – who helped him, expand the group and renamed it the Resurrection Power Evangelistic Ministry (REPEM)<sup>20</sup>. Amoako’s preaching which was mainly in Twi and was known for its remarkably plain and bold utterances on national issues; he boldly attacked the then Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government verbally for its anti-Christian tendencies, a practice which earned him the nickname “John the Baptist” of Ghana.<sup>22</sup>

In recent times, the churches that seem to be having a “loud voice” are the leaders of the Neo-prophetic churches. They have a voice in almost every aspect of life: football, business, relationships, politics, and Christian life. This voice seems to be having much impact in the society. The impact on politics merits special attention as that seems to be on the increase since 2008 elections. This is probably because almost every activity in the country is

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<sup>19</sup> S. B. Aduborfour, *Evangelical and Para Church Movements in Ghanaian Christianity: c. 1950-Early 1990s*. (An unpublished PhD Thesis, Univ. of Edinburgh, 1994).

<sup>20</sup> David A. Shank, ed *Ministry of Missions to African Independent Churches* (Elkhart: Mennonite Board of Missions, 1987); see also Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church Volumes 1&2* (London: Clarendon, 1967); Victor Hayward, ed. *African Independent Church Movements: Essays in Honour of Harold W. Turner* (Elkhart: Mission Focus Publications, 1990); Benneta Jules-Rosette, ed. *The New Religions of Africa* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1979); Ntedika Konde, ed. *Interpretations et Croissance de la Foi* (Kinshasa: Facultes Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1992); and C. G. Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana* (London: SCM, 1961). David Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa* (London: OUP., 1968), p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> S. B. Aduborfour, *Evangelical and Para Church Movements in Ghanaian Christianity: c. 1950-Early 1990s*. (An unpublished PhD Thesis, Univ. of Edinburgh, 1994).

<sup>22</sup> P. Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 2004).

interpreted politically. Hence, the voice of neo-Prophetic leaders in the political sphere is greatly followed and discussed.

In 2008, the late President John Evans Atta Mills visited Prophet T.B. Joshua in Nigeria for prayers before the elections. After the elections, he went back to offer his thanks and appreciation to the Nigerian Prophet. He had since been attached to the ministry of Prophet TB Joshua and the Prophet visited the late President a few times.<sup>23</sup> The activities of prophets were on the increase during the 2012 and 2016 elections. A lot of the prophets made various predictions for specific candidates. Some of the predictions were thought of as possible to raise controversies in the elections. For example, some people are of the view that the prediction of Prophet Owusu-Bempah was a trigger for the Election results petition at the Supreme Court.<sup>24</sup> The 2016 elections were also characterised by the same kinds of predictions from various prophets and leaders of various ministries. It is clear that the activities of these prophets have had impact on the political landscape. They have probably affected the activities, actions and inactions of political leaders and followers in various aspects. This impact is worth investigating, hence this research.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is indeed true, and convincingly enough to state that Christian groups in Ghana, especially the mainline or orthodox churches and more recently the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches have contributed in various ways to ensure good governance and peaceful democratic processes in the 4<sup>th</sup> republic. Not least, these Christian groups have played active roles in

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<sup>23</sup> There were rumors that the President had started a prayer camp in the Castle because of the activities of Prophet TB Joshua.

<sup>24</sup> Prophet Owusu-Bempah had predicted that The New Patriotic Party (NPP) candidate was going to win the 2012 elections, but the verdict was going to be stolen. The belief is that this assurance made the NPP sure of victory and hence they took it to court when the verdict appeared to them to be stolen.

ensuring free and fair elections. In worst scenarios, they have been able to meet presidential candidates in close-door meetings to accept results when they do not go in their favour. However, despite these efforts by religious institutions, one phenomenon that seems to be very disturbing, and worrying because it also emanates from Christian groups especially Pentecostals and more specifically the prophetic strand of the Pentecostal movement is the influx of prophecies attempting to predict presidential results or candidates who are likely to lose presidential or parliamentary elections. Evidently, prophetic religion has contributed to the growth of Pentecostalism in Ghana but nonetheless, it also presents a number of challenges. This is because, in their attempt to foretell the end result of events especially regarding the issue of presidential elections in Ghana, they end up issuing messages that are fraught with contradictions. To some extent, it is becoming somewhat obvious that the attempt by some prophets to particularly speak or predict winners of impending presidential election sometimes create anxieties and unnecessary tension and debates among Christians and media practitioners. Some, including religious leaders have spoken against such practices in the view that they are completely out of place with scripture and also, it can create chaos and misunderstanding for the losers of the elections.

In the wake of the activities of neo-Prophetic leaders in the political sphere, it is important to study how these activities impact the actions and inactions, policies, campaigning, and general activities of politicians, as well as the response and voting pattern of the electorate.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

From the foregoing, this study attempts to deal with the following research questions

1. What kind of influence have prophecies had on Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> Republican elections with particular reference to the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections?
2. Do prophecies influence the voting pattern of the electorate?

3. Is there any negative or positive impact of these prophetic messages on Ghana's elections?

#### **1.4 Aims/Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of this study is to assess the influence of prophecies on the political landscape of Ghana using the 2012 and 2016 electioneering year as a point of reference. To achieve this aim, the researcher seeks to undertake the following:

1. To examine some selected prophecies from some prophets in Ghana during the 2012 and 2016 elections and their influence on Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> republican elections.
2. To assess whether or not, these prophecies have any impact on the voting pattern of electorates.
3. To investigate or find out if these prophecies regarding presidential elections have any positive or negative impacts on political leaders, electorate and the nation at large.

#### **1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study**

Looking at the enormity of issues that emerged during 2012 and 2016 presidential elections in Ghana, there is no way the researcher can take into considerations all the prophecies that were given by various prophets towards the expected results of the election. As a result of this, the study intends to focus on selected case studies that evolved during both elections.

These two periods were selected by the researcher because they are the periods within which Ghana has seen or witnessed a lot of the activities relating to prophecies on elections. Apart from these reasons, they are also somewhat current and will rekindle a passionate comparative analysis.

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework: Fohrer's Typology of Prophecy in Israel**

For the purposes of this study, the researcher has decided situate the study within the framework of Georg Fohrer's typology of prophecy in Ancient Israel. The choice of this framework was influenced by the fact that this theoretical framework fits in well with the material at hand as well as the purpose and objectives of this study.

Georg Fohrer has observed that in ancient Israel there were two forms of prophecy which corresponded to two types of religious backgrounds, namely nomadic religion and religion of the settled area. The corresponding prophets were the 'seer' and the *nabhi*. Fohrer points out that in the life of nomads of the ancient Near East the figure of the seer played an important role. According to Fohrer, people who functioned as 'seers' proclaimed divine instructions primarily on the basis of dreams and premonitions.<sup>25</sup> Fohrer has noted that in the early nomadic life the activities of the seer coincided, to a certain extent, with that of a priest, magician, and clan leader and was normally held to be inspired by God. Fohrer has noted that the seer's primary contact with the other, higher world was through the sense of vision, in which case hearing played a lesser role. Oracles were usually based on what came into view and what the seer observed (see Numb. 22-24). For the seer to function he had to open his soul and his spirit, in order to receive the first impressions given to him by outward appearances.<sup>26</sup>

It appears that in the history of the people of Israel, the 9th century BC prophets, that is, Elijah and Elisha represented, to a certain extent, this class of prophets. The aforementioned two prophets, apart from their core duty of defending Yahweh in opposition to religious apostasy and to the authority of kings who failed to uphold the cause of Yahweh or flouted

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<sup>25</sup> Georg Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion* (London: SPCK, 1972), 224.

<sup>26</sup> Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion*, 224.

his moral demands, also performed a number of miracles which seem to have made them somewhat popular. Although the miracles that are associated with them may sound legendary, they seem to represent popular views of the prophets of their time.<sup>27</sup>

Fohrer has indicated that another type of prophecy had its roots in the settled area of the ancient Near East. This type of prophets is associated with ecstatic prophets at sanctuaries or royal courts. They were best known as *nabhis*. According to Fohrer, Jewish prophecy reached its summit in the prophetic works of the 8th century prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Hosea and others.<sup>28</sup> S. H. Hooke has noted that the autobiographical elements which have been preserved among their oracles, show that all these men had passed through a profound experience of God, which gave them a sense of mission and set them consciously apart from the official class of prophets of their day.<sup>29</sup> According to Hooke, these men did not regard themselves as innovators but as recalling Israel to standards of private and public conduct which reached back to the time of the covenant mediated by Moses. One of their chief characteristics is that they were the most trenchant critics of the religious institutions and people of their times, princes, priests and even other prophets.<sup>32</sup> By most accounts, these prophets placed a great deal of emphasis not so much on performing miracles or predicting the future, but denouncing the public morality of their people.

Whybray has intimated that though the prophets of the 8th and 7th centuries BCE stood for the same principles as their predecessors, their prophecy was radically different from that of

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<sup>27</sup> Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion*, 224.

<sup>28</sup> Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion*, 224.

<sup>29</sup> SH Hooke, "The religious institutions of Israel" in Matthew Black and HH Rowley, *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1962), 148. <sup>32</sup> Hooke, "The religious institutions of Israel", 48.

9th century BC in two decisive ways. In the first instance, the 8th and 7th century BC prophets addressed themselves not only to kings and other individuals and particular groups but also the whole people. Secondly, they were the first to prophesy the destruction of the entire nation as a punishment for its sins. According to Whybray, this prophecy of national disaster was the main feature of the message of the prophets of the 8th century BC BCE such as Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and it was presented as avoidable only through repentance of sins. It should be noted that prophets who delivered unpalatable messages like this faced great difficulties not only in terms of finding acceptance as authentic messengers of Yahweh but they were also liable to suffer humiliation and even threats to their lives (Amos 7:10-13; Jer. 26:7-9).<sup>30</sup>

Particularly, this study argues that the prophetic ministry and/or the message delivered by the acclaimed prophets of God regarding elections in Ghana seem to be similar to that of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC in ancient Israel, particularly that of Jeremiah, Isaiah and Amos. This is because their style of ministry and/or prophecies resemble, to a large extent, some popular prophecies given by men of God such as Apostle Owusus Bempah and Prophet Kobi respectively. As is clearly exemplified in the bible, the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah for example, was more directed to kings and the nature of their rulership. Their messages were directed to the royal courts. They also nonetheless, made predictions about future occurrences and prophesied about impending dangers. This phenomenon of prediction and fulfilment tended to make believe that they were indeed men of God. This particular situation perhaps, made them popular during their time. In Ghana today, predictions of electoral results by prophets can be somewhat equated to the prophecies that were directed to kings during their reigns in ancient Israel. However, the distinguishing difference between these

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<sup>30</sup> Whybray, "Prophets", 622.

two historical periods is the manner and style of the prophecies. Whereas in ancient Israel, there wasn't any specific elections held, contemporary situation presents a new phenomenon where elections are held and citizens are allowed to exercise their franchise in choosing leaders that govern the nation. The question that this bequeath is; to what extent can the contemporary prophecies by prophet be a genuine reflection or ideal plan of God regarding those who are seeking political office of the president to govern the nation. These are the issues this study unravels in subsequent discussions in different chapters of this study.

It is also somewhat obvious that some of the predictions by prophets in Ghana, whether genuine or not genuine regarding electoral results and future happenings in the country for instance, have been fulfilled. On the basis of this, many people in Ghana including presidential candidates and candidates contesting for parliamentary seat believe in them and run to their steads for direction during electoral years. In this regard, Fohrer's theoretical framework of dual typology of prophecy is an ideal tool to examine electoral prophecies in Ghana and particularly for electoral candidates who go to consult the prophet to know whether or not they have received a message from God for them.

### **1.7 Methodology**

Generally, this research is a qualitative study and employs a phenomenological approach. This approach being the main methodology for the entire work is basically an approach to the study of religion which requires that the scholar of religion suspends all judgements about the phenomenon being studied, by bracketing out potentially distorting presumptions stemming both from confessional Christian Theology and from positivistic science, such that, by using empathetic methods, he (the scholar) could enter into the experiences of the adherents to achieve understanding. Thus, using the phenomenological approach to the

study of religion does not seek to discredit the significance nor the important contribution to knowledge, but to explain fully the meaning of religion, and avoid evaluative judgements which is to enable the researcher to open up and take a critical look at the prophetic phenomenon in the light of Ghanaian presidential and parliamentary elections in both 2012 and 2016.

### **1.7.1 Methods of Data Collection**

The data for this study was collected using both primary and secondary sources. The researcher in gathering the data from the primary source employed personal interviews and purposive sampling technique.

#### **1.7.1.1 Primary Sources**

The researcher also used both structured and unstructured interview approach to collect data for the study. This approach involved personal interviews between the researcher and respondents. The personal interviews included having a personal interaction, ‘one on one’, with a respondent. This approach enabled the researcher and respondents to develop a personal friendship and rapport<sup>31</sup> which also created a conducive environment for the researcher to meet the respondents face to face and to elicit relevant pieces of primary information. Better still the researcher by this method interacted and sought further clarification to validate pieces of information already gathered about the topic.

During the interviews, permission was sought from the respondents to record relevant parts of the interview. As an essential method to the research, it offered to the researcher, the opportunity to seek the meaning or clarity on some of the complex issues that evolved during

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<sup>31</sup> Tom K. B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research: Sections 1 - 3*, 189.

the study. In addition, informal conversations, which in the context of this study took the form of unstructured interview, although sometimes “time-consuming”<sup>32</sup>, was employed as one of the convenient method to access relevant information which otherwise would have been difficult to obtain, in a much more relaxed manner. In all, the researcher interviewed 14 individuals comprising of pastors, prophets, and religious leaders. Questionnaires was also given to respondents to seek their views on whether or not prophecies regarding elections had any influence on them. In all, 65 questionnaires were distributed to respondents. The questionnaires were distributing in five churches which included; the Glorious Word Ministries, Glorious Wave Ministry International Church, Spring of Joy Ministries, and Word Victory Chapel International.

These churches were selected based on the fact that the leaders and/or the general overseers of the churches were the main target of this study. The researcher in trying to establish a point by finding out whether or not their prophecies had any influence on electorates deemed it important to use their own congregants to test the hypothesis. The result of this are presented in chapter four of this study. Though other churches in this domain may have been important, the above reason and time constraint available for this study did not permit the researcher to go beyond the limit of the five churches.

#### **1.7.1.2 Secondary Sources**

Looking at the focus and scope of the study, the researcher also consulted different secondary sources, journals, articles which were deem relevant for the study. These were published

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<sup>32</sup> J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden: The Netherlands, African Christian Press, 2005), 5.

materials of scholarly opinion. Data from the electronic media specifically the internet were also useful.

### **1.7.2 Samples and Sampling Procedure/Techniques**

In this study, the researcher employed purposive sampling technique to select his respondents. In his work, *Research Methods: Techniques of Social Research*, Tom K. B. Kumekpor argues that in purposive sampling, “the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed but they are typical or they exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study.”<sup>33</sup> The categories of people that were interviewed included, pastors, religious leaders, and executive members of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic council (GPCC). The researcher selected these respondents based on the fact that they possess relevant information and draw opinions that were considered to be essential to the study.

### **1.7.3 Data Analysis**

In evaluating the data that was gathered during fieldwork, a qualitative analysis was employed. This method relies on the quality of the information based on its relevance to the subject matter being studied rather than on the quantity of responses to a particular issue.<sup>34</sup> That is, instead of drawing from a large representative sample, the researcher sought to acquire in-depth and intimate information from relatively smaller group of people. This method of data analysis was employed since the researcher dwells largely on interviews which are intended to elicit detailed information from individual respondents.

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<sup>33</sup> Tom K.B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research*, (Ghana: Son Life Press and Services, 1999), 72.

<sup>34</sup> JBarbara M. Wildemuth, ‘Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research’, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63 (1995), 881.

## 1.8 Literature Review

In reviewing the literature that were seen as pertinent to the subject under study, the researcher employs the use of a thematic approach. The thematic approach is chosen because the researcher examined already existing works that has contributed immensely to the subject matter under discussion. In doing this, the researcher has chosen to examine already existing works on two thematic areas which include; the emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana and Religion and Politics.

### 1.8.1 Pentecostalism in Ghana

Historically, there are three main strands of Pentecostalism in Ghana, these include the African Instituted Churches popularly referred to as the AICS, the classical Pentecostal Churches and the Neo-Pentecostal movements.<sup>35</sup> The neo-Pentecostal churches are broadly defined to include the neo-prophetic ministries or churches. The earliest of this African Initiated Churches emerged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century through to the Classical Pentecostal in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and later the new Pentecostal or charismatic church that emerged in the last three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1970s).<sup>39</sup>

*African Instituted Churches (AICs):* The AICs were mainly African prophet-led churches that developed into indigenous or spiritual churches.<sup>36</sup> These were the early African

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<sup>35</sup> Cephas Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 16, no. 2 (1994): 169. For general historical emergence in Africa, see Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu, "Pentecostalism in Africa and the Changing Face of Christian Missions: Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal Movements in Ghana," *Mission Studies* 19, no. 2 (2002): 14–39 and Ogbu Kalu, "African Christianity: An Overview," in *African Christianity: An African Story*, ed. Ogbu Kalu (Pretoria: University of Pretoria Press, 2005), 24–43. <sup>39</sup>Allan Anderson, "Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Belief and Practices," ed. J. Gordon Melton and Martin Buamann (Oxford: ABC-CLIO Inc, 2002), 12.

<sup>36</sup> This name is a direct translation from the Akan local language *sumsum sore*, which means spiritual churches. They are characterised by their prophetic leadership and place emphasis on spiritual healing." See Gerrieter Haar, "Standing Up for Jesus: A Survey of New Developments in Christianity in Ghana," *Exchange* 23, no. 3 (1994): 222.

initiatives in the promulgation of the gospel before the coming of western missionaries. Some of the well-known African missionary initiatives which are recognised as the initial wave of Pentecostalism were led by William Wade Harris, Sampson Opong and Garrick Barride. Harris preached from the Ivory Coast and on the west coast of the then Gold Coast. He is said to have converted 120, 000 Ivorian's in the year 1913-1914 and 36000 Ghanaian adult adherents of African Traditional Religion in 1920.<sup>37</sup> He had a simple message of asking people to believe in God, reject idol worship and accept God.<sup>38</sup> Most of these precursors did not start churches, however, their followers did when they were no more at the scene.<sup>39</sup> Majority of the people they converted were absorbed by the missionary churches that actually worked in collaboration with these prophets and officially commissioned some of them to work on their behalf.<sup>40</sup> It is on record for instance that Sampson Opong worked with the Methodist church, while Wade Harris also worked with the Methodist and the Catholic at some point in his ministry.<sup>41</sup><sup>42</sup> However, there were other converts who found their way directly into the churches that were founded by the disciples of these leaders or later joined them after they could not fit into the missionary churches because of the missionaries' uncompromising teachings on polygamy and the foreign liturgy that was

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<sup>37</sup> Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Church in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002), 68. See also H.W. Debrunner, *Histroy of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 272–ff.

<sup>38</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM, 2007), 162–165. See also Omenyo

<sup>39</sup> Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "African Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity: An Overview" (Lausanne World Pulse, Wheaton, November 2014), [www.lausanneworldpulse.com/464?pg=all](http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/464?pg=all). Harris Grace Thannie and John Nackabah who were converts of Ward Harris founded a church and named it the Twelve Apostles Church in 1918.

<sup>40</sup> Debrunner, *Histroy of Christianity in Ghana*, 227.

<sup>41</sup> Omenyo, "Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian Case,"

<sup>42</sup> For a comprehensive account of the life and mission of William Wade Harris see David A. Shank, "The Taming of the Prophet," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 27, no. 1 (1997): 59–95; David A. Shank, "The Prophet Harris: A Historiographical and Bibliographical Survey," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 14, no. 2 (1983): 130–60.

difficult for them to comprehend.<sup>43</sup> An example of some of these churches that are variously referred to as African Initiated, African Independent, and African Indigenous Churches are the Musama Disco Christo Church, Twelve Apostles Church and the Apostle Revelation Society.<sup>47</sup> One of the reasons that has been noted by Omenyo as a contributing factor to the emergence of AICs in sub-Saharan Africa was the nationalist quest to gain self-governance from European control. Thus some AICs were used as a protest against European domination and as a means to pursue the policy of African self-expression and freedom from missionary control.<sup>44</sup>

*Classical Pentecostal Churches:* The emergence of the second strand of Ghanaian Pentecostalism has, however, not been directly linked to the AICs. It seems rather to have been linked to Western Pentecostal influence. They are the Western mission-related Pentecostal denominations. This is because even though they have their root in indigenous initiatives, they are often linked with early foreign Pentecostal missions. Larbi calls them ‘the mainline’ or ‘evangelical Pentecostal denominations’. They are also called the ‘classical Pentecostal churches.’<sup>45</sup> The origins of Ghanaian classical Pentecostalism is often traced to Peter Anim and his Faith Tabernacle Church. Out of this organization emerged three of the four leading classical Pentecostals in Ghana that is, the Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and the Christ Apostolic Church.<sup>46</sup> These were also of indigenous initiatives but

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<sup>43</sup> Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*, 218. Harris Grace Thannie and John Nackabah who were converts of Ward Harris founded a church and named it the Twelve Apostles Church in 1918.<sup>47</sup> Kwabena J. DarkwaAmanor, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana and the African Culture: Confrontation or Compromise?,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 125. See also John S. Pobee, “African Instituted (Independent) Churches,” *World Council of Churches*, 2002; World Council of Churches, “African Instituted (Independent) Churches,” <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/churchfamilies/african-instituted-churches/african-instituted-independent-churches> (assessed May 1, 2014).

