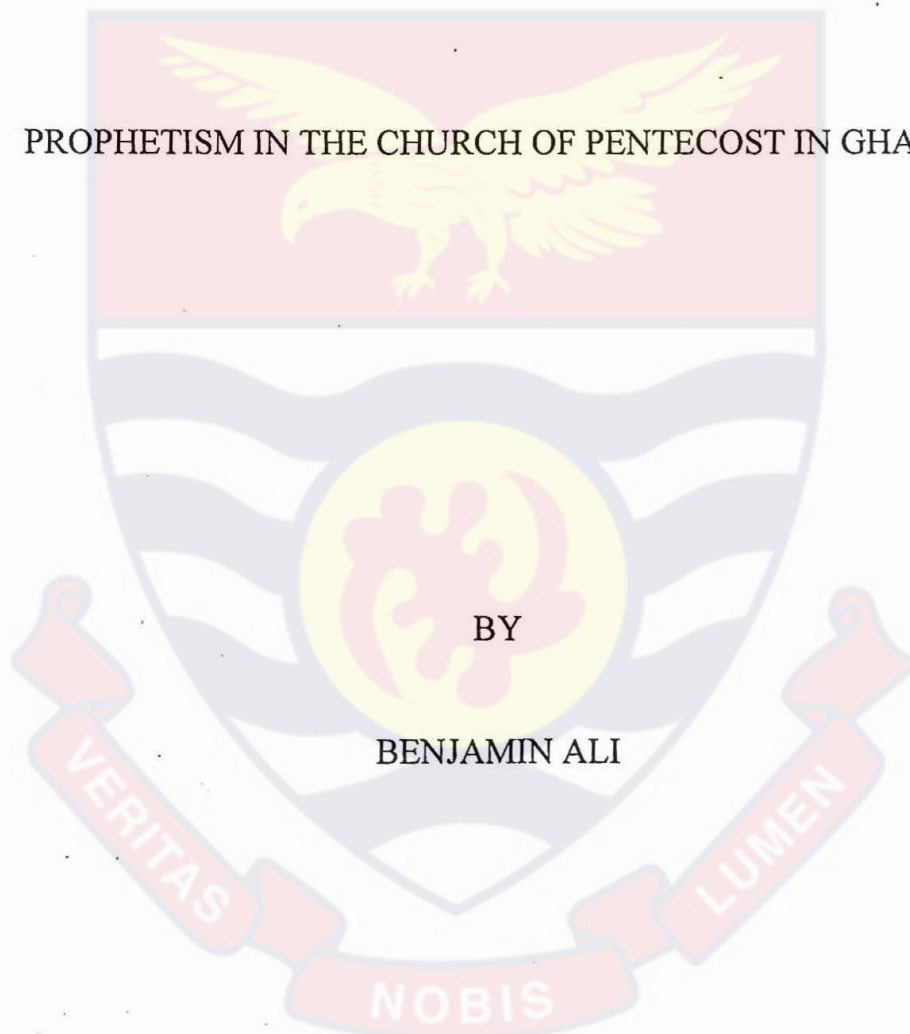


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PROPHETISM IN THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST IN GHANA



Thesis submitted to the Department of Religion and Human Values of the Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Religion and Human Values.

JULY, 2014

DECLARATION**Candidate's declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

The Church of Pentecost (CoP), in Ghana employs prophecy in contemporary times to appoint people to higher offices, transfer Church workers, and give direction generally. These functions have sometimes caused hatred, divisions, envy, insecurity, embarrassment and social incoherence due to its unchallenged powerful presence. Notwithstanding, prophecy identified and nominated Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Apostle M. K. Ntummy as Chairmen in 1988 and 1998 respectively averting states of confusion that would have ensued in the Church. There is therefore a debate as to whether to use or not to use prophecy.

Since the inception of the Apostolic Church (AC), the CoP's precursor, there has been a shift in the understanding of prophecy. Initially, prophecy was acknowledged as divine in origin and infallible. Currently prophecy is viewed as a divinely inspired message but that it passes through the theological lenses of the one speaking. To forestall confusion, prophets are thus graded to determine who can or cannot give direction to the Church via prophecy.

Phenomenological methods were employed to investigate the merits and demerits of using prophecy in the CoP. Observations, interviews, as well as the use of archival material generated by the CoP and its American and British antecedents were used to arrive at conclusions.

Even though prophetic guidance has been helpful to the CoP, this work concludes that different methods could also be employed rather than making a given method the norm. Finally, the CoP, as a denomination needs to choose a governmental system most satisfactory and realistic as the occasion demands.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Mrs. Mary Ali, and my children Joshua Ali, Deborah Ali, Priscilla Ali, Dan Ali, Samson Ali and Abigail Ali.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

This study focuses on the operation of prophecy and prophets in the Church of Pentecost (CoP) in Ghana. The CoP's antecedents are the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) and the Apostolic Church (AC) of January 1916, the first organized Pentecostal movement in Great Britain (Worsfold, 1991). The Apostolic Faith Church that dated from 1912 was the first Apostolic denomination to teach that New Testament offices of apostles and prophets were being restored to the modern church (Worsfold, 1991). William Oliver Hutchinson, around whose leadership the AFC grew, held the view that the New Testament Church was "not governed by a democracy but rather by a theocracy, or to be more definitive, a Christocracy" (Worsfold, 1991, p. 86).

The Church therefore accepted and allowed prophecy to provide motivation and direction for the lives of individuals as well as the denomination as a whole (Worsfold, 1991). In 1911 Daniel Powell Williams became a minister of the AFC under W. O. Hutchinson. In 1914 prophecy located D. P. Williams as an apostle in the AFC and he was ordained as such immediately by Hutchinson to oversee AFC congregations in Wales (Worsfold, 1991). However, on January 8, 1916, Williams and a number of Welsh congregations seceded to form the Apostolic Church (AC) (Worsfold,

1991). The Church of Pentecost in Ghana, which had its roots from the Apostolic Faith Church, embraced the practice of Prophetism from the Apostolic Faith Church through the Apostolic Church, its immediate predecessor.

Prophecy, in the CoP is understood to be the reception and subsequent transmission of “divinely inspired message to edify, exhort and comfort” a gathering of God’s people (*The Church of Pentecost Constitution*, 2005 p. 39). In the light of this understanding prophecy has become a very important component in the Church. In the use of prophecy the CoP makes a distinction between prophecy as a gift available to all Christians, and prophecy as a ministry and limited only to the ordained prophets. One is recognized as an ordained prophet if his prophetic gift is recognized by the Church’s leadership (the Executive Council), and at a gathering of the Church, such a person is prayed for by laying on of hands by the Apostles and Prophets of the Church. Lay prophets do not go through the act of ordination. Females are permitted to operate in the prophetic gift yet are not ordained like their male counterparts, a case of gender imbalance in the Church. The Church believes that leadership is male, and for that matter women are not called into full time ministry. Since one cannot be a prophet in the CoP if that one is not in the full-time ministry, women are therefore, not subjects of ordinations into the prophetic ministry.

For the African, the good life has to do with good health, long life, increase in crops and goods, having many children, and being successful in all areas of life. Failure to realize the above aspirations is considered an

aberration. In order to unravel the mysteries behind their inability to enjoy protection, healing and all that is needed, the African has to sometimes seek answers from some 'powerful people' – traditional priests and sorcerers, and in the Christian context, the prophets. It is with this understanding that prophecy is very important in the CoP. The practice of inquiring of the Lord has biblical antecedents. Rebekah inquired of the Lord concerning her children's future (Genesis 25:20-23). Again, Saul went to the prophet Samuel to enquire about his father's lost donkeys (1 Samuel 9:3-6).

The CoP in Ghana forms a distinct denomination within Ghanaian Pentecostalism on account of its practice of "divine government." The Church believes that God guides and directs her through prophecy. To buttress the importance and use of prophecy in the CoP the researcher quotes here a prophecy delivered by Apostle Opoku Onyinah (as at this work, the Chairman of the CoP) during a meeting of the Executive Council Members of the Church on September 4, 1991. The message went thus:

I am the Lord who does not change. I am the Lord who has set the administration of the whole world, and out of this I have chosen my Church to be the perfect example of the Human race to the whole world. Out of my good will and my Perfect will, I have chosen some people of the Church to Lead and direct. So it is I who have chosen people and placed them in different offices, and out of this I

have chosen you as the leaders of the Church of Pentecost, so my eyes are upon you, and I confirm to you that I do nothing without Revealing it to my prophets and therefore I have set prophets In my Church to reveal and give directives.

The prominence, importance, and challenges connected with the practice of prophecy in the CoP have become issues of concern to many including leaders in the Church.

For the past ten years this researcher has observed that in the CoP the subject of prophecy with its attendant problems of hatred, divisions, disaffections, and others has come into sharp focus. Prophetism in the CoP in Ghana has been used for appointment of people to church offices and Church leadership is divided concerning this practice. In the year 1988 prophecy was used to identify and nominate Prophet M. K. Yeboah to the position of Chairman, the highest office in the Church. In 1993, prophecy through Prophet J. K. Ennuhm again identified Prophet M. K. Yeboah as having been nominated Chairman of the Church for another five-year term. This time, the prophetic directive was fraught with lobbying. On March 19, 1993 at the Koforidua Central Tabernacle Chapel in the Eastern Region of Ghana the prophet who gave the directive called on ministers present in a meeting including this researcher to send a memo to the General Council (the highest decision making body in the CoP) urging the council to endorse the nomination of Prophet M. K. Yeboah for a second term of five years. This, the

researcher found problematic. It would seem that God needed human assistance to accomplish His purposes.

In 1998 Apostle M. K. Ntumy, was nominated through prophecy to the office of Chairman of the CoP. Again, in 2008, prophecy identified and nominated a candidate to the position of Chairman. This prophecy, however, was not endorsed by the Electoral College (a body of apostles and prophets, directors of ministries and Area Heads) of the Church as the Church's constitution demanded. Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah was eventually elected as Chairman without recourse to directive prophecy. In 2013, Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah was again elected to the highest office of Chairman of the CoP without the use of prophecy. The use of prophecy in the CoP to call persons to the top three offices in the Church, Chairman, General Secretary and International Missions Director have been fraught with serious challenges that need solution. Some in the CoP, therefore, hold that the use of prophecy to appoint people to higher offices or to transfer Church workers to various stations should be discouraged. The reason for this, they argue is that sometimes people prophesied their favorites into enviable positions. The use of directive prophecy, therefore, has sometimes led to hatred, division, envy, insecurity, disaffection, and the like. This usually happened whether the ones nominated through prophecies won the seats or lost them.

As early as 1939 the leaders of the Apostolic Church had agreed to discontinue the practice of prophets singling out people in public meetings and pronouncing them as called to certain church positions. Instead potential

leaders were to be 'handled more carefully by the apostles in future regarding their definite natural abilities' (*Minutes of the Apostolic Church Ministry Committee* held at Cardiff, 22 January to 25th January 1935, p. 12, Apostolic Church Headquarters in I. M. Randall (1999, p. 223).

In spite of this earlier position, the CoP that mirrored its predecessor, the Apostolic Church (AC), continued to use prophecy to make callings to positions in the Church. Another concern is that most practicing Christians believe that scripture is reliable while prophecies, though believed to be inspirational by the CoP were fallible and therefore could be annulled by human failure. There is also the problem as to how to support the authority of contemporary prophetic pronouncements when faced with bizarre proclamations (that is, where some messages do not conform to human reason).

The giving out of prophetic utterances using the first person singular, as if they were speaking God's own words had also earlier been discouraged by Gee, (1932), one of the early Pentecostal leaders in the United Kingdom who was associated with the Apostolic Church (AC). When prophecy is spoken forth in this manner, it makes it very difficult for the utterance to be ignored since leadership may fear to ignore God's very words.

In the CoP, it has been observed that some prophets (not recognized as such by the leadership), especially those in the prayer camps (residential healing homes where people go for prayer) and prayer centres (places where residential facilities are not available), in attempting to predict the destinies of

people, tended to accuse people's family members as well as close friends as being obstacles to their attainment of the good life. This state of affairs has led to hatred, divisions and mistrust, thus leading to social incoherence. For that reason some prophetic practices are not endorsed by the CoP leadership.

In the CoP, prophets are often believed to reveal the wishes of God and or hindrances to the Church and people's progress in life and then prescribe solutions to the hindrances as well as the way forward. The Church's practice of Prophetism has led to three prophetic types that are examined later in this work. In spite of the benefits of prophecy, it is also undeniably one of the most problematic charismas of the adherents of the CoP. Can Prophetism be practiced in a way as to avoid or curb schisms in the church? This question is answered in this study.

Statement of the Problem

The CoP exhibits divine government (direction) as a consequence of Prophetism. The Church relies on prophetic utterances to call people to Church offices, transfer personnel, make people to conform to certain directions, transform their ways, and sometimes prophecy is used to formulate doctrine.

Different types of prophets are recognized in the Church. The act of ordination gives a prophet an exalted position within the Church. The leadership therefore holds that only ordained prophets can give directive prophecies (that is, prophecies that give directions to individuals, the church, or its leadership). Thus, in the Church directive prophecy is the preserve of the

ordained prophets. This, a section of the Church seriously detests, arguing that it has no biblical basis. The contention thus generated can only adversely affect, and certainly threaten, the unity of the Church. Some leaders in the Church hold that consulting the prophet concerning callings to higher offices as well as one's life is not a New Testament practice. For these and many other reasons, others in the Church argue that the use of directive prophecy should be discouraged, if not curtailed. In this work the researcher attempts to delve deep into these issues and make suggestions out of his findings.

In spite of the acceptance of the prophetic gift, there has not been unanimous agreement in the CoP concerning the functions of the prophet because the role of the Prophet has not assumed clarity. The functioning of prophecy sometimes leads to divisions, hatred, envy, insecurity, embarrassment and social incoherence due to its unchallenged powerful presence. In attempts to curb rifts in the practice of the prophetic, leadership is saddled with finding amicable settlement. This is also not without its own challenges. There is therefore the need to seek a reconcilable balance to this state of affairs. Finally, both the Church leadership and the prophet himself need to be clear as to the prophet's function and place in the Church.

The researcher interviewed key leaders in the CoP concerning the challenges posed by the practice of Prophetism. This study therefore examined the challenges posed by the practice of directive prophecy and appraises its practice in the Church noting probable influences from theological precursors. The study also examined contemporary thinking of the present-day practice

noting its effect on Church and society and offering helpful solutions to the problem. Prophetic practices in the Church could impact the Church and society.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out how prophecy can be used in the appointment of leaders in the CoP.
2. To examine the role of the prophetic ministry in the CoP.
3. To examine the merits connected with the use of prophecy in the Church.
4. To scrutinize carefully the demerits of using prophecy in appointing leaders and suggesting solutions to challenges posed by its use.
5. To investigate how prophecy can work harmoniously with other gifts for church growth in the CoP.
6. To provide 'in-service' or 'up-grading' training to Christian ministers who's previous pastoral as well as professional training had not been at this level of understanding of prophecy.

Research Questions

In the light of the above, the following research questions are examined:

1. What is the concept of prophecy in the CoP?

2. Should prophecy be relied upon every time for direction in the calling, and nomination to different offices, as well as in the transfer of people to different places in the church?
3. What is the relation between a Prophet in the CoP and a prophet in biblical times? How did the prophet function and what was prophecy's effect on the organizational structure and the running of the churches in the biblical accounts?
4. Who make up the CoP? How is the Church organized, nurtured, controlled, and maintained through prophetic practices?

Motivation for the Study:

First, there is biblical evidence that prophets played very significant roles in the scheme of things, in the choice of leaders (1 Samuel 9:15-17; 9:27-10:13), as well as giving directions to certain biblical leaders (2 Samuel 2:1). The choices of Saul and David respectively into kingship in Israel were given by prophetic words to Samuel the prophet (1 Samuel 9:15-17; 10:1). In the New Testament, the calling of Paul and Barnabas to take up mission's assignment was given through a prophecy (Acts 13:1-3).

Again, according to Robeck (1988, pp. 735-737) the early church "was no stranger to prophetic activity," room was made for prophets to work within the church's structure at local and national levels. The question is whether that position is to be recognized in today's church. Another objective of this work therefore is the necessity to explore and gain the best and most illuminating sources for understanding contemporary prophecy. What is the position of

prophecy/prophet in the CoP and modern Christianity in view of the closed canon of scripture?

The CoP in Ghana forms about a fifth of Ghanaian Christians (*National Church Survey*, 1989, p. 32). Prophetism in this group has not attracted sufficient scholarly attention. Incidentally, there is little comprehensive critical academic discussion of the concept of prophecy in the Church in Ghana. Prophetism in such a large group could have a telling effect on Ghanaian Christianity if not handled with utmost care. This work will also provide basic training for Christian leaders and individuals to help them study, understand the place of contemporary prophecy and apply the findings to their own lives and ministries.

Therefore, this study explores, describes, explains, and examines the CoP's understanding of the function of the prophetic and its effect on the organizational structure and operations of the Church. The work therefore, provides examination of the subject to fill a gap in our understanding of the phenomenon. Clarification or illumination will be of benefit to the church and society.

Justification of the Study

Any interest in the actual practice of Prophetism in Ghana cannot ignore the large numbers of people who attach themselves to the CoP that forms approximately 8 percent of the total Ghanaian population of 24,658,823 (2010 Population and Housing Census, Final Results, Ghana Statistical Service

May 2012). Some Church members in the CoP hold that the way spiritual gifts including prophecy are being handled in the Church is stifling spirituality. This has led to many young men and women leaving the Church to start their independent works. The findings of this research will be helpful to those in the Church who are misunderstanding the position of the leadership, as well as inform the leadership as to what course to take in tactfully handling the subject of prophecy. The findings will also inform the Ghanaian as well as the universal church.

Despite the problems connected with the practice of prophecy in the CoP in Ghana, there seems to be little scholarly work done on Prophetism in the Church directly. Prophetism, being very strong in Ghana's new Christianity highlights the ministry of the prophet as a key religious functionary within contemporary forms of indigenous Pentecostalism. This new manifestation of Prophetism is remarkable considering what C. G. Baeta (1962/2004, xiii) wrote about four decades ago:

Prophetism appears to me to be a perennial phenomenon of African life, and the basic operative element in it seems to be personal in character. ...

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. ...

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.

Baeta's work published in 1962, on *Prophetism in Ghana* stands out as one of the main comprehensive work that has been done on Prophetism in Ghana. Baeta's work concentrated on a study of "Spiritual Churches in Ghana" (Baeta, 1962/2004). In the book, he discusses the calling, training and practice of the prophet that the "Spiritual Churches" - The Church of the Twelve Apostles, The Musama Disco Christo Church, Memeneda Gyidifo (The Saviour Church), The Apostles' Revelation Society, the Prayer and Healing Group of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, African Faith Tabernacle Congregation, The Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim Society and the Church of the Lord (Aladura) presented.