<sup>44</sup> Omenyo Cephias, “Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements,” 8.

<sup>45</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 69.

<sup>46</sup> Asamoah-Gyafu, *African Charismatics*, 23 – 26.

were linked up with foreign Pentecostal missions early in their formation. For instance, Ghana's Church of Pentecost (CoP), one of the foremost classical Pentecostal churches, was established in the 1930s and had links with foreign missions like Faith Tabernacle in Philadelphia for a short period and a more lasting link with the United Kingdom's (UK) Apostolic Church.<sup>47</sup>

Generally, Apostle Peter Newman Anim is regarded as the father of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana.<sup>48</sup> In 1917, he 'had come to believe in the efficacy of 'prevailing prayer' for the healing of diseases through *The Sword of the Spirit*, the periodical of a Philadelphia-based Faith Tabernacle movement based in Portland, Oregon, USA.'<sup>49</sup> Through the principles of 'prevailing prayer', Anim was healed of a chronic ulcer and guinea worm disease. In 1922, Anim brought together a group of followers to establish a branch of the Tabernacle Church in the Gold Coast. Anim in 1930 severed relationship with the Faith Tabernacle Church having come under Pentecostal influence upon reading a magazine on the Apostolic faith.

Apostle Anim in 1931 established contact with Pastor David O. Odubanjo of Nigeria who, like Anim, had separated himself from the Faith Tabernacle, USA. Pastor George Perfect, one of the two missionaries sent by the UK Apostolic Church to Nigeria in 1932 visited Asamankese in 1935 for two weeks. Perfect's ministry impressed Anim and his church so much that they decided to affiliate themselves with the UK Apostolic Church. When the Missionary Secretary of the Apostolic Church visited Asamankese in October 1936, he promised recommending a missionary to be sent to them. In fulfilment of the promise, James

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<sup>47</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 175.

<sup>48</sup> Emmanuel I.K. Addo, *Worldview, Way of Life and Worship: The Continuing Encounter between the Christian Faith and Ga Religion and Culture*, (Zoetermeer, Boekencentrum Pub. House, 2009), 147.

<sup>49</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 24.

McKeown arrived as the first resident missionary of the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast in 1937 to work with Anim and his group.<sup>50</sup>

Two years later in the face of further developments and misunderstanding on the issue of doctrines and praxis, Anim and McKeown parted company. The faction that remained with Anim became known as the Christ Apostolic Church as against the Apostolic Church led by McKeown. On May 1953, a section of the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast also broke away from the UK mainly over the matters of church government in the mission field where McKeown was working and his reservation over the Apostolic Church's belief in 'directive prophecy'.<sup>51</sup> McKeown was dismissed from the UK Apostolic Church and he later formed the Gold Coast (Ghana) Apostolic Church. The section that remained loyal to the UK maintained the original name, The Apostolic Church of Gold Coast. In view of the confusion that the adopted names generated, McKeown's group finally adopted the name the Church of Pentecost in August 1962.<sup>52</sup> One other Pentecostal organization that also worked in Ghana is the Assemblies of God. Aside the Assemblies of God other Pentecostal bodies that have worked in Ghana at different times are the Four Square Gospel Church, Church of God, Tennessee, and Church of God, Anderson, Indiana.<sup>53</sup>

*Neo-Pentecostal Churches:* In the late 1970s and early 80s, the Charismatic movement became a predominant feature of the Ghanaian religious landscape. The rise of the Charismatic movement, which coincided with Ghana's implementation of neoliberal policies, mandated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund contributed to the

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<sup>50</sup> Addo, *Worldview, Way of Life and Worship*, 147.

<sup>51</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 24.

<sup>52</sup> Addo, *Worldview, Way of Life and Worship*, 147.

<sup>53</sup> Addo, *Worldview, Way of Life and Worship*, 148.

exponential spread of the charismatic movement.<sup>54</sup> The neoliberal policies, which significantly reduced government's intervention in the running of the state through the removal of subsidies on education, health, and agriculture, exacerbated the already ailing economy of Ghana. The nosedive position of the Ghanaian economy coincided with widespread famine in Ghana. The net effect of this situation was that the Ghanaian social landscape was in need of a religious movement that would inspire hope in Ghanaians. It was, therefore, not sheer luck when charismatic movements emerged on the Ghanaian landscape. The charismatic movements emphasize salvation, with material prosperity as part of its package.<sup>55</sup>

Historically, the charismatic churches emerged from evangelical and town fellowships, Students' Union, classroom gatherings et cetera. There were also prophetic initiatives that run concurrently with evangelistic fellowships, which contributed to the popularization of the charismatic movement. The rise of the charismatic movement was given a boost by leading American tele-evangelists including Oral Roberts<sup>56</sup>, Kenneth Copeland, and Kenneth Hagin. Benson Idahosa was influential in preparing the grounds for charismatic movement in Ghana by providing training to leading Ghanaian charismatic leaders including Duncan-Williams, Christie Doe Tetteh, and Agyin Asare<sup>57</sup>. Other leaders at the charismatic front include, Mensah Otabil, Eastwood Anaba, Sam Korankye Ankrah, Steve Mensah and

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<sup>54</sup> Gifford, P. *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 2004).

<sup>55</sup> Omenyo, C. *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002). Larbi, 2001

<sup>56</sup> Oral Roberts visited Ghana for a crusade with Benson Idahosa and Duncan Williams

<sup>57</sup> Charles Agyinasare is recorded to have attributed his healing gift to an impartation he receives from Morris Cerullo in a school of ministry conference in Accra

Dag Heward Mills, to mention but a few, have been very influential in sustaining the steam of the charismatic movement in Ghana.<sup>58</sup>

The neo-Pentecostal or charismatic movement constitutes the third strand of Pentecostalism in Ghana. Scholars have noted that there are two ways in which these movements can be distinguished from mainline missionary established churches and classical Pentecostal churches. Walter Ihejirika<sup>59</sup> opines that “the prefixes ‘new wave’ and ‘neo’ are used to distinguish these new churches from established classical Pentecostal denominations like the Church of Pentecost and the Assemblies of God, and to underscore the fact that they are historically younger and have remained autochthonous founder-led congregations.” In another sense, the term ‘new-wave Pentecostalism’ or ‘neo-Pentecostalism’ is also used to “designate the indigenous protestant Christian denominations that emphasize salvation by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ through personal conversion, the authority of scripture in matters of faith healing, and the speaking in tongues.”<sup>60</sup> Neo-Pentecostals emphasize the importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the life of every “born again” Christian.<sup>61</sup> Olupona’s description of this new phenomenon is worth noting:

Charismatic churches are evangelical churches founded by African leaders who have adopted radical spiritual conversion, often called “born again”, through baptism of the Holy Spirit, recalling the day of Pentecost. As in the prophetic independent African churches before them, the charismatic churches emphasize speaking in tongues, divine healing, and miracles. In addition, they profess that the

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<sup>58</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 2001

<sup>59</sup> Walter C. Ihejirika, “From Televisuality to Social Activism: Nigerian Televangelists and their SocioPolitical Agenda” In Pradip Ninan Thomas and Philip Lee (eds.), *Global and Televangelism*, (NY: Pelgrave MacMillan, 2012), 173. See also J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostal Media Images and Religious Globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa”, 65.

<sup>60</sup> Ihejirika, “From Televisuality to Social Activism: Nigerian Televangelists and their Socio-Political Agenda, 174.

<sup>61</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12. Asamoah-Gyadu deals with the rise and nature of charismatic ministries, beginning with their roots in the conservative evangelical movement and the basic theological differences between this fresh wave of Pentecostalism and their older counterparts, the Sumsum soré.

material success and prosperity of their members are signs of divine grace and benevolence.<sup>62</sup>

The neo-Pentecostal Churches have a theological distinctiveness that is not as evident, at least not to the same degree, in the other versions of Pentecostalism. They are also distinguished from the classical Pentecostal churches and the independent churches by features such as their predominantly youth membership, their use of the English language for worship services, the use of live music and the media.<sup>63</sup> In practice the neo-Pentecostal churches place or emphasize ‘every-member-ministry’, than the other Pentecostal groups. Ghanaian neo-Pentecostals, make ‘personal spiritual power for every believer’ the hallmark of their theology and pastoral endeavours.<sup>64</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu notes that:

In neo-Pentecostalism generally there is strong opposition to over-reliance on the charismatic abilities and competence of particular individuals. Recourse to and dependence on traditional remedies, biblical symbolism and the use of prophylactics to mediate healing associated with the ministry of the Sunsum soré are also normally discouraged. Neo-Pentecostal teaching emphasizes that personal experience of Pentecostal power should enable individuals to live the Christian life with minimal recourse to human or symbolic mediation. In other words, the experience of the Spirit, following conversion, not only empowers the believer to be an effective witness, but also opens the door to the reception of ministry gifts of the Spirit including those of healing, discernment and prophecy.<sup>65</sup>

The charismatic churches have attained much social prominence in Ghana because of their adroit use of the media. Asamoah-Gyadu has argued that “this new type of Christianity, as a result of its media presence, continues to have a much more diffused impact on African

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<sup>62</sup> Jacob, Olupuna, “Africa, West (Survey),” In Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Revised and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 11-21.

<sup>63</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 96.

<sup>64</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

<sup>65</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

Christianity in particular and popular culture in general.”<sup>66</sup> The presence of the new Pentecostal/Charismatic movements has transformed the religious culture of Christianity in Africa, leading to what may be referred to as religious ‘Pentecostalization’ and ‘Charismaticization’<sup>67</sup> of African Christianity. This Charismatic renewal has, at the same time, impacted other strands of Christianity in both Nigeria and Ghana.<sup>68</sup>

This strand manifests in three forms, the first being the Independent Charismatic Churches (this group is the focus of this study). In Ghana, they refer to themselves as the ‘Charismatic Ministries’. A typical example is the Christian Action Faith Ministries led by Nicholas Duncan Williams. The non-denominational or trans-denominational fellowships like the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI) and Women’s Aglow, also referred to as the Para-church Movement, make up the second form.<sup>69</sup> The third are the renewal groups within the traditional Western missionary churches. An example is the Charismatic Renewal Movement.<sup>70</sup> Larbi<sup>71</sup> adds a fourth one which is the Prophet/Healercentred Pentecostalist Prayer Camps and Prophet led Charismatic churches. An example is the Alive Chapel led by Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoaku. This is currently designated as Neoprophetic or deliverance ministries in Ghana.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Pentecostal Media Images and Religious Globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa’ in P. Horsfield, M. E. Hess and A. M. Medrano (eds) *Belief in Media: Cultural Perspective on Media and Christianity* (England: Ashgate Pub. Company, 2004). 66.

<sup>67</sup> “Pentecostalization” and “Charismaticization” is used to refer to situations in which non-Pentecostal or noncharismatic churches are affected by this renewal movement especially in the mainline churches. See also for example Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002).

<sup>68</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism* 2006. See Hackett, Rosalind, I.J., “Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana”, *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28(3): 1998, 265.

<sup>69</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 11, Asamoah-Gyadu categorizes them in terms of waves, a metaphor likening the emergence of Pentecostal innovation and creativity in Africa in terms of waves on the seashore.

<sup>70</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 2006. See also, Cephas Omenyo, “From The Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana” *Exchange*, 34, 1 (2005), 38 – 60.

<sup>71</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 89.

<sup>72</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo and Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, “Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana”, *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. 1. No.1 (2006), 55 – 68.

The neo-Pentecostal/charismatic movement emerged in Ghana in the 1970s. Larbi<sup>73</sup> sees its emergence as the aftermath of the evangelical/charismatic renewal in the 1960s and the 1970s.<sup>74</sup> Most of the charismatic ministries have developed into independent churches with some becoming very popular in less than a decade. Pentecostalism/ Charismatics generally is the area in which the phenomenal growth in African Christianity has been most conspicuous.<sup>79</sup> The boom and expansion of Pentecostal movements are increasingly making Pentecostalism the dominant characteristic form of Christianity on the African continent.

*Neo-Prophetic Churches:* They came to the scene in the latter part of the 1990s. These churches employed both the belief systems and elements of AICs and charismatic groups.<sup>75</sup> Examples are Alive Chapel International, Ebenezer Miracle Worship Center and Great Live Worship Centre.

As argued by Omenyo, more than four decades ago Professor C. G. Baëta, the foremost Ghanaian scholar on the phenomenon of prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity, whose authoritative study on the phenomenon is still relevant today, made a discerning observation that, ‘prophetism appears to me to be a perennial phenomenon of African life . . .’<sup>76</sup> So far, Baëta’s reflection appears to be normative in the study of the history of African religions. Indeed, it is more relevant today than before. In this discussion, we adopt Baëta’s definition of the phenomenon of prophetism as follows:

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<sup>73</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 89.

<sup>74</sup> Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 89. <sup>79</sup>

Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 13.

<sup>75</sup> Omenyo Cephass and Atiemo Abamfo Ofori, “Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Prophetism in Ghana,” *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, New Series, 1, no. 1 (2006): 55–68. See also OgbuKalu, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Reshaping of the African Religious Landscape in the 1990s,” *Mission Studies* 20, no. 1–39 (2003): 85; Cephass Omenyo, “Man of God Prophesy Unto Me: The Prophetic Phenomenon in African Christianity,” *Studies in World Christianity* 17, no. 1 (2011): 40.

<sup>76</sup> Christian G. Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana* (London: SCM, 1961), 21. <sup>82</sup>  
Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, 23.

Whether in relation to or independently of events or developments in society, the individual endowed with a striking personality and the ability to impose his own will on 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. Powers traditionally credited to such persons, of healing, revealing hidden things, predicting the future, cursing and blessing effectually, etc., will be attributed to him whether he claims them or not. Some will make a more successful showing than others. Such things as the above-mentioned endowment, inward illumination, a sense of divine vocation, spontaneous enthusiasm . . . are facts of life and have their effects in African society.<sup>82</sup>

Like all the other categories in the Pentecostal family, neo-prophetism is growing rapidly in Ghana for a number of reasons. Some of these reasons are the relevance of the phenomenon to the Ghanaian religious context and religious pragmatism and its compatibility with most sections of people. Additionally, neo-prophetism involves the use of a predominantly oral form of communication, provides the youth with the opportunity for exercising their gifts and talents and encompasses phenomena such as dreams and visions in personal and public forms of worship.

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<sup>77</sup> Cephas Omenyo and Wonderful Adjei Arthur, “The Bible Says! Neo-Prophetic Hermeneutics in Africa”. *Studies in World Christianity* 19.1 (2013): 50–70.

### 1.8.2 Religion and Politics in Ghana

The notion that religion and politics are interrelated is well grounded phenomenon in Ghana, many scholars including Patrick Ryan, John Pobee, Elom Dovlo and Abamfo Atiemo within the Study of Religions have enhanced this notion in their writings. Some of these basic writings are reviewed below.

In his book *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana*, Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, has argued that “Religion in Ghana connects with most aspects of life, and in the public sphere, it is explicitly recognized and dealt with, albeit in a way not completely unambiguous: the constitution of the republic makes the country a secular state but not an atheistic one.”<sup>7879</sup> He argues that though there is a clear constitutional separation between religion and politics, a conscious effort or an attempt is made in recognition of the pervasive religiosity among the Ghanaian populace. For instance, the constitution of Ghana itself prescribes a representation of religious constituencies on certain statutory bodies. He argues, “in practice, prayer is offered at important state functions, and institutions such as Parliament and the judiciary begin their daily or annual sessions with prayer or, in some cases, with elaborate church services.”<sup>80</sup>

In highlighting the work of Assimeng, Atiemo outlines six significant phases of what can be described as the intertwining of religion and politics in Ghana since the country’s independence. It is however, referred to as “national religiousness” which occurred within the social, economic and cultural changes that has taken place in the country since

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<sup>78</sup> Abamfo O. Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana* (London, NY: Bloomsbury: <sup>79</sup>), 86.

<sup>80</sup> Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana*, 86. <sup>86</sup>  
Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana*, 87.

independence.<sup>86</sup> It somewhat demonstrates how various regimes of government in the country have resorted to some level of religiosity in dealing or handling the affairs of the nation. The first phase as he outlines, is the phase of formal subordination and marginalization of religion in public life (1957-66 under the government of Dr. Nkrumah) and the second phase was characterized by official attempts to “bring back God” to the centre of national life (1966-9 under the military regime of the National Liberation Council).

The third phase was marked by a conscious “God- fearing posture” on the part of public officials, led by Dr. Busia, the prime minister (1969-72). At this time, Atiemo emphasizes that “religious life, especially, church going became fashionable at the level of national leadership.”<sup>81</sup> The fourth phase was one of “psychological insecurity and extreme superstition” (1972-9, under the military regimes of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) I & II). The fifth phase was the period under Dr. Limann’s presidency which was marked by economic and social difficulties which were said to be capable of solution “only by God” (1979-81); and the sixth phase was the phase of “Holy War” when under Rawlings’ second revolutionary government, radical attempts were made at socio-economic transformation (1981-92).<sup>88</sup>

These phases highlighted above indicate how religion, has over the years been intertwined with politics in Ghana. Though Atiemo’s work gives a good background of the situation, it does not further take into consideration the subsequent development of religion and politics in Ghana such as the issues of political prophecies. This study takes into accounts some of the recent development regarding religion and politics in Ghana by looking at certain new

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<sup>81</sup> Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana*, 87. <sup>88</sup> Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana*, 87. <sup>89</sup> Patrick Ryan, “Is it Possible to Conduct a United History of Religions in West Africa” *Universe* 5 (8): 1074.

development such as political prophecies and influence on Ghana's election as well as the voting pattern of electorate in Ghana.

Patrick Ryan, in his article "Is it possible to conduct a Unified History of Religions in West Africa"<sup>89</sup> justifies why the conduct of a History of Religions is possible in sub-Saharan Africa. He argues that in West Africa, the use of religion in the political circles of the subregion is one aspect of this history. He notes that this is not limited to Civil Religion and identifies Religious Nationalism and the Political Manipulation of Religion as other variables that are used in the politics of the sub-region. Political Manipulation as identified by Ryan were variables that were given attention to in this work. The researcher found out if there have been innovations and new strategies adopted by politicians. Since, these politicians mostly make use of these variables, especially during elections to influence the electorates to vote for them.

Closely related to Ryan's work is that of Elom Dovlo's article titled "Civil Religion in Ghana" and "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case". Dovlo, while acknowledging Ryan's work also identified a fourth dimension or variable that has hitherto been glossed over. In identifying the fourth variable, Dovlo observed: "But the place of religion in the African political arena must not be seen solely in terms of politicians using religion to influence citizens in a political way. Religious bodies and their leaders have also independently tried to influence political decision making in Africa."<sup>82</sup>

That is to say, the religious personalities or leaders have been involved directly in political matters and sometimes influenced national issues. On Religious Nationalism, Dovlo argues

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<sup>82</sup> Dovlo, "Civil Religion in Ghana", 37.

that “within the African context, Religious Nationalism is not purely a matter of political independence, but involves the restoration of the identity and dignity of the African, lost in the slavery, colonialism, apartheid and various kinds of mental and physical oppression that went with them.”<sup>83</sup> Nationalism he further, argued is directly linked with African cultural expression and albeit with religion, as there is a strong bonding between religion and culture of African people. John Pobee who writes earlier (*Religion and Politics in Ghana*) argues that, “religion is one of the important institutional structures making up the total social system.”<sup>84</sup> He noted that, in African societies, religion is all-pervasive, with most communal and societal functions of the people inextricably bound up with religion. He emphasized that, “the metaphysical has always been a factor in politics.”<sup>85</sup> That is to say, religion has always been part of the African public or secular life, even before the coming of the colonial administration (pre-colonial era). In spite of the strong bond that exist between religion and African politics, the ability of Christianity and Islam to form sound foundations for Ghana after independence was questioned by the new African leadership. Christianity, one of the religious traditions whose ability was questioned had played an important role in the Nationalist struggle towards self-governance including the provision of education for the new African leadership.

David Kimble’s book, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism (1850-1928)*, for instance, reveals the role of Christianity in the Nationalist cause in Ghana. According to Kimble, “in the growth and self-governing institutions, the churches were usually ahead of the government and provided some African leaders with a forum and an

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<sup>83</sup> Dovlo, “Civil Religion in Ghana”, 37.

<sup>84</sup> John Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1991), 11.

<sup>85</sup> Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 11.

accustomed freedom of expression, both in the pulpit and press.”<sup>86</sup> Thus the church provided and dedicated columns in their correspondents to national issues. Some of these Christians newsletters were the *Christian Messenger Examiner*, *Christian Reporter* and the *Gold Coast Methodist Times*.

John Pobee’s book *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana* particularly reveals how Christianity has been deeply involved in the politics of the country and described the church as “the guardian angel of African Nationalism,”<sup>95</sup> for her role in shaping the lives of the politicians of the day. He cited a lot of politicians who had not only Christian background but more importantly Christian education, including Dr. Nkrumah. He singled out of them, (some ministers of the gospel) who served in government for close study. It was worth investigating, why the church dominated or occupied the largest segment of the religious space in the public sphere and if they still hold on to this segment or have been over taken by other religious communities.

In his work *The Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950: Its Effects upon Muslim and Muslim Christian Relation*, Nathan Samwini examines the factors of change that stimulated the resurgence<sup>87</sup> and the “effects of this resurgence upon Muslim relationship and between Muslim and non-Muslims.”<sup>88</sup> In the last pages of his work, Samwini touches on the impact of Christianity and Islam almost a century after their existence. In retrospect, he revealed that early Muslim settlers made an impact on the government of the people, especially

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<sup>86</sup> David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928*, 162. <sup>95</sup> John Pobee, *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana: 1949-1966* (Accra: Asempra Publishers, 1998), 106.

<sup>87</sup> Nathan Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950: It Effects upon Muslim and Muslim Christian Relations* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 1.

<sup>88</sup> Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950*, 1.

Ashanti and the Northern Kingdoms. He explained that, this impact on the high office of these kingdoms were possibly due to the spiritual powers that Muslims of the period possessed. He added that the perceived spiritual potency possessed by Muslims of the time seems to have disappeared or is not evident after the 1950s.<sup>89</sup> It was worth exploring to examine how in today's political elections, some political leaders still consult the prophets or religious people for spiritual intervention and support to win election.

Despite these previous important roles, the new African leadership seems unconvinced about the ability of these religions to form the bedrock of the new Africa and John Pobee seems to have a clue as to why the ability of these two religions were queried by the new leadership in Ghana. The reason according to John Pobee was because these religions were deemed as "imperial religions." He said Christianity, for instance appeared in West Africa "as one of the fronts of imperialism and colonialism."<sup>90</sup> In retrospect, Pobee mentions how Christianity was deemed "an imperial religion because of the process of its establishment by the emperors Constantine 1, Theodsius 1 and Charles the Great."<sup>91</sup> According to him, Islam was given a similar tag, because the faith within decades of the death of the Prophet jMohammed became accommodated to the caliphate and therefore imperialized."<sup>92</sup> Christianity was the worst affected. Whiles appreciating the social service provided by the missionary bodies, Christianity was also deemed "as a tool of the imperial onslaught on Africa", a situation Pobee describes as "a love-hate relationship between African Nationalist and Christianity."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950*, 58.

<sup>90</sup> Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 148.

<sup>91</sup> Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 148.

<sup>92</sup> Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 148.

<sup>93</sup> Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 148. <sup>103</sup>

Dovlo, "Civil Religion in Ghana", 37.

Hence, the new African leadership according to Dovlo chose a different path and developed various ideologies to entrench patriotism in the people.<sup>103</sup> Examples of such ideologies were Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria's Zikism and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah and Nkrumaism. Pobee's book *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana* however reveals that these ideologies as were championed by the new leadership were not enough to end the direct involvement of religion in national politics. The direct role of these religious traditions in the politics of this country and the success thereof seem to have changed the popular notion among early African political leaders, that Christianity and Islam were incapable of being the bed rock of independent Africa. Politicians who rejected these religions found solace in them. Politicians did not only resort to reaching their constituents through religious leaders, but made manipulative use of religion (faith) in their campaign for political office. On the issue of Political Religion, which is the deliberate manipulation of religion by political parties and their agents to strengthen their political base, Dovlo reveals that politicians resort to the leadership of religious institutions in a bid to influence them to convince their people to buy their ideologies and vote in their favour. According to Dovlo, politicians court the leadership of these institutions to "attract an entire group, without reaching out to them individually"<sup>94</sup> with the hope that "where the religious leadership is influential to exploit their influence on the adherents"<sup>95</sup> to vote for their party. In spite of this influence Dovlo contends that most religious leaders have strived to retain political neutrality by staying clear off partisan politics.<sup>96</sup> These literature were reviewed in the light of the current phenomenon of prophetism in Ghanaian elections.

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<sup>94</sup> Elom Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case" in Samuel E. Quainoo (ed.) *Africa through Ghanaian Lenses* (New York: Vestal International Press, 2004), 217.

<sup>95</sup> Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case", 217.

<sup>96</sup> Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case", 217. <sup>107</sup> Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 161.

Paul Gifford has however observed that at the intra religious or denominational level, the independent role played by the Church is mostly led by the mainline churches Catholic Bishop Conference (C.B.C) and the Christian Council Ghana (CCG) with Pentecostal churches and other Neo-Prophetic churches taking a lean back approach. The last chapter of Gifford's book *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, which centers on the charismatic approach to the politics of the country, among others explains the Pentecostal attitude towards politics. In this work, Gifford reveals a new dimension, to the whole idea of religion in the politics of Ghana's elections. He identifies two approaches that usually characterizes charismatic approach to Ghanaian politics, and clearly demonstrate how different they are from that of the mainline churches that "have been characterized by the element of direct political involvement which has led them to pronounce on issues of human rights and even to train election monitors."<sup>107</sup> In an earlier book, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, Gifford notes that there are some of these "new churches", who view Christian involvement in politics differently. He observed: "When we consider the direct involvement of these new churches, we see an enormous difference from Ghana's mainline churches... some will teach that a Christian has no concern with politics."<sup>97</sup>

The charismatic worldview makes them "tend in particular to think in terms of spiritual causality"<sup>98</sup> which led them to 'spiritualise' or moralise' issues out of the mundane plane on which political issues had been most fruitfully addressed.<sup>99</sup> In this work, the researcher found out, why and how the attitude of charismatic groupings towards national politics has changed. If they have, to what extent and in which ways are they involved in politics? Is the

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<sup>97</sup> Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 85.

<sup>98</sup> Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 85.

<sup>99</sup> Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 169.

approach the same as that of the mainline churches or have they developed their own style and approach? At the inter-religious level, Christianity dominates in terms of its direct involvement in national politics than Islam and African Traditional Religion. As a faith that took its roots from the Northern part of Ghana Islam suffered some setbacks that invariably affected its public sphere after independence.

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

Arguably, this study is an important contribution to the study of religion and politics in Ghana. Over the years, religion has been intertwined with politics in Ghana and scholars such as Pobee, Kwesi Dickson and Elorm Dovlo have contributed immensely to such area of studies in the academia. In this study, the researcher wishes to take the steps further by looking at contemporary situations of religion and politics in Ghana particularly on the contributions of Pentecostals and draw its implications for both the academy and the entire populace. It is aimed that the findings that will be made will serve a good purpose in educating the church and the academia on the various ramifications of prophetism on Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> republican elections.

### **1.10 Organization of Chapters**

This study is organized under five broad chapters. Chapter one deals with the introductory issues by giving the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, aims and objectives, scope and focus of the study, theoretical framework adopted for the study and the methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of the research. Literature on the subject under study will also be examined. This will be followed by organization of chapters, and significance of the study.

The subsequent chapters examine the influence of prophetism on Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> republican election using the 2012 and 2016 elections as case studies. Particularly, chapter two focuses on political prophecies in Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> republic. Chapter three basically focus on selected case studies of electoral prophecies regarding both the 2012 and 2016 elections in Ghana. It particularly discusses and outlines the various predictions and key messages made by certain prophet of God in Ghana regarding both elections.

Chapter four deals with the analysis of issues that emerges from the study. It is an attempt to discuss the impact of prophecies on Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> republican elections particularly the 2012 and 2016 elections.

The summary, recommendations and conclusions from the study are presented in chapter five of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### POLITICAL PROPHECIES IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

#### 2.1 Introduction

One distinctive confluence of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana is prophetic politics. Since the burgeoning of Ghanaian Pentecostalism in the 1990s; the prophetic ministry, as an offshoot of the Pentecostal ministries, particularly that which foretells political and national events has also gained political prominence. Different political prophecies ranging from electoral, governmental, doomsday and scriptural prophecies have been unpacked and communicated in different ways. There are also contrasting prophecies concerning the political fortunes of Ghana, political parties, political office holders, and prospective political candidates, leading to doubts over the sources and authenticity of some prophecies. The pervasive nature of this phenomenon is because of the decentralisation of the prophetic declaration in the Pentecostal ministries. The apparent contradictions, conflicts and contests that are occasioned by some of the prophetic declarations, are as a result of the current 'strand-struggle' for prominence among Charismatic Churches on the one hand and the Charismatic Churches and Neo-Prophetic Churches on the other hand. This chapter will examine the reasons for the upsurge in political prophecies and analyse some political prophecies, during Ghana's Fourth Republican era. In particular, I will focus on prophecies relating to elections, governmental decisions, systems of governance and negative prophecies.

#### 2.2 Biblical Prophecy and Prophetism in Ghana

Prophecy in the Bible deals with concrete life-related issues affecting the communities of faith. Prophecy is neither abstract nor theoretical; it is concrete, dealing with challenges

threatening obedience to God by ordinary people. Biblical prophecy is both foretelling and forth-telling in nature. Let us consider the following examples from scripture:

The Lamentations of Jeremiah address social issues facing the community of faith in his day. In one instance, Jeremiah says: “Let us examine our ways and test them, let us return to the Lord. Let us lift our hearts and our hands to God in heaven, and say: we have sinned and rebelled against the Lord and you have not forgiven” (3:40- 42). Jeremiah further confronts the social evils in a formulaic prophetic fashion: “Come out of her, my people! Run for your lives! Run from fierce anger of the Lord (51:45)... We are disgraced, for we have been insulted and shame covers our faces, because foreigners have entered the holy places of the Lord’s house. But days are coming declares the Lord, when I will punish her idols, and throughout her land the wounded will groan” (Jer. 51:51-52).

This prophecy addresses the current state of affairs and narrates to the Israelites, the community of faith, sins committed by Babylon against them. It is both advisory and promissory to the people of faith. It spells out what will happen to the offenders as a consequence of present actions. Prophet Amos prophetically names and shames the crimes that were happening among the people of faith. He writes: This is what the Lord says, “For three sins of Israel, even four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name. They lie down besides every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of God they take wine taken as fines” (Amos 2:6-8). Amos further confronts the social evils committed by those outside the community of faith. He declared prophetically what God would do as a result. He writes: This is what the Lord says, “For three sins of Moab, even four, I will not back my wrath. Because he burned as if to lime, the bones of

Edom's king, I will send fire upon Moab that will consume the fortresses of Kerioth. Moab will go down in great tumult amid war cries and the blast of the trumpet. I will destroy her ruler and all her officials with him." (2: 1-3). Concerning Judah, Amos prophesies: This is what the Lord says: "For three sins of Judah, even four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because they have rejected the law of the Lord and have not kept his decree, because they have been led astray by false gods, the gods their ancestors followed, I will send fire upon Judah that will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem" (Amos 2: 4-5). Prophet Amos has similar formulaic forth-telling prophecies against other neighbouring nations such as Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and towns such as Gaza and Damascus.

From the foregoing, the nature and function of Hebrew prophecy is overt. It confronts and shames actions that compromise the communal good of all or amount to injustices against other people which consequently hinder the predicted future. Therefore, Hebrew prophecy is forth telling in nature except for messianic prophecies and a few others that foretell the future. Prophecies in the Hebrew Bible largely address "specific social, political, and religious circumstances in ancient Israel and Judah."<sup>100</sup> In ancient Israel and Judah, prophetic foretelling is largely limited to the eschatological coming of the messiah. All other kinds of prophetic foretelling were either a reinterpretation of prophetic forth-telling with the addition or alternative of a reapplication of prophecies forth-told whose actions were futuristic. It would be erroneous for readers to typically interpret prophecy in the Bible as having its primary intent limited to the foretelling of the future.

Prophecy (in the biblical and Christian theological traditions terms) is achieved under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit which leads to "either the foretelling of a future otherwise

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<sup>100</sup> S.L. McKenzie. *How to read the Bible: History, prophecy, literature, — Why modern readers need to know the difference, and what it means to faith today* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009),

unknown to human beings or the forth-telling of a divine message for a specific place, time, and situation.”<sup>101</sup> In the New Testament, prophecy is defined as “a specific form of divination that consists of intelligible verbal messages believed to originate with God and communicated through inspired human intermediaries.”<sup>102</sup> In simple terms, it is “the organ of communication between God and man”<sup>103</sup> and described as a promised gift received universally at Pentecost.<sup>115</sup>

Pentecostals who emphasise prophetism, as a key component in their ministries have, “long been stereotyped, as being politically quiescent.”<sup>104</sup> However, Amos Young has observed in a worldwide study of Pentecostal relations with the public sphere that the last three decades has seen a change in attitude of Pentecostals who avoided the political domain.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, Pentecostals do not hold a monopoly to prophetic engagement with the public square, since the phenomenon has been part of Christian tradition since ancient times where “the prophets of Israel warned kings and governments, questioned existing socio-political developments, and advocated for the poor, women, and other oppressed groups, often challenging the status quo.”<sup>118</sup> Thus, in ancient times there was no distinct private religious sphere.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Amos Yong, “Essays & Exchanges: Pentecostalism, Politics, and the Prophetic: Renewing the Public Square II,” *SSRC Forums*, January 21, 2014, <http://forums.ssrc.org/ndsp/2014/01/21/pentecostalism-politicsand-the-prophetic-renewing-the-public-square-ii/>.

<sup>102</sup> [David E. Aune](#), *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World*, (Grand Rapids: [Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing](#) Company, 1983), 339.

<sup>103</sup> Max B. Turner, “The Significance of Receiving the Spirit in Luke-Acts: A Survey of Modern Scholarship,” *Trinity Journal* 2 (1981), 157. <sup>115</sup> Max Turner, “Jesus and the Spirit in Lucan Perspective,” *TynBul* 32(1981), 38.

<sup>104</sup> Amos Yong, “Pentecostalism and the Political — Trajectories in Its Second Century 32 (2010) 333,” *Pneuma* 32, no. 2 (2010): 333.

<sup>105</sup> Yong, “Renewing the Public Square II.”

<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Tim Bulkeley, Bible Commentary, <http://www.bible.gen.nz/amos/prophets.htm>

Prophets have also been part of African Christianity since the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>107</sup> Some precursors of African Pentecostalism including Sampson Oppong, Wade Harris and Garrick Braide were all Prophets. The churches that also emerged following their initiatives (AICs) were also led by prophets with their emphasis on working of miracles and healings.<sup>108</sup> Within the Ghanaian context, Prophetism has been part of Ghanaian Christianity appearing in various phases of the Ghanaian Pentecostal experience and currently in the fifth phase.<sup>109</sup> Hence, the current prophetic phenomenon in Ghanaian Pentecostalism is not totally new.<sup>110</sup> Most prophets of the AICs mainly focused on winning souls, healing and working miracles and therefore not engaged in divine predictions. The Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC) founded in 1922<sup>111</sup> can however be singled out as one of the churches whose leader, M.M. Jehu Appiah's (*Akaboha II*) prophecy touched on national, transnational and world affairs.<sup>112</sup>

Quayesi-Amakye has also noted the relationship that exists between biblical prophets and Ghanaian prophets and argued that:

Biblical prophetism and Ghanaian Pentecostal prophetism share apparent similarities. Whereas the emphasis in Pentecostal prophetism may differ somewhat from OT [Old Testament] prophetism the former tends to share similar trends with the latter. For in both cases there is ample evidence to show that the prophets sought or seek to provide solutions to the problems of their people in particular situations and periods of their history.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism: Antecedents and Some Characteristic Features," *Australasian Pentecostal Studies*, no. 15, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://apsjournal.com/aps/index.php/APS/article/view/125/122>.

<sup>108</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism, 15.

<sup>109</sup> I Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism, 15.

<sup>110</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism, 15.

<sup>111</sup> Amy Cox, "The Historical Exodus of the Musama Disco Christo Church," *African Diaspora Collection*, January 4, 2002, 5.

<sup>112</sup> Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Study of Spiritual Churches* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962), 155.

<sup>113</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism."

Meaning, despite the somewhat different focus of Pentecostal prophetism it still contains traits of the ancient prophecy. However, the most significant difference is the public arena in which both prophecies were declared and the authority accorded both offices. As Bernard notes:

Among the Hebrews of the monarchy the prophet occupied a position which has no exact analogue among the other great nations of antiquity, and of which it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance. In the Jewish commonwealth the distinction between the religious and the secular, between church and state, was not recognized; and so the prophets who proclaimed the will and purposes of Jehovah to his people played a conspicuous part in the foreign and domestic policy of the nation. The great figures among those who held the prophetic office appear among the king's ministers and advisers, or where they are in conflict with the reigning sovereign—they take their place as the natural leaders of the people (I Kings 19: 15 ff.).<sup>114</sup>

Ordinarily, this should not be the case in a secular nation like Ghana. Thus, ideally in some respects, the prophetic message is to be treated as moral suasion. However, in the Ghanaian context, as is the case in other parts of Africa, prophetic declarations are recognised because in spite of the formal secularity of the state, Pentecostalism has achieved prominent public presence.<sup>115</sup>

Without a doubt, Prophetism in some respect is equivalent to divination in AIRs. In most Akan societies, priests are consulted to divine (*abisa*) the reasons for certain calamities such as famine, unexplained death, strange illness, etc. They were also asked to foretell the fortunes or destiny of a person, town or chiefdom and prescribed solutions for any impending dangers (*akwankyere*).<sup>116</sup> In the modern political sphere, AIRs priests are usually consulted

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<sup>114</sup> J. H. Bernard, "Prophets and Prophecy in New Testament Times," *The Biblical World* 25, no. 2 (1905): 117.

<sup>115</sup> Birgit Meyer, "Religious and Secular, 'Spiritual' and 'Physical' in Ghana," in *What Matters? Ethnographies of Value in a (Not So) Secular Age*, ed. Courtney Bender and Ann Taves, SSRC (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 92.

<sup>116</sup> Cephas Omenyo, "Man of God Prophecy unto Me: The Prophetic Phenomenon in African Christianity," vol. 17.1, *Studies in World Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 32.

or the gods of AIRS are invoked publicly to settle political disputes and the enforcement of political promises.<sup>117</sup> Within the political history of Ghana, there are a lot of reported cases of Politicians and government functionaries consulting prophets and diviners to either win an election or have an undue advantage over their opponents. Kwame Nkrumah and Bro. Yeboah Korieh of the F'Eden Church, Rawlings and the Afrikania Movement leader Osofo Komfo Damuah and Kutu Acheampong and Sri Sathya Sai Baba are some examples that suffice here.

### *What is New Then?*

For historical reasons, there are certainly marked differences between the biblical prophets and those that emerged as a component of African Pentecostalism.<sup>118</sup> What is new when it comes to the Christian tradition in the Ghanaian context as against that in the biblical accounts is that, the current political prophecies focus or emphasises the foretelling of the otherwise unknown to human beings as against the biblical traditions where forth-telling was more pronounced.<sup>119</sup> That is not to say they do not address current issues at all. I am asserting here that, although neither under the law, nor the gospel was predictions the most important or conspicuous part of the prophetic function,<sup>133</sup> within the Ghanaian context, it has assumed an important and pronounce space. What will then be new in the case of African Christianity is the pervasive intrusion of prophetism into the public arena. Thus we can describe the current phenomenon as an upsurge in prophetism with a focus on foretelling political events. The

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<sup>117</sup> Elom Dovlo, "Religion and the Politics of Fourth Republican Elections in Ghana (1992, 1996)," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 1, no. 1 (2006): 15; Fredrick Acheampong, "Religion and Politics in Ghana's 4th Republican Elections (1992-2008)" (MPhil. Thesis, University of Ghana, 2010), 116.

<sup>118</sup> Tarisayi A. Chimuka, "Reflections on the Morality of Some Prophetic Acts in Zimbabwe's Pentecostal Movements," in *Prophets and Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe*, ed. Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda, and Joachim Kügler, *Bible in African Studies* 12 (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2013), 121–122.

<sup>119</sup> Felix Just, "What Is Biblical Prophecy," 2006, <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Prophecy.htm>.<sup>133</sup> Bernard, "Prohecy in NT," 121.

pervasive intrusion of prophecies into the *polis* leads to the conclusion that, although Pentecostalism is arguably responsible for the upsurge in Christianity globally, within the Ghanaian context “it may be correct to say that it is the prophetic ministry which is strongly making this assertion true.”<sup>120</sup>

### 2.3 The Popularity of Prophetic Politics in Ghana

One of the main reasons for the popularity of prophetic ministries in Ghana and by extension prophetic politics is “the Ghanaian traditional this worldly salvation [which] interprets life existentially.”<sup>121</sup> It is believed that for one to achieve this existential need, one has to have a harmonious relationship with the spirit world which is believed to give meaning to the physical life and thus has control over it.<sup>122</sup> Thus, with the receptive nature of AIRs, any faith that claims to have the power to meet these existing needs is usually embraced.<sup>123</sup> Hence, the Pentecostalism parallel of a cosmological harmony,<sup>124</sup> made possible through the provision of supernatural succour outside the believer is very much sought after by politicians.<sup>125</sup> With the same orientation, most Ghanaian Pentecostals expect their leaders to at least profess to a faith, preferably a born again Christian. Basically for Pentecostals, candidates contesting for political leadership should have spiritual legitimacy in order to rule. The requirement of a ‘God fearing credential’ of a leader has become a requirement for politicians, especially those aspiring to the highest office of the land. For instance, one of

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<sup>120</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana’s New Prophetism.”

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Adrian Hastings, “From Agbebi to Diangienda: Independency and Prophetism,” in *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003), 530.

<sup>123</sup> Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, “Prosperity and Prophecy in African Pentecostalism,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 20 (2011): 296.

<sup>124</sup> Cephas Omenyo and Wonderful Adjei Arthur, “The Bible Says! Neo-Prophetic Hermeneutics in Africa,” 19.1 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 66.