Baeta was right in noting that Prophetism is a perennial phenomenon. Its practice however has caused problems in the past in the CoP and continues to be a challenge in the contemporary Church in Ghana. Baeta's work was produced over four decades ago and though few have done some work in the area of Prophetism in Ghana, its practice needs to be revisited in the light of recent innovations in the functioning and practice of Prophetism in Ghana generally and in the CoP particularly. The CoP is chosen because Prophetism seems to be very prominent in the Church. Again, the Church seems to demonstrate the differences and similarities in the practice of Prophetism within Ghanaian Pentecostalism.

According to the teaching of Paul, prophecy should be the most sought for gift in the Church (1 Corinthians 14:1). It is worth giving prophecy in the CoP a more prominent place in academic research for the following reasons: Firstly, in the preface to Baeta's *Prophetism in Ghana* it is stated that: Baeta's work leaves out such groups such as the Apostolic Church of Ghana and its splinter-body the Ghana Apostolic Church (CoP). Secondly, the complexity of the Pentecostal movement calls for some understanding of the various doctrines and practices within the CoP from which many neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana originated. Again, Pentecostalism has made inroads into Protestant churches as well as the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana. Therefore this research is worth pursuing because any problem in the CoP in Ghana will have a spillover effect on Ghanaian Christianity and even worldwide since the church now has branches in over 85 nations in the world. In 1993 the CoP was listed, in terms of church attendance, as the single largest Protestant church in Ghana (Ghana Evangelism Committee Report, 1993). In 2012, the CoP claimed a membership of 1,938,411 and 12,802 new congregations (2012, CoP *Executive Summary Reports*, p. 245). Prophetism in the CoP needs to be studied carefully due to the fact that even though she had her roots in indigenous initiatives, she quickly became linked with foreign Pentecostal missions, the AFC and the AC. This has brought about a clash between the western and African worldviews in the operation of the prophetic gift. There is therefore the need to seek a reconcilable balance to this state of affairs.

Literature Review

The researcher reviewed relevant literature on the background to understanding prophecy, the place of contemporary prophecy, different conceptions of prophecy, as well as categories of prophets and prophecies. This will aid the researcher to evaluate what is happening in the CoP. A number of works of a host of scholars who have written on the subject of prophecy have been reviewed.

Modern scholars approach the New Testament from diverse perspectives and arrive at different conclusions. Using a modern redaction critical approach, scholars, including Packer (1984) identify biblical prophecy with contemporary preaching. There are therefore lively debates as to the nature of biblical prophecy and its significance for today (Turner, 1996). Packer sees no distinction between biblical prophecy and contemporary preaching, for he wrote:

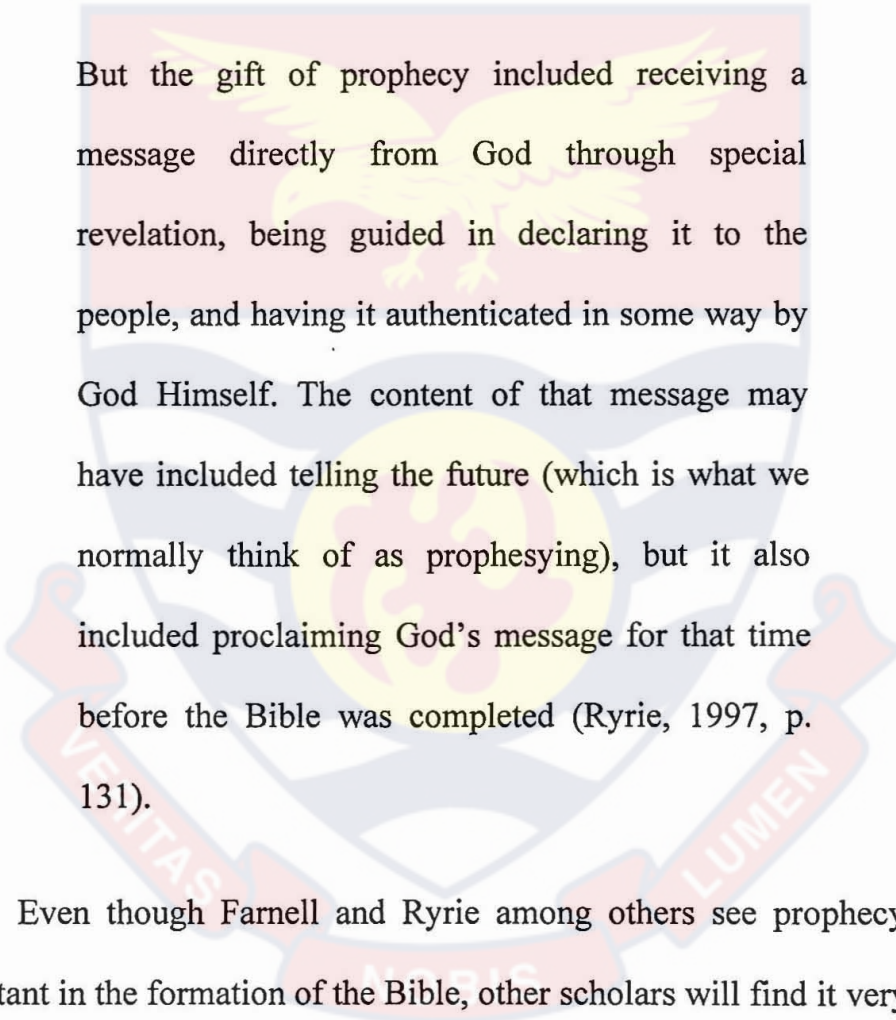
The essence of prophetic ministry was foretelling God's present word to his people, and this regularly meant application of revealed truth rather than augmentation of it. As Old Testament prophets preached the law and recalled Israel to face God's covenant claim on their obedience ... so it appears that New Testament prophets preached the gospel ... for conversion, edification and encouragement ... By parity of reasoning, therefore, any verbal

enforcement of biblical teaching as it applies to one's present hearers may probably be called prophecy today, for that in truth is what it is (Packer, 1984, p. 215).

Packer's position depends on his perception of prophecy. Other scholars perceive prophecy to be concerned with giving of predictions, criticizing social issues, interpretation of the *mantis*, announcements at games, while other scholars perceive prophecy as proclaiming immediately recent information. Although preaching and prophesying are both vocal gifts, they are not interchangeable since they are differentiated in the New Testament (I Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11). Prophecy and teaching are differentiated in the list of the *charismata* in (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29), and of teaching from revelation in 1 Corinthians 14:26. This may suggest that prophecy is not preaching, teaching, or in any direct sense, charismatic exegesis (Dunn, 1975). Prophecy, teaching, and preaching are different in content and audience. 'Prophecy proclaims immediately recent revelation: preaching, the revelation of the past' (Best, 1959, pp. 129-150; Forbes, 1995, p. 275). Romans 12: 6-7 reads:

According to the grace given us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the standards of one's faith; if service, in service; if teaching, in teaching; . . .

So from the above passage two offices are mentioned. The one with the gift of prophecy is to prophesy, and the teacher is to teach. It thus shows that prophecy and teaching are separate distinct ministries. Farnell (1992) and Ryrie (1965) hold that the gift of prophecy was needed to establish the New Testament Church and that the gift ceased when the Bible was completed. Ryrie has this to say concerning the prophetic gift:

The logo of the University of Cape Coast is a watermark in the background. It features a shield with a yellow eagle at the top, a yellow sun in the center, and a red banner at the bottom with the Latin motto 'VERITAS NOBIS LUMEN'.

But the gift of prophecy included receiving a message directly from God through special revelation, being guided in declaring it to the people, and having it authenticated in some way by God Himself. The content of that message may have included telling the future (which is what we normally think of as prophesying), but it also included proclaiming God's message for that time before the Bible was completed (Ryrie, 1997, p. 131).

Even though Farnell and Ryrie among others see prophecy as very important in the formation of the Bible, other scholars will find it very difficult to accept that prophecy has ceased. Farnell's position, as observed by J. Penny (1997) rests on the following reasons:

Farnell believed that the prophets of the Old Testament 'proclaimed God's message and will to the people of God' (Farnell, 1992, p. 393). Again, Farnell intimated that Old Testament prophets 'were recipients of revelations

directly from Yahweh which they proclaimed to the nation' (Farnell, 1992, p. 406). For Farnell, Old Testament prophecy was always authoritative, the testing of both the prophets and their prophecies were absolute, either true or false (Farnell, 1992). Farnell also argued that prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments were foundational and linked to the establishment of the biblical canon (Farnell, 1992). Farnell, like Ryrie and others therefore hold that prophetic claims after Malachi and after the 'formative, revelatory period of the early church' are to be rejected as false prophecies or revelations (Farnell, 1992, pp. 389, 410).

Farnell's notion of biblical prophecy needs to be critically examined. In the first place his analysis seems too simplistic because the canonical prophets are not the only prophets in the Old Testament. Second, it seems that Deuteronomy 18:14-22 sets a tone for the Mosaic origin of the prophetic office in Israel (relating prophecy to the Sinai covenant). But examination of Genesis 20:7 indicates that Abraham is called a prophet and this notion of Abraham being called a prophet falls outside the usual role of what some scholars term 'covenant mediator' (Clements, 1965/1975 p. 23). It needs to be clarified in this work that prophecy does not have the same meaning throughout the Bible. There is no indication in Ephesians 4: 11-13 that prophesying will cease before the perfection of the Church. J. Blenkinsopp quotes Josephus (born 37/8 AD) as also intimating that the exact succession of prophets of the caliber of the earlier biblical ones were non-existent (Clements, 1965/1975). This is to say that genuine biblical prophecy has ceased. This notion has been carried forward to recent times (Gentile, 1999, p. 131). Cessationists (those who

believe that prophecy is not for today) use 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 as a proof text that genuine gifts of the Spirit including prophecy had ceased when the biblical canon was completed (Gentile, 1999/2000). However, some Bible scholars of the 19th century have shown that the disappearance of the gifts from the church of Jesus Christ was due to lukewarmness and lethargy (Ruthven, 1993; Carson, 1984).

The Bible teaches that when the Holy Spirit comes, he will guide believers (John 15:26; Romans 8:14-16). The Holy Spirit gives gifts one of which is prophecy as in 1 Corinthians 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 14:1ff. One means of giving specific guidance is prophecy. Farnell's position does not explain the place of contemporary prophecy.

Another group of scholars among whom is Grudem (1998) holds that prophecy is for today but believe that it is 'speaking merely human words to report something God brings to mind' (Grudem, chapter 4). Grudem's conclusions, though very insightful, do not help us resolve the problems connected with prophetic practices in the CoP. For example, when does the believer accept a word as coming from God and another coming from the human? Again, Grudem's conclusions fail to note that in Numbers 11:16-30 Yahweh distributed some of Moses' spirit upon seventy elders of Israel leading them to prophesy, probably once. This phenomenon is not recorded, yet it is attributed to God's Spirit giving messages to them for his people. Thus even in the Old Testament there were different types of prophets, canonical and non-canonical. Nevertheless, the messages of both classes of prophets

were considered prophetic all the same. Thus, Grudem's perception of some prophecies coming from God and others coming from the human mind is rather problematic.

Grudem has also failed to note that there are different classes and ranks of prophets in the New Testament with different levels of authority. First, mention is made of the prophet like unto Moses or the prophet that Christians referred to as Jesus Christ (John 4:19, 28-29; 6:13-14; Acts 7:37, 51-53). Jesus Christ stood in a class of his own and no other person in the New Testament stood in that rank. Second, is the foundational apostles/prophets, one of them being Paul who established New Testament doctrine (Ephesians 2:20). This class of prophets does not exist today. Third, there are the non-foundational prophets in the New Testament who did not have the same level of authority as the foundational prophets. Examples in the New Testament are Agabus (Acts 11:27-30), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32) as well as the Corinthian prophets (1 Corinthians 14:26-32). Nothing is said about their formulating New Testament doctrine. Most biblical scholars are in agreement that in 1 Corinthians 12:1-4 Paul was talking about his own out of the body experience during which he had visions and revelations (signs of a prophetic kind of ministry). The Scriptures also confirm that Paul had some of his teaching by revelation (1 Corinthians 11:23-34; 15:1-4; Galatians 2:1-2).

Grudem (1982) has noted that New Testament apostles are the equivalent of the Old Testament prophets, whereas the New Testament prophets do not have the same status as the Old Testament prophets. However,

he noted that the foundational apostles/prophets of Ephesians 2:20 are the counterparts of the canonical Old Testament prophets, because for him these foundational apostles/prophets formulated doctrine which became Scripture. In order to defend contemporary prophecy he intimated there were two forms of New Testament prophecy: authoritative or apostolic prophecy which ceased within the first generation of the New Testament church and a less authoritative type of prophecy indicated in 1 Corinthians (Grudem, 1999).

F. D. Farnell published a rejoinder to Grudem's position in an article titled, "Is the gift of prophecy for today?" This appeared in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149/595 July-September 1992), 277-303 and three subsequent editions. In those publications Farnell denounces the two-level prophetic expression and attempted to show that all prophecy ceased at the close of the apostolic age. Grudem and Farnell did very well in attempting to protect Scripture. J. Ruthven has done a serious blow to the cessationist position in a number of publications including (Ruthven, 1993) and his article, 10/2 (2002): 28-43 that the issue needs no further treatment here.

The fourth and last of the class of prophets have to do with present day prophets who together with the other ministries – apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers are for the maturing of the body of Christ (the church – Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-23). The context of the passage in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-23 on not despising prophecy ties in on the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, implying that prophecy is a continuing phenomenon. Into this class the CoP holds that their prophets belong. The prophets in the CoP do

not add foundational doctrines to the Scriptures. In fact, the Scriptures regulate their prophecies. They are to edify, comfort and exhort the body of believers (*CoP Constitution*).

Hill (1991) a theologian and sociologist, has explored the prophetic ministry in the Bible and the church today. In his book *Prophecy, Past and Present*, he sought to convince the Christian community to receive the present Pentecostal phenomenon as the “New” word of God, “Thus says the Lord to this generation...!” Clifford’s work deals with prophecy, generally, its definition, characteristics of a prophet/prophecy in the early church, and prophecy today.

The works of Sundkler (1961), and Baeta (1962), concentrate mainly on the “Spiritual”, “Zionist churches” or “prophet healing” and the Charismatic churches, ignoring another church type, the CoP. There are some other works like those of Kingsley Larbi and Opoku Onyinah that deal briefly with historical development of Prophetism in Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in Ghana (Larbi, 2001; Onyinah, 2002).

Even though both Larbi and Onyinah briefly mentioned Prophetism in the Pentecostal denominations, dealing with the rise and practice of it in the churches, the phenomenon was examined from a historical perspective and not from a phenomenological perspective. Their works, however, highlight various areas of Pentecostalism in Ghana that need further research. Stiles-Ocran (2004), in his M.Phil thesis, presented to the University of Ghana, dealt with Prophetism in Ghana as it pertains to some Charismatic Churches. His work

does deal with the phenomenon as it is practiced in some charismatic churches in Ghana. However, the way Prophetism is practiced in those churches does not fully explain the phenomenon in the CoP. According to Omenyo and Atiemo, (2006), since the 1990s, a phenomenon known as neo-Prophetism began to surface on the Ghanaian religious scene. This phenomenon has been explained in many ways: an answer to the search for belonging (Welbourn & Ogot, 1966), an extreme dislike to Western European and ecclesiastical control (Omenyo, 2002), making amends for the failure of traditional support systems, as well as attending to the African's traditional worries (Pobee & Ositule, 1998; Atiemo, 1993; Meyer, 1992) seeking for space in ministry when the already established churches do not accommodate the new comers. Omenyo and Atiemo's work focused on seeking a categorization and operation of Neo-Prophetism as it is practiced in the "Resurrection Power/Evangelistic Ministry", led by Evangelist Akwasi Amoako, "Alive Chapel International" led by Prophet Elisha Salifu Amoako (Omenyo & Atiemo, 2006, p. 61), and the 'King Jesus Evangelistic Ministry', led by Prophet Kweku Apraku (Omenyo & Atiemo, pp. 61-62). Their work however does not explain the different conceptions and practices of Prophetism in the CoP.

Prophecy, in the CoP is generally believed by most people in the church to be a continuation of the prophetic tradition of the Bible. The above works do not explain the distinction between the prophet and the one operating in the gift of prophecy and their categorizations as espoused by the CoP.

Delimitations

This research is limited to the practice of Prophetism in the CoP. The researcher made use of Heads' meeting times when all of them were supposed to be gathered. Heads from Greater Accra, Ashanti, Eastern and the Central Region of Ghana were interviewed. The reason was that these regions had concentration of active and retired ministers in the CoP. This was done to cut down cost. Ten (10) key leaders, five (5) apostles, and five (5) prophets were chosen through purposive sampling (later explained) for interview on the prophetic in the Church. Also, textual critical study is not employed in this work, the reason being that it is not a biblical study. The researcher used phenomenological study (explained later in the work). The history of CoP is linked to many of the classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana. In addition, most of the Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leaders in Ghana came out of the CoP. The Akan form the largest ethnic group in Ghana and it is the group with the largest attendance in the CoP in Ghana as shown below. Their worldview is heightened in this work.

Limitations

The researcher limited his interview to apostles and prophets in the Church and a few senior ministers for corroboration of information. There were some challenges in getting respondents at the appropriate times agreed upon by the researcher and the subjects for interview. Being a qualitative study, only a small number could be studied. The chosen worldview for discussion and analysis is the Akan worldview. The researcher did his study in

the southern part of Ghana, and therefore did not cover other areas where Akan is not predominant.

Research Methodology

This work analyses and critiques the practice of prophecy and the operation of divine government in the CoP in Ghana. The researcher considered phenomenological methods in the study since they are particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives and therefore at challenging structural or normative assumptions. Again, phenomenological study focuses on descriptions of what people experience and the practical knowledge about what they experience.

The researcher gathered archival material generated by the CoP and its American and British antecedents. These were helpful in giving the researcher background information to the origins of Prophetism in the CoP. These primary written sources have previously received scholarly attention only for the purpose of establishing the historical record. No theological commentary on the material is dealt with in this work. Odum and Jocher (1929) noted that the study of social processes demand an objective qualitative approach. The non-experimental descriptive qualitative research design used in this study is therefore the phenomenological method. The reason for this is that the aim of the researcher is to better understand the prophetic phenomenon in the CoP. There is also the need for in-depth knowledge of the subject that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. The method is appropriate in situations

where variables to be tested quantitatively later have to be firstly identified. Quantitative measures cannot be used where descriptions or interpretations are to be used. Having chosen the phenomenological method the following section outlines how the research progressed.

Two classes of data were collected, namely primary data and secondary or literary data. Primary data was collected through interviews and participant observation. Secondary data was sourced from published and unpublished documents, as well as from Books and journal articles, Church Annual Reports, memos, and letters. Information was also gathered from the public and private newspapers. Documentary sources such as encyclopedia, periodicals, dictionaries and textbooks were also consulted. Popular literature on prophecy, prayer meetings, seminars on prophecy in the church, church council meetings' minutes, church publications, as well as videotapes and audiotapes were also examined. The Internet was also very useful in informing the researcher on current developments in the area of the prophetic.

Non-random sampling strategy is used in a phenomenological study. Purposive sampling was used to consciously hand pick people who yielded the most comprehensive understanding of the researcher's subject of study. The researcher observed that purposive/judgmental sampling technique was the most important kind of non-probability sampling to identify the primary participants. The sample was selected based on the researcher's judgment and purpose. The basis of choice of respondents was their status in the church – one with higher educational background or a leader. This was so because they

better understood the issues at stake. The reason for the choice is the respondent's expertise and knowledge concerning the prophetic phenomenon. The respondents were made to share with the researcher their observations of prophetic people or if they themselves have prophesied before. The sample interviewees were requested by the researcher to give at their own discretion names, and contact details of people who they know have had experience of the phenomenon. For that reason, those contacted were ten (10) ministers (leaders) from the church that included those who have had experience of the prophetic phenomenon. Other persons were interviewed with the view of corroborating the records.

The researcher thereafter used snowball sampling, an approach where the researcher chose a few respondents referred to as gate-keepers, by Greig and Taylor (1999). The researcher employed accidental sampling to select the gate-keepers and then asked them to recommend other people who could be of help in giving information for the study. "Someone with the formal authority to control access to a site" is qualified by Neuman (2000, p. 352) as a gate-keeper. Snowball sampling is therefore the approach where the researcher chose a few respondents, employing accidental sampling or some other method, and then asking them to recommend other people who could be of help in giving information for the study. This approach is also called network, chain referral, or reputational sampling. In short, snowball sampling is where the research begun with a small number of individuals who have knowledge of the subject for study. These contact persons then in turn led the researcher to other persons who were willing to participate in the task.

Thus purposive sampling and snowball sampling were adopted because they are less expensive far less complicated, and can prove adequate for the researcher's purpose. This research was based on small samples, though providing rich information that allowed for valid conclusions. Certain problems were inherent in the use of purposive sampling. Distortions may be caused due to insufficient breadth in sampling; distortions may also change with time; and distortions may occur due to lack of depth in data collection.

In-depth interviews were conducted. The questions were open-ended, usually wide-ranging, probing issues in detail, allowing the interviewees to express their views at length. The participants were made aware of the purpose, benefits, procedures, to be used to protect confidentiality as well as the voluntary nature of the research. The researcher employed three types of qualitative interviewing: informal conversational interviews; semi-structured interviews, though being careful that the interviewee did not digress from the researcher's research subject; and standardized, open-ended, unstructured interviews that had the advantage of allowing the researcher to hear different views on the same topic or issue as he progressed from one interview to another. Questions were usually targeted at the participant's experiences, feelings, beliefs and convictions about the prophetic phenomenon. The enquiry was performed from the perspective of the researcher. The researcher asked the participants to set aside their experiences of prophecy and share their reflections on its value, a form of bracketing. The interview was reciprocal: both the research subject and the researcher were engaged in dialogue. The researcher envisaged that the number of questions and the duration of the

interviews varied from one participant to the other. An interview guide, a list of questions or general topics that the researcher wanted to explore during each interview was made.

Ten leading apostles and prophets from different local assemblies of the church were contacted for the interviews. The size was arrived at based on the suggestion of Boyd (2001) that two (2) to ten (10) research subjects is enough to reach saturation for a phenomenological study. Other people were also contacted purposely for the sake of corroborating the information received. This will thus bring about a fair representation. The target interviewees included those in the churches known to operate the gift of prophecy. The number was kept deliberately small in keeping with the recommendation by Creswell (1998, pp. 65 & 113) that “long interviews with up to 10 people” for a phenomenological study is sufficient.

A topic guide to aid the discussions was made to ensure that a range of aspects of the topic is explored until the topic was exhausted, that is, when the respondents introduced no new perspectives on the topic. The discussions were frequently tape recorded, if allowed by the interviewees and then later transcribed and analyzed. In addition to interviewing people the researcher also visited some congregations to fellowship, observe, and describe what he observed. Data was collected from an assembly each from the Greater Accra, Central and Eastern regions to explore the prophetic in the church. This is so because these regions contain the greatest concentration of congregations in

the church (GEC Report, 1989, pp. 39-62) and will also give the research findings a national scope.

The researcher's status as a minister in the Church enabled access to the church leaders, official and private records and, in general facilitated frank response from the people interviewed. The added advantage was that the researcher was also able to participate in very significant ways by fellowshipping within the lives of the churches' various assemblies. The interviews were conducted in English, but Akan, and sometimes, Ga terms for the phenomenon were explained. The Akan and Ga languages were employed in order to clarify some terms used in the CoP concerning prophet and prophecy that may differ from the English ones. The choice of languages was informed by the (GEC Report, 1993 that these are the languages used mainly in church services in the catchment area).

The researcher employed the services of some of his Ga speaking friends to help in interpretation since the researcher does not understand that dialect. In order to gain the certainty of accurate translations, five (5) Ga friends were contacted to give their understanding of the terms. There was no need for interpretation of Akan language since the researcher understood that language. Even though all the interviewees understood English, the terms used in the local languages helped to get clarification of the prophetic phenomenon as it pertains to the Ghanaian milieu. The outcome was then transcribed into the English Language. The questions for the interviews were probing questions, which, the researcher prepared to stimulate discussions (see

appendix 1). The researcher's experience as a pastor who has worked in this country for over twenty years aided him to make personal contacts, select, and identify interviewees.

The reference to Akan/Ga is therefore a methodological advantage than a handicap. Akan/Ga terms are a rich source of the people's religion and philosophy having deep spirituality and also spoken philosophical and theological insights. Data was also collected through participant observation by the researcher. The researcher visited Edumfa Prayer Centre at Abura Dunkwa in the Central Region, Oyoko Senior High school in Koforidua in the Eastern Region, where there was a Youth Camp meeting, Pentecost International Worship Centre, Atomic Accra, Nungua Nshorna Emmanuel Assembly in Accra, and Shalom Worship Centre where the researcher fellowships. These centres were chosen because they had practices that had bearing on prophecy.

These places were visited between August 2010 and June 2012. In this way the researcher aimed at becoming immersed in or becoming part of the study group, so as to develop a detailed understanding of the values and beliefs of the people being studied. The researcher made notes of anything observed for analysis later. The researcher sat through some of the services, listening to prophetic messages and taking sermon notes as well. In this way, the researcher could observe insights that an outside observer may miss. It is however worth noting that the participant observer may suffer the criticism of subjectivity as it may become very difficult for him/her to be extricated from

personal interests. It however helped the researcher to balance objectivity with subjectivity. The researcher listened through some of the recorded prophetic messages of the local assemblies taking note of the content, and types of prophecies recorded with the view to assessing the practice of Prophetism against biblical data.

The data collected from literature, interviews, as well as observations, were subjected to qualitative inductive content analyses. The aim of using inductive content analysis is to build a model to describe the prophetic phenomenon in a conceptual form. Inductive content analysis was used because available study of the prophetic phenomenon in the CoP was little and also fragmented. It was also the analytical method that the researcher considered more appropriate for his purpose for analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages (Cole, 1988). The aim was to attain a condensed and broad description of the prophetic phenomenon. Whole interviews as well as observations made were analyzed.

Manifest content (the visible, surface content of the communications were coded) as well as latent content (the underlying meanings of the communications) were analyzed. The aim of latent content was also to notice silence, sighs, laughter, attitudes, and so on (hidden meanings were also analyzed) because their analysis involved interpretation. The researcher, during the mode of analysis stage sought to identify common themes in people's descriptions of their experiences including open coding (notes and headings were written in the text while reading it), creating categories and

abstraction. After the transcriptions of the interviews, the researcher typically took the following steps: First, he sought to identify statements that related to his topic. Second, the researcher grouped all statements into “meaning units” that is grouped the segments of the interviews into categories that reflected the various aspects (“meanings”) of the prophetic phenomenon as it is experienced. Third, the study sought divergent perspectives in which different people claimed to understand or experience prophecy. Lastly, the researcher then used the various meanings of the phenomenon identified to develop an overall description of Prophetism as people typically experienced, thus presenting a coherent, consistent picture. In this work the researcher has examined the nature, origin, development, function and the types of prophecies in operation in the Church of Pentecost and their relation to biblical prophecy. As a working definition, this researcher defines prophecy as a message communicated from the divine world, normally to a third party through a mediator (prophet) who may or may not be identified with the deity.

Organization of the Thesis

The work is divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter the researcher examined the background and context of the study. The statement of the problem is stated, the research questions are posed, and objectives of the study as well as justification of the study are examined. In the chapter there is also a review of the relevant literature, examination of the methodology used as well as the delimitations and limitations of the study. Finally, the researcher discussed how the data collected was analyzed.

Chapter two provides the background information, which forms the framework for understanding the origins of Prophetism. The chapter begins with examination of how prophecy was understood in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament world. Definition(s) of “prophet” and “prophecy” are discussed. The researcher then discussed the problem of origin of Prophetism to ascertain the roots of Prophetism and how that is related to prophecy in the CoP. In this chapter the researcher also examined the Mediterranean world’s understanding of prophecy as well as that in the New Testament and early Christianity. Core issues are deduced from reflections above in order to assess what is happening in the CoP with a view to accepting or making corrections for effective use.

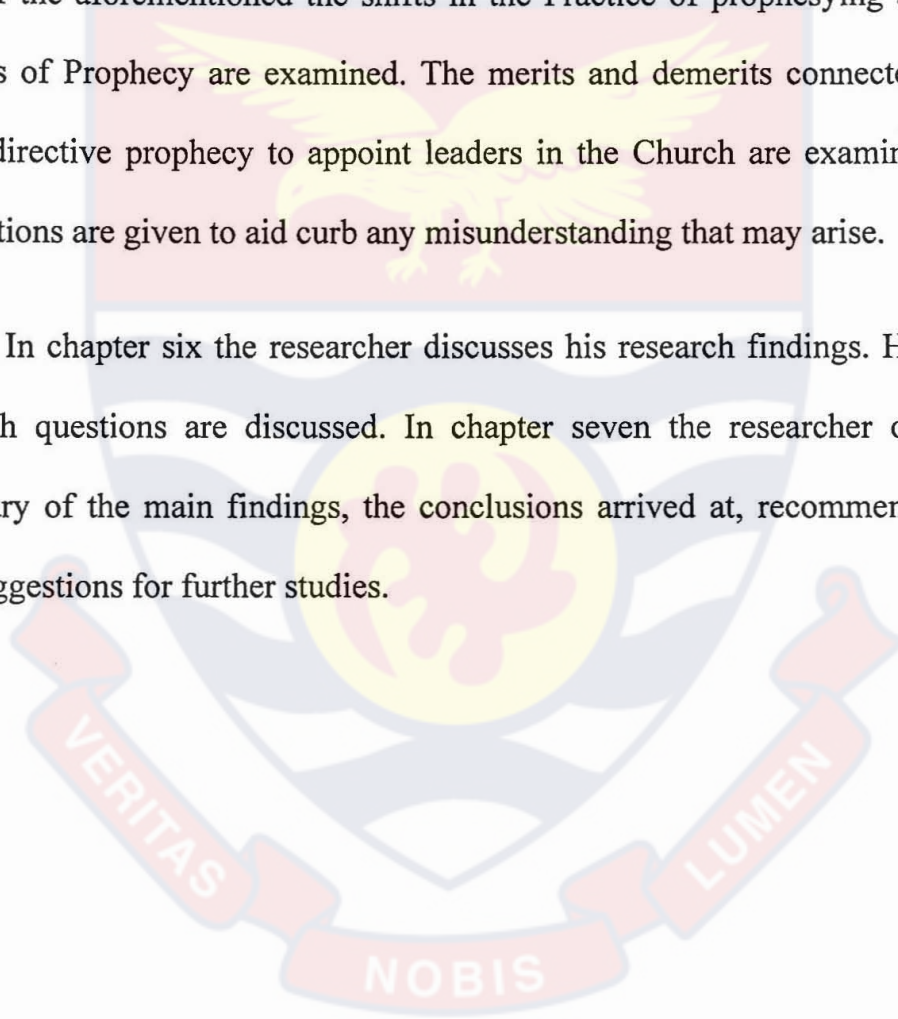
Chapter three discusses Prophetism worldwide. This chapter examines the American and British antecedents to prophetic practices in the CoP. The researcher then examined practical usage of Prophetism deduced from the American and British backgrounds. Similarities and dissimilarities of Prophetism in the American and British backgrounds are then compared noting how the CoP adopted their practices and lessons that can be learned from them.

Chapter four presents the introduction to prophetic groups linked to the CoP in Ghana. In this chapter, the researcher examined Prophetism in various groups in Ghana that are directly linked to the CoP and how they are linked. Thus, Prophetism in the African Independent Churches (AICs), Prophetism in Neo-Prophetic churches, and Prophetism in Classical Pentecostalism are

examined. Characteristics of prophets in these groups, and how they function are discussed. This was done to understand the basis of CoP's value of the prophetic in the churches and Ghanaian Christianity generally.

Chapter five presents the practice of Prophetism within the CoP. In this chapter the researcher analyses the data collected from his fieldwork. In the light of the aforementioned the shifts in the Practice of prophesying and the Process of Prophecy are examined. The merits and demerits connected with using directive prophecy to appoint leaders in the Church are examined and suggestions are given to aid curb any misunderstanding that may arise.

In chapter six the researcher discusses his research findings. Here the research questions are discussed. In chapter seven the researcher offers a summary of the main findings, the conclusions arrived at, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.



CHAPTER TWO

ORIGINS OF PROPHETISM

This chapter examines the origins of prophecy, how it was understood in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament world, as well as the Mediterranean and New Testament milieu. The nature and purpose of prophecy in those environments is also discussed. Core issues deduced from reflection on the examination of the above are then discussed. With this background then can this work assess Prophetism in the CoP.

Problem of Origin of Prophetism

Critical scholarship contends that Israel borrowed her religious ideas and institutions from her Near Eastern neighbours, largely Canaan, who already had an established prophetic and institutional life (Freeman, 2005). The group of scholars holding this view and depicting Hebrew prophets as using crude methods of divination and self-torture like the Baal prophets of Elijah's day (1 Kings 18:25-29) include Robinson (1953); Oesterly and Robinson (1962). Robinson, (1962, p. 200), states categorically: "Israel inherited both the Law and the Prophets from her predecessors in Palestine." However, Robinson's view ignores the fact that Israel did have a unique

prophetic institution, and that the God of Israel (Yahweh) warned them (the Israelites) against adopting Canaanite prophetic and religious practices (Deuteronomy 18:9-18).

Nevertheless there is overwhelming evidence from all over Northern Mesopotamia that a population essentially similar to the Hebrews was actually existing there in the first half of 2000 BC; or the fact that various patriarchal customs have analogous practices among the population of approximately the same area at approximately the same time – and much more. Bright, (1980) has noted that prophecy as a phenomenon as we view it in the Bible “finds its closest known parallels in the Mari texts” (p. 88). Other scholars seek to trace Israelite Prophetism from cultures outside Canaan. Cornill (1907) argues that the basic root form of the verb corresponding to the term “*nabi*” does not occur in Hebrew but Arabic. For that reason he contends that Arabia is the home of Prophetism. Furthermore, Cornill argues that the ecstatic and visionary elements characteristic of prophesying conforms more to desert life.

The origin of prophecy has been attributed to Syria-Asia Minor region (Cornill, 1907); trans-Jordan peoples (Gottwald, 1964); Palestine as a result of Philistine conquest and the oppression of the Israelites necessitating in the prophets calling the people to action by preaching a politico-religious crusade against the heathen (Meek, 1960). Rowley (1956, pp. 340-341), notes, “It is quite impossible to treat Hebrew prophecy as an isolated phenomenon. It grew out of a background of ancient Near Eastern practices, going back very far and spreading widely.” It is this desire that has produced among all nations the

numerous forms of soothsaying of which prophecy is, a part. In spite of this Israelite prophetic institution is seen not to have its origin in Canaan nor other Near Eastern cultures as some scholars contend but it was “established for the specific purpose of guarding Israel against Canaan superstitious practices, as well as those of her neighbours” (Freeman, 1968, p. 26). Thus while some trace it to Canaanite, Egyptian, and Arabic sources, recently, some scholars have turned attention to Mesopotamia, especially the ancient city of Mari for enlightenment on the phenomenon of Hebrew prophecy (Hayes, 1967; Moran, 1969; Cragan, 1975; Mallamat, 1956; Mallamat, 1966; Bullock, 2007). In recent times, hundreds of texts have been unearthed and translated, then compared with the biblical texts to enlighten their manner or setting. It was found out that some of these texts had similarities with Old Testament prophecy. It is therefore suggested that Israelite prophecy can be understood as an activity and a concept that Israel shared with other peoples and cultures among which they lived and experienced their God.

The Book of Jude (verses 14-15) in the New Testament informs us that prophetic activity was evident before the era of the monarchy, even though the prophetic office seemed to have risen in conjunction with kingship in Israel (Freeman, 2005). Nevertheless, Hildebrandt intimated that many aspects having to do with the development, content, character and significance of prophecy remain obscure. A number of similarities between the experience of Israel and that of the surrounding cultures provide knowledge of the origins of prophecy. Huffmon (1976) and Ringgren (1982) have noted that prophecy in the ancient Near East had certain elements: communication from the divine

world, normally to a third party through a mediator (prophet), who may or may not be identified with the deity. The prophet may be inspired through dreams, an ecstatic experience, or “through what may be called inner illumination” (Hildebrandt, 1995 p. 152). The inspiration is not usually an immediate message not requiring a technical expert to interpret, nor is it solicited: the message is usually exhortatory or admonitory (Huffman, 1968).