<sup>125</sup> Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, “The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of the Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology,” *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, n.d., <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj10/larbi.html>. [27] [27] E. K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 426.

the reasons why Prophet Owusu Bempah argued for the removal of President John Mahama from office prior to the 2016 elections was associated with his immoral behavior.<sup>126</sup>

Another reason for the popularity of prophetic politics is the challenges politicians face in assessing the services of AIRs priests. The tapping of the potency of AIRs by politicians has sometimes been linked with ritual sacrifice and ritual murder. In this respect, I am suggesting, that the new consultations and prophecies offered by these prophetic ministers' which usually includes prayer rituals involving anointing oil and florida water looks more refined, less demanding and ultimately deemed as more acceptable. The Christian alternative provided by some Neo-prophet and Charismatic ministers, seem to have shifted attention from these AIRs priests. Hence, Pentecostal political prophecies are gradually taking over from AIRs divination into political affairs.

Aside the above religious reasons, another reason for the popularity of these prophecies is social in nature, though it has a spiritual underpinning.<sup>127</sup> It was hoped since the late 1980s that the economic situation in most African countries, will improve with the return of most African Countries to constitutional rule. This hope is yet to materialise. With the failure of most successive governments, most people have turned to religion as a means of coping with the challenges of life in the hope that through these spiritual means, a miraculous breakthrough may come their way.<sup>128</sup> Thus, one cannot delineate the popularity of these churches from the social-political realities of the countries in Africa. It has been noted for

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<sup>126</sup> See chapter for more details on this.

<sup>127</sup> For a detailed discussion of the case of Zimbabwe, see Charity Manyeruke and Shakespear Hamauswa, "Prophets, Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe," in *Prophets and Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe*, ed. Ezra Chitando, Masiiwa Ragies Gunda, and Joachim Kügler, vol. 12, Bible in African Studies (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2013), 281–98.

<sup>128</sup> Virginia Garrard-Burnett, "Neo-Pentecostalism and Prosperity Theology in Latin America: A Religion for Late Capitalist Society," *Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 42, no. 1&2 (2012): 25.

instance, that the pervasiveness of prophetic activities in Zimbabwe is taking place at a time when the nation is undergoing deep economic, social and political crises.<sup>129</sup>

#### **2.4 Prophetic Politics in Ghana's Fourth Republic**

Political Prophecies is usually deemed as 'the infusion of religion into the political sphere.' However, for the purpose of this study, political prophecies will be defined as any prophetic utterance that concerns a nation state, its politics, leadership (government) and institutions. Basically, they are prophecies that are political in nature that usually focuses on politics, political parties, politicians, governments and nation /states. It can be national (within a particular country) or transnational (concerning another nation).<sup>130</sup> Prophetic Politics, on the other hand is the act or process of prophesying about political issues.

There are several political prophecies that have been uttered within the context of Ghana's Fourth Republic. Some of these prophecies may be a carryover from other periods of Ghana's political history. These different ranges of political prophecies do not yield to easy classification. However, one can identify the characteristics of some of these prophecies. Some of the prophecies are conditional, requiring an action to be taken or halted to avert the realisation of such a prophecy. Usually, special prayers are needed to avert particular consequences. Some of these prophetic predictions are usually negative and forecast calamities. There are also some prophecies concerning the same issues (like the eventual winner of an election) that usually contrast or conflict each other, although it is claimed the source of the prophecy is the same –God. Some of these prophecies come from prophets

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<sup>129</sup> Manyeruke and Hamauswa, "Prophets in Zimbabwe," 282.

<sup>130</sup> See Nonimous Hameno, "Country Report: The Political and Social Impact of Prophetic Churches in Zimbabwe," A Research Paper (Harare: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, October 2014), 2. Byron Mutingwende, "Battle for Supremacy Among Prophets Rages," *Nehanda Radio*, May 2014, concerning transnational prophets and spiritual fathers

who have questionable characters; while still others come from prophets who are perceived as politically aligned and thus usually prophesy in favour of particular political grouping or politician(s). Yet there are prophets whose prophecies are not usually questioned or challenged. Some prophets who are engaged in these declarations usually claim their present declarations should be accepted as genuine because their previous predictions came to pass. In Ghana, most prophets engaged in these prophecies are usually from the neo-prophetic churches and charismatic churches.

The prophecies that are dealt with in this chapter are classified under two main headings of spiritual causality and human causality. Spiritual causalities are prophecies that deem events to have taken or about to take place, as an act of the devil or divinely sanctioned (by God). Human causality prophecies, on the other hand, are prophecies that are usually attributed to have taken place or about to take place because of human action or inaction –either by its leadership or the nation as a whole. I will analyse two case prophecies under each of these two broad headings. Nonetheless, reference will be made to other similar or related prophecies for the sake of emphasis. Under human causalities prophecies I will focus on electoral and governmental prophecies, while that of spiritual causality will encompass scriptural prophecies and doomsday prophecies.

### **2.5 Human Causalities: Electoral Prophecies**

‘Divine predictions’ of future events are usually made in favour of the two largest political parties in Ghana (the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party), especially in the run up to presidential and parliamentary elections. Though, most of these predictions are made for both presidential and parliamentary candidates of these parties, for obvious

reasons that of the presidential candidates of the two parties always gained more media attention and generate much public discourse in the run up to elections.

Nana Kwame Ampadu (a renowned Ghanaian Musician turned prophet), who claimed he predicted the presidential candidature of Prof. Mills in 1998, was reported to have proclaimed at an N.P.P. rally ahead of the 2008 elections that Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo (then presidential candidate of the NPP) was going to win that election. However, a conflicting prophecy was also declared by I.K. Obeng (Former Provisional National Defence Council Secretary for Religious Affairs), who predicted victory for Prof. John Evans Ataa Mills (then presidential candidate of the opposition NDC). What make these predictions questionable is the fact that, though they all claimed the source of their predictions was God, the ‘victory forecast’ was “... not in favour of only one among the candidates vying for the highest office of the land, but almost all the candidates were receiving these forecasts in their favour.”<sup>131</sup> Is the Christian God, a God of confusion? The conclusion that one comes to, in the face of these contradictions is, either both prophecies are politically motivated and thus not from God. This is because both of these personalities were known supporters of the political parties they predicted victory for. The other probability is that, one of the prophecies is a false prophecy and therefore, conflicting the genuine one from the other (from God).

Another popular electoral prophecy is that usually made by Apostle Owusu Bempah (Founder and General Overseer of the Glorious Word Ministries International in Ghana), usually in favour of the NPP. He has gained popularity in Ghana for his prophecies about

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<sup>131</sup> Segbefia, “Spiritual Forecast in Ghana,” Political Feature, *The Spectator* (Accra), 29 November 2008, 37. See also Halifax Ansah, “Joshua, Man behind Mills,” *The Ghanaian Journal* [database online] updated 23 February 2009, accessed 21 June 2009; available from <http://theghanaijournal.com/author/admin/html>; Internet.

Ghana and public officials, since the late 1990s. His predictions on electoral outcomes, particularly presidential elections, just like other prophecies authored by him, are usually conditional. In this instance, the one who will ultimately suffer defeat as per the prophetic declaration can avert the situation through prayers and fasting.

In one of such prophecies, Apostle Bempah prophesised on 31 December 2011, at a ‘cross over night’ church service, that there was going to be confusion over the 2012 Ghanaian presidential elections. He claims he saw (in a vision) the two flags of the then opposition NPP and that of the then incumbent NDC, with the national flag of Ghana in the middle. But that, of the NPP which was held high as a sign of victory was quickly put down by someone. He interpreted this to mean that, if the NPP does not intensify their prayers, they will win the elections, but their victory was going to be taken away from them. This may lead to violence. Although he fell short of explaining who pull down the NPP flag, it was clear to many who heard this prophecy that he was referring to the possibility of the incumbent government stealing the elections. The controversial creation of more than 45 new constituencies ahead of the 2012 general elections and some allegations raised by the NPP on the creation of these new constituencies led to some of NPP supporters and media communicators concluding that what was happening was a manifestation of what the Prophet predicted. According to the NPP, most of the new constituencies were calved out of NDC strong holds as well as from parts of NPP held seats, where the NDC had strong support during elections. The creation of new constituencies is constitutional obligation that is undertaken by the Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC). Thus, ordinarily the E.C in carrying out this exercise, fulfilled article 47 (5) of the 1992 constitution.<sup>132</sup> This was also not the first time the E.C. was altering the electoral boundaries of the country. In 2003, the EC carried

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<sup>132</sup> Government of Ghana, “Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992” (Republic of Ghana, 1992), 45.

out a similar exercise after the 2000 Census, which led to the creation of thirty new constituencies<sup>133</sup> However, in a country, where the perception of the abuse of incumbency and the manipulation of state institutions, including the EC is rife, the prophecy about the possibility of a stolen verdict, in the elections, directed at an incumbent that has all the state resources at its disposal to make this possible given credence, especially by the opposition and its supporters. In the end, the NPP lost the elections and did not accept the outcome, claiming there were some irregularities. It proceeded to the Supreme Court to challenge the EC's declaration, but lost the Election Petition. There was no electoral violence predicted. Apostle Bempah and followers have since argued that Ghana did not experience the said violence he predicted because his church and some well-meaning Ghanaians prayed against it.

The same prophet has prophesied ahead of the 2016 elections, that the NPP going to win those polls. He has challenged the Ghanaian public to note down the prophecy. Like the 2012 election victory prophecy in favour of the NPP, that for 2016 also comes with a caveat. The NPP will win the elections if they make their things right and stop consulting other gods.<sup>134</sup> It is difficult to fault or authenticate Apostle Bempah prophecies because of the caveat inherent in most of his prophecies. In instances where a particular prophecy by him does not come to pass, he has always insisted he and his pastors prayed to avert the possible outcome.

Yet another electoral prophecy that was transnational in nature was prophesied by Prophet Temitope Babatunde Joshua. He is a prophet from Nigeria and heads the Synagogue, Church

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<sup>133</sup> Electoral Commission of Ghana, *The 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections* (Accra: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2005), 1, 12, 16.

<sup>134</sup> "Rev. Owusu Bempah Declares Nana Addo Winner of 2016 Election," March 2, 2015, <http://elections.peacefmonline.com/pages/politics/201503/234119.php?page=2&storyid=100&cs>.

of All Nations. He is also a Televangelist with his own television station called Emmanuel TV. He is well known for his s transnational prophecies, including the November 2015 terror attack in France and the disappearance of a Malaysian plane in 2014. His prophecy concerning the Ghanaian elections in 2008 was made retrospectively public when Prof Mills (then incumbent President of Ghana) visited the Synagogue to thank God and the Prophet for his prayers and support in winning the Ghanaian elections. Prof Mills revealed that ahead of the elections, the prophet had prophesied to him that the elections were going to be decided in three rounds.<sup>135</sup>

In the 2008 election, since none of the eight (8) candidates for the Presidential elections received the required votes (50% plus one vote) to be declared the winner of the polls, the EC announced a runoff on the 28th of December. The second round, which was conducted across the country, with the exception of the Tain constituency was too close to call. Hence, an election in Tain was necessary before a declaration will be made. Prof. Mills emerged as the eventual winner. That, for the Prophet is three rounds of elections and the Ghanaian President and his supporters believed same. This prophecy was made retrospectively and it is difficult for one to verify its authenticity. However, since the one in whose favour this prophecy was made acknowledge the said prophecy, one is inclined to accept it. There are however a possibility, that President Mills referred to this prophecy as a demonstration of his election being divinely sanctioned.

For a society that deems what happens physically as having been sanctioned spiritually, a prophecy that predicts the eventual winner of an election (spiritual legitimacy) is seen as a

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<sup>135</sup> Halifax Ansah, "Joshua, Man behind Mills," Website, *The Ghanaian Journal*, (February 23, 2009), <http://theoghanaianjournal.com/author/admin/html..>

foregone conclusion that the eventual winner has already been chosen even before the elections are held (physical legitimacy). Thus prophecies are a good call for politicians in whose favour these predictions are made as it enhances their electoral fortunes in the eyes of not only Pentecostal electorates, but non Pentecostals alike – since the whole Ghanaian public sphere has been ‘pentecostalized,’<sup>136</sup> reinforcement by the pre-Christian notion that discerns causality in the spiritual realms.<sup>151</sup> In the process, prophets play a crucial role in either propping up the legitimacy of a political leader or denouncing it completely.<sup>15137</sup> Most importantly the prophet who makes these predictions becomes a public figure, especially in situations where the said declaration comes to pass. Having assumed the position of ‘king maker,’ secures a form of legitimacy in the public eye that he can leverage to attract more members to his church. In this regard, divine predictions of electoral outcomes have become a form of prophetic politics used by some Pentecostal pastors to promote the electoral prospects of favoured candidates. This is achieved through appeals to the spirituality of the candidates and his follower, drawing on the popularity of Pentecostal Christianity (theological appeal) that has captured the ideological imagination of the Ghanaian public sphere. In the end the public influence of Pentecostalism is deployed as part of the toolkit of political suasion.

## **2.6 Prophecies directed to Regimes of Government**

Prophecies directed to different regimes of governments in Ghana, otherwise referred to as Governmental prophecies in this study, is described as a form of human causality prophecy that is usually directed at the actions and inactions of ruling governments. One of the

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<sup>136</sup> Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Missionaries without Robes: Lay Charismatic Fellowships and the Evangelization of Ghana,” *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 19, no. 2 (1997): 167. <sup>151</sup> Max Assimeng, *Religion and Social Change in West African: An Introduction to Sociology of Religion*,

<sup>137</sup> nd ed. (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2010), 67. See also Paul Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 92. <sup>152</sup> Manyeruke and Hamauswa, “Prophets in Zimbabwe,” 286–287.

prophets in Ghana, who is well known for such governmental prophecies, is Rev. Prof. Enoch Immanuel Amanor Agbozo of the Ghana Evangelical Society (GES). He is one of the few prophets, whose prophecies are usually not challenged or contradicted. Although his prophecies are usually localised, they sometimes have transnational effects and implications. The GES which he heads was formed in 1973. Unlike other prophecies that orally declared, Rev. Agbozo usually puts most of his prophecies in writing and distributes it among stakeholders, including Christian umbrella groups, governments, opposition parties and other civil society organisations.

According to Rev. Agbozo he has been commissioned by God to win the church, the nation and Africa for God.<sup>138</sup> His success in winning, especially the nation for God, I suggest depends on winning political leaders, which explains why most of prophecies are directed or targeted at ruling governments. He has prophesied concerning many governmental decisions of both the NPP and NDC. However, for our purpose, we will be focusing on one of such prophecies, which he declared during the presidency of Prof. John Evans Atta Mills.

#### *Background to the Prophecy*

This prophecy is a carryover from Ghana's First Republic. According to Rev. Agbozo, in 1975, God directed him to get Ghana rebuilt, because previous attempts to build the country had failed. Hence, the commissioning of the GES to rebuild the broken walls of Ghana based on three books of the Bible – Haggai, Ezra and Nehemiah.<sup>154</sup> The mission was to be achieved through missionary activities that started in 1975 and ended in 2005. The Reverend claimed that during prayers for direction of the nation building mission process, God revealed to him that:

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<sup>138</sup> Interviewed on 9 October 2017, Accra. <sup>154</sup> Ibid.

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah [first President of Ghana] had instituted a spiritual force and system for building the nation. That the said force and system is an ‘Accursed Thing.’ That, the ‘Accursed Thing,’ should not be allowed to stand. It must be cast out and not allowed space and place in the nation building process and the country's affairs as a whole. Otherwise the nation's forward march onto her destined glory as nation and people of God will not see the light of day.<sup>139</sup>

He explained this ‘Accused Thing’ was a major factor behind the overthrow of the Dr.

Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People’s Party (CPP). Thus, in honouring God’s directive, GES undertook two special crusades in 1978 in Nkroful (hometown of Dr. Nkrumah) and Axim (located in the Western Region of Ghana) aimed at casting out the ‘Accursed Thing’ and neutralise the negative spiritual influence of the Nkrumah factor on the nation's development, progress and prosperity.<sup>140</sup> Rev. Agbozo also avers that, the Spirit of God led him personally in a spiritual battle to release the national flag and Coat of Arms from the negative influence of a spiritual power behind them.<sup>141</sup> With the mission accomplished in October 2005, Ghana was married and established as a nation and people of God's inheritance under God’s Kingdom. Within this period Rev. Agbozo claimed the country witness the spiritual effect of divine seed of development, progress and prosperity sown during the restoration and kingdom building process.<sup>142</sup> In essence, the divine intervention ended oppression by these spirits being.<sup>143</sup> Unfortunately, President Mills resurrected this ‘Accused Thing,’ when his government in 2009 decided to make Nkrumah the founder of Ghana, reversing the progress which has taken root during the President J.A.

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<sup>139</sup> Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, “Better Ghana Agenda—An Accursed Thing?,” August 4, 2014, <https://www.modernghana.com/print/566901/1/betterghanaagendaanaccursedthing.html>.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Agbozo, Political Prophecies in Ghana.

<sup>143</sup> Agbozo, “An Accursed Thing.” <sup>160</sup>  
Ibid.

Kuffour's presidency because that administration was as he puts it, the "first democratic government of the redeemed, healed and married new Ghana era."<sup>160</sup> He accused the NDC

Government of not been oblivious of the fact that the fall of Nkrumah was an act of God.

He also challenged the Christian credentials, of President Mills describing his spiritual and religious connections, as occultic or "cultish" in nature.<sup>144</sup> Thus, for such a decision, he concluded that President Mills has sinned against God and for that matter God was not amused. He declared:

President Atta Mills had desecrated the divine redemption of heavenly peace and kingdom glory image and standing of Ghana as star of Africa. He was committed to overturning the divine standing of Jesus Christ as reconciler, deliverer, redeemer, Prince of Peace, governor and king of glory of the new Ghana born out of the ashes of the old postcolonial Nkrumah ordered and controlled Ghana overshadowed by political dictatorship and oppression, atheistic philosophical scientificism, ideological coercion and oppression under one party monarchy type Republican state and idolatrous multi-deity blood sacrificing Pan African Ghana/Africa.<sup>162</sup>

The processes to bring Ghana back to its former state must begin from the church. As a human causality prophecy, humans must be seen as acting or changing course to ensure the restoration of the country back onto the path of righteous in the eyes of God.

While, the above prophecy was still pending, Rev Agbozo on 27 February 2012 issued another prophetic message, titled: "An Open Letter to President Prof. Atta Mills and Government of Ghana." The summary of the prophecy reads in part:

Thus says the Lord. That having regard to the spiritual, political, governmental, economic, legal and moral fallout of the Woyome judgment debt payment and considering the resultant threat to peace, righteousness and justice, stability, security and progress of the country, the most honourable thing for his Excellency president Atta Mills to do is to vacate his office, dismiss the government and

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid <sup>162</sup> Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, "Divine Message to Church, Government and Nation a Sequel (Part 2)," *Opinions*, November 18, 2012, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/428706/divine-message-to-churchgovernment-and-nation-a-sequel-part-2.html>.

appoint a presidential commission to supervise general elections for the election of a new president, executive and legislature for the country. In the absence of a presidential commission the chief justice should assume the reins of office to order year [December] 2012 general elections. .... That, the resignation of the president and government, will restore honour, dignity and glory to politics and governance in the country and affirm the powers of the President.<sup>145</sup>

As far as the records go the NDC government did not change course in making any changes to the constitutional instrument that proclaimed Dr. Nkrumah as the founder of Ghana. Neither did the President resign on the basis of the Woyome judgement debt payment scandal. President Mills was pronounced dead on 24 July 2012. On 22 August, 2012, a few weeks after the burial of the President, Rev. Agbozo, published a prophecy in which he sought to draw attention to the President's death as a testimony of God's judgement on the nation. He declared:

“Thus Saith the Most High God, "The Better Ghana Agenda is lost and buried with (Prof. John Evans) Atta Mills. I am no respecter of persons. I share My glory with no one. I cannot be mocked. No one takes or calls on my name in vain. I am the Giver of Life. I give and take life. No one counsels Me.”<sup>146</sup>

The sitting President's death, was seen by a cross section of the Ghanaian public as the physical manifestation of God's judgement on the nation, with the death of the sitting President, who signed the 'founder's bill,' into law. Nonetheless, I must be quick to note that, none of Rev. Agbozo's prophecies predicted the death of the President Mills. The emphasis has always been on the "judgement of God." There is also the possibility that the prophecy about the President's death and his eventual demise is just a coincidence. This is because, before Prof. Mills became President, it was public knowledge that he had been

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<sup>145</sup> Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, "An Open Letter to President Prof. Atta Mills and Government of Ghana," February 27, 2012, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/An-Open-Letter-To-President-Prof-Atta-Mills-And-Government-Of-Ghana-230784>.

<sup>146</sup> Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, "An Open Letter to the Church, Government, Nation and People of Ghana," August 27, 2012, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/413853/an-open-letter-to-the-church-governmentnation-and-people-of-ghana.html>.

battling with a medical condition since the NDC came to government in 2009. Prof. Mills has publicly indicated that he once went to South Africa for the treatment of sinusitis and cataract. His health status was a major campaign issue when he stood for the NDC presidential primaries in 2007 and the national campaign in 2008. He actually died about six months after his return from a medical check-up in the United States of America (U.S.A.). Therefore, one may argue that, President Mills might have died of natural causes and not necessarily by any divine judgement on his life because of his actions and inactions. However, it is equally important to note that Apostle Bempah and Prophet Peter Anamoh had prophesied the demise of President Mills. Apostle Bempah predicted the President's death together with former Vice President Alieu Mama on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011. Indeed Alieu Mahama also passed away in 2012. In the said prophecy, Apostle Bempah did not reveal the reasons why, President Mills was going to die. However, one can deduce, that if Rev. Agbozo's prophecy was anything to go by, then President Mills' death can be said to be related to the Judgement of God on his life. Ghana's current President, John Mahama, has not made any changes following the demise of President Mills as far as the demands of the prophecy is concerned. Prof. Agbozo claims the current economic and social challenges facing the country is as a result of government inaction on the prophecy. He has indicated that God will find a man after His heart because President Mahama has no divine agenda for the nation.<sup>147</sup>

Rev. Agbozo's prophecy depicts clear battle lines between two kingdoms (the Kingdom of God and that of the Devil), which are constantly at war, to win Ghana to their side. For most Pentecostal pastors, a God fearing political leadership is essential to achieving the perpetual reign of God in the country.