There were similarities and dissimilarities between Israel and her surrounding cultures. The Old Testament itself records some Canaanite prophetic practices. The cultures and practices of the Canaanites were a constant temptation to Israel (Leviticus 18:1-3; Deuteronomy 7-8; 13:1-5; 18:9-18), even though Israel had constantly been warned by Yahweh to rid themselves of their influence. The Old Testament generally and the prophets in particular saw the origins of prophecy in the call of Yahweh. Studying parallels may give us useful results, yet “the question remains unanswered”, as to the origins of Hebrew prophecy (Bullock, 1986, p. 18). The Old Testament itself offers the best and most illuminating understanding of Hebrew prophecy (Bullock, 1986).

Prophecy in Ancient Near East

According to the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* the term prophecy has been used of various texts and roles known from the Ancient Near East. The texts have to do with predictions, or apparent predictions, apocalyptic or eschatological, religious or social criticism, as well as “commissioned messages from deities” (Freedman *et. al.*, 1922, p. 477). The roles have been

noted to include those of priests (Egypt), technical diviners (Western Asia), for herbalists and quack doctors, for poets (Titus 1:12), for the interpreter of the *mantis*, “metaphorically for proclaimers in general, including the announcer at the games”, and those who speak directly under orders from a deity (Freedman, 1922, p. 496).

Although prophecy is perhaps frequently associated with Judaism and Christianity, it is found throughout the world’s religions, both ancient and modern. The term prophet (Greek *prophetes*, “forthteller”) has to do with an inspired person who believes that he/she has been sent by his/her god with a message to tell. Included in the functions are those played by technical diviners, ordinary priests, and people who speak undeviatingly from a deity.

From the above, the definition of prophecy is diverse, guided by whichever definition of prophecy one uses. A prophet therefore could refer to anyone who speaks the will of a deity, “often ascertained through dreams, visions, or the casting of lots; the will of the deity also may be spoken in a liturgical setting. The prophet, thus, is often associated with the priest, the shaman (a religious figure in primitive societies who functions as a healer, diviner, and possessor of psychic powers), the diviner (foreteller), and the mystic” (“prophecy” 2011, *Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*). The term prophet has also been used to refer to a critic of society ‘social and religio-political reformers and leaders’, while others see the prophet as a charismatically authorized messenger, and others, the announcer of the future.

Prophecy is thus understood as divinely initiated inspired speech, “clear in itself and commonly directed to a third party” (Freedman, 1922, p. 477).

Bullock, (1986), has observed texts from Mari, dating from the first half of the second millennium BC that show interesting exposure of prophetic men and women who practiced divination known or perceived by intuition. According to Bullock, these Mari prophets and prophetesses were not persons who practiced the standard techniques of divination but were dependent upon inspiration for their oracles, much in the same way as the Hebrew prophets (Bullock, 1986; Malamat, 1956). Administrative records from Mari, according to Bullock showed that the oracles of these prophets were short and limited to materials relating to the reign of King Zimrilim. As a result of the character of the texts and their relation to the royal court, he intimates, one does not get as full a picture of the prophets and prophetesses of Mari as would the Hebrew prophets.

Another feature of the Mari documents he observed were their most likely preservation within the royal court, whereas the documents of the Hebrew literary prophets were for the most part preserved apart from the court, thus exercising a kind of independence from the kings. Different types of prophecies have been gleaned from ancient writings: There is the case of “prophecy of Nefer-rohu” which purports to be a tract in the sense of foretelling events during the reign of King Snefru of the Fourth Dynasty in Egypt (Wilson, 1951; Harrison, 1970). This type of prophecy was used to authorize and advance the political and religious views of the leadership.

Correspondences to Israelite prophecies according to Hildebrandt (1995), citing Wilson, have been found at Mari an influential centre in Mesopotamia during the third and early second millennia BC. According to Wilson (1978), and Herrmann (1963), prophetic literatures, along with other documents have been discovered at Mari that show very interesting similarities with biblical functionaries (ca. 1828-1758 BC). According to him there are within the Mari texts a host of designations, which, are applied to various functionaries. Terms like *apilu*, generally meaning “to respond or to answer” probably indicating the response to questions put to a god or solicited by the functionary in some way can be found. These messages are then passed on to the supplicant.

A verb, *muhum*, meaning “to rave” or “become frenzied” or ecstatic is associated with a functionary, like the *assinu*, who receives and delivers messages from a goddess, sometimes accompanied by ecstatic behavior usually warning kings of plots against them are also found. Messages from the functionaries are usually brought to the king regarding “matters of the cult and the royal administration.” These admonitory messages were usually brought to the king to move him to actively pursue his duties.” Hildebrandt (1995) intimates, “the salvation oracle is often contingent on the king’s response to the prophetic word, both in matters of cultus and social concerns where he is encouraged to rule with justice and equity.”

Prophecy in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, prophecy has been connected with revelation, that is, something disclosed by or as if by divine or supernatural means. This is the key that provides the foundation or basis for a definition. Revelation is clearly stipulated in the account of the call of Samuel to the ministry of the prophet. In 1 Samuel 3, the link between prophecy and revelation occurs in verse 7. An editorial note inserted into the text by the compiler of the book reads: "Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord; the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him." This editorial comment in 1 Samuel 3:7 is believed by some biblical scholars to be dated in the seventh century BC "when the major work on compiling the historical account of the monarchy from a variety of source material was undertaken" (Hill, 1995, pp. 12-13). Hill (1995, p. 13) contends that by the time of compiling the accounts of the monarchy "the nature of prophecy as rooted in revelation was established." 1 Samuel 3:21 reads: "The Lord continued to appear in Shiloh, because there He revealed Himself to Samuel by His word" (HCSB). Prophecy was thus regarded as God's revealed word.

For the Old Testament generally and the Hebrew prophets particularly, Israelite Prophetism had its origins in the call of Yahweh. The study of parallels, though helpful, does not settle the question of the origins of Israelite prophecy. The best and most enlightening sources for understanding Prophetism in the Hebrew context are found in the Old Testament itself. For

this reason, it will be appropriate to examine the terminology used for prophet in the Old Testament.

Old Testament Definition of Prophecy

Since biblical foundation of Prophetism is rooted in the Old Testament, examination of the word prophet/prophecy from the Hebrew perspective is necessary. Examination of the biblical definition will give us a picture of who, a prophet or what prophesying is in the Old Testament and then compare if there are any parallels to what is occurring in the CoP. This will aid the researcher to assess Prophetism in the CoP. A number of Old Testament scholars have noted that Israelite history is fundamentally prophetic (Freeman, 1978; Orelli, 1885). One cannot determine the precise function of the prophet in Israel without first discovering the basic root meanings of the terms “prophet” and “prophecy.” Cornill (1907, p. 10), Eiselen, (1919, p. 23), Smith (1928, p. 19), and others propose this etymological view. Cornill, Konig, Eiselen and Smith contend that the term prophet comes from an Arabic root (Freeman, 1968).

Konig intimates that the Arabic root *nabaa* means “to proclaim or announce” (Hastings, 1928, p. 384). Hence, the noun *nabhi*, “prophet” in Hebrew means literally a “spokesperson” or “speaker” while in Assyrian-Babylonian context the term prophet has to do with the general sense of speaking, the Arabic root “has the special sense of a deputed speaker.” Thus according to Cornill, the prophet does not speak of himself “but as an agent of another who has some special communication to deliver.” Other scholars such

as Gesenius (1849), Kuenen, Oehler and others argue that the noun is from a Hebrew root (Freeman, 1968). In Gesenius' Hebrew-English lexicon, Gesenius cites that the Hebrew verb *nabha* "to prophesy" is a softened form of the Hebrew verb *nabha*, that has the sense of "to flow, boil up, bubble forth," hence, to "pour forth words." Thus Gesenius wrote, "The prophets when under the power of inspiration, appear to have been greatly agitated and to have exhibited writhings and spasmodic affections of the body like delirious persons" Oehler therefore holds that the *nabhi* is one "who is the speaker as the instrument of another, viz God."

According to Davidson (1903/1955), Koehler, Ludwig and Baumgartner (1953), Brown, Driver and Briggs (2004), Young (1954), among others, the verbal root *nabha* "to prophesy" used in the Old Testament comes from an unknown Semitic root. This view is the most likely, since its usage can determine its meaning. Exodus 7:1-2 clarifies the meaning of the term. "The Lord answered Moses, 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet. You must say whatever I command you; then Aaron your brother must declare it to Pharaoh so that he will let the Israelites go from his land' (HCSB). Again, the Greek noun *prophetes* is derived, from the preposition *pro*, "for, or on behalf of," and the verb *phemi* "to speak" hence, "to speak for another." From all that have been said, it indicates that the prophet's primary function was to prophesy, that is, to speak the message which God had revealed unto him." In the Bible there is no hint of the known biblical prophet incapable of self-control or consciousness. That notion would erroneously portray God as using the prophet like a flute player

using his instrument. No ecstasy is associated with the messages of the following Old Testament prophetic figures: Moses (Exodus 14:1-3), Samuel (1 Samuel 9:15-17), Nathan (2 Samuel 7:4-5), Elijah (1 Kings 17:8-9).

Prophets in the early history of Israel particularly functioned as mediators and intercessors (Genesis 18:17; 20:7; Exodus 20:19) as well as revealers of God's mind (Genesis 15:1ff; Deuteronomy 34:10-12; Hosea 12:13). Using the law of precedence, the word prophet is first used in Genesis 20:6-8, 17-18) and the function of the prophet is associated with prayer/intercession. In Exodus 4:14-17 the prophet is seen as a spokesperson of God and is also associated with signs. The prophets were expected to pay total allegiance to Yahweh and faithfully deliver his message (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:22). They were also to speak authoritatively for Yahweh (Hildebrant, 138).

Their messages have to do with predictions, or apparent predictions, apocalyptic or eschatology, religious or social criticism, as well as "commissioned messages from deities" (Freedman, 1968, p. 477; Bromiley, 1986 pp. 986-989). Included in the roles played by prophets are the part played by technical diviners, ordinary priests, and people who speak directly from a deity. From the above, the definition of prophecy is diverse, guided by whichever definition of prophecy one uses. Some see the prophet as the critic of society while others see the prophet as a charismatically authorized messenger, and others, the announcer of the future. In this dissertation,

prophecy is understood as divinely initiated inspired speech, “clear in itself and commonly directed to a third party” (Freedman, 1968, p. 477).

The Old Testament usage of the term, portrays the general function of the prophet, the prophet also functioned in the social and the religious life of Israel. The true function of the Israelite prophet was threefold (Freeman, 1968). First, the law itself provided for the prophetic institution (Deuteronomy 18), thus the prophet’s ministry was not something developed at a later time to cope with Israel’s apostasy and deficiencies of the priesthood. Thus John Calvin (1948, p. xxvii) wrote: we are “to trace the Prophets to the Law, from which they derive their doctrine, like streams from a fountain... to be its interpreters.” Mingled with the ethical preaching of the prophets were to be found numerous predictions of future events concerning Israel, the Gentiles and the coming Messianic age (Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 10:16-17). This was the second aspect of the function of the prophet. The predictions were not to satisfy human curiosity nor were the predictions merely to demonstrate that God knew the future. The predictions were concerned with salvation, judgment, the Messiah and the Kingdom of the Messiah.

Lastly, the historical situation, which brought the prophetic institution into prominence, gives us insight into the third aspects of the function and purpose of prophecy in Israel. Although the prophet had been a known figure in Israel from the earlier times, the apostasy of the ten northern tribes under Jeroboam the son of Nebat and the division of the kingdom of Israel called forth the uninterrupted and definite ministry of the prophet. Thus, they were

watchmen standing upon the walls of Zion to sound the trumpet against dangers of religious apostasy (Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7). The priests who were the religious teachers of Israel had also fallen into spiritual decline just as the rest of the populace. “Into this spiritually degenerate situation the prophets were called.” The function of the prophet was to warn and turn the nation from sin, and idolatry due to the failure of the priesthood. According to Ezekiel 36:18, God had poured out his wrath upon the people because of “the blood they had shed on the land, . . .” (HCSB). Having said this, Ezekiel also stated that just as God’s justice demanded that disaster came upon his rebellious people, so according to the teaching of Ezekiel the holiness of God’s nature demanded that he restored his people. God’s reason for doing this was not because his covenant people deserved it:

Therefore, say to the house of Israel: It is not for your sake that I will act, house of Israel, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will honor the holiness of My great name, which has been profaned among the nations – the name you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am “Yahweh” – the declaration of the LORD GOD - . . . (Ezekiel 36:22-23 – HCSB).

Aune (1983, p. 339) defined biblical prophecy as “an intelligible verbal message believed to originate with God, and communicated through an

inspired human intermediary.” Aune (1983) however makes a very useful distinction between prophecy as a verbal message and divination, which he describes as the “interpretation of coded messages from the supernatural world conveyed through various kinds of symbols.”

According to Nissinen (2003) it is not easy to distinguish prophecy from other oracular activities; identify one as a prophet, or even recognize any given text as prophetic. According to Nissinen, a text’s prophetic nature is in question if the following three components of the transmission of prophecy are not evident: the words should have originated from a deity; the message should have been addressed to a human being; the message should be conveyed by the human prophet (Nissinen, 2003). In conclusion therefore, the prophetic institution in Israel remained the same in essence or principle from its beginnings, though the names ascribed it changed from age to age. The prophets stood as intermediary between Yahweh and the people, forth-telling and foretelling Yahweh’s theocratic redemptive programme.

The Prophetic Institution in Israel

A careful examination of the Old Testament shows that prophecy is not a uniform phenomenon, ranging from the primitive guilds to the sophisticated first and second Isaiah, the visionary Ezekiel to the pragmatic Amos and the true to the false. Abraham and Moses both enjoyed the designation ‘prophet’. Yet it was Samuel who was chosen by Yahweh to establish the distinct office and function of the Israelite prophet. The Old Testament says of his prophecies that “God did not let any of his words to fall to the ground” (1 Samuel 3:19).

From the time of Samuel onwards we find the formulaic phrase “thus says the Lord God of Israel”, prophecy thus being heard in the first person. This is very important since in the CoP these formulaic expressions are very common as is noticed later in this work.

During the time of Samuel’s childhood visions were rare, nevertheless there is evidence that the prophetic guilds were flourishing and demonstrated a contagious element to their characteristic invasive oracular speech (1 Samuel 10:5-6). The contagious nature of the prophecies of the prophetic guilds is demonstrated by Saul’s response when he entered into a prophetic seizure with attendant bizarre behaviour. Israel would seem to be uncomfortable with contagious prophecy, evidenced by the question carrying the nuance of disapproval, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1 Samuel 10:11).

Whereas the Israelite prophets usually are pictured as standing alone often before the kings speaking God’s judgement, the prophetic guilds with their contagious prophecies usually sustained their individual members. This close relationship that existed between the Old Testament prophet and the kings may explain the interdependence later shown in the New Testament of apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20). The CoP also has a very strong belief in a close affinity between the roles of the apostle and the prophet, the former regulating prophecies of the latter. While the content of Israelite prophets’ oracles was often received prior to delivery, after the manner of Ezekiel, there is sufficient record of invasive prophecy occurring for it to be considered a part of the usual practice (Numbers 11:25; 1 Samuel 10:5-6; 1 Kings 13:20).

The fact that Saul solicited help from Samuel to locate his lost donkeys presumes that the prophet was considered capable of obtaining divine-sourced information immediately. Thus during Samuel's time the use of divination via the ephod which yielded only affirmative or negative answers to closed questions, gave way to enquiring of the Lord through the prophet.

In Deuteronomy 18:9-22 Moses sets forth the divine origin of the prophetic institution. In the passage Moses, who had never come into direct contact with the Canaanite religious institutions, makes it abundantly clear that there was going to be an institution of prophets that would one day culminate in a great Prophet like unto himself. This great prophet has been interpreted to refer to different persons in world history. In the passage one notes that the reason and basis for the origin of the prophetic institution in Israel is clearly stated. In verse 9, the author of Deuteronomy states: "When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not imitate the detestable customs of those nations" In verses 10 and 11 the author lists divination, spiritism and augury, methods by which the soothsayers of the Canaanites and their neighbours sought to gain knowledge but Israel was barred from using those methods.

Some scholars have argued therefore that the origin of the prophetic institution in Israel is not to be found in Canaanite and other Near Eastern cultures, but was "itself established for the specific purpose of guarding Israel against Canaan's superstitious practices, as well as those of her neighbours" (Freeman, 1968, p. 26). But this work notes that Prophetism developed in a socio-cultural environment.

According to Freeman (1968), two general periods are said to appear in the historical development of Old Testament prophecy, the pre canonical prophetic era and the canonical prophetic era. The term pre canonical is used in a limited or technical sense in contrast with the literary or writing prophets. The pre canonical period is divided into the pre-Mosaic period, the Mosaic period, the period of Samuel and the prophetic schools, the period of the early monarchy and the period of the divided monarchy, to the time of Elijah and Elisha (Freeman, 1968). This period, he observed, was characterized by prophecies that stressed the moral demands of Yahweh and the requirement of the covenant. From the Old Testament it is noted that the seer was a lonely figure consulted on individual basis by one seeking divine guidance.

The canonical period according to Freeman began with the period of the Prophet Obadiah (c 845 BC) down to about 796 BC. in short, the time of the literary prophets. For Freeman, this period retained the basic truths of the earlier phase but Israel and Judah's survival in the shadow of world powers comes into focus. This period, also known as the classical period was associated with the line of fearless spokespersons that left such a great impact on Israelite religion. The spokespersons during this period are commonly designated as the literary prophets by Bible scholars since the names of these prophets were connected "with the body of prophetic literature that forms the conclusion of the Christian Old Testament" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 669). The Catholic Encyclopedia has noted one Brueggemann as speaking about two dimensions of the office of the prophet, particularly among the classical prophets (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 669). Brueggemann, according to the

Catholic Encyclopedia noted firstly the criticizing dimension, where the prophets must denounce evil and attempt to win the people from the grips of royal business. The second dimension had to do with the energizing dimension. In this case the prophets must speak to their listening public to provide the possibility of hope for their disenchanted and despairing hearers (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 669). From the above the researcher has shown the content of prophetic utterances. This will aid the researcher to assess prophecy in the CoP. The section will also help him to assess prophecies in the CoP since the church holds that their prophetic practices are rooted in the Bible.

It is worth noting that women were included in the functions of prophecy in the precanonical periods of the Old Testament dispensation. A few women who spoke or sung by inspiration were designated by the term *nebhiah*, “prophetess” (masculine, *nabhi*). Examples of women so called *nebhiah* are Miriam, the sister of Moses (Exodus 15:20); Deborah (Judges 5:2-31); Isaiah’s wife *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (Isaiah 8:2-3); Huldah the wife of Shallum, the keeper of the royal wardrobe (2 Kings 22:14) and Noadia who lived during the restoration period and who took part in opposing Nehemiah (Nehemiah 6:14). Exodus 15:20, states,

Then Miriam the prophetess (*nebhiah*), Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with their tambourines and danced (HCSB).

Judges 5:1-31 also states concerning Deborah: “On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang: ...” From the passages above it indicates clearly that music played a part in their prophesying. This notion is clearly stated in 1 Chronicles 25 where David appointed a number of musicians to work closely with the people who prophesied. “David ... set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, who were to prophesy, accompanied by lyres, harps, and cymbals” (1 Chronicles 15:1). In the context of the above passage, prophesying by these women seem to do with an attempt to enter into the presence of God in order to convey worship to him as well as receive divine guidance. Clearly this kind of strenuous exercise involving the elements of praise and may contain elements of ecstatic prophecy. According to Judges 4:4-5 it is stated thus:

Deborah, a woman who was a prophetess, and the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. It was her custom to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her for judgment (HCSB).

According to 2 Kings 22:12-20, Josiah, the king of Israel, sent to Huldah, the prophetess to inquire of the Lord. In the Judges passage it showed that Deborah adjudicated in cases the people were plagued with, while Huldah gave direction to the king of Israel in the 2 Kings passage. It therefore stands to show that prophetesses in the Old Testament were recognized, and their

roles highly appreciated. It is worth noting that prophecy in Israel was seen to be a continuous, permanent institution. Carrol (1969, p. 401) states:

The institution of prophecy was to be a continuous and permanent office constantly supplying the people of Israel with a covenant mediator who would recreate the role of Moses for the nation.

This perspective is supported by scholars such as Driver (1902); Kraus (1966); Nicholson (1967) and Thompson (1974) all of whom speak of a permanent prophetic institution, primarily based on the text of Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

According to Hebrews 1:1, Old Testament Scriptures was a revelation through the prophets. The Old Testament writers viewed history and prophecy as being very closely related, inasmuch as the great events of Israel's history (for example the call of Abraham, the exodus, the establishment of the Davidic kingdom, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the exile to Babylon) called for a host of prophetic revelations and messages. Prophetism in Israel as believed by a number of Old Testament scholars arose out of Israel's historical experiences and was to find its fulfillment in history (Freeman, 2005; Orelli, 1885). Thus, the purpose of the next section is to examine the terms used for prophets/prophecy from the Old Testament era through the early Christian era to the present to show how prophet/prophecy has been understood over the decades. It is necessary to do this to note any changes in usage of the word prophecy in different periods in history.

Terms used for Prophet in the Old Testament

In this section, the various terms used for Old Testament prophets are reviewed. Again, the role and function of the prophets as found in the Hebrew canon are discussed. The various terms used in the Hebrew canon may reflect a wide variety of functions that may include mediation, moral guidance, healing, warfare, influence in public affairs, and politics (Fenton, 1997).

According to Freeman (2005), the word, prophet, has no neatly stated definition either in the Hebrew lexicons or in the Bible. Wilson (1980) has defined prophecy as the ‘communication–based intermediation between the divine world and human society.’ The importance of prophecy in the Bible is evidenced by the occurrence of the word “prophet” over 300 times in the Old Testament Scriptures. Below the researcher discusses the terms used of prophet and prophecy in the Bible. In the Hebrew Bible four main words are used to describe those who prophesy:

Prophet (*nabi*)

The word “prophet” comes from the Hebrew noun for prophet “*nabi*” probably not of Hebrew origin, but the Akkadian “*nabitu*” seems closest kindred, in spite of the fact that the title *nabu*, “diviner” is now affirmed at Mari (Middle Euphrates) (Freedman *et. al.*, 1882, pp. 478-479). The word *nabi* appears three hundred and fifteen times in the Old Testament. Blenkinsopp (1996) has noted that verbal forms, which derive from the noun *nabi* exist in two conjugations, the *niphael* equivalent to the passive, and the *hithpael*

equivalent to the reflexive. The *niphael* though used of wild behaviour devoid of any prophetic element can also refer to rational prophetic speech. In a similar vein, the *hithpael* can be used of both communal ecstatic behavior and of prophetic speech (Blenkinsopp, 1996).

Thus, no clear distinction exists between the two forms although, over time, the *niphael* became the usual form in describing prophetic speech. The relation between the noun *nabi* and the verbal stems however, provide context and meaning. There are two opinions regarding the verbal significance underlying *nabi* (Rowley, 1956). One view suggests that the original root of the word was passive in form, and for that reason the word *nabi* itself is to be viewed as conveying a passive meaning. Thus, the prophet, according to this view is a passive medium of revelation, personally not responsible for his message (Rowley, 1956). In the last decade however, it has come to the fore that the word *nabi* is active in form. This view makes the prophet an active participant, receiving and communicating divine revelations to people. The theological implications arising from this diversity of views explains whether the *nabi* was seen as a mere channel through whom God spoke or the *nabi* was one who had all his faculties intact in receiving and communicating God's message to people. The Bible however, shows that the dominant characteristic of the *nabi* is one who is an active instrument in God's hands rather than someone who is primarily a passive channel of communication whose activity was made up of ecstatic frenzy or predictive soothsaying. Even though the prophet may sometimes enter into experiences and activities, which seem to be abnormal, these were always subsidiary to his main function of speaking for

God. If the passive form of *nabi* is adopted, the *nabi* would refer to someone called by a deity. The active form means that the *nabi* was someone who spoke for God, uttering as oracles given divine words. Thus the names used for the prophet in the Bible provides us with clues as to the work to which he is called, and a basis for consideration of his role in God's theocratic programme.

Prophet (*hozeh*)

This type of prophet is a visionary. The title "seer" is used of Amos, Isaiah and Micah and these books contain vision reports (*hezyonot*). Although the seer may have deliberately sought the Lord for revelation the vision does not result from the request of an audience (Petersen, 1997).

Prophet (*roeh*)

Petersen (1977, p. 25) intimates that this type of prophet is "something akin to a diviner" Petersen has observed that an intermediary of this nature operates in a manner different from other prophets; the diviner has an audience which has sought direction from the deity. The social interaction of the seer with the audience constitutes part of the behavior of the prophet the record of which properly forms a valid part of the prophetic literature (Petersen, 1977). Biblical tradition uses several words to describe the behaviour of prophets in Israel. According to 1 Samuel 9:9 the Israelite prophet (*nabi*) was known as a seer (*roeh*) (Young, 1952; Skinner, 1940). The passage in 1 Samuel 9:9-19, tells the reader that Saul and his servant, who were looking for some strayed donkeys pictured Samuel as a man of God whose words would surely come to

pass. The passage portrays Saul and his servant seeking a prophetic service from Samuel in telling them the whereabouts of the lost donkeys. This depicts indisputably the function of the prophet. Thus in Saul's day, the seer was a forth-teller, whose word, not its channel of reception, was extremely important.

Johnson (1944) along with others has attempted to argue that from 1 Samuel 9:9 onwards, Samuel changed from a *roeh* to a *nabi*. However, since the terms *roeh* and *nabi* are used interchangeably in the same passage of the same person that is, Samuel, that suggestion is flawed. In the passage, even though Samuel is viewed as a *roeh*, he performed the work of a *nabi*, and was recognized as such by Saul. The word *roeh* comes from the verb *raah*, which means, "to see". The *roeh* then applied to "one who sees." The dissimilarity between the two words *roeh* and *nabi* has to do with stress or emphasis, which each word gives to the prophetic mission. The word *nabi* emphasizes the active work of the prophet, whereas the word *roeh* the experience of the prophet in receiving the prophetic word. On the strength of these qualifications, it is probable to see that the prophet was some time in the history of the Hebrew people a *roeh* and or a *nabi*.

According to Kaiser (1989, p. 74), "a *roeh* is someone who is given insight into the past, present, and future [i.e., a 'seer']". A *hozeh* is one who is given his message in a vision [i.e., a 'visionary']". What then is a vision? According to the *Encyclopedia Britanica Ultimate Suite*, a vision is "something seen in a dream, trance, or ecstasy; a supernatural appearance that

conveys a revelation,” a dream also being defined as “a series of thoughts, images, or emotions occurring during sleep.” Wevers, (1982) outlined four main sections of visions in the book of Ezekiel and concluded that all visions are ecstatic. This he intimated was so because for him the visions experienced in Ezekiel’s life were the basis of his ministry of declaring God’s word. Each is introduced by the technical phrase ‘The hand of Yahweh was upon me’, describing entrance into the trance state, whereas the technical term of ecstasy as such is ‘visions of God’ Unlike Isaiah’s visions in Isaiah 21, which records the nightmarish reaction of the prophet (c.f. also Habakkuk 3:16), there is no hint of any personal response on the part of Ezekiel (but see 11:13).

Wevers (1982), however, is in error to conclude that all visionary experiences are necessarily ecstatic and thus concluding that prophets were always in a trance at the point of receiving revelation through prophetic pictures. Ezekiel never worked himself into frenzy in order to receive his visions. For example in Ezekiel 8:1 it reads,

While I was sitting in my house and the elders of Judah were sitting before me, the hand of the Sovereign Lord came upon me there. I looked and saw the figure like that of a man

The passage does not seem to depict a man in a trance but rather someone sitting among a group of concerned elders considering the situation they found themselves as exiles in a foreign land (Babylon). Wevers also failed to realize that visions are of many kinds. There is what is known as the

‘open’ vision where the faculties of the prophet are intact and the prophet is seeing into the realm of the spirit, just as in the case of Ezekiel in the above passage. Here the prophet is not in prayer (1 Samuel 3:1; Ezekiel 1:1; 8:1-4; Daniel 8:1-3; 10:30). The second kind may be known as a ‘night’ vision where things are revealed to the prophet when he is asleep (Job 20:8; 33:15; Isaiah 29:7; Daniel 2:19; 7:2). The third kind is the ‘closed’ vision where the prophet sees while in prayer with the eyes closed (Daniel 9: 20-23; Acts 9:10-13). The fourth kind is what may be known as the trance. In this case, the faculties of the prophet are suspended even though the prophet is not asleep, yet he sees into the spirit realm (Ezekiel 8:3; Daniel 8:15-18). However, according to Moytyer the terms *nabi*, *roeh* and *hozeh* are sometimes synonymous (Moytyer, in Douglas, *New Bible Dictionary*, 1962, p. 1037). 1 Chronicles 29:29 (HCSB) uses all three terms in one verse:

As for the events of King David’s reign, from beginning to end, note that they are written in the Events of Samuel the seer (*roeh*), the Events of Nathan the prophet (*nabi*), and the Events of Gad the seer (*hozeh*).

It must however be noted that in Israel, there was no standard prerequisite for someone to become a prophet (Freedman, 1992, p. 482). What made one a prophet was divine inspiration, and it was this inspiration that caused the prophet to speak out and to be listened to as a legitimate spokesperson for God.

Man of God (*ish / ha / elohim*)

Occasionally used for the role of the Israelite prophet is another term: man of God (*ish / ha / elohim*). In 1 Samuel 9:6, for example, the term man of God is used for the prophet Samuel:

And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God (*ish/halelohim*), and he is an honorable man: all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither: peradventure he can show us our way that we should go.

Petersen (1997) noted that the expression 'man of God' is used of Elisha (27 times) and Elijah (5 times). The term or title, however, he noted described men who demonstrated God's power rather than men who uttered words or encountered visions. Petersen explained in his work that the man of God like the Israelite priest profiled the sacred among the profane but without performing any rituals characteristic of the priests (Petersen, 1997). However, this researcher, after a careful examination of some biblical passages, holds that the title 'man of God' may be highlighting additional functions of certain class of prophets. Not all prophets in the Bible are associated with miraculous feats. Moses was associated with miraculous feats (Deuteronomy 34:10-12). Again, Elijah (1 Kings 12:1), and Elisha (2 Kings 4:32-37; 6:1-6), were also associated with signs and wonders and miracles. This was not so with all the prophets.

Thus, there are three key Hebrew terms that describe the Hebrew “prophet” – *roeh*, *hozeh* and *nabi* (Freeman, 2005, p. 40). The words *roeh* and *hozeh* both mean “to see” and in the English Bible are usually translated as seer. In 1 Samuel 9:9 it is stated that the prophet was formerly called a seer, and in Isaiah 30:10, the word *roeh* is used for a prophet. According to Wood (1998), the two words translated seer refers “to the revelational aspect of the prophets’ work, when they heard from God and discerned His will.” Williams (1931) also identifies the seer as one that sees in a trance, endowed with the faculty of seeing in the Spirit by Divine intuition, and of looking through the darkness of the then present hour with illumination upon and toward the future.

Thus, the terms *roeh* and *hozeh* emphasize the subjective element – ‘a personal reception of divine revelation by visionary seeing or insight’ (Gentile, 1999, p. 389). The seer was believed to be the contemplative (solitary figure) type of prophet “who went about in bands or companies and appeared to live in community.” (Gentile, 1999, p. 389).

Goll (2004, p. 23) made a very interesting observation:

All true seers are prophets, but not all prophets are seers. A prophet may have the particular grace to hear and proclaim the word of the Lord and yet not necessarily function as profusely in the revelatory visionary capacity as a seer does. The seer, on the other hand, may move quite remarkably in this

visionary dream capacity yet not be as deep in the inspirational audible graces of hearing and speaking. Nevertheless, both move and operate in the prophetic realm, but in different capacities or dimensions.

However, it is suggested by some scholars that since the same individual can be designated by the three terms, *nabi*, *hozeh*, and *roeh*, there may not be any distinction among them (Freeman, 2005). The basis of their argument is that, first, in 1 Samuel 9:9, the offices of prophet and seer are identical (“Formerly in Israel, a man who was going to inquire of God would say, ‘Come, let’s go to the seer,’ for the Prophet of today was formerly called the Seer” - HCSB). In 2 Samuel 24:11 Gad the Prophet is called both prophet and seer -“the prophet [*nabhi*] Gad, David’s seer [*hozeh*].” The three terms are used together in 1 Chronicles 29:29:

As for the events of King David’s reign ... are written in the Events of Samuel the Seer [*roeh*], the Events of Nathan the prophet [*nabhi*], and in the Events of Gad the seer [*hozeh*] (HCSB).

If the distinctions between the act of seeing on the part of the *roeh* and the *hozeh* are excessive, it is easier said than done to make understandable the gradual diminishing of the term *roeh* and the emergence of the use of *hozeh* in the frequency of use in the Old Testament Scriptures. Generally, Girdlestone (1948) has noted that the term *roeh* was used from 1100 to 700 BC and the

term *hozeh* from 800 BC to the close of the Old Testament canon. However, he noted that the word *nabi* is used throughout the period of biblical revelation. The distinctions drawn among the three terms *nabi*, *roeh*, and *hozeh* are only superficial in nature, and generally have to do with the ministry of the prophet rather than a different ministry altogether.

Mediterranean and New Testament Understanding of Prophecy

The Septuagint, Greek version of the Old Testament, translated the Hebrew term *nabi* into the Greek *prophetes* consistently throughout the Old Testament. Writers of the New Testament continued to use the same word without any redefinition or explanation: “In the *LXX* [Septuagint] *nabi* is always translated *prophetes*; there is not a single instance of any other word” (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 6, p. 242).

The New Testament informs us that prophecy is a reality and must not be despised (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21). The New Testament accounts tell us that both men and women functioned as prophets in the Churches (Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:4-5). Again, the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* explains that the term prophet may mean either “called” or “calling” (p. 668). Thus, a prophet is “one who speaks for or on behalf of another” (p. 668). “Prophets, therefore, are those who communicate in various ways God’s message to the community of faith” (p. 668). Examination of the New Testament shows that New Testament prophets used oral means to convey their messages, even though sometimes it was supplemented with visible demonstrations as in Paul being bound by Agabus (Acts 21:10-11). Aune (1991, pp. 247-248; 317-318; chapter

10) also presented five criteria for New Testament prophecy to be identified as such. He noted that a message would be prophetic if it: had supernatural origin; contained specific knowledge; used a certain formula; was introduced by the qualification of the speaker; did not conform to a literary classification. Based on this schema, Aune identified oracles which: announced salvation or judgement; predicted the future; confirmed ecclesiastical status; provided assurance; carried eschatological themes.

Aune noted that the prophets' messages in the Old Testament were predictive and in cases like that there was often a covenantal basis and an opportunity for the hearers to experience Yahweh's blessings. Sometimes, future events were simply outlined. Some of the prophecies gave no indications of the time frame for fulfillment and indeed did not come to pass in the lifetime of the prophet. We are also informed in 1 Peter 1:10-12 that the prophets did not even know the period their messages referred to. Consequently, assessment of the prophet's authenticity, after the manner of Deuteronomy 18:22 could not appeal to the utterances' fulfillment. What needed to be noted is that a positive response of the hearers to a message in the form of repentance could avert a threatened outcome and so render a prophecy technically unfulfilled while, at the same time, completing God's purposes (Freedman, 1997).

In the New Testament, prophecy is seen as the reception and subsequent delivery of divinely originating revelation at the spur of the moment (Turner, 1999). Biblical prophecy therefore is seen as a sort of

revelatory speech, that is, “speech which is fully inspired by God’s Spirit and therefore totally true and totally authoritative” (Turner, 1999, p. 183). Grudem views two distinct types of prophecy in the New Testament. According to him the apostles had fully authoritative prophecy that was on the same level as the Old Testament type, while amongst the congregation there was a weaker type of prophecy (Turner, 1999). For Grudem, the type of prophecy exhibited by the apostles was fully authoritative and gave foundational revelation, which became scripture (Grudem, 2001). According to him, the weaker one or the congregational type did not establish doctrine but was nevertheless helpful for the “up building and direction of the Church, or individuals, often in areas which Scripture had nothing to say” (Grudem, 2001, p. 184). For Grudem therefore, the apostolic type had passed away while the congregational type was ongoing (Grudem, 2001). However, in the New Testament, there is no evidence of any distinction between apostolic prophecy and congregational prophecy as espoused by Grudem.

In the New Testament prophecies may be used to give direction for ministry (1 Timothy 1:18):

Timothy, my child, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by them you may strongly engage in battle, ... (HCSB).

Another New Testament example is found in Acts 13:2:

As they were ministering to the Lord, and fasting,
the Holy Spirit said, 'Set for Me Barnabas and Saul
for the work that I have called them to (HCSB).

1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 Paul dealt with the irregularities in the worship in the Corinthian church, a question about the nature of spiritual gifts, and the exercise of these gifts in the public assembly.