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<sup>147</sup> Agbozo, Political Prophecies in Ghana.

## 2.7 Doomsday and Negative Prophecies

There also prophecies, that are usually negative and predict doom, not in an apocalyptic sense, but that which foretell pending dangers and painful happenings. These prophecies are usually predicted to take place usually within a year, either on a specific date or unspecified periods within the year under review. Most of these prophecies usually revolve around, natural disasters like floods, human occasioned disasters like fires, road accidents, deaths through childbirth and the death of high profile personalities, particularly, politicians. For our purpose, we will focus on the death of politicians. As a spiritual causality prophecy, the reasons for such prophecies are not usually explained. There have been many of such ‘death prophecies’ during the Fourth Republic, but one that attracted national attention was the prophecy by Apostle Bempah that Ghana’s sitting President, John Dramani Mahama, was going to die, unless the President and his advisers take steps to reverse it. This prophecy was given on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 during the end of year watch night service –which is usually, the period the Apostle predicts events in the succeeding year.

The Apostle complained in an interview on Adom TV’s *Pampaso* and Adom FM’s *Dwaso Nsem* (Multimedia platforms in Accra) on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 that he has not been successful in his attempt at reaching the President to inform him about the prophecy. He noted that a similar situation took place, when he prophesied about the possible deaths, of late President Mills and late Vice President, Mahama on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011.<sup>148</sup> He claims these personalities eventually died because; there was no divine intervention to avert their death. Like his other conditional prophecies, he emphasised, that the impending calamity

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<sup>148</sup> Frank Agyei-Twum, “John Mahama will die this year unless... Rev OwusuBempah,” Adomonline.com, (February 8, 2013), <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201302/101142.php>.

could be averted if the entire nation, but especially the President sought God's help through prayer.

This prophecy was, however challenged by other charismatic leaders within the Pentecostal ministry. Those who challenged the prophecy were Archbishop Duncan Williams, Bishop Agyinasare and Rev. Steve Wengham. Bishop Agyin-Asare, who is the Presiding Bishop of the Perez Chapel International, described Apostle Bempah's prophecy as "pastorally and scripturally unethical," because of his recourse to the media with his alleged prophesy.<sup>149</sup> In a sermon on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2013, at the Perez Dome in Accra, Bishop Agyin-Asare told his congregation that the sole purpose of Apostle Bempah's prophecies was "to create panic and despair." He declared that by the authority vested in him as a prophet and an Apostle to the nations and also as one of the spiritual watchmen at the gates of Ghana and by the authority of heaven behind him, the President will not die a premature death before his time but he will live to declare the works of God.<sup>150</sup> In contrast, the President's death prophecy, Bishop Agyin-Asare observed: "In the bible when God told Isaiah to go to King Hezekiah to tell him he will die, he went to him not, stand in the Temple," suggesting: "the president is a Christian, he has a pastor, he [Prophet Bempah] could seek an audience with him."<sup>151</sup> He added that the only time prophets made public a particular prophesy was when the leader refused to repent.<sup>152</sup> He made a prophetic declaration to cancel that which has been issued by Apostle Bempah. He declared: "As an Apostle and a Prophet of God, I neutralize anything prophesied against the President, spoken against him, invoked against him, any psychic

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<sup>149</sup> Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues John Mahama from the Prophecy of Death," General News, *Radio Xyz Online*, (February 11, 2013), <https://www.modernghana.com/news/444872/1/agyin-asare-rescuesjohn-mahama-from-the-prophecy-.html>.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Afua Hirsch, "Ghana's Celebrity Preachers Clash Over Prophecy of President's Death," *The Guardian*, 27 February, 2013

<sup>152</sup> Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues Mahama."

commands and demands and any agreements of witches and wizards and I decree that the counsel of the Lord alone concerning him that shall stand.”<sup>153</sup>

In a similar fashion, Rev. Dr. Stephen Wengham (Head Pastor of Cedar Mountain Chapel of the Assemblies of God, Ghana) also criticised Apostle Bempah’s handling of the said prophecy. He described the Apostle’s action, as a populous way, of trying to gain popularity. He asked Ghanaians to disregard the prophecy because it was not coming from God. According to him, the Bible, which dictates the manner in which Christians are to live their lives, says in Corinthians 14: 3, that a prophecy must come to edify, council and exhort; hence the criteria that must attend every prophecy.<sup>154</sup> He described the prophecy as one that creates fear and panic and thus per the scripture, it cannot be one from God. In contrasting, the Apostle’s prophecy he noted:

He [Apostle Bempah] is not the only prophet in the country. We all pray for the nation and we have not seen or sensed anything like that, so I want to tell Ghanaians on authority that it is a false prophecy and they should disregard it whether they are [members] of the NDC or NPP, because the President belongs to the whole nation<sup>155</sup>

Hence, for Rev. Wengham and Bishop Agyin Asare, Apostle Bempah’s prophecy were false, because they see no death hanging over the life of the president. Put the other way, even if the President was going to die, it has been averted by that revelation because the Lord reveal to redeem. Hence the death has been averted.

On Sunday, February 10, 2013, the same day Bishop Agyinasare challenged Apostle Bempah’s prophecy; Archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams (Founder and General

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> “President John Mahama’s Death Prophecy,” Interview, *Eye Witness News* (Accra: Citi Fm, February 13, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pMi9vvurHw>.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

Overseer of Action Faith Chapel International and the Chairman of the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches) also spoke generally about what he described as doomsday prophecies. However, it is clear from his comments that he was responding specifically to Apostle Bempah's prophecy. He taught:

The thing that you must always look out for when you see all these prophets prophesying all kinds of doom on the internet against the President...is to ask yourself, does [the Prophet] have honour, credibility, character and integrity? Where did he come from? Who trained him? How long has he been on the scene? Who laid hands on him? Whose product is he? At whose feet did he study? Who groomed him? Who covered him? Who was his teacher? Who taught him? You must be honourable first to qualify to make whatever you say that comes to pass legitimate...it is not just about prophesying<sup>156</sup>.

The Archbishop's comment disqualifies Apostle Bempah as not having a locus, to utter such prophetic declarations, even if he has indeed received such a prophecy and it even comes to pass. This was an important observation by the Archbishop as it raises the question of who qualifies to be a national or political prophet and within the Ghanaian religious sphere who qualify to be regarded as one. It also re-echoes my argument that there is too much laxity within the prophetic ministry in Ghana, which permits or is unable to check, who says what – because of 'liberalisation of the Holy Spirit gifting.'

The reactions to Apostle Bempah's prophecy and the subsequent response from him are a clear case of the growing contests among Pentecostal leaders particularly among charismatics and neo-prophet pastors. In one breath, Bishop Agyinasaare and Rev. Wengham concludes that, Apostle Bempah's prophecy is a false one. Yet, in another breath they seem to suggest that even if it is a prophecy from God, it was specifically meant for the President, so it was unethical and scripturally wrong for Apostle Bempah to have gone public

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<sup>156</sup> Agyei-Twum, "John Mahama will die this year unless."

and told the media about it. This is a contradiction. If a prophecy is false, then the talk of the best way of handling that said false prophecy does not even arise, because there was no authentic prophecy in the first place.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

From the above discussions, we have established that despite some similarities, there are some unique attributes of the current phenomenon of prophetic politics in Ghana in comparison with biblical traditions and the pre-Christian traditions of Ghana. Just like other earlier contexts, Ghanaian Pentecostalism does not distinguish between the secular and religious realms. However, there are some marked differentiations between the current political prophecies and biblical traditions and early African Pentecostal Christianity (AICs). Current Ghanaian political prophecies mainly focus on the forthtelling (predictions). While these earlier traditions focused more on forthtelling events in their society. Hence, the current phenomena can be described as an upsurge in political prophecies with a pronounced focus on foretelling events.

I have also highlighted the fact that the popularity of the current political prophecies is due to Ghana's pre-Christian orientation of spiritual causality (that things don't happen by chance and everything that takes in the physical must have already taken place in spirit world) which parallel Pentecostal theology. Therefore, this force political office holders and seekers, to seek this spiritual resource as a means, of ensuring harmonious relations with the spirit world. On the other side, the populace with the same orientation expects political leaders to have a certain form of divine acceptance. In that instance, prophetic declaration helps them to make informed judgements on which leader has a God fearing credential or is divinely favored. Additionally, because of the name tags associated with accessing similar resources

provided by priests of AIRs, most politicians have switched to Pentecostal prophets. Hence, Pentecostal political prophecies are gradually replacing *abisa* and *Akwanyire*. In the end, political prophecies are not only replacing AIRs divination to political issues, but providing a Christian alternative hitherto not available through the historic churches.

## CHAPTER THREE

### GHANA'S 4TH REPUBLICAN ELECTORAL PROPHECIES: THE CASE OF 2012 AND 2016 ELECTIONS

#### 3.1 Introduction

In Ghana, the 4<sup>th</sup> republican constitution (1992) gives an open space for elections to be held to elect an Executive President and Members of Parliament (the Legislature) once every four years. Joseph R.A Ayee has argued that “elections... are central to democracy because they provide opportunities for citizens to endorse or reject the performance of an incumbent government.”<sup>157</sup> Ayee further intimate that elections, generally, “are about public choices over who should rule, why and under which political arrangements or governmental structures.”<sup>158</sup>

Elections also create the enabling environment for people to judge the incumbent government on how they have ensured “... the proper functioning of democratic institutions and a system of checks and balances...”<sup>159</sup> during their period in office. Evidently, Ghana is one of the few countries in the West African sub-region that has witnessed a stable electoral process since its return to constitutional rule two and half decades ago. This means, the use of the term 4<sup>th</sup> republican elections typifies Ghana’s “...4<sup>th</sup> attempt at restoring democratic governance in the country.”<sup>160</sup> In Ghana today, one of the emerging religious phenomenon

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<sup>157</sup> Joseph R.A. Ayee *Introduction to the 1996 General Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Ghana*, ed. Joseph R.A. Ayee (Legon: Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, 1998), 9.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Joseph R.A. Ayee, Key Note Address to The 1996 General Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Ghana by Peter Schellschmidt (ed. Joseph R.A. Ayee, Legon: Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, 1998), viii.

<sup>160</sup> Electoral Commission of Ghana, *Preface to Election 2004: Ghana's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections* (Accra: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2005), 1.

that has become part of parliamentary and presidential elections in the 4<sup>th</sup> republic is the attempt by some prophets to predict or prophesy the outcome of the elections.

In the Ghanaian religious space, the giving of prophesy by “men of God” seems to have become an integral part of religious activity especially in the media (television and radio). On daily basis, some acclaimed prophets of God continually give prophesies regarding dangers and deaths traps that hangs around the head of people. This situation has transcended into the Ghanaian political arena. Generally, the attempt by some prophets to predict the outcome of presidential elections in Ghana has generated some kind of contest among prophets in the country. Prior to the 2016 elections and previous ones, different attempts by “men of God” or prophets especially those from the neo-prophetic churches have become a hotly debated issue in the Ghanaian media. In Ghana, the most popular among these men of God is Apostle Owusu Bempah, the founder and General Overseer of the Glorious Word Ministries International, Ghana. Others include Prophet Emmanuel Kobi and Prophet Agyeman Prempeh among many others. There are also, other acclaimed international prophet mainly from Nigeria that have attempted to prophesy the outcome of Ghanaian presidential elections.

In this chapter, the concern of the researcher is to discuss some of the prophecies that were given by some Ghanaian prophets during the 2012 and most importantly, the 2016 parliamentary and presidential elections. The aim here is to discuss in detail or give a general overview of the prophesies that flooded the media space during these two periods. It is to also, present the kind of battle and/or contestations that exists among pastors regarding electoral prophesies in Ghana. The discussion in this chapter serves as a point of departure

in examining the issues that confront the researcher in this study especially in the next chapter of this work.

### **3.2 Prophecies and Elections in Ghana**

Before a thorough discussion of prophecies and elections in Ghana, it might first, be prudent to understand the nature and functions of prophets especially tracing the background from the context of the Hebrew society. It is also important that we gain an understanding of the nature of the message that they delivered to their people at the time.

R. N. Whybray has observed that it is not possible to give a comprehensive definition of an Israelite prophet since the persons conventionally included in this category showed different kinds of character and function. Consequently, a prophet or prophets are referred to by a number of terms that in some texts are used interchangeably. However, Whybray has given us a working definition of a prophet. According to Whybray in ancient Israel prophets were men or women believed to be recipients of divine messages through audition, vision or dream, and they passed on such messages to others by means of speech or symbolic action. Their messages were addressed to individuals, particular groups of Israelites, the whole nation or even foreign powers.<sup>161</sup> Whybray further intones that the messages of the prophets were frequently not solicited and were delivered under divine compulsion. However, there were occasions when prophets were consulted by people who wished to know whether or not the prophets had a message for them from God.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> R.N. Whybray, "Prophets" in Bruce M Metzger & Michael D Coogan (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 621. <sup>180</sup> Whybray, "Prophets", 621.

Whybray has pointed out that prophets in ancient Israel had different functions. These included, among others, rebuking kings for their immoral behaviour (2 Sam.12:1-12; 1 Kings 18:15-19; 1 Kings 21:17-24); helping people to discover lost property ( 1 Sam.9:120); acting as military advisors to the king (1 Kings 22:1-28; 2 Kings 3:11-19); fomenting *coup d'états* by deposing one king and choosing and consecrating another (2 Kings 9:1-13); acting as miracle workers (2 Kings 6:1-7); healing the sick (2 Kings 5:1-14); predicting the future (1 Kings 17:1) and raising the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:8-37).<sup>162</sup>

Michael Ramsey has noted that, by and large, the prophets claimed to be the mouth-pieces of Yahweh and that they spoke under the inspiration of the Spirit of Yahweh who was held to be the source of many kinds of extraordinary strengths and skills. The prophets were conscious of a divine command to speak on Yahweh's behalf and of divine guidance as to what they should say. According to Ramsey, the prophets spoke under overwhelming divine constraint in such a way that their mind and speech were brought into relation with Yahweh's word.<sup>163</sup> As regards the message of the prophets, Ramsey indicates that it was one of the mediums of communication or speech of Yahweh to the people of Israel. The prophets claimed to speak with Yahweh's authority and this is why their utterances were frequently introduced with the formula "Thus says Yahweh." This is also why the people who edited their prophecies in writing described how the word of Yahweh came to them. In this context, according to Ramsey, the term "word of Yahweh" has special significance for the understanding of the prophetic message. Ramsey notes further that the criteria of authenticity of the word of Yahweh thus spoken were found not in the particular media of

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<sup>162</sup> Whybray, "Prophets", 621.

<sup>163</sup> Michael Ramsey, "The authority of the Bible" in Matthew Black & HH Rowley (eds.), *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (Middlesex: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1977), 2. <sup>183</sup> Ramsey, "The authority of the Bible", 1-2.

communication, whether dream or ecstasy, but in the fulfilment of the things which the prophet declared would happen. Such fulfilment was evidence that the word of God had truly come to the prophet.<sup>183</sup>

Thus, prophecy, the ability of an individual under the influence of a supernatural deity, to communicate with a supernatural being and thereby, make known the mind of that deity to an audience is a phenomenon associated with most religions. Most importantly, the historical antecedents of the Christian religion demonstrate how the office of the prophet was important in biblical times. Arguably, in the history of Jews, it was only the prophets, the priests and kings that were anointed by God. The issue of prophecies is a very common phenomenon, especially during each election year. But while some people take those prophecies with a pinch of salt, others put a lot of premium on the predictions. The involvement of the clergy or prophets in the administration of nations dates back to biblical times when the prophets of some nations had great influence in governance issues since they were the mouthpiece of God. In biblical times, prophets were God's voice on earth. They comforted, praised, and counseled, rebuked and condemned kings, priests and the people of the land.<sup>164</sup> The prophet Jeremiah for instance, executed his prophetic role in the reigns of about five kings over four decades.<sup>165</sup> Jeremiah's prophetic ministry affected, and was affected by the political milieu in and around Judah to the extent that on several occasions he was arrested, vilified and persecuted by the powers that be.

The expression "prophetic" and/or prophecies according to Asamoah-Gyadu "refers to mediatory religious functions meant to deliver forms of supernatural communication to

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<sup>164</sup> Ben Bosomprah, "PCG as God's Voice for the Nation", *Christian Messenger Vol.26 No.2*, March/April, 2012, 19.

<sup>165</sup> Internal evidence found in the book of Jeremiah shows that Jeremiah ministered as a prophet in the reigns of King Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (Jer. 1:1ff).

supplicants with the prophet as a person with recognize supernatural power and influence.”<sup>166</sup> He further states that the, “prophetic religion is a global phenomenon recognized within Pentecostalism in particular. It is founded on charisma as a religious category of extraordinary ability based on supernatural gifts.”<sup>167</sup> This corroborates Weber’s treatment of prophecies which puts a strong emphasis on the charismatic authority of people, that is, the specific and exceptional qualities with which leaders are considered to be endowed.<sup>168</sup> In Pentecostalism, such qualities are believed to be bestowed on people through the gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>189</sup> Most of the time, this gift is expressed during church services in which people feel they receive a divine message to be transmitted to the surrounding church community. In the Ghanaian case, most prophets give a lot of prophecy during church services, all-night services and also, on radio and television stations.

In Ghana, as early as January 2016, subsequent to the Election Day on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December in the same year, some men of God began making predictions about who would eventually win Election 2016. Not only that, in the run up to the 2012 generational elections, there were prophecies that also flooded the Ghanaian media regarding which presidential candidate was going to win the election. Arguably, religion has essentially played a vital role in the electoral process of Ghana since 1992. In most cases, it is the church through its representatives in the National Peace Council that has played a mediatory role among presidential candidates anytime there are disputes on the electoral results. To a very large extent, religious bodies in Ghana have exerted “...much power in the politics of self-identity and maintenance of

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<sup>166</sup> J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Channels of Prayer, Prophecy and Power: Contemporary Religion, New Media and Transformation of the Public Sphere in Africa* (Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences), 4.

<sup>167</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *Channels of Prayer, Prophecy and Power*, 5.

<sup>168</sup> Frans H. Kamsteeg, *Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile: A Case Study on Religion and Development Policy* (Lanham, Maryland & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1998), 11. <sup>189</sup> Kamsteeg, *Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile*, 11.

political power.”<sup>169</sup> This is evident in the political associations with major religious traditions and the independent role of religious traditions to ensure free, fair and transparent elections. However, over the years, the involvement of neo-Pentecostal or charismatic leadership in the politics of Ghana has been different from that of the mainline churches. Gifford, commenting on this difference argued that, “the newer churches...relates to politics very differently. They tend in particular, to think in terms of spiritual causality...” thus, most of the leadership of the charismatic churches in Ghana have limited their level of involvement to the metaphysical (spiritual), without much attention to secular issues that take place within the public sphere. As Gifford noted, “it is this tendency to spiritualize that characterizes the politics of so many of Ghana’s new churches.” Christian leaders across the denominational divide have generally stayed clear of openly supporting candidates, except for a few neo-Pentecostal and neo-prophetic ministers who tend to predict eventual winner of the polls, based on visions and revelations they claim to have received.

The ensuing sub-section recounts some of the prophetic declarations or messages delivered by some key notable prophets towards the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. Most of the predictions, though, have centered on the flag bearers of the two leading political parties – the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

### **3.2.1 Apostle Owusu Bempah and the 2012 and 2016 Elections**

In Ghana, one individual that has gained popularity for electoral prophecies is Apostle Owusu Bempah. Apostle Bempah is the founder and general overseer of the Glorious Word Ministries International in Ghana. Over the years, he has gained an accolade the “nation’s

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<sup>169</sup> Elom Dovlo, “The Role of Religious Bodies in Ghana’s Political Development Process”, *Legon Journal of the Humanities* 8.1(1995), 2.

prophet” due to his continuous prophecies on issues that affects the country both politically, economically and spiritually. Popularly known in Ghana for his prophecies about Ghana and public officials, since the late 1990s. Apostle Bempah is known for playing a major role in the massive victory President Nana Addo Danquah chalked in the 2016 elections. In the build up to the 2016 elections, the acclaimed prophet predicted on many occasions that, the then candidate Akufo Addo will be “the best President ever to rule Ghana.”<sup>170</sup> The following present both his prophecies that were altered during the last two previous elections.