Prophecy in Early Christianity

Some historical surveys of Prophetism in the New Testament and its conceptual hinterland have been made by Aune (1991, chapters 4&5), and Forbes (1995, chapters. 5&8). They deal with definitions of prophecy as it pertained to the New Testament world. They both define prophecy as intelligible messages originating from God and delivered in human language through inspired human mediums (Aune, 1991 chapters 4&5; Forbes, 1995, chapters 5&8). Aune, wrote,

In ancient Israel, as in Greece, "inspired prophecy," a phrase which is interchangeable with "oracular divination," consists of comprehensible verbal messages from the supernatural world conveyed through an inspired medium who may be designated as a prophet (Aune, 1991, p. 82).

The definition of prophecy by Forbes, (1995) expresses the same notion as that of Aune. These will be very helpful in this work in explaining Prophetism in the CoP.

Prophecy played very important role in early Christianity, evidenced by its permeation of New Testament literature (Aune, 1983). There is also vast amount of literature to prove that prophetic activity did not disappear at the end of the apostolic period (Aune, 1991). Some of the literature during the period was regarded as canonical by various segments of the church (Turner, 1996). Aune (1983) and Forbes (1983) who are considered to have produced the most up-to-date historical surveys of Prophetism in the New Testament, and its conceptual hinterland both view prophecy to be intelligible verbal message believed to originate with God, and to be communicated through an inspired human intermediary (Turner, 1996, p. 184; Aune, 1983 p. 339; Forbes, 1983, p. 219). Aune (1983) noted that the letters of Ignatius, an early bishop of Antioch who died as a martyr at the end of Trajan's reign (AD 98-117) together with New Testament writings as well as works during the last decade of the first century and AD 150 give us ideas about the form and content of early Christian prophecy (Aune, 1991). These ideas tell us about the profiles of the prophet.

It appears that the ability to reveal things about people was considered to be prophecy in New Testament times. For example, in John 4:18 after Jesus had declared to the Samaritan woman "For you've had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true" (HSCB),

the woman remarked, “Sir I see that you art a prophet” (John 4:19 - HSCB). From this statement, it seems that one of the functions of the New Testament prophet had to do with the ability to unravel secrets. This accords with what is written in 1 Corinthians 14:24-25. Again, the ability to predict the future was identified as prophecy in New Testament times:

One of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, ‘You know nothing at all . . . He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied . . . (John 11: 49-52 – HCSB).

Nevertheless, early Christian prophetic speeches were of diverse forms, namely, revelation, admonition, narrative, oath and revelation, song, commission and comfort (Aune, 1991). In the Old Testament only specially endowed individuals prophesied, however, Paul makes it abundantly clear that any Spirit filled believer can desire to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1, 5). The fact that in the Bible prophets/prophecy are mentioned in all four lists of spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11) show their importance. Vincent (1975) noted that prophecy had the purpose of being an “utterance under immediate divine inspiration; delivering divine inspirations; instructions, or warnings ... Direct inspiration distinguished ‘prophecy’ from ‘teaching.’ Thus, the last statement allows for prophecy to be a supernatural element – especially the non-predictive prophecy. The biblical prophets revealed God’s will which otherwise may

never have been known. Walvoord (1973) enumerates certain factors necessary to the prophetic gift as follows: (1) the prophet must have received his message from God in the form of some special revelation, (2) the prophet must have divine guidance in the declaration of this revelation, corresponding to the inspiration of the written word, (3) the message delivered by the prophet must bear with it the authority of God. The Biblical prophets were seen as the spokespersons of God for the inspired messages to be delivered.

Summary

In summary, the following were noted in the chapter: Even though there are different conceptions of prophecy by a number of groups, it is generally accepted by majority of biblical scholars that prophecy has to do with inspired utterance. Prophecy must originate from a divine source and must be delivered through a human medium. It is noted in this chapter that the terms *nabi*, *hozeh*, *roeh* as observed in the biblical text may all be translated as prophet but that there may be some distinctions among them. Prophecy is a very old phenomenon spanning ancient times to the present, and is available to both male and females. Prophets in the Bible functioned as spokespersons for God, intercessors on behalf of the nation and individuals, and sometimes performed priestly functions. There is relationship between the New Testament world's understanding of prophecy and prophecy in contemporary times. Examination of the New Testament shows that New Testament prophets used oral means to convey their messages, even though sometimes it was supplemented with visible demonstrations. Aune also presented five criteria

for New Testament prophecy to be identified as such. He noted that a message would be prophetic if it: had supernatural origin; contained specific knowledge; used a certain formula; was introduced by the qualification of the speaker; did not conform to a literary classification. Based on this schema, Aune identified oracles which: announced salvation or judgement; predicted the future; confirmed ecclesiastical status; provided assurance; carried eschatological themes.

The messages of the prophets in the Old Testament were predictive and in cases like that there was often a covenantal basis and an opportunity for the hearers to experience Yahweh's blessings. Sometimes, future events were simply outlined. Some of the prophecies gave no indications of the time frame for fulfillment and indeed did not come to pass in the lifetime of the prophet. We are also informed in 1 Peter 1:10-12 that the prophets did not even know the period their messages referred to. Consequently, assessment of the prophet's authenticity, after the manner of Deuteronomy 18:22 could not appeal to the utterances' fulfillment. What needs to be noted is that a positive response of the hearers to a prophetic message in the form of repentance could avert a threatened outcome and so render a prophecy technically unfulfilled while, at the same time, completing God's purposes, as in the case of Micah 3:12 (Freedman, D. N. 1997). Thus, prophecies can be categorized as conditional and unconditional. The conditional ones depend on human action for fulfillment, while the unconditional ones do not need human actions. Having examined the way the prophet received his messages and spoke forth, we now turn to the next chapter where the roots and historical development of

Prophetism in the USA and the United Kingdom are examined, with a view to understanding how Prophetism in the CoP may be linked to other Pentecostal groups.



CHAPTER THREE

PROPHETISM IN THE USA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

In this chapter, the researcher examines Prophetism in the USA and the United Kingdom. Here, he attempts to lead the reader to the genesis of Prophetism in the CoP. In this light, the work examines prophetic practices in Pentecostalism in the United States of America as well as the United Kingdom's perceptions of Prophetism. This was done to decipher how American and British perceptions may help us to understand Prophetism in the CoP, since they are connected. The nature and significance of prophecy in American and British Pentecostalism is discussed. Finally, similarities and dissimilarities between the two are deduced.

Prophetism in USA Pentecostalism

Synan (2001) has noted that though the modern Pentecostal movement had its genesis in the United States of America, much of its theology was rooted in earlier British perfectionistic and charismatic movements. He intimated that at least three of these movements – the Methodist holiness movement, the Catholic Apostolic movement of Edward Irving, and the

British Keswick “Higher Life” movement made the preparation for what appeared to be a spontaneous outpouring of the Holy Spirit in America.

Pentecostals believe that the hallmark of normative Christianity must be the modern experience of Pentecost, which she refers to as “the baptism in the Holy Spirit” evidenced by speaking in a tongue (language) unknown to the speaker. This experience is considered a “*donum superadditum*” (subsequent experience) to being born again or accepting Jesus Christ. Following the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit the Pentecostals teach is the manifestation of gifts of the Spirit including prophecy. Fee and Stuart (2006) have noted that prophecy is undoubtedly a factor in the revitalization of Pentecostalism. Thus, the place of prophecy in Pentecostalism needs elucidation in the next section.

The Place of Prophecy

Yong, a Pentecostal scholar, has noted that the third element of the Pentecostal fivefold gospel, Jesus the baptizer in the Holy Spirit is followed by the manifestation of the prophetic gift the functioning of which is needed in what he called “a politico-prophetic theology of mission and socio-cultural evangelization” (Yong, 2010, p. 211). Prophecy, according to some Pentecostal scholars is for both the foretelling of future events as well as to the forth-telling of the word of God. Prophecy in global Pentecostalism is rooted in interrelated aspects of dispensationalist eschatology, an eschatological system and hermeneutic developed in the nineteenth century by John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), one of the founding members of the Separatistic (from the

Church of Ireland) Plymouth Brethren movement in the 1830s (Crutchfield, 1992; Hoekema, 1979; Kromminga, 1948 chapters 3-7; Bass, 1960; Clouse, 1977). Dispensationalists belong to a group of Christians that divide the dealings of God with the human race into a number of distinct “dispensations” (Ryrie, 1965; Hoekema, 1979). The *New Scofield Bible* distinguishes seven such dispensations: Innocence, Conscience or Moral Responsibility, Human Government, Promise, Law, the Church and the Kingdom. A dispensation according to this scheme is defined as “period of time during which human beings are tested in respect of their obedience to specific revelation of God’s will” (Hoekema, 1979, p. 188).

For Pentecostals, to know God is to participate in his redemptive presence in the world (Murray *et. al.*, 1999). This, they contend demands that Pentecostals offer to the world a truly prophetic and holistic praxis; one which first of all integrates godly affections into reflection and action; secondly, it is modeled in the life of the church; and thirdly, it is integrated into the missional presence of the church in the world. Under the leading of the Spirit the church may indeed enter into a shared praxis with persons and groups of the world (Murray, *et. al.*, 1999). Pentecostalism in this work is noted to be compatible with the leading praxis models of education and social reform. Praxis refers to a way of knowing in which the subject unites thinking and doing (Murray *et. al.*, 1999), a process by which a theory, lesson or skill is established, practised, manifested or achieved. It could also have reference to the act of employing, applying, exercising, accomplishing or practising ideas. This model or paradigm requires that “Pentecostals take care to preserve their historic self-

understanding as a prophetic movement – the humble who speak for God” (Murray, *et. al.*, 1999, p. 71).

Nature and Significance of Prophecy

Pentecostals believe that God speaks to them on a daily basis, and that the gifts of the Spirit work among them, and that the Holy Spirit causes the word of God to “come alive” whenever they read it (Synan, 2001, pp. 97-148). Unfortunately, their belief in and practice of Prophetism is by no means uniform. Pentecostals are continuationists, meaning that they believe that the gifts of the Spirit continue to operate in the Christian church in the present time (Duffield and Van Cleave, 1983/2008). Pentecostal ministers who practise Prophetism, in most cases base their practices on the Old Testament and little on the New Testament where they use the nine gifts of the Spirit given in 1 Corinthians chapter twelve “as the focus of their thinking about the charismata, the emphasis being on tongues, interpretation and prophecy, sometimes called ‘voice gifts’ (Randall, 1999, p. 221). A very important consideration for Pentecostals was how far they followed scriptures that gave guidance on the use of gifts of the Spirit.

A Prophet is believed by most Pentecostal groups to be a person who has a consistent manifestation of at least two revelation gifts (word of wisdom, word of knowledge and, or discerning of spirits) plus prophecy. These terms are explained in the fifth chapter. However, Wagner (1990) does not seem to agree with the classical Pentecostal tradition concerning the relationship between the revelation gifts and prophecy. This researcher, from the

observation of the use of the gift of prophecy in the Church of Pentecost, Assemblies of God, Apostolic Church in Ghana does not seem to wholly agree with Wagner's position. What Wagner failed to notice was that people who do not have revelation gifts but prophesy do not bring up predictive elements into their prophetic messages.

This position seems to accord with scripture: while all believers may prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:31, 39), not all are prophets (1 Corinthians 12:29). The construction of 1 Corinthians 12:29 suggests that the answer to the question whether all were prophets is to be in the negative. All believers may evangelize but not all are designated evangelists. Thus the distinction between a prophet and other believers is that of degree more than kind. The prophet is a person with extraordinary prophetic ability. The prophet is not one because he or she holds a certain office in the church, but because of his or her prophetic ability. Notwithstanding, the designation prophet appears not to be a title of office, but a function or description of work within the church.

According to Wagner, prophets began to be widely recognized in the 1980s (Wagner, 2000). This state of affairs, Wagner intimates was so because prophets had to first "open the curtain of God's revelation to key church leaders, allowing them to look through to see that when the apostles came, it was truly something the Spirit was saying to the churches" (Wagner, 2000, p. 75).

Diverse Understanding of Prophecy

Pentecostals, the world over are of the view that prophetic ministry is related to the need for knowing the will of God for their lives. In spite of that few thoughtful and honest Pentecostals will contend that all is not well with their churches in the area of understanding and handling the prophetic. A brief survey of the histories of some of them will bring out a vivid contrast among them in their views of prophecy and its role in the churches. They make some discrimination between what they call the prophetic ministry and the gift of prophecy. They are however widely divided as to the function of prophecy as the discussion below will show.

“The Assemblies of God had its roots in a religious revival that began in the late 1800’s and swept into the 20th century with widespread repetition of biblical experience.” The Ghana branch however forms a part of the worldwide fellowship of Assemblies of God born out of the modern Pentecostal revival that is traced to the Azusa Street Revival in USA around the year 1914 (Assemblies of God, Ghana, 75th Anniversary Brochure, 2006, p. 8). Assemblies of God Ghana had its beginnings in the ministries of American missionaries Lloyed and Margaret Shirer who entered the country from Ouagadougou and settled at Yendi in October 1931 at the invitation of the Yaa-Naa the paramount chief of the Dagombas (Ton-Laar, 2009). Though the invitation was to the Shirers, Miss Beular Buchwalter and Guy Hickock, Miss Beular left in March 1934 for the Canary Island and in January 1935 back to the United States of America due to ill health (Ton-Laar, 2009). Guy

Hickock died two years after arrival at Yendi. Miss Beular later came back to Yendi and died there on November 15, 1942 in service to God (Ton-Laar, 2009). However, some work had started in Yendi.

The Assemblies of God, along with a number of Pentecostal denominations never embraced the idea of ordained prophets functioning in the church. Many within the Assemblies of God Church believe that there are some within their ranks who do exercise the ministry function of apostles and prophets. However, the United States Assemblies of God like their counterparts worldwide holds that “the New Testament does not make provision for the establishing of the prophet in a hierarchical governing structure of the church.” (General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God [USA] Official Position Paper, “Apostles and Prophets” (2001): 12-13).

The Assemblies of God therefore holds that prophets are supposed to provide information rather than give directions for church government (Kay, 1991). Nonetheless, Howard Carter who was appointed chairman of the Assemblies of God in the United Kingdom in 1934 recalled receiving a prophecy on 24 May 1928 “telling him to mark this as a day of future blessing” (Randall, 1999, p. 223). Gee affirmed the story as illustrating genuine prophecy (1 June 1934, p. 10). Donald Gee (1891-1996) a foremost international Pentecostal spokesman and a minister with the Assemblies of God Church noted that “gifts of prophecy, tongues and interpretation had much in common, and that ‘prophetic interpretations’ released by tongues could be genuine, but he conceded that the custom was not strictly scriptural”

(1932, p. 3). Donald Gee (1891-1966) a leader of Assemblies of God was regarded as Pentecostalism's most prodigious writer and penetrating thinker as well as the foremost international Pentecostal spokesman for many years ((Randall, 1999).

This man, Donald Gee, was fearful that attempts to curb abuses in the exercise of the charismata could quench the Spirit. The Assemblies of God was from the very beginning of its history "suspicious of the activities of Apostolic 'prophets'" (Randall, 1999). Their reasons were that prophets delivered their messages as if they (the prophets) were speaking God's own words by speaking in the first person singular. In order to direct the church the oldest Pentecostal Bible College in the world (Hampstead Bible College) in Great Britain was established by the Assemblies of God Church and handled by John and Howard Carter to train ministers in authentic Bible doctrines (Randall, 1999).

The Assemblies of God, therefore, right from the beginning, made frantic efforts to locate itself within traditional evangelical convictions (Randall, p. 206). Thus within Pentecostalism, there was a common belief in prophecy as genuine revelation from God. In spite of this according to Moses Sumaila, Principal of Assemblies of God Mid-Ghana Bible College in Kumasi, in their ministers' meetings, if there happened to be a directive prophecy it is treated in its own right taking into consideration biblical guidelines for testing prophecy (Sumaila, M. Personal communication, May 20, 2011).

The Latter Rain Movement (LRM)

The LRM was an eruption of charismatic manifestations in North Battleford Saskatchewan Canada in 1946-48, believed to be the start of a remarkable departure in history of the Pentecostal type of churches around the world. Ben Nort, President of the Apostolic Church (AC) in Canada conceded that although the LRM had brought some gains, the LRM did some things differently. Prophets were not arranged as in the AC, that is, local, national or international, but autonomously (Worsfold, 1991). This was to bring about a clash between AC and LRM practices in the CoP. In the 1950's prophets in the AC were themselves "disturbed by the system for the restriction to certain spheres which placed a prophet in a circle of administration that no other prophet was permitted to speak about" (Worsfold, 1991, p. 302). The call of Wyatt as an apostle through the prophet Adams McKweown, a LRM Prophet, and brother of James McKweown raised disquiet in some members of the AC in Britain (Worsfold, 1991). In spite of that Wyatt became associated with the AC in the Gold Coast. LRM prophetic practices were then passed on to the AC in the Gold Coast.

British Perceptions of Prophetism

According to Randall (1999), the roots and history of Prophetism in the Apostolic Faith Church, later the Church of Pentecost in Ghana can be traced to the Welsh revival that occurred in the United Kingdom since British Pentecostalism owed more to the effects of the Welsh Revival. The Welsh revival of 1904/5 had tremendous effects on many parts of the British Isles. As

a result of the revival, there sprung up Pentecostal groups worldwide which also believed that the gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers of Ephesians 4:11 should operate in the church together with the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit spelt out in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. Anyone who had a consistent manifestation of what was known as the voice gifts, that is, the gift of diverse kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, the gift of prophecy and revelation gifts coupled with the act of ordination was considered a prophet in AFC (Worsfold, 1991).

Gee (1932) intimated that spiritual gifts such as prophecy, tongues and interpretation had much in common, and that 'prophetic interpretations' given out by tongues could be authentic, but he acknowledged that the practice was not strictly scriptural. One Brethren spokesman, Pollock (1929, p. 7) in *Modern Pentecostalism* linked speaking in tongues "to heathen practices". It is interesting to note that Hathaway (1933), a former Apostolic Faith Church (A. F. C.) minister, who became a Field Superintendent of the Elim Church in the United Kingdom in 1933 reacted strongly against the practice of ordination when he wrote: 'The creation of so-called offices by appointment through a human ordination or by a word of prophecy is nothing more than a pitiable make-believe.' He however, saw nothing wrong with the use of prophecy. He was against the idea of ordaining someone and designating the person as a prophet. The Apostolic Church in the United Kingdom into which the CoP was 'converted' came out of the Apostolic Faith Church that was united in consulting the 'set prophets' or the 'ordained prophets' (Gee, November 1922, p. 164).

The position of the AFC on prophecy is exemplified by an article, which was presented by Hutchinson (1939), which stated that “there is no difference at all” between the written word and the spoken word, for him they are both the “word of God” (*Showers*, no. 14.4). Thus Hutchinson (1939) viewed prophecies as infallible, and the callings along with others that were done were to demonstrate the New Testament offices of Apostle and Prophet in the United Kingdom. Williams, Hutchinson’s successor initially held to the belief in the infallibility of divine utterance (Williams, 1931). Years later, though affirming the authenticity of the prophetic gift, he also acknowledged the possibility of error depending on the state of the prophet when he wrote:

“Prophecy is a gift in the bowels of a prophet and is perfect. It cannot be touched by a subconscious or a conscious mind, but the prophet who has the infallible gift of the Holy Spirit in him, if he gives forth words that were not from that gift, knows that he is doing it” (1920, *Riches of Grace* 3, no. 1:73-74). The fact that Hutchinson later on in ministry preferred the prophecies of his son-in-law and Mrs. Kenny as against prophecies coming through Jones Williams highlighted the challenges of directive prophecies (Worsfold, 1991). Randall (1999) has noted, “Apostolic groups were united in the practice of ‘consulting the prophet’; which entailed seeking guidance from those identified as having the gift of prophecy – known as the ‘set prophets’ and acting upon their words, a procedure which other Pentecostals feared” (Gee, November 1922, p. 164). Seeking guidance via the prophet was to be adopted by the Apostolic Church and later by the CoP.

This governmental role, though accepted in some Pentecostal Churches like the Apostolic Faith Church, the Apostolic Church and the Christ Apostolic Church, to mention only a few, it is not endorsed by others, for example, the Elim Pentecostal Churches worldwide and the Assemblies of God Church.

Due to this diversity in the use of prophecy, the Assemblies of God Church, the Elim Church and the Apostolic Church in the United Kingdom agreed that they would ‘work in unison, provided all prophetic utterances, especially those for guidance, are judged by a responsible body of believers’ (Minutes of the Apostolic Church General Executive Meeting held at Workington, 6 June to 13 June 1939, p 12, Apostolic Church Headquarters, cited in Randall, 1999). In Elim, explicit warnings were made against prophecies, which included the phrase: ‘The Lord has spoken’ (Randall, 1999, p. 222). The Elim Church was therefore comfortable hearing a prophet saying, “I feel the Lord is telling me . . .” rather than “the Lord says . . .” as occurs in the AC. This researcher, however, is yet to find the biblical basis for Elim’s position.

The Apostolic Faith Church (AFC.) a trinitarian (they believe in one God, revealed in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and fundamental Church dating back from 1912 was the first Pentecostal group that held to restoring New Testament offices of apostles and prophets (Worsfold, 1991).

In 1910, William Oliver Hutchinson visited Penygroes prompted by prophecy through a recognized prophetess living in London (Worsfold, 1991).

He met D. P. Williams and his brother Jones Williams who through prophecy were to be ordained apostle and prophet respectively. Hutchinson acted on the prophecy immediately. In February 1911, some young men from an Evangelistic Church in Penygroes gathered at D. P. Williams' house for prayer and fellowship. One of them Ivor Thomas, prophesied and said,

Hearken thou unto my word my servant. I have a purpose for thee this night to go on My word to the home of thy brother (Jones) – Thou shalt find two young men there. Deliver unto him this message that 'My spirit shall not always strive with men', for I have purposed that he shall stand at thy side in the days that are coming, and he shall travel with thee to many lands, for he is chosen vessel unto Me, yea, a channel shall he be in My hands", said the Lord. "Prove thou Me, My servant, and fear not for it shall come to pass, saith the Lord." (*Souvenir Exhibiting the Movements of God in the Apostolic Church*, p. 1933).

D. P. Williams obeyed the prophecy and went to the home of his brother. There he found two young men, one being his brother Jones. He gave them the prophecy and offered prayer and the two men went to the Church and surrendered their lives to the Lord. The prophetic word was meticulously

fulfilled and Jones later became a prophet and helped direct the AC (Worsfold, 1991).

Prophecy in the AFC was recorded and transcribed by many, very highly skilled shorthand-writers, both men and women members of the congregation (Worsfold, 1991). The human contribution to receiving the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands was popularized (Worsfold, 1991). The Assemblies of God Great Britain had reservations to using biblical titles for its Church leaders. Up to the 1950's any leader in the Assemblies of God in Great Britain was simply known as brother (Worsfold, 1991). The AC, however, used biblical titles for its leaders.

In 1911 the AFC held a convention at Kilysth in Scotland with the main speakers being Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson, Mrs. Kenny, and Evangelist Smith Wigglesworth (Worsfold, p. 54). Prophetic ministry, which brought guidance to some leaders in the AFC, now played an important role in the congregations. In the AFC phrases such as "called of the Lord" or "called to" in the Church's reports of activities are used (Worsfold, 1991, p. 66). These phrases are used to describe the results of prophetic words "through the gift of the Spirit calling or nominating leaders for positions of authority or change of pastor" (Worsfold, p. 66). The practice continued in the AC up until the 1950s, but with the significant distinction that callings and nominations to pastorate came through recognized prophets in the Church. This practice infrequently happens in the AC today (Worsfold, 1991). In the year 1911 Brother and Sister Higgs-Roderick from Wales were commissioned for a mission in South Africa

interpreted to be in fulfillment of a prophetic word concerning their lives (Worsfold, 1991). However, it was to be James Brooke of the AFC and leader of Belleuve Chapel, Swansea, who provided Apostolic ministry for the congregation in South Africa in 1912 (Worsfold, 1991). Earlier in the AFC Hutchinson was the only recognized apostle, and for that reason, the good ship of the AFC sailed in calm waters. This notion of one apostle was soon to be displaced by the scriptural teaching that God had set in the Church a plurality of ministries: firstly, apostles, secondly, prophets (Worsfold, 1991).

If the Church were to remain submitted to the Lord it would have to face the challenge to develop an apostleship and prophethood, - developing some form of collegiality “the inner spirit of a group of colleagues involved in decision-making and in taking responsibility” (Worsfold, 1991, p. 76). The AFC made the distinction between the ministry of the prophet and the gift of prophecy. The distinction between the ministry of prophet and the gift of prophecy for many years was cause for debate and at times division in the AFC. Was prophecy the word of God or a word from God? Was the utterance of a prophet more authoritative than that through the gift of prophecy? The AFC failed to settle on biblical criteria to test the prophetic inspiration coming among them (Worsfold, 1991).

The function and fulfillment of prophecy in the AFC was not without difficulties. “Those called to the office of prophet were at times, plunged into doubt and despair”, not knowing whether they had the ability or not (Worsfold, 1991, p. 136). The main prophet in the AFC, E. C. Boulton

recanted in 1915 positively declaring that what he had been prophesying over the years came from his own mind (Worsfold, 1991). This then made Hutchinson to become suspicious of the volume of prophecies coming through the prophets. Hutchinson, therefore, preferred prophecies coming through his son-in-law and Mrs. Kenny to any coming from any other prophet (Worsfold, 1991). Randall (1999) recalled one Boulton, previously a leading Apostolic Faith Church prophet but by 1922 was strongly antagonistic to Apostolic customs or practices of consulting the prophet. This was so because the Church later realized that prophecies were fallible. James E. Worsfold, a Pentecostal historian wrote: "In this matter, the Apostolic Faith Church was in serious error in equating the interpretation of tongues and prophetic utterance with the word of God and of also giving all utterance a life of its own" (Worsfold, 1991, p. 122).

"But in wider Pentecostalism it was observed that suspicion of Apostolic prophetic procedures was only slowly allayed" (Randall, 1999, p. 210). At the outset of the Pentecostal movement, procedures such as making appointments to church office on the basis of prophecy, or writing down new prophecies, were roundly condemned outside Apostolic circles (Hathaway, 1933), while attempts by Gee to discourage people from using the first person singular in prophecy as if God's own words were being spoken had little effect (*RT*, June 1932, p. 5).

In 1930, Henderson William, an Elim overseer insisted that prophecy was not for guidance but for edification, exhortation and comfort, while the

Assemblies of God church held that prophecy did not include revelation of the future (*EE*, 24 October 1930, pp. 675-676). The understanding that prophecy is a prediction of future events and therefore as foreknowledge, is not fully endorsed by Pentecostals who see prediction to be confined to the ministry of the prophet rather than someone who is operating “in the simple gift of prophecy.” (CoP constitution, 2010 p. 44; Assemblies of God, Madina Central, Annual Programme, 2011, p. 19).

Prophetism in The Apostolic Faith Church

The vision of apostolic doctrine that gripped the first leader of the Fellowship, Daniel Powell Williams, led to his ordination in 1913 as an apostle in the body of Christ. William Jones Williams, a brother of Daniel Powell Williams was also called to the full-time ministry as well as to office of a prophet in the Apostolic Church and in the body of Christ. D. P. Williams' ordination as a prophet by W. O. Hutchinson was in response to a prophetic message. In 1914 during an Apostolic Faith Church convention that took place in London, it was prophecy that identified Williams to be an overseer and apostle of the Apostolic Faith Church congregations in Wales and Williams was ordained as such immediately.

Nevertheless, Hutchinson's autocratic rule led to defections leading to the birth of the Apostolic Church (AC) led by Daniel Powell Williams (1882-1947) in 1916 in Penygroes, South Wales, United Kingdom (Turnbull, 1959/1963). It is interesting to note that original prophetic directives, which had profound influence on the Apostolic Church leaders and their followers

“were given through AFC prophets (both men and women) in Bournemouth, Penygroes, Kilsyth, and London” (Worsfold, 1991, p. 55-56). The ministry of the prophet, which brought guidance to the leaders in the AC, played a very significant function in the congregations as well (Worsfold, 1991).

What is very striking, when British Pentecostalism is compared with its American counterpart, is the absence of strong Wesleyan roots in England. “More powerful influences came through Keswick and Brethrenism” (Randall, 1999, p. 207). Pentecostals in Britain adopted Brethren terminology such as ‘assembly’ (Randall, 1999, p. 208). It is therefore not surprising to note that local churches in the CoP are called ‘assemblies.’ To be able to operate very powerfully in the prophetic and others it was believed that those seeking a more powerful experience of the Spirit often explored various avenues, including Wesleyan entire sanctification (Randall, 1999, p. 209). Horton (1934, (pp. 24, 3) in his influential book *The Gifts of the Spirit* has argued very strongly that while holiness was possible without the charismata, spiritual gifts were essential for a person to be “mighty in God”.

During the period 1937 to 1962 prophecy appeared at the top of the Apostolic Church’s minutes. However, this is not to say that prophecy ruled the Church. Daniel Powell Williams, one of the early Apostolic Church leaders had noted that a gift imparted by God’s Spirit was found to be unprofitable if the person operating in the gift will not be “ruled and guided by ordinations” (Williams, 1931, p. 87). What Williams was intimating was that the revelation via the prophet is to be evaluated and expounded by the apostle (Williams,

1931). Williams borrowed from an unnamed source by utilizing the metaphor of the hand to represent church government. The “index finger of the prophetic ministry” is directional in nature in that it points the way, but it is itself controlled by the thumb, which represents the apostles who provide wisdom and judgment of divine revelation (Williams, 1931, p. 88).

Nevertheless, Williams held the view of the infallibility of divine utterance (Williams, 1931). This was a dangerous position in view of the fact that Williams, though an apostle, was known to prophesy. James, a brother of Jesus Christ and an apostle had earlier noted, “We all stumble in many ways” (James 3:1-2). Williams noted that the apostles and prophets had some purposes including (1) evidence of the Spirit of God indwelling Christ’s body; (2) protection of the Church from human deceit; (3) perfection of the Church, work of the ministry and edification of the body of Christ; (4) unity of the spirit, faith, knowledge and love (Williams, 1931).

Prophecies carried both promise and warning during this period, challenging Christians to distance themselves from things that defile. The revelatory element was apparent in identifying purity of heart as a catalyst to removing obstacles and reminding God’s people of the Church’s mandate, that is, to evangelize the world. The weight of prophecy laid in the assertion that God “will visit sin” resulting in the response of many people to heart searching in prayer to God.

The position of the Apostolic Faith Church as well as the Apostolic Church on prophecy during the period is exemplified by an article by James

Hutchinson-Dennis. The article states that “there is no difference at all” between the written and spoken word, they are both the “Word of God” (Hutchinson-Dennis, 1939, number 14.4). Thus, Hutchinson-Dennis, equated prophecy with the Scriptures. McKweown, however, believed that prophecies must be tested against the Bible in order to ascertain their authenticity.

Prophecy was better developed in the AC. Prophecies in the AFC had been used to supply guidance covering a wide range of policy and praxis. Prophecy was to continue with new enthusiasm in the AC in Wales. In fact, the practice of “enquiring of the Lord through the prophet” was to become even more popular in the immediate years (Worsfold, 1991, pp. 172-173). In spite of the odd embarrassment and disappointment that sometimes resulted from this practice, there are many often-remarkable testimonies to the effect that the Lord did meet the enquirers’ needs often in miraculous ways when the prophetic word given was received and obeyed (Worsfold, 1991). Promoting a prophetic word at times to the level of infallibility was very disappointing and an element of mystery.

In 1917, prophecy through Jones Williams informed the leadership of the AC to save money to erect a temple for worship at Penygroes. However, a further prophecy came forth asking that the saved money be put in a pool to help other AC congregations who were struggling to provide places of worship for their members (Worsfold, 1991). Williams however agreed and answered that at the right time the Lord would meet the Church’s need at Penygroes. Gradual diminishing of the influence and personal charisma of district leaders

and so on through organizational structures that were not flexible led to tensions and cessations.

About the time of the Second World War the functions of prophets were overhauled. The influence of the prophetic ministry was not prominent as formerly (Worsfold, 1991). Although still a chief ingredient of service, and much used to call people to various offices and responsibilities prophecy was no longer the awe in congregations that it formerly had (Worsfold, 1991). From 1940, in the AC, though the gift of prophecy for edification was not discouraged, “it was the concern that prophets were speaking too much on governmental or administrative matters” (Worsfold, 1991). Perhaps the single biggest feature that demonstrates the importance of prophecy to the Apostolic Church happens to be the conditions placed on its use. According to the Church, prophecy was to be used in the Church under the supervision of the local presbytery. It was not to be used privately in homes unless “an elder or higher officer” was present and the occasion was a recognized church meeting (*Apostolic Church: Principles and Practices*, 1937, p. 224-225). During the period 1937 to 1962 the ‘set’ or ordained prophetic instruments would usually designate a person who was to be called; notwithstanding, apostles, on receiving a direct revelation from God had control to ordain an individual to any position.

Prophecy formed a fundamental element in D. P. Williams’ spirituality and subsequently the Church of Pentecost in Ghana. A number of challenges faced the Ghana church that led to the formation of the Christ Apostolic

Church in 1938, the Gold Coast Apostolic Church in 1953 and later the CoP in 1962.

Prophetism in the Apostolic Church 1937-1962

This time delineation will aid us see how Prophetism has been important from the beginning of the Church as well as note the shifts in understanding and use of prophecy in the Church. From 1962, the CoP was born out of the Apostolic Church led by Reverend James McKweown. James was born on 12 September 1900 in Glenboig, Scotland to Irish parents (Leonard, 1989). At nineteen years of age McKweown accepted Christ in his hometown, Ballymena (Leonard, 1989). Later on in life, McKweown in a bid to find a job settled in Glasgow in Scotland where he joined the Apostolic Church (Leonard, 1989). Beliefs and practices of the AC were to impact McKweown's life. Hollenwegger (1972) has described the Apostolic Church as one denomination that "gives greater play to the gifts of the Spirit." The Apostolic Church was noted to have developed an organizational structure to be the most authoritarian and hierarchical organization within British Pentecostalism" (Walker, 1986, p. 241; Wyllie, 1974, p. 114). The structure and practices of the Apostolic Church were to have an influence upon the CoP (Onyinah, 2012).

The governmental role of prophecy is seen in discovering the will of God, delivered in terms of identifying personnel to certain offices, transfers and also by giving general instructions. It is in the appointment of ministers to

certain offices that the prophetic element of divine government in the CoP becomes overly acute.

Summary

The genesis of Prophetism in the CoP may be connected to prophetic practices in Pentecostalism in the United States of America as well as the United Kingdom. Baptism in the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism is believed to issue forth the manifestation of gifts of the Spirit including prophecy, a factor in the revitalization of Pentecostalism. The functioning of the prophetic gift is needed in what Yong called “a politico-prophetic theology of mission and socio-cultural evangelization”. Prophecy, in global Pentecostalism, is rooted in interrelated aspects of dispensationalist eschatology. According to some Pentecostal scholars prophecy is for both the foretelling of future events as well as to the forth-telling of the word of God. Pentecostals hold that prophetic ministry is related to the need for knowing the will of God for their lives. In spite of that there is contrast among them in their views of prophecy and its role in the churches. They make some distinction between what they call the prophetic ministry and the gift of prophecy. Prophets were arranged in the Apostolic Church according to whether local, national or international prophets. The LRM saw them to work autonomously. This was to bring about a clash between AC and LRM practices in the CoP. The use of prophecy to make appointments, though accepted in some Pentecostal Churches like the AFC, the AC and the Christ Apostolic Church, to mention only a few, was not endorsed by others, for example, the Elim Pentecostal Churches worldwide

and the Assemblies of God Church. This was so because of conflicting prophetic messages from prophets.

Due to this diversity in the use of prophecy, the Assemblies of God Church, the Elim Church and the Apostolic Church in the United Kingdom agreed that they would 'work in unison, provided all prophetic utterances, especially those for guidance, are judged by a responsible body of believers'. The practice of "enquiring of the Lord through the prophet" became very popular in the AC. The practice sometimes led to embarrassments and disappointments that sometimes resulted. The AFC, initially viewed prophecies as infallible, and the callings along with others that were done to demonstrate the New Testament offices of Apostle and Prophet in the United Kingdom. Years later, though affirming the authenticity of the prophetic gift, the AFC and the AC also acknowledged the possibility of error depending on the state of the prophet.

It is in the appointment of personnel to certain offices that the prophetic element of divine government in the AFC and the AC became overly acute. On this note in chapter four the work examines Prophetism in Ghana.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROPHETISM IN GHANA

In the third chapter American and British antecedents to Prophetism in the CoP were examined and discussed. In this chapter, the researcher outlines the roots and history of Prophetism in Ghana from the African Independent Churches (AIC's), through to the Neo-Prophetic and Pentecostal Churches and show how they may be linked to the CoP. This will aid us appreciate how Prophetism in the CoP may be different from or similar to other prophetic movements in origin and practice.