### *2012 Elections*

Prior to the 2012 general elections, Apostle Owusu Bempah gave a prophecy regarding which presidential candidate or a political was going to ascend unto the seat of government in Ghana. Known for his usual end of year service prophecies, Apostle Bempah on the 31<sup>st</sup> night of December, 2011 prophesied about the outcome of the 2012 general elections. On that very night, before delivering his prophetic message, the Apostle Bempah asked his congregation whether they recall the hidden mysteries that God gave to Daniel and John. The prophet said: “Do you remember God revealed something secret to Daniel? Do you also remember that he revealed some mysteries to John? He (God) told them, write everything you are hearing because they will come to pass. We all know that 2012 is an election year. Please listen carefully, let all your attention be here. The upcoming election is coming with some war”.<sup>192</sup>

According to Apostle Bempah, God revealed to him the impending elections was going to result in war. In his prophecies, he said that God revealed to him Ghana has turned into a

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<sup>170</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGarC1DI9mA&t=735s> (accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2018). <sup>192</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

form a football and it caught fire. This is what he said, “I saw in the spirit. I saw Ghana in the form of a football. I saw that it caught fire. Then I saw that it caught fire and it fell into the sea. And when I asked the Lord the meaning of this, this is what He told me. He said that the destroyer wants war to happen in Ghana. There will be confusion during the elections and that will culminate in war. And you will see that people’s home will be burnt down. You will see that people’s cars will be burnt down with fire. People’s churches will be burnt with fire. And you will see people been shot and lying on the streets.”<sup>171</sup>

The Apostle reiterated that it was going to be very difficult for people to move out of their home even though there will be no curfew in the country. He emphasized that it is the enemy or the devil that want war to happen in Ghana. According to him, Satan together with his associates like ‘Apollyon’ ‘Abaddon’ and ‘Belial’ have planned such a calamity for Ghana. This, he said, if the nation does not spend enough time to pray about it can result in war and destruction of Ghana.<sup>194</sup> According to Apostle Bempah, people usually don’t take it serious when war is spoken about in Ghana. This, he cautioned against strongly during his prophecy and asked the church to pray and avert it. Apostle Bempah said “When we talk about war people don’t take it serious. If we don’t pray to avert it and it happens. It will affect you and me.”<sup>172</sup> So if you are a “born again” believer here, the prayer topic am giving you is that; there is war coming to Ghana. I have seen that some people have gathered together. And they have weapons. And they entered into Ghana. War! War!”<sup>173</sup> Apostle Bempah claimed that he wasn’t able to sleep well anytime he closed his eyes to sleep because he could see an impending war on the nation Ghana.

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<sup>171</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”. <sup>194</sup>

Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”

<sup>172</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”

<sup>173</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”

Directly on the 2012 elections, Apostle Bempah said that he had seen two flags with one flag in between the two. According to him, the flag in the middle was a Ghanaian national flag. However, the flag on the right belong to the then incumbent party the National Democratic Congress whereas the flag on the left was the flag of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). According to Apostle, in the vision, he saw that one of the flags has been lifted up.

This, according to him, was the flag on his left. He said “And I looked, I saw that someone has held the flag and pulled it down.” According to Apostle Bempah, it was the pulling down of the flag that triggered the misunderstanding. By interpreting this phenomenon, Apostle Bempah made it clear that if care is not taken during the elections, “the one who will win [the election] is not the one who will ascend into power.”<sup>174</sup> He emphasized that “if some people do not pray intensively and organize [themselves] well, they will win the election but they will not ascend into power.”<sup>175</sup>

He prophesied that the 2012 election was going to be “tougher and keener than any other elections organized in this country.”<sup>176</sup> In trying to put much emphasis on his prophesy, Apostle again emphasized that “If you are here and understand spiritual things, I said the flag that was on my left was that of NPP’s and the one on my right was for NDC. Everyone on earth has a political party he or she belongs. Am not going to tell you which party I belong but am going to vote. And am not going to tell you the one am going to vote for. So don’t think that am being biased. I prophesied about an election in Kumasi that NDC was going to win and yes, they won. And I prophesied sometime back that NPP was going to win and yes, they won. Last election I prophesied that NPP will win but I said something.

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<sup>174</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

<sup>175</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

<sup>176</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

But the one who understood me, will really understand it. Who will remember what I said...

I believe you don't remember."<sup>177</sup>

According to him, He said then that, "it is like Mr. Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo and John Evans Atta Mills are in a race. And Nana Addo has taken a lead but when he got to the seat, he couldn't sit on it. Then I saw that Atta Mills came to sit on the seat. After I said that and I got home, a gentleman came to ask me. So father, are you saying NDC is going to win the elections. I prophesied again that NPP will win the election but is not all things I can say here. But what I said happened and human being changed/thwarted it."<sup>178</sup>

Making more emphatic his prophecy for the 2012 elections, Apostle Bempah intoned again by asserting that:

Let me repeat it for the last time. The flag on my left is lifted up but I saw someone has held it and was trying to pull it down. The one on my left is NPP. The one on my right is NDC. The one on my left is lifted and hoisted and people were jubilating. All of sudden I saw somebody hold it and pull it down. If the person is stronger, he or she will prevail in bringing it down. If NPP is not careful, though they will win the election they cannot ascend unto the seat of government. I believe what I have said is very clear and everyone understands it. In this election, let NPP not be level headed. They think they are going to win but they will be surprise. It will be like a video to them. Like you have a key, and you have open a door but you couldn't enter and the one behind you bypass you and enters the room. That's all! That's all about the election. I believe some people are confuse.<sup>202</sup>

He emphasized though some people might see his prophecy as not a clear one, he nonetheless, was very optimistic of what he said was the exact thing that was going to happen. According to him, the election was not going to be clear and people should expect

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<sup>177</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, "December 31, 2011 Prophecies".

<sup>178</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, "December 31, 2011 Prophecies".

<sup>202</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, "December 31, 2011 Prophecies".

<sup>203</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, "December 31, 2011 Prophecies".

that. He bemoaned “it is not going to be clear. NPP will win the elections in 2012 but if they are not careful, NDC will ascend unto the seat.”<sup>203</sup>

In 2012, after the general parliamentary and presidential elections, the NPP disputed the results of the elections and sent a petition to the Supreme Court challenging the results. According to the NPP there were a lot of irregularities that marred the true results of the election. When Apostle Bempah was interviewed on one of Ghana’s popular radio station Okay FM regarding the development, the man of God indicated that he had prophesied of the NPP’s electoral victory a year ago and believes the trend of current events at the supreme court was a clear manifestation that what God said to him, has come to pass. In re-echoing his earlier prophetic declaration, the man of God again emphasized that the Lord revealed to him that “The NPP would win this election but if care isn’t taken, they wouldn’t taste power and the aftermath could plunge our nation into chaos...means Nana Addo would win this election but could be boxed out from tasting power.”<sup>179</sup>

According to him, by sending a petition to the Supreme Court to challenge the results, it means “that prophesy has come to pass because the NPP say they have proof to show they won the elections...the NDC is also claiming they won the elections but I am not the judge in Ghana. Let us allow our judges to do their work to make peace prevail.”<sup>180</sup> However, during the interview he Apostle Bempah debunked rumours that he had said that “if the NPP didn’t win the elections, then the NDC had manipulated the results”. He advised the NPP leadership to lessen the tense situation in the country by remaining calm and just focus on

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<sup>179</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

<sup>180</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

<sup>206</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, “December 31, 2011 Prophecies”.

fighting their case in court if they feel cheated. He further stated that “people are scared and stomachs are turning...even on Sundays, people don’t attend church in their numbers. People used to attend my church and had no seats to sit on in the past but you can’t compare the numbers I have now to that of the past...I am not saying this because I need somebody’s money to survive. No politician has given me a dime to feed on.”<sup>206</sup>

### *2016 Elections*

In the run up to the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections, the man of God prophesied that the candidate of the then opposition party, New Patriotic Party (NPP) Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo was going to win the presidential elections. According to the prophet, candidate Akufo Addo was appointed by God to rule Ghana at this period of the country’s history and to deliver the best for the country. “Nana Addo will be the best President ever in Ghana...mark my words, God has said that he will be the best President and it will come to pass.”<sup>181</sup> The Prophet stated that it was needless to doubt him since his past prophecies had come to pass. He argued, “At the end of the month...Pardon me to say that Nana Akufo Addo is not my family member. NPP executives don’t pay my children’s school fees. They didn’t buy the car I drive for me, neither did they buy the house I’m living in for me so why should I say these things for people to insult me. It is what I am seeing that I am saying.”<sup>208</sup>

The prophet argued that God had used him as a vessel to predict the National Democratic Congress’ (NDC) victory a few years ago.<sup>209</sup>

However, one interesting thing about Apostle Bempah’s prophecies authored by him is the conditionality clause associated with his prophecies. The conditionality here means that the

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<sup>181</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election. “Good Evening Ghana”. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t169I9USRcI&t=156s>. (accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2018). <sup>208</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

one who is receiving the prophecy must fulfil certain conditions before he or she can see the reality of that particular prophecy. For instance, the one who will ultimately suffer defeat as per the prophetic declaration can avert the situation through prayers and fasting.

Appearing on the “Good Evening Ghana” program, a political talk show hosted by the Ghanaian journalist Paul Adom Octchere on Ghana’s metro TV, Apostle Bempah reiterated his earlier prophecy about the 2016 general elections and stated emphatically that from his prophetic relationship with God it was still candidate Akufo Addo of the NPP who was going to win the 2016 presidential election. Apostle Bempah claimed that this was what <sup>209</sup> God has revealed to him and no one can thwart or change God’s decision. However, as indicated earlier, Apostle Bempah, nevertheless, again, raised the issue of the conditionality regarding the prophecy. He indicated that candidate Akufo Addo needed to do “something” or perform some rituals in order to activate the fulfilment of the prophecy. When the host of the program posed a question to him to find out whether or not such condition has been fulfilled by the Akufo Addo, Apostle Bempah responded in the affirmative and indicated that he and his prayer team had together met with candidate Akufo Addo. He intimated that they have spent some time together and prayed to avert any challenge or misfortune that will prevent or block the fulfilment of the prophecy.<sup>182</sup> In justifying the reasons for such prayers, Apostle Bempah argued from a biblical point of view by citing the experiences of Solomon and that of Jesus to substantiate his actions. According to him, though God had said Solomon was going to be a “president or a king”, it took the prophet Nathan, Zadok and Beniah to pray for him before he became a king. He argued that though sometimes God prophecies about the greatness of someone, the person must go the extra mile to make that prophesy see the light of day or become a reality.<sup>211</sup> According to him, what God tells or reveal to his prophets are spiritual

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<sup>182</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

things but before it appears in the physical it is always dependent on the individual. He argued, for instance that, the prophet Jeremiah prophesied about the number of years that the people of Israel were going to be in captivity in Babylon. Though the period of the prophecy elapsed, it didn't mean that the prophet's prophecy wasn't genuine. According to Apostle Bempah, it was Daniel that saw the delay of the prophet and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went to pray about it. Apostle Bempah argued that though God sent Angel Gabriel to bring the answer of <sup>211</sup> the prayer to Daniel. So that Daniel could perform certain rituals to get them out of captivity.<sup>183</sup> However, when the Angel of God was coming, he was prevented by the prince of Persia "(the dragon)" for twenty-one days but still Daniel never gave up. With inference from this, Owusu Bempah argued that though God can prophesy about a particular blessing on one's life, if that individual is not careful, he or she cannot see or witness the reality of that prophesy.

He disclosed during the interview that God has revealed to him that candidate Akufo Addo was going to win the election and that, though some "man of God" have come to Ghana to perform certain rituals in favor of another presidential candidate, supposedly the incumbent president at the time, those rituals or prayers were not going to work according to Apostle Bempah because no one can change what God has ordained to come to pass. Apostle Bempah postulated that the "man of God" came from Nigeria to work towards the elections, and whatever he does will not suffice or be fruitful in the favor of the person who brought him."<sup>213</sup> He argued that the power that the person brought into the country is very minimal to turn the predicted outcome of the election. According to Apostle Bempah, though in the bible Abiathar went and followed Adonijah and they all worshipped the same God, Nathan said it is not Adonijah but it was Solomon that God has chosen. In his view, God defended

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<sup>183</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

Nathan because he went to where God has chosen. In buttressing his claim, he said that God asked Samuel why he was continually seeking and intervening for Saul when He (God) has rejected him. He said, God asked Samuel to leave the camp of Saul because he has rejected him as king over Israel. Hence, God asked Samuel to go to David and anoint him as king over Israel for it is him that he (God) has chosen for his people. So, in the view of Apostle Bempah, God can reject a king or a president and chose another king or a president. “This is scriptural”<sup>184</sup>, he argued.

In the view of Apostle Bempah, it was candidate Akufo Addo that God has chosen to be president of Ghana at such an appointed time and no individual or man of God that can thwart that plan of God. When he was asked why God has rejected president Mahama, he said because “his hand was full of blood” and hence, he might have spiritual difficulties. When he was asked about the host of the program why he was making that assertion. He claimed that anyone who “has spiritual eyes” and can see in the spiritual realm, and can testify to the truth, that person could see that there is someone’s face in the clouds that covers the nation Ghana, that face is shedding tears. He argued that “God is angry”. According to Apostle Bempah “God being so good, has sent his angels to use bowls to collect the tears so that it will not drop down on the Ghanaian soil if not, there was going to be a calamity in the nation.”<sup>215</sup>

Apostle Bempah claimed that, “God said, His children are in Ghana, and He has listened to the prayers of his children and as a result of that the punishment that need to have come upon the nation as a result of the tears has been averted by the angel though the collection of the

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<sup>184</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.  
Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

tears.” He claimed that God has said, “if Ghanaians don’t know and go the wrong way against what He (God) has intended, whether Mrs. Charlotte Osei (EC Chairperson) or anyone, God will let that tears fall down on Ghana and when that happens, the darkness that Ghanaians are going to experience, and the tribulations that Ghanaians are going to go through, can never be blamed on God.”<sup>185</sup>

According to him, “Shin has hold someone’s neck, his waist, hand and leg, and God has let him stood there waiting for judgment”. According to him, “the end of that individual is going to be miserable”. Apostle Bempah argued that, most Ghanaian leaders are hypocrites and a lot more of the men of God in the country also don’t speak truth. To him, he does not understand why some men of God will question why some prophets prophesy about the country. According to him, he sees no wrong about a prophet prophesying about a nation because in the bible God used prophets to prophesy against governments. In citing 1 Corinthians 12:28, he argued that God said, “He has called some for governments, it means men of God who says such things do not know their scriptures well”. According to him, the eyes of God is upon the governance seat of every nation. Whether the person used foul means or a good means to ascend to throne of the seat of government, God knows it. However, on the Day of Judgment, that individual will answer for his or her works. The prophet claimed that the person whose face was in the cloud is a deceased Ghanaian.

When asked by the host whether when people die, they stay in the clouds and shed tears, Apostle Bempah intimated that, “there is what we call tokens and symbols”. He argued that what he was talking about is symbolic and true, and he does not want anyone to challenge him”. Apostle Bempah indicated that he is not the only man of God in the country. He said,

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<sup>185</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

“God being his witness” he could not sleep between the hours of 4am to 5am.” This is because, he argues, like a prophet Jeremiah, “he weeps for Ghana”. He claimed he is in pain because God is also in pain for Ghanaians. According to him, “something has happened in the country and he is surprised a human being could do such a thing.”<sup>186</sup> He claimed “God is angry and that, he speaks as a prophet of God. Anyone can hail insult on him and he doesn’t care because even Jesus Christ, people insulted him”.<sup>187</sup> According to him, “if Ghanaians don’t know and they make President John Dramani Mahama, the president of Ghana again, the calamities that will befall the nation will make it unbearable for people to stay in Ghana.”<sup>188</sup>

### **3.2.2 Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi and the 2016 Elections**

Apart from Apostle Owusu Bempah, other acclaimed prophets of God also uttered some prophecies which were in favor of the incumbent candidate President John Dramani Mahama. One of such prophet was Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi of the Glorious Wave Ministry International Church. Prophet Kobi, is also said to have been trained by Apostle Bempah. Prophet Kobi is known for giving out free cars to members of his church and gospel musicians as a way of supporting them. Prior to the 2016 general elections, Prophet Kobi prophesied that President John Mahama was going to win the 2016 presidential elections in the first round. Speaking at an all-night service in his church prior to the 2016 general elections, Prophet Kobi informed his congregation that God has revealed to him that the impending parliamentary and presidential elections will not extend to the second round, and that, President Mahama will secure a second term mandate. This is what he says “There will not be a second round , John Mahama will get 50 percent plus but I saw us voting till the

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<sup>186</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

<sup>187</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

<sup>188</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

next day which is 8th; which simply means some places across the country will vote the next day.”<sup>189</sup>

However, similar to the prophecy given by Apostle Bempah, prophet Kobi also intimidated that the NPP’s 2016 flag bearer Akufo Addo was under some demonic bondage which is eventually serving as a blockage to allow him ascend unto the throne or the seat of the presidency. This is what he says “If Nana wants to win the election, he knows what to do. If he doesn’t do it, President Mahama will once again snatch victory from him... Spiritually, if you look at it, Nana Addo has won the election but how to make that manifest in the physical realm is another issue.”<sup>190</sup> Prophet Badu Kobi, still on the same issue, spoke to “Restoration with Stacy”<sup>191</sup>: “There is someone in this land, I would say it on air, if the person wants to become president (of Ghana), he must purge himself. There is something holding the person from becoming a president. And I still don’t believe he would be president except he purges himself.”<sup>192</sup> He further stated that:

It is not a matter of ‘men of God’. Sometimes, we miss it. He himself must ask himself, ‘I have gone sometimes’, if I mention it, Ghanaians would know the person. I have gone more than once, I am still not winning, I do not cross the 50 percent mark. What is my problem? Sometimes [he gets] 49.9 percent but never crosses the 50 percent. The person must ask himself what is happening. Why is it that I do not cross the 50 percent? But you see, the people in his party won’t ask this question. They are only making a mistake by saying still ‘let’s get this person there. Why are they making a mistake? The person is affecting his party seriously. He would not ask himself certain questions and yet they say he is popular. Popular? It is affecting his party, it is affecting their finances.”<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Prophet Badu-Kobi, NDC also Wants to Win Election 2016 at All Costs!

<https://www.myjoyonline.com/opinion/2016/june-7th/prophet-badu-kobi-ndc-also-wants-to-win-election2016-at-all-costs.php> (accessed on 3rd March, 2018).

<sup>190</sup> Prophet Badu-Kobi, NDC also Wants to Win Election 2016 at All Costs!

<sup>191</sup> Restoration is a social television show programme hosted by Stacy Amoateng on TV3 network in Ghana.

<sup>192</sup> Prophet Badu-Kobi, NDC also Wants to Win Election 2016 at All Costs! <sup>226</sup>

Prophet Badu-Kobi, NDC also Wants to Win Election 2016 at All Costs!

He also cautioned his church to pray and avert any unforeseen challenges that might bedevil the country during the elections. According to him, he had seen that some sections of Ghanaians will not agree to the verdict of the electoral commission and this will create chaos in the country. He argued that, “We must pray because some section of Ghanaians will not understand and those who will not understand will this time create confusion.”<sup>193</sup>

### **3.2.3 Prophet Akwasi Agyemang Prempeh**

Prophet Akwasi Agyeman Prempeh is the founder and leader of the Springs of Joy Ministries International, East Legon, Accra. In recent times, he has gained a lot of popularity in the Ghanaian Christian scene due to his annual festival of grace conference which is mostly held together with some notable North American charismatic preachers such as Crefflo Dollar and Noel Jones. That program is usually held at the Accra International Conference Centre.

Prior to the 2016 parliamentary and presidential elections, Prophet Agyeman Prempeh is one of the men of God who came out vehemently to prophesy on who wins the 2016 general elections. Also, appearing on the “Good Evening Ghana” program hosted by Paul Adom Okyere, prophet Agyeman Prempeh argued that apart from President Mahama, most of the candidate seeking the office of the president were double-minded and that, they have tried to synchronize their belief in the Christian God with that of other traditional gods in their quest to obtain political power.<sup>194</sup> According to Agyeman Prempeh, this attitude of other presidential candidate made John Mahama a favorite candidate to win the 2016 presidential elections. He again emphasized the fact that since President Mahama managed to win the

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<sup>193</sup> Prophet Badu-Kobi, NDC also Wants to Win Election 2016 at All Costs!

<sup>194</sup> Prophet Akwasi Agyeman Prempeh, Assessing the Role of the Prophetic on the 2016 Elections, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXAKnFcZ2mA&t=1290s> (accessed on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2018).<sup>229</sup>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXAKnFcZ2mA&t=1290s>

2012 presidential elections just with 5 months of campaigning, it was a sign that he was highly favored by God and that he would win the 2016 elections.<sup>229</sup>

### **3.2.4 Prophecy by Emmanuel Kofi Enim**

In a report carried by the Ghanaian Times newspaper, the Founder and General Overseer of Word Victory Chapel International, Prophet Emmanuel Kofi Enim, also prophesied victory for President John Dramani Mahama in the 2016 general election.

Claiming that he had earlier prophesied that the 2012 presidential candidate for the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, would emerge as the winner in the NPP congress in the previous year, Prophet Enim said God revealed the victory of President Mahama to him through a vision and asked him to make it known to Ghanaians as a sign of God's endorsement of the President. This is what he says "in a very explicit vision, I saw the President seated on a presidential seat and clad in a white wear with an inscription '2016'. I asked God the meaning of the vision and He told me President Mahama was destined to win the 2016 general election and would be enthroned for the second time as president."<sup>195</sup> According to him, "Nothing in this world can change this prophesy. Not even the current hardship and the devilish plots masterminded by the enemies of the President can change it. President Mahama is destined to win 2016 election and it shall be so."<sup>196</sup>

According to him, the vision was not borne out of political motivation or affiliations but as a neutral voter and a son of a staunch NPP supporter, he was only blessed with the vision and shared with the church members. Prophet Enim thus argues, "I have had similar visions.