In order to determine the precise function of prophets in the CoP, it is necessary to discover the root or basic meanings of certain Akan and Ga religious terms related to the subject of study. In this section therefore, some Akan and Ga terms are employed in conjunction with Hebrew terms that will aid us to determine the precise function of the prophet in the CoP. Akan and Ga terms related to prophet are considered because these two languages are the most widely used in worship within the study area. According to the 1993 Ghana Evangelism Committee Report (p. 28), in the Greater Accra Region, 32.6% of the churches used Akan in worship with Ga/Adangme taking 44.1%. Again majority of the CoP members are Akan speakers. In the Eastern Region

the two language groups took 83.6% and 11.8% respectively while in the Central Region they took 99.0% and 0.3% respectively. The choice of terms used by these two language groups therefore aided the researcher to understand how traditional nuances come into play in the CoP's conception of the roles of their religious functionaries, specifically the prophet.

In Akan, terminology the word *kom* is related to the act of prophesying (Ekem, 2009), and the word '*kom*' an Akan word that has to do with hunger can also be seen in another context as ascribing reference to fasting, which is a means of seeking visions, (sometimes in dreams) through prayer. In the Akan language, the word '*okomfo*' is used for one who is a traditional priest or priestess, a medicine man or woman of sorts, who works with the spirits (*abosom*). The traditional priest (*okomfo*) who has received training is expected to serve the community as an intermediary between the deity and the devotee. In this light the *okomfo* is one who prophesies through divine inspiration. The *okomfo*'s credibility therefore depends on whether their prophecies are true or false.

Other terms worth examining are '*odiyifo*' (prophet) and '*nkomhye*' (prophesy) as they are understood by the Akan people. The basic and common Akan word for prophet is '*nkomhyefo*' (Owiredu, 2011) analogous with the Hebrew noun *nabi* (prophet) meaning literally a 'spokesperson' or 'speaker.' The term '*nkomhyefo*', however, is viewed to come from the Akan root '*akom*' (divine), and the one who divines is known as '*okomfo*.' The *okomfo* in Akan played so many functions – a priest, fortune-teller and sometimes a healer. He

or she therefore sees into the future, hears from the gods and ancestors and also speaks on their behalf. The Akan *okomfo* can be likened to the Hebrew *nabi* (prophet) and also two other Old Testament terms for the Hebrew prophet namely *roeh* and *hozeh*, both of which are translated as 'seer.' According to the researcher's respondents, however, the term *nkomhyefo* is a biblical concept and not a traditional Akan term. The term *okomfo* therefore may not properly or exactly define the biblical prophet. Another Akan term for prophet is '*odiyifo*' and this term is synonymous with the Hebrew prophet. The term, however, is a coinage from the Bible and not a traditional Akan term. The term *odiyifo* means 'seer'. That person has '*ediyi*' (Owiredu, 2011) (sees into the future as well as discerns). According to Opoku Onyinah, the Chairman of the CoP as of the time of this work (personal communication, November 10, 2010 CoP HQ. La Accra July 17, 2013), in Akan terminology, '*nkomhyefo*' (prophet), that is the one who prophesies may not necessarily be an '*odiyifo*' (a seer). The *nkomhyefo* prophesies, that is, speaks from God, but the *odiyifo* (male seer) and *odiyifobaa* (female seer) do not only speak from God, they also see into the future.

Some scholars like Lindblom (1956/1962); Johnson (1944) and Bright (1980) have shown that there were persons from the Ancient Near East who exhibited activities similar to the Hebrew prophets. They therefore saw a link between spirit possession, divination, and prophecy. If one is to go by the definition of prophecy by Wilson (1980) and Petersen (2000), as well as penetration into Hebrew and Greek designations for 'prophet' one can say that mediation between the divine and human cosmos is the predominant duty or

function of the prophet. The prophet must hear from the divinity (God, the gods or ancestors) and communicate the message to human beings. If that is the case then it can be concluded that the traditional priests, priestesses and diviners can be called “prophets.”

The *okomfo* in traditional Akan religion may be possessed to warn the community of any impending danger and then prescribe the appropriate remedy to avert it. Thus the *okomfo* may be classified as one experiencing an altered personality. For this reason, the term *osofu* (priest in the Akan Christian context) is used in Christianity to show a distinction between *osofu* and the *okomfo* (priest) in traditional religion. This is so because since the era of the early missionaries of the nineteenth century there had been a gradual demonization of African traditional religions as pertaining to the purview or realm of what the Akan of Ghana call *obonsam* (the devil). To come to Jesus as was sermonized and required in the Christian message, is to turn away from traditional resources of supernatural succor represented by traditional religions and culture. The use of the term *okomfo* for the Christian priest is therefore considered derogatory.

The priests in the traditional setup undergo a period of training to acquire “knowledge of medicine – herbs, roots, etc. – and traditional African methods of psychiatry” (Opoku, 1978). Every *okomfo* (priest) is also a *dunsifo* (herbalist), but being a herbalist does not necessarily make one a priest (Opoku, 1978). There are also rankings among the *akomfo* as the chief priest or priestess is known as *okomfohene* (*ohene* in Akan means chief). According

to Opanyin Kofi Agyekum, a Professor at the Language Department, University of Ghana, *akom* is associated with “possession by a spirit.” (Personal communication: March 26, 2011, Language Department, University of Ghana Legon). The *okomfo*, according to him, is a traditional priest while the diviner, is *obi a okura sunsum* (that is, one who has the spirit) (Opanin Kofi Agyekum: Personal communication, March 9, 2011, University of Ghana). However, the Hebrew word *qoshem* is translated in the Akan Twi Bible as *nkomhyefo* (Micah 3:7), and in the King James Bible as diviner.

Thus while Opanin Kofi Agyekum differentiates between the traditional priest and the diviner the Akuapem Twi Bible and the King James Bible translators seem to see no distinction between the two. It is very enlightening to note that the CoP beliefs and practices seem to be patterned after Akan socio-political organization where there are different levels of the *akomfo* as noted by Ekem (2009). Thus in the CoP there are lay prophets (low level prophets) as well as ordained prophets (the high level prophets). There are two categories of the lay prophets, those at the prayer centres and those who prophesy in the local assemblies. In his work *Priesthood in Context* (2009), Ekem again makes a very important distinction between the *akomfo* (those individuals specifically called and possessed by Akan deities to communicate their wishes to the people) and the *asofo* (priests who perform religious rites at the shrines). According to Opanin Kofi Agyekum the term *osofo* is not a biblical concept. In Akan cosmology, according to him, *osofo* referred to the interpreter of the *okomfo*. A Christian minister in Akan will be properly designated *ohwefo* (shepherd) rather than *osofo*.

Christians, however, have adopted the term *osofu* for the Christian minister. The *akomfo* (plural of *okomfo*) have been 'demonized' by the Christians as belonging to *obonsam* (devil) as already noted above in this work. In order to know the way forward people resort to the *adiyifo* (prophets), not the *akomfo* (traditional priests). The interests of Christians are in the ministry of the *adiyifo*.

In order to remove the derogatory tag from the term *okomfo*, Vincent Kwabena Damoah (April 1930 – August 1992) who was a Catholic priest, theologian, and politician in Ghana decided to marry the terms *okomfo* and *osofu*. He therefore called himself Osofo Okomfo Kwabena Damoah. He founded a group the Mission Africana or African Renaissance Mission. His beliefs were not in line with the Roman Catholic beliefs and practices and for that matter, he was expelled from the Church.

Thus, the word *okomfo* is seen as a derogatory term from the Christian standpoint because of the way the *akomfo* receive their messages. The *okomfo* needs an image or representation of the deity as a domicile for the *bosom* (deity, god), until it wants to possess him or her. The *bosom* may sometimes also possess the *okomfo* forcibly, to warn the community of any imminent hazard. Again many of the *abosom* have *abisa da* (a day of consultation and a day when people from far and near travel to the traditional shrine for consultation). During the said day, an invitation is extended to the deity to possess the *okomfo*. The invitation normally takes the form of dancing to certain drum beats. The *bosom* then takes possession of the personality and

mind of the *okomfo* making him or her a medium and spokesperson expressing the unique characteristics of the respective deity. In this way the *okomfo* may be termed a prophet. People go to traditional priests for *abisa* (consultation) or *sunsumfre* (the act of calling forth spirits to find out solutions to their problems). Thus in the traditional setting, the *odiyifo* also performs the above functions. Priesthood in Akan is normally open to both males and females who are usually referred to as *Akomfo* (singular: *okomfo*). The *akomfo* are believed to be persons possessed by some external power when in a state of trance. In this state the *okomfo* prophesies authentically about present and future events under the inspiration of the deity. It needs to be stated emphatically that Prophetism exists in African traditional religions where it operates through priests, diviners and mediums. The priests and prophetesses and mediums receive as well as give out their messages orally when the spirits possess them while the diviners foretell future events through employing their divining skills and objects.

In the traditional setting, the religious functionaries mentioned above work very closely together and for that reason it is artificial to delimit their various functions (Opanin Kofi Agyekum). The *akomfo* can combine these various functions depending on their training. Some scholars have noted that the focus of Akan religious activities is *abisa* (that is divinatory consultation, “the desire to know the supernatural causalities of affairs”) (Onyinah, 2002, p. 85). This has led Onyinah and other scholars to see a link between Akan traditional divination and Prophetism in Prayer Camps and Centres in the CoP (Onyinah, 2002). This perspective is not accepted by the leaders of the prayer

camps and centres in the CoP. The leadership of the CoP faces the challenge of disabusing the minds of church members to desist from consulting the prophet to find out solutions to their problems since they perceive prophetic practices that have a trace of Akan traditional prophetic practices as demonic.

Akai-Nettey (2008), in his discussion of the institution of priesthood among the Ga-Mashie people of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana makes certain contrasting comparisons with priesthood as it pertains among the Akan people. In his work he shows how the *Wulomo*, the Traditional High Priest among the Ga people is never possessed while the *okomfo* among the Akan people gets possessed.

According to Henry Sowah Arko-Nai, a minister with the CoP, based in Abeka, Accra, certain Ga terms can help us understand how Prophetism is understood in the Ga traditional area among Pentecostals (Henry Sowah Arko-Nai, Personal communication, March 6, 2011, Abeka, CoP Mission House). The Ga word for prophet is *gbalo*, meaning one who speaks out on behalf of another. The word is used in the following verses of Scripture: (Genesis 20:7; Exodus 7:1 and the plural *gbaloi* in Acts 11:27; 13:1 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-29. A related term is *ninalo* (a seer). A prophetess is *yo gbalo*. A traditional priest is *wontse* and the term for prophecy is *gbaa*. Divination is *klamo* and the diviner is known as a *klalo*. However, in the Ga Bible the words used are *mei ni klaa* (Deuteronomy 18:14) and *okomfoi/klamo mumo* (1 Samuel 6:2). In the Hebrew context, the word diviner or soothsayer (*qosem*) is used of people who practiced formal divination, which probably had to do with using lots or other

methods of discerning the will of a deity, “but that term was not applied to those prophets who received legitimate sanction in the Old Testament” (Bullock, 2007).

In a similar vein, *wontse* and *klalo* are not associated with Christianity or Pentecostalism in Ghana. Ecstasy in Ga is *kpokpomo* or *no eyi eno*. To be in the possessed state is *shi yimo* and to come out of that state is *shi kplekemo* (to come out of possession). The chief traditional priest (head of the traditional hierarchy) is the *nai wulomo*. Without him, there cannot be worship or the pouring of libation on behalf of the community (S. H. Arko-Nai, Personal communication, March 16-17, 2011, Abeka, CoP Mission House).

These terms will be very important in our understanding of Prophetism in the CoP. Prophetism in the Charismatic and Neo-prophetic Churches do not explain the different levels of prophetic practices and the status of the prophet as observed in the CoP churches. Nevertheless in the CoP and the other Classical Pentecostal circles, the *okomfo/wontse* (traditional priest), *dunsini* (herbalist), and *samanfrefo/klalo* (necromancer), are not associated with Christianity. Any prophetic practice that wholly resembles the practices of the above persons is therefore seen as a deviation from authentic Pentecostal Christian practice.

Field (1960) and Appiah-Kubi (1983) affirm that spirit possession is real and distinct from mental disorder as Radin (1937) suggests. This is helpful to this researcher to show that Prophetism in the CoP may not be an abnormal activity; it seems to be a reality. Oracular places and persons from these two

language groups (Akan and Ga) have been examined in order to understand the functions and characteristics of prophecy/prophets in the CoP setting. In summation, the researcher observed that Prophetism may be real, something distinct from mental disorder, thus allowing people to have confidence in it.

Prophetism in the African Independent Churches (AIC's)

This section focuses on Prophetism in the key revival and charismatic movements that occurred between 1910 and 1950, called the African Initiated/African Indigenous/ African Independent Churches (AIC's). Annorbah-Sarpei (1990) has noted that between 1900 and 1950, the southern part of Ghana witnessed strong and widespread prophetic and spiritual movement activities. This development was believed to aim at dealing with African nationalism against cultural as well as ethnic domination by Europeans (Annorbah-Sarpei, 1990), the inability of the historic mission churches to meet the African's need for a more holistic salvation (Anquandah, 1990), as well as offer them protection against anti-witchcraft cults such as *Tigare*, *Brakune* or *Kune*, *Senyakapo* or *Senya Kupo*, *Tongo*, *Kweku Firi* and *Blekete* among others (Debrunner, 1959 and Field, 1968).

The catalytic and widespread role that anti-witchcraft cults played in the rise of Prophetism in Ghana has been noted by Larbi (2000) in his book *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*. Oduro (2001) defines African Indigenous churches as churches that have been established by Africans and, or denominations planted, led, administered, supported, propagated, instituted and funded by Africans for the purpose of propagating

the gospel of Jesus Christ and worshipping the true God. Akrong (1998) appears to support Oduro's definition. However, that definition failed to note that there are some independent Churches founded by non-Africans, but which yet claim to be AICs. Some of such churches had their founders to be black American theologians campaigning for contextualization, enculturation and indigenization of Christianity.

Turner (1967) disagrees with the notion that AICs are financially independent from foreign missionary support. He observes, "Many AICs seek financial support from overseas missionaries to set up Bible Colleges and Theological institutions to train their leaders." An example of such missionary supported projects is the Good News Theological College and Seminary in Accra, Ghana that provides theological education to AIC prophets and prophetesses (Atuahene, 2010). Examples of AICs include Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC), Cherubim and Seraphim, the Church of the Lord (Aladura), The True Church of Christ, Harris Church, The Church of the Twelve Apostles (known as Nakabah) in the Western region of Ghana, and Memeneda Gyidifo (The Saviour Church).

These churches arose to protest against the increasingly negative attitude of missionaries toward African people and their cultural beliefs and practices. Debrunner (1965), Haliburton (1971), Shank (1980), Howard (1989), Opoku (1990), and Larbi (2000), among others intimate that William Wade Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong stand out prominently among numerous prophets and prophetesses who pioneered and laid a solid

foundation for the AICs. These charismatic figures often came from the low strata of society with little or no formal education and whose Christian experiences were probably different from those typical of the mainline churches (Opoku, 2012 and Debrunner, 1959). These prophets normally exhibited certain features characteristic of Akan traditional practices that Baeta (1962, p. xi-xiv) called Prophetism within Christian circles.

Some scholars, including Baeta (1962) have argued that Prophetism in Ghanaian Christianity is traceable to the AIC's, the precursors of contemporary Pentecostalism, and go on to argue that present day Ghanaian Christianity is a continuation, and an improvement upon the weaknesses and lapses of the AIC's. However, in this work the researcher seeks to show that Prophetism in the CoP has a different origin even though the practices tend to have some resemblances with what pertain to the AICs and Akan Traditional practices. He contends that the apparent similarities are due to Pentecostal prophets unintentionally exploiting the existing Akan religious and cultural worldview in an attempt to respond to the social, physical, and material needs of the adherents.

The AICs believe in spirituality, Prophetism, spiritual healing, and reliance upon the Holy Spirit rather than human intellect. Their distinctive beliefs and practices include revelation through prophets. They practice faith healing. Africans believe that whatever happens to their well being has a spiritual linkage and therefore their well being can be restored through spiritual consultation. The prophets establish healing homes where the sick

could be kept for days, months or even years until they are completely restored. Healing is usually effected through praying, laying on of hands and, or through the use of anointing oil, and *nhyiransuo* (blessed water). Larbi (2001) attests to this when he wrote that the use of healing agents like florida water, incense, consecrated water, and candles is integral part of the ethos of spiritual churches.

The prophets in the AICs had certain unique traits or features – a long beard (among the male) and the use of symbol, (either a cross, staff or a bowl with holy water). They were charismatic figures rigidly against African traditional religion and nominalism. They saw that the pattern of Christianization of Africa only replaced one culture with another and hardly attacked the central loyalties. It is as if Africans create a border “where they conversed with the missionary message, while preserving a core interior or epicenter where traditional allegiances predominated” (Kalu, 2005).

The prophets focused their ministries on the salvation of souls through word and miracles. They were not willing to start churches. They manifested features of praying and healing. Some of the AIC’s pioneering prophets were educated, others were not: they attacked symbols of ATR and nominal Christianity with the same antagonism as did the Western missionaries, but in addition, demonstrated their faith with signs and wonders. Their attitude to primal world-view affirm a power confrontation scenario. They questioned traditional practices and did not harbour them to the Christian message. Their

message focused on the power of God and Christ to conquer traditional spirits and insisted on the destruction of fetishes.

It seemed that in West Africa at the time of these prophets there was “a mysterious ripeness of conversion” (Hastings, 1994). These prophets normally told their hearers to follow the Ten Commandments, to observe the Lord’s Day, avoid adultery, reject idols, accept the authority of the Bible. Those who were baptized by these prophets were encouraged to join the missionary churches in their area. They did not condemn polygamy and appeared to have many wives (Kalu, 2005).

Adubofuor (1994) has identified five revival phases leading to the practice of Prophetism in Ghana as per this sequence. The first is that by the AIC’s. Second, is Classical Pentecostalism, followed by a third, Campus Christian Fellowships. The fourth phase highlights the prominence of the CoP in the 1980’s that saw the proliferation of prayer camps as well as positive evangelization and renewal. Included in this group this researcher includes Vineyard Ministries at Adenta which was led by Evangelist Vaglas Kanko, then of Assemblies of God, Christ Apostolic Prayer Centre at Koforidua, behind New Juaben Secondary Commercial School, to mention only a few. The fifth phase saw the rise of independent prophetic figures. By October 1993 prayer