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<sup>195</sup> Prophet Predict Victory for NDC in 2016, The Ghanaian Times, <http://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/prophet-predicts-victory-for-ndc-in-2016/> (accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2018).

<sup>196</sup> Prophet Predict Victory for NDC in 2016, The Ghanaian Times.

Before this year's March 6, I prophesied that there would be a heavy downpour during the 6th March celebrations and I therefore suggested that the celebration be postponed."<sup>197</sup>

According to him, the current development and economic challenges faced by the country were all plans of God to make his power known to the President and Ghanaians and that in due time God shall bring about a great change through the President that would attract the votes of majority of Ghanaians.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has looked at the aspect of prophecies relating to parliamentary and presidential elections in Ghana with particular attention to the 2016 general elections. Ghana, has over the past twenty five years enjoyed smooth electoral transitions. One thing that has become evident in the 4<sup>th</sup> republican elections is intertwining of religion and politics even though this is not new. In this particular chapter of the study, some of the prophecies that were given by some of the acclaimed prophet of God have been highlighted. Though the prophecies discussed in this chapter do not represent all those that were given by some men of God, it was carefully selected to general overview of the issue at stake. The next chapter of this study will deal with an in-depth discussion of these prophecies on the general electoral process and examine whether or not such prophecies has any consequences on electorates and the general elections at large.

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<sup>197</sup> Prophet Predict Victory for NDC in 2016, The Ghanaian Times.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**ANALYSING THE INFLUENCE OF PROPHECIES ON GHANAIAN**  
**ELECTORATES**

**4.1 Introduction**

Ghana, since the beginning of the fourth republic has had some level of successful elections and peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another through elections at the ballot. Over the years, these elections in Ghana have been interspersed with some level of violence, misunderstanding and more recently, legal tussle. Though the tension always seems to be high, it does not degenerate into serious conflict among the political parties although some casualties are sometimes recorded. However, one phenomenon that has characterized Ghanaian presidential and parliamentary elections is the religious factor especially prophecies. These issues have been highlighted in the chapters 2 and 3 of this study. In the last two elections, especially, the 2012 and 2016 elections in Ghana, there were numerous prophets who prophesied and declared which presidential candidate was going to win the election. This, undoubtedly, generated a lot of debate in the media regarding the way and manner they were going about their prophecies. Whereas some social commentators were of the view that they are entitled to their own opinion and that they can be allowed to prophecy, others were of the view that these kind of activities has the potential to influence or instigate some confusion among the populace.

This study has aimed at looking at the influences that prophecies concerning elections in Ghana have on the electorate as well as some of the negative and/or positive consequences of this prophecies on elections in Ghana. Some of the issues analysed in chapter include, religious prophecies and its influence on the Ghanaian populace and politicians, the influence of prophecies on elections and electoral prophecies as spiritual warfare.

#### 4.2 Religious Prophecies and its Influence on the Ghanaian Populace and Politicians

In Ghana and elsewhere in Africa, the religious mediatory role played by prophets as “seers”, and people with the ability to consult the divine and thereby “bring communication from that spiritual realm into the human/physical realm”<sup>198</sup> has made them important religious functionaries. Their role as religious functionaries has become very important in the Ghanaian economy of faith due to the fact that they seem to satisfy a basic primal worldview of religion. Thus, prophets are seen as charismatic figures who functions as the Christian equivalents of traditional priests and diviners.<sup>199</sup> They have become very important due to the perceived ability in dealing with or responding to soteriological goals be it prosperity, deliverance from poverty and illness and successful wellbeing. In Ghana, when people are going through some troubles or difficulties, the need has always been to consult and infer from supernatural sources the cause of their situation. As Masamba Ma Mpolo has argued that etiology and diagnosis in the context of traditional African thought always pose the following basic question “‘who is the cause of my illness?’ In this context of Spiritual causality, organically manifested symptoms are always the result of some external aggression.”<sup>200</sup>

Though, prophetism, has in recent times posed a challenge to African Christianity, it has nonetheless, offered “hope to Christianity due to its ability to respond to soteriological and pastoral needs amidst its ‘unexplained’ nature and ‘unconventional’ operations.”<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit*, 85.

<sup>199</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit*, 86.

<sup>200</sup> Masamba ma Mpolo, “Perspective on African Pastoral Counselling”. In Masamba ma Mpolo & Wilhelmina Kalu (Eds.), *The Risks of Growth: Counselling and Pastoral Theology in the African Context* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1985), 1-17, 9.

<sup>201</sup> Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana's New Prophetism: Antecedents and Some Characteristic Features”, *Australasian Pentecostal Studies*, 1. <http://aps-journal.com/aps/index.php/APS/article/view/125/122> (accessed on 2nd June 2018)

According to Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, although many people find problems regarding the ethos and theology of contemporary Ghanaian Pentecostal prophets, they have nonetheless attracted the public to themselves.<sup>202</sup> Their service has become more appealing to the Ghanaian Christian and non-Christians alike.<sup>203</sup> In Ghana and elsewhere in Africa, many Christian and non-Christians desire to acquire information in response to their existential needs such as wealth, health, business, progress, education, marriage, promotion, foreign travels etc. With their traditional African religiosity, they turn to people with powerful spiritual connection to elicit such relevant information. However, since the society is fast changing; it is becoming more and more ‘Christianised’ and ‘civilised’, many of such people find it ‘unwholesome’ to visit the traditional sources for the requisite information. Therefore they prefer going to Christian prophets. Quayesi-Amakye has argued that “consequently, it is not surprising to meet even Muslims and other non-Christian believers in Pentecostal prophetic services.”<sup>204</sup>

The phenomenon of going to see a prophet to diagnose and find a solution to one’s problems functions within the broader concept of what is referred to as “abisa” in the Akan traditional societies. As argued by the Ghanaian Pentecostal theologian Opoku Onyinah, a central feature of religious activities among the Akan is *abisa*, divinatory consultation or the desire to know the supernatural causalities of life affairs.<sup>205</sup> Particularly, the discussion in this section and other issues raised in this study make the concept of *abisa* a paramount issue to look at, especially in looking at the reasons why politicians consult prophets or why the activities of prophets seems to have some sort of influence on politicians and the general

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<sup>202</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana's New Prophetism”, 1.

<sup>203</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana's New Prophetism”, 1.

<sup>204</sup> Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana's New Prophetism”, 1.

<sup>205</sup> Opoku Onyinah, *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Blandford: Deo Publishing, 2012), 85.

electorates in Ghana. In Akan society, it is believed that one's destiny can be known and may be altered through *abisa*.<sup>206</sup> From Akan philosophical thinking and/or the general goal of religion among the Ghanaian populace as has been discussed, success, health and prosperity are the norms of the goal of religion. Consequently, if these things becomes elusive in one's life, the people resort to religion or religious functionaries such as prophets, mallams, pastors or the okomfo to divine and provide and answers to problems, questions and perplexities of everyday experiences of life. This is the context that makes prophetism, the ability to divine and tell people the causes of their problems in life have influence on people in Ghana including politicians.

Thus, during elections in Ghana, there are both reported and unreported stories that suggest that Politicians who are contesting for parliamentary and presidential seats consult or visit prophetic churches to seek prayers and spiritual support to aid them in their quest to attain political power. Not only that, there are other numerous stories that point to the fact that candidates contesting for the presidency consult prophets and any other individuals deemed to be "spiritually powerful" to divine and inform them whether or not they will win the election that are ahead of them. For instance, during the 2016 election campaign, it emerged that the leader and founder of the Glorious Word Power Ministry International, the Apostle, Owusu Bempah has formed a prayer team who were praying for the then opposition candidate Nana Akufo Addo to prevent any misfortune that has prevented him from winning the presidential elections in Ghana. According to the prophet, Nana Akufo Addo could not win the previous elections he contested because there were some spiritual forces from his family background that were preventing him from winning the elections. Therefore, as part of the measures to pray and avert such calamity from befalling him again, a team was

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<sup>206</sup> Onyinah, *Pentecostal Exorcism*, 85.

purposely set up to pray and destroy such principalities and powers. As part of these prayer activities, the Apostle Owusu Bempah revealed during one of his interviews on Metro TV that then candidate Akufo Addo has been made to perform some sacrifices meant to avert this so called misfortune preventing him from winning the presidential elections. In line with this development, other prayer vigils were also held for the presidential candidate to specifically support with him prayers.<sup>207</sup>

Again, in another development, the founder and leader of the Ezra Church of God in Asonomanso Nkwanta in the Kwabere District of the Ashanti Region, Prophet Kofi Amponsah also declared then opposition leader Nana Akufo Addo as the winner of the 2016 elections when the presidential candidate paid a visit to his church during one of his tours in the Ashanti Region. Prophet Amponsah prayed and cursed every evil spirit that will prevent him from winning the elections. The prophet after the prayers claimed to have ordained Nana Akufo Addo as the president of Ghana by placing him three times on his spiritual seat. There were other similar events in the camp of the then incumbent president John Dramani Mahama. Some prophets such as prophet T.B Joshua of the Synagogue Church of God in Nigeria was rumoured to have come to Ghana to perform some ritual prayers in the aim of helping then President John Mahama retain his seat as the president of Ghana.<sup>208</sup> Other prophets in the country such as the Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi and others also prayed and prophesied for President John Mahama to win the elections.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election. "Good Evening Ghana". Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t169I9USRcI&t=156s>. (accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2018).

<sup>208</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election. "Good Evening Ghana".

<sup>244</sup> See chapter three for Prophet Kobi's prophecy for John Mahama.

These and other spiritual activities undertaken by presidential candidates during election period in Ghana points to the kind of influence prophetic activities have been having on presidential candidates in Ghana. These influence can be attributed to the supposed believe in the prophetic gifts as having the ability to foretell the future and specifically help individuals by giving them directions (*akwankyere*) in helping to find solutions to their problems. It also points to the deep seated religiosity of political leaders in Ghana. They more or less practising the traditional concept of *abisa* through the office of the prophet to know their fortune at the presidential polls.

#### **4.3 Prophecies and its Influence on Elections in Ghana**

Evidently, the discussion done in the previous section suggests that prophecies have influence on the Ghanaian populace and politicians in general due to their deep seated religious inclinations to the things of the supernatural. On the average, a Ghanaian, before he or she will attempt to do anything is likely to consult or seek divine intervention to either secure protection or guidance or to know the impending outcome of a particular venture or enterprise he or she wants to undertake. This attempt to seek protection, guidance, and consult to know the implications of particular action one wishes to undertake cut across the religious divide. Thus whether in Christianity, Islam or traditional religion, adherents are engage in these activities. This point to the influence prophecies have on politicians and explains the reason behind many politicians decision to have prophets who prays for them as well as seeking guidance from them.

This religious inclination towards the issues of the supernatural makes one to believe or assume that there is a possible likelihood for some to be influence by the kind of prophecies they hear about a particular issue concerning their lives. Based on these general views, there is a tendency that prophecies that are uttered by some prophets regarding elections in Ghana,

might in one way or the other, influence the voting pattern of some electorates. This is because, there is a likelihood for a member of a particular church whose leader has prophesied about a particular candidate to vote for that candidate whom his or her church leader has pronounced through a prophecy that he or she is going to win the elections. However, since these assumptions cannot be made in a vacuum, the researcher sought to test this hypothesis by distributing some questionnaires to find out whether or not elections in Ghana are influenced by prophecies. In all, the researcher administered 65 questionnaires to members of different churches, out of which 55 were received and analysed. These respondents were randomly selected from different churches. The following presents some of the findings from the respondents. The first two tables deals with the background of the respondents which include their ages and educational background. Some portions of the questionnaires were opened ended which allowed respondents to express their views on some of the issues investigated. These views are also presented in the analysis after these tables.

**Table 1: Age of Respondents**

Educational Level	Number (#)	Percentage
JHS (Junior High School)	0	0
SHS/GCE O' Level/A' Level	13	23.6
Technical/Vocational	2	3.6
Diploma Holder	16	29.1
Degree Holder	17	31
Post Graduate	7	12.7
Total	55	100

Source: Field work 2018.

The researcher found it necessary to find out the age distribution of the respondents because of his interest in which age group constitutes those who are influenced by prophecies delivered by some prophets in Ghana regarding winners of presidential elections. As shown in the table 1, 16.4% of the respondents ranged between the ages of 18 and 25, and 40%

were between the ages 26-35, 23.6% fell between ages 36 and 45 while 20% fell between the ages of 46 and above. Finding the age of the respondents gave the researcher an opportunity to know the age category of the participants who took part in the research survey.

**Table 2: Educational Attainment**

Age	Number (#)	Percentage
18-25	9	16.4
26-35	22	40
36-45	13	23.6
45- and above	11	20
Total	55	100

Source: Field work 2018

The researcher also found it necessary to know the educational level of the respondents. As shown in the table 2, 13 of the respondents representing 23.6% had their level of education up to the SHS/GCE O' level or A' level, 3.6% of the respondents also had a background in vocational or technical training. 16 of the respondents representing 29.1% were diploma holders while 17 of the respondents representing 31% had degrees, 7 of the respondents representing 12.7% also had post graduated education. This indicates those who have master's degree and/or doctorates.

**Table 3: Believe in Biblical Prophecies**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	55	100
NO	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Field work 2015

In looking at the focus of the study, the researcher found it necessary to find out whether or not respondents believe in biblical prophecies. All the 55 five respondents indicated that they believe in biblical prophecies.

**Table 4: Do prophecies influence elections?**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	18	32.7
NO	37	<b>67.3</b>
TOTAL	55	100

Source: Field work 2018

The study also sought to find out whether respondents believe in the fact that prophecies do influence the outcome of elections. From the table 4, 18 of the respondents representing 32.7% indicated yes, while 37 of the respondents representing 67.3% indicated no.

**Table 5: Registered Voters**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	51	92.7
NO	4	7.3
TOTAL	55	100

Source: Field work 2018

The study also found out how many of the respondents were registered voters. Out of the number of 55, 51 of the respondents representing 92.7% indicated they are registered voters while the remaining 4 representing 7.3% indicated they were not.

**Table 6: Voted in the 2012/2016 Elections**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	47	85.5
NO	8	14.5
TOTAL	55	100

Source: Field work 2018

Since the focus was to find out whether or not electorates were influenced by the prophecies they heard prior to election polls, the researcher thought it was necessary to also find out how many of the respondents voted during the 2012 and 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections. As shown in the table 6, 47 out of the 55 respondents representing 85.5% indicated

they voted in those two elections. However, 8 of the respondents representing 14.5% indicated that they did not vote in either of the two elections. This means that a high number of the respondents in this study voted in the two elections under study and their views will help form an overview of the issues been discussed in this study.

**Table 7: Heard any prophecy about the elections**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	49	89.1
NO	6	10.9
TOTAL	55	100

Source: Filed work 2018

Since the study has one of its aims to establish whether or not prophecies influence the voting patterns of electorates, the researcher sought to find out from the respondents whether or not they heard any prophecies concerning elections in Ghana. The aim of this question was to later found out from them if such prophecies had any influence on their voting pattern or the particular candidate they voted for during any of these two elections in Ghana. As shown in the table 7, 49 out of 55 respondents representing 89.1% indicated yes while 6 of the respondents representing 10.9% said no.

**Table 8: Votes influenced by the prophecies heard**

	Number (#)	Percentage
YES	3	5.5
NO	52	94.5
TOTAL	55	100

Based on the information in Table 8, 3 of the respondents representing 5.5% indicated their particular choice of a presidential candidate and/or voting pattern was influenced by the prophecies they heard regarding a particular candidate. However, a staggering number of 52 out of the 55 respondents indicated that they were not influenced by the prophecies they heard about a particular candidate.

#### **4.3.1 Emerging Issues from the Views of Respondents**

The views expressed by respondents point to the fact that there are were divergent views or reasons why people vote for particular presidential candidate during elections in Ghana. Though, generally, there is a perceived notion that religion has some sort of influence on the choice people make in life, the views expressed by the respondents largely indicate that this does not seem to be the case in the context of elections in Ghana. In the Table 8, 52 of the respondents representing 94.5% indicated their votes were not influenced by the prophecies they heard either on radio, television or social media. In a follow-up question to find out from respondents the factors that influenced their votes for a particular candidate during the 2012 and 2016 elections, some of respondents listed the following reasons.

According to some of the respondents, they were influenced by the “party policy direction than a prophecy” as well as the integrity of the presidential candidate. Some also disclosed that they voted on economic issues; “programmes and activities (messages) of the political parties”; “for change of government to fight corruption”; “the views and developmental projects of the party”; “messages of the candidates and the track record of the two main political parties – NDC and NPP”; “the candidates manifesto and the state of affairs in the country”; “Good leadership” the right to vote as a citizen; party affiliation; accessing a presidential candidate and his policies whether it matches with their expectations etc.

Most of the respondents indicated they do not vote based on the prophecies they have heard. As a matter of fact, one respondent opined that if religion or prophecies should be the guide for the elections, then “God should rather elect the leader” since there wouldn’t be any need for the election. According to this respondent, only “naïve people pay attention to prophecies which were gift of the Spirit subject to manipulations”. Some of the respondents also stated

that only “illiterates and uneducated people will be moved by those prophecies”. Some argued that some of the prophecies lacked credibility and hence could provide any meaningful conviction to influence their voting pattern.

The views expressed by the respondents in this study points to the fact that religious beliefs though are seen as essential, do not contribute to the factors that influence the electorates on which presidential candidate to vote for during elections in Ghana. However, the causal factors that influence the voting pattern in Ghana include economic related issues, party affiliation, manifesto of political parties and the track records of political parties in governance. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that prophecies do not influence elections in Ghana but rather, issues such as corruption do. In Ghana, the resulting economic crisis in the public morale has been made worse by the people’s perception of widespread corruption in high places in Ghana. Corruption represents a major threat to rule of law and sustainable development globally. The canker of corruption has a disproportionate, destructive impact on the poor and most vulnerable, and it is also quite simply bad for business.

In a recent University of Ghana Alumni lecture delivered by Paul Acquah at the Great Hall of the University of Ghana, the former governor of the Bank of Ghana intimated that corruption stifles economic growth, distorts competition and presents serious legal and reputational risks.<sup>209</sup> According to Acquah, it drives away investors by acting as a hidden “tax” or illegal overhead charge, thereby increasing costs for companies, and further down the chain, their customers.<sup>210</sup> He argued further that in Africa and particularly Ghana, “the narrative about development prospects has changed over the last decade, and it is now one

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<sup>209</sup> Paul Acquah, “Corruption, Culture and National Development: An Interrogation of Africa’s Experience” 2017 University of Ghana Alumni Lecture, University of Ghana, Legon, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

<sup>210</sup> Acquah, “Corruption, Culture and National Development”.

of optimism; but not without an undertone of some scepticism. Recent growth rates and economic and social indicators show impressive progress and the benefits of years of economic reforms and engagement with development partners.”<sup>211</sup> He argued further, low rankings in corruption-perception indicators in international surveys raise questions and concerns. He intimated that “corruption is a global concern. But for Ghana, it is critical issue of governance and arguably the x-factor, the toxin, in its economic performance. High corruption is a flashing signal that something is wrong and there is an injustice.”<sup>212</sup>

It is therefore not surprising that many of the respondents that the researcher contacted pointed to corruption as one of the factors that influenced their voting pattern in the two elections period under study. The researcher wishes to suggest that although in Ghana, religion and politics are, by definition, bound to be close, indeed inextricably related, religion and/or prophecies per the findings made in this study does not influence voters in Ghana. Again, one can also see that people are more interested in development project and policies that will impact their lives to vote than to rely on particular prophecy from a man of God to vote for a candidate in presidential elections. It will not be too far-fetched to suggest that Ghanaian voters are becoming more discerning regarding the issues they vote on than to rely on religion for directions.

#### **4.4 Prophecies Concerning Elections in Ghana: Views of Respondents**

It is generally accepted that Ghanaians are by their nature religious and that religion cut across many spheres of life. In Africa and particularly in Ghana, the prophetic, mostly thrive on the fears and insecurities of the public... where worldviews of mystical causality prevail.

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<sup>211</sup> Acquah, “Corruption, Culture and National Development”.

<sup>212</sup> Acquah, “Corruption, Culture and National Development”.

Prophets enjoy an expansive patronage in the religious marketplace. Therefore, one might argue that since they enjoy such an expansive following and wield much religious influence, their views will be accepted by people. What is important to note in the Ghanaian context regarding the office of the prophet is that some church members do not even want to question the authority or activities of the prophet in whose church they fellowship. Church members do not question the authority of the prophet or any revelation given by prophet whether it is in consonance with the scriptures or not. As argued by Luis Mauro Sa Martino, “religious beliefs, by contrast, claim not to be the elaboration of a person or group of individuals, but a ‘revelation’ – that is something that was ‘unveiled’ to some enabling them to see ‘it’ as ‘it’ really is. And, for some believers, revealed truth cannot be disputed by human-created-knowledge.”<sup>213</sup>

However, responses emanating from the views of respondents in this study points to the fact that in the context of elections, prophecies are not taken seriously by some electorates and hence, do not form the basis for their votes for a particular presidential candidate during elections. In this study, some of the respondents express the view that prophecies regarding presidential elections are just “fallacies”, because most of the prophets use economic hardship to predict the outcome of presidential elections in Ghana. For some respondents, some prophets by virtue of their knowledge about the economy and the outcry of people regarding the economic state of the country had an informed knowledge that a particular candidate will not win the elections and hence, towed the line of the popular view regarding the favorite candidate of the day and utter prophecies that are in favor of the popular views.

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<sup>213</sup> Luis Mauro Sa Martino, *The Mediatization of Religion: When Faith Rocks* (England: Ashgate Pub. Ltd, 2013), 32.

For these respondents, based on this perceived knowledge, prophets cannot be trusted on their views or prophecies on presidential elections in Ghana.

In similar view, another respondent was of the view that there is nothing spectacular about prophecies in determining or deciding the final results or outcome of an election in Ghana. This respondent explained further that voting is done privately and hence, one cannot claim that his or her prophecy influenced a particular voter to vote for a particular candidate through the act of prophecy. Another respondent indicated that though he believes in biblical prophecies and to some extent, believe in some prophets in Ghana he does not have any trust or belief in prophets when it comes to elections, “even if the prophet is a true prophet of God”. According to this respondents prophets should not declare such prophecies in the public domain but should however, be confidential with such prophecies.

Another respondent indicated that even though he has keen interest in prophecies, he thinks that any prophecies concerning presidential elections in Ghana should be neutral and not judgmental. Another respondent also indicated that electoral prophecies are just a mockery of the prophetic gifts in Ghana because most of the prophets are affiliates of the political parties they prophecy are going to win an election. Thus, such prophets only hide behind prophecies and try to distance themselves from the party. This view can be explained in the context of political religious alignment. Though these religious alignments are always contestable. This is because it is always an assumption based on public perception. In some cases, certain religious entities or leaders through their speeches or ideologies have been associated or aligned by the general public to be sympathizers of political parties. For example, in Ghana, Pastor Mensah Otabil of the International Central Gospel Church has been associated with the New Patriotic Party (NPP) whereas Archbishop Duncan Williams

of the Christian Action Faith Ministries or popularly known as the Action Chapel has been aligned with the National Democratic Congress (NPP). In other examples too, Apostle Owusu Bempah has been aligned with the NPP whereas Prophet Badu Kobi has been aligned with the NDC. Religious politics and alignments within Africa is complex and not straight forward. The “complexity arises, not merely because the political structure is more open and allows the participation of a larger number of players from the religious field, but also because those involved legitimate their actions from a vastly expanded range of ideologies and knowledge systems.”<sup>214</sup> Hence there are multiple considerations within the public sphere that complicate the whole phenomenon. Again, other respondents indicated that electoral prophecies are irrelevant and that religion must be separated from politics. These respondents argued that if electoral prophecies are anything to go by, then there is no sense in organizing elections in Ghana and that we should allow God to choose our presidential candidate for us as a country.

However, others were of the view that they believe in prophecies and that if a prophecy is coming from a genuine servant of God, they do not have problems with it. This view of the respondent suggest that he or she is likely to vote a presidential candidate that a prophet he or she trusts has prophesied is going to win an impending elections. Another respondent also expressed the view that anything that happens during elections has the hand of God in it and that some of these prophecies are only an indication of the dealing of God with his people. Some also expressed the view that prophecies concerning presidential elections is something to be encouraged because it motivates individuals to know the right person to vote for during an election. According to this respondent, such prophecies at times indicate or point to God

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<sup>214</sup> David Maxwell, “Catch the Cockerel before Dawn: Pentecostalism and Politics in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe,” *Journal of the International African Institute* 70, no. 2 (2000): 250.

children the kind of person God has chosen to lead the country at a particular time in history. The divergent views expressed by the respondents indicate the complex nature and understanding of political prophecies among the Ghanaian populace. These alternative views suggest one cannot claim the electoral prophecies has any meaningful role to play or in other words influences the voting pattern of electorates in Ghana during elections.

#### **4.5 The Impact of Prophecies on Presidential Elections in Ghana**

In many parts of Africa, elections have resulted in tension and violent clashes that sometimes result in civil war. Evidently, many African countries especially those within the West African region has suffered from the brutalities of electoral violence. Though, Ghana, since the beginning of the Fourth Republic has enjoyed and witnessed successful elections and smooth transfer of power from one political party to another, the country has not been immune to violent tensions. Some of these tension has resulted in some clashes though sometimes and in most cases, some of these clashes are manage by the police to prevent any escalation. However, over the last few years, religious leaders and social commentators have bemoaned the activities of some prophets regarding their prophecies on elections in Ghana and cautioned that these practices, if care is not taken can result in some level of tension and clashes.

In this study, the researcher sought to find out from respondents their views on the impact of prophecies on presidential elections in Ghana. Some of the respondents indicated that indeed political prophecies regarding presidential elections in Ghana have some kind of impact on the elections or the nation at large. Some of the views they expressed as follows: According to some respondents some of the prophecies ends up making some people lose faith in the prophetic gifts because it makes disbelieve prophecy especially when a candidate a prophet prophesied was going to win the election do not win. Generally, one would argue that this

assertion can interpreted in the context of how electoral prophecies and/or comments by pastors of some churches on political leaders is creating divisions among Christians resulting in some leaving their churches. For example, prior to the 2012 presidential elections, the former chief executive officer of the Ghana Freezone Board, Mr. Twum Boafo was reported to have left the Presbyterian Church of Ghana due to some comments made by then Moderator of the church on the NDC and its leaders especially President John Mahama at the time.<sup>215</sup>

Furthermore, what this suggests is that electoral prophecies can create division and strife among church members and relatives. For instance, there is a likelihood that members of a particular church may not belong to the same political party. However, in the case where a leader or a pastor make prophetic declaration in favor of one particular presidential candidate, it may results in the level of some dissatisfaction among some members that can affect their relations and commitment to the church. There is the need for prophets to be circumspect in their prophetic declaration regarding presidential elections to avoid such tendencies.

In addition, these prophetic declarations can also result in some level of misunderstanding and tension. In some of the prophetic messages, the prophets prophesy to the extent of claiming that if a particular candidate does not win the presidential elections, then the managers of the electoral process have “stolen the verdict” in favor of particular presidential candidate. For instance, prior to the 2016 elections, Apostle Bempah claimed that God has said, “if Ghanaians don’t know and go the wrong way against what He (God) has intended, whether Mrs. Charlotte Osei (EC Chairperson) or anyone, God will let that tears fall down

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<sup>215</sup> “Twum Boafo resigns from Presby Church”. <https://www.newsghana.com.gh/twum-boafo-resigns-frompresby-church/> (accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2018).

on Ghana and when that happens, the darkness that Ghanaians are going to experience, and the tribulations that Ghanaians are going to go through, can never be blamed on God.”<sup>216</sup>

In a country like Ghana where democratic processes are still in its formative stages, people can be psychologically influenced by such prophecies and hence, disregard the results that will be declared by the electoral commission. It therefore imperative that prophets exercise restraint and caution in the ways some of the prophetic messages are uttered in order to do away with unnecessary tension and strife that usually results during election years.

#### **4.6 Electoral Prophecies as Spiritual Warfare**

A closer examination of the content of the prophecies delivered by prophets prior to the 2012 and 2016 elections also seems to suggest that the prophecies are constructed in the context of spiritual warfare. Over the past years, scholars of Pentecostalism have argued that Pentecostals share a view of the world as the site of a spiritual war between demonic forces and God.<sup>217</sup> According to Birgit Meyer, in order to “see” what goes on behind the surface of appearance, extraordinary vision and power – the spirit of discernment and/or prophecy is required. Hence the emphasis on pastors, prophets, and believers who have the power to “see”.<sup>218</sup> Meyer further argues that as this spiritual war affects every aspect of existence, it may well be found to operate in a person’s body, but also in public spaces, institutions, or even whole countries.<sup>219</sup> Arguably, one of the aims of Pentecostals is to launch attack and deal with any demonic forces that does not allow the progress of the nation. Evidently, as

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<sup>216</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

<sup>217</sup> Birgit Meyer, “Pentecostalism and Globalization” in Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, Andre Droogers and Cornelis van der Lan (eds.), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 117. See also, Harry Englund, “Cosmopolitanism and the Devil in Malawi” *Ethnos* 69 (2004): 293- 316; Harry Englund, “Witchcraft and the Limits of Mass Mediation in Malawi”, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 13(2007): 295- 311.

<sup>218</sup> Meyer, “Pentecostalism and Globalization”, 177.

<sup>219</sup> Meyer, “Pentecostalism and Globalization”, 177.

argued by Nimi Wariboko, some Pentecostal pastors and their followers think about economic predicament of African nations in spiritualist terms.<sup>220</sup> The key to development or political freedom is therefore in intercessory prayers and deliverance (exorcism) to redeem the land. This view is implied in the understanding of political power in Africa as being supported by spiritual forces. Thus, spiritualist pastors, in the context of this study, prophets, “believe political and economic powers have both an outer form and an inner spiritual dynamic that animate their manifestation and uphold them.”<sup>221</sup> As Ogbu Kalu argues:

Pentecostals look beneath the structures of the public spheres to address the spirits that govern them. This theme opens up the possibility for examining both the overt and covert dimensions of political engagement. In Africa the sacralization of the cosmos legitimates the political space and the dynamics of the political culture. The rulers and the ruled often act from a sense of the presence and ultimateness of the spiritual forces.<sup>222</sup>

In chapter 3 of this study, it was highlighted in the prophetic declaration of Apostle Owusu Bempah that God has rejected the then incumbent President Mahama because “his hand was full of blood” and hence, he might have spiritual difficulties. The prophet claimed in his prophecy that the rejection of President Mahama is showing and resulting in the countless number of economic challenges the country was going through and if care is not taken, and he is being elected as President of the country, no one could bear the atrocities and the calamities that will befall the country. Apostle Owusu Bempah claimed “God said, His children are in Ghana, and He has listened to the prayers of his children and as a result of

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<sup>220</sup> Nimi Wariboko, “Pentecostal Paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa” in Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (eds.), *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economic of the Global Charismatic Movement* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 45

<sup>221</sup> Wariboko, “Pentecostal Paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa”, 45.

<sup>222</sup> Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 200201.

that the punishment that need to have come upon the nation as a result of the tears has been averted by the angel though the collection of the tears.<sup>223224</sup> He claimed that God has said,

if Ghanaians don't know and go the wrong way against what He (God) has intended... the darkness that Ghanaians are going to experience, and the tribulations that Ghanaians are going to go through, can never be blamed on God... if Ghanaians don't know and they make President John Dramani Mahama, the president of Ghana again, the calamities that will befall the nation will make it unbearable for people to stay in Ghana.<sup>225</sup>

Clearly, these prophecies centers on leadership failure and attributes the failure of development of the country to individual moral shortcomings. Thus, then President John Mahama have missed the mark of development because of his leadership style and behavior so the need for his removal. So, the problems that the country faces is as result of the immoral leadership. Hence the whole goal of transformation is hinged on the election of Christian believers who are upright in the Lord. However, this cannot be done on a mere human face level and need spiritual support of prayers and commitment. In this direction, prayers are said for the preferred whom it is acclaimed God has selected to take his children to the promise land. In the prophecies delivered by Apostle Owusu Bempah God had then selected the opposition leader Nana Akufo Addo and all the intercessory prayers are being said for him to enable him win the presidential polls. The following statement explains the contest of the spiritual battle further:

Concerning what my son and brother, Prophet Badu Kobi said, he was very right and was speaking the truth. I know the things he was talking about and the revelations he put out. Badu Kobi was very right that Nana Addo has to avail himself to a man of God for particular type of prayers and intercession to be done for him. That was a very true prophecy and we are working on that aspect very very well. Prayer warriors, pastors and intercessors are all tarrying in prayer for Nana Addo. Personally too, I have gone before God over this matter and doing some of the things Prophet Kobi said must be done before Nana Addo can become president. I can assure you we have broken things and this is a new Nana Addo. This new Nana Addo is spiritually sound, all curses have been broken and very soon

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<sup>223</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election. "Good Evening Ghana". Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t169I9USRcI&t=156s>. (accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2018).

<sup>224</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

<sup>225</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

we shall meet again one on one for further directions and consultations. There is no cause for alarm at all as far as the spiritual battles are concerned. Leave that aspect to me and to God. And I am telling you that God has told me Nana Addo shall be president of Ghana by the time we enter the year 2017.<sup>226</sup>

From this prophecy, according to Owusu Bempah, it is necessary for Nana Akufo Addo to become the President of Ghana because he is the chosen one. However, some spiritual forces are preventing him and that there was the need to pray and offer all the necessary rituals and sacrifices to enable him win the presidential elections. From this perspective, the researcher argues that political prophecies in Ghana are only a dramatization of politics as a spiritual battle between God and the devil. The belligerent attributes of prayer support only relate to an eschatological urgency of action needed to subvert the economic and political challenges facing the country. This is so because, from the views of the respondents, it is somewhat evident the prophecies delivered by prophets in Ghana do not influence the choice of presidential candidates they vote for during election. Issues voted on centers on political party affiliation, manifestos, corruption and party's economic policy agenda.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed the general role of the prophetic ministry and its influence on the Ghanaian populace and politicians. The chapter argued that the general influence of the prophetic religion can be unpacked within the context of the Ghanaian primal worldview. Again, the chapter has also presented the views of respondents regarding political prophecies on elections in Ghana and its influence on the Ghanaian electorates. Based on the responses from the respondents discussed in this study, the researcher can conclude in this chapter that though religion plays a key role in the lives of many Ghanaians,

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<sup>226</sup> Rev. Owusu Bempah, Akufo Addo to win 2016 Election.

religion does not influence them on the decision they make regarding the choice of the presidential candidate they vote for during presidential elections in Ghana.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary

The recent engagement of Pentecostals in the political affairs of the nation Ghana has been very phenomenal, though academically, much attention has not been paid to it. Over the years, religious groups such as the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishop Conference have been the only religious bodies to voice out their views on issues that border on politics in Ghana. Pentecostals have very often been accused of only concentrating on spiritual issues that affects their members and even tends to spiritualize national issues. However, in recent times, Pentecostals have become more diverse and pervasive in asserting their relevance in the political landscape.

Particularly, this study has dealt with the engagement of one strand of the Pentecostal movement in Ghana and its engagement with national politics. That is, the neo-prophetic churches. In Ghana, the neo-prophetic churches and/or the leaders of the neo-prophetic movement in Ghana have been engaging themselves actively in the politics of the nations by especially, trying to prophesy and predict the outcome of presidential elections. This has generated a lot of debate regarding the appropriateness of such acts. This study, however, sought to look at this prophetic phenomenon in Ghana and discuss its implications on both the electorates and the nation at large. In doing so, the study focused on some selected prophecies delivered by some well-known prophets of the neo-prophetic movement in Ghana. The study transcribed and analysed their prophetic messages on the 2012 and 2016 December elections held in Ghana. In the Ghanaian religious space, the giving of prophesy by “men of God” seems to have become an integral part of religious activity especially in the media (television and radio). The study discussed some of the prophecies that were given

by some Ghanaian prophets during the 2012 and most importantly, the 2016 parliamentary and presidential elections. These discussions served as a point of departure in examining the issues that confronted the researcher in this study.

The study also explored some of the similarities between prophetic politics in Ghana and biblical traditions and the pre-Christian traditions of Ghana. The study made discussion to the fact that just like other earlier contexts, Ghanaian Pentecostalism does not entirely distinguish between secular and religious realms. However, there are some differences between current political prophecies and biblical prophecies and early African Pentecostal Christianity. Current Ghanaian political prophecies mainly focus on the foretelling (predictions) while these earlier traditions focused more on foretelling events in their society.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The current religious political landscape of Ghana, especially in the context of political prophecies seems to have become part and parcel of the religious and political debate. Though the intertwining of religion and politics is not a novel practice in Ghana, the current nature of political prophecies demands much of scholarly attention. This study, has attempted to address some aspect of the debate and discuss how political prophecies influences elections in Ghana. The study argued that current influence of political prophecies and the attempt of political parties or presidential candidate to solicit the help of prophets for electoral fortunes can be explained in the context of spiritual causality. That, in the broader context of *abisa*, aspirants to the Ghanaian presidency have the inclination to know their fortunes due to their belief in the supernatural and its causative factors. Prophecy, thus, serves a constituting function among the Ghanaian populace because it is a means of advertising ways of accessing salvation, grace, and belonging. Prophetic forth-telling as a

religious practice further dissociates members from any environment that is deemed evil. It confronts any type of practice or behaviour that if allowed to continue would lead to multiple identity among members or lead to non-adherence to prophetic utterances which unite people under the same ethos. It eradicates any threat, be it spiritual, social or political, with an aim of restoring fellowship. It enables individuals to embrace communal ethos revealed through prophetic utterances.

On the whole, the populace with the same orientation expect political leaders to have a certain form of divine acceptance. In that, prophetic declaration and consultation helps them to make informed judgments on which leader has God fearing credentials or is divinely favoured. Hence, Pentecostal political prophecies are gradually replacing *abisa* and *akwankyere*.

Generally, this study found out that though prophecies in general are believed and accepted by most Ghanaian Christians, political prophecies in the context of elections do not influence the voting pattern of the electorates. The study found out that despite the numerous prophecies and prophetic declaration and cautions made to the general public regarding which presidential candidate they should vote, electorates rather concentrate on issues such as corruption, integrity of the leader or good leadership traits, party affiliations and other factors such as political party's economic policies to vote during elections rather than prophecies.

Second, the research also found out that the political prophecies declared by prophets regarding elections in Ghana made or can be placed within the context of spiritual warfare and the need to select a presidential candidate with good moral and leadership values. That

is to say that, in looking at the prophecies declared especially prior to the 2016 elections, the issues had to do more with fighting a spiritual battle to win the presidency than to influence electorates to vote for a particular presidential candidate.

Third, the study also found out that Ghanaian electorates are becoming more discerning in terms of what influences their voting pattern. Though religion plays a major in the decision making process in the lives of most Ghanaians, there seem to be a limited role of religion with regards to the choice of the leaders during elections.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on these findings, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

First, there must be a conscious effort on the part of religious leaders in Ghana to educate their congregants about the role of religion on the political affairs of the nation. Though religion, is important and have become part of the people's life, this study has shown that religious ideas and/or religious prophecies do not have much influence especially on the voting pattern of the electorates. Hence, there is the need for congregants to be educated to avoid sometimes, the verbal altercations and misunderstanding that ensues between people in society resulting from these electoral prophecies.

Second, essentially, this study has revealed the prominence of prophetic Pentecostalism within national affairs, particularly politics. This current development calls for the need to put in place measures that can allow to regularize the activities of the prophetic stream of Pentecostalism as an organized body to make them more relevant in terms of their contribution to the affairs of the state. This is because, this stream of Pentecostalism is growing and whether one agrees or not, they will continue to have some level of impact or

influence on the political leadership and governance of the nation. This study particularly recommends for the establishment of religious bodies such as the Christian Council of Ghana for the prophetic stream of Pentecostalism.

Third, the researcher also recommends that there should a future research dedicated to study the impact of Prophetic Pentecostalism and on the democratic development and processes of Ghana and Africa in general.

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**APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

**TOPIC**

**NEO-PROPHETISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY PRESIDENTIAL**

**ELECTIONS IN GHANA**

I am an MPhil student of the above mentioned school reading Master of Philosophy in the Study of Religions. I am conducting a research on the above mentioned topic. The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of political prophecies on presidential elections in Ghana. Please I will be glad if you can take some time off your busy schedule and answer the following questions for me.

I assure you that all the information provided will be kept confidential and used for academic purpose only.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Please tick [] your choice in the box.
- Attempt and respond to all the questions.
- Do not write your name anywhere in the questionnaire.
  
- Age: a). 18-25 [  ]    b.) 26-35 [  ]    c). 36-45 [  ]    d). 45 and above [  ]
  
- Highest level of Education
  - (a) JHS [  ]
  - (b)SHS/GCE O' level/A' level [  ]
  - (c) Middle School [  ]
  - (d)Degree Holder [  ]
  - (e) Diploma Holder [  ]
  - (f)Any other..... [  ]
  
- 1. What Church do you attend or fellowship with?
  - Pentecostal or Charismatic church [  ]
  - Orthodox Church [  ]
  - Catholic Church [  ]

2. Do you believe in biblical prophecies?

- YES            [   ]
- NO             [   ]

3. What is your view on Prophecies concerning presidential elections in Ghana?

.....

.....

.....

4. Do you think prophecies on elections influences how people vote in Ghana?

- YES            [   ]
- NO             [   ]

If yes, can you explain?

.....

If no, can you explain?

.....

5. Are you a registered voter?

- YES            [   ]
- NO             [   ]

6. Did you vote in the 2012 or 2016 elections?

- YES            [   ]
- NO             [   ]

7. Did you hear/listened to any prophecy pronouncing/declaring which presidential candidate was going to win the elections?

- YES            [   ]
- NO             [   ]

8. Can you mention the name of the prophet, if you can remember?

.....

.....

9. Through what medium did you hear about the prophecy concerning the presidential elections in 2012 and 2016?

- Television [ ]
- Radio [ ]
- Social Media [ ]
- Church gathering [ ]
- A friend [ ]
- A relative [ ]

10. Can you mention any message you heard in the prophecy?

.....  
.....

Was your vote influenced by the prophecy you heard?

- YES [ ]
- NO [ ]

11. If yes, can you explain why?

.....  
.....

12. If no, what influenced you to vote for your preferred presidential candidate?

.....  
.....  
.....

13. Do you think prophecies on presidential elections has any influence on Ghana?

- YES [ ]
- NO [ ]

14. Can you list/mention any of the influence/impact – both positive and negative?

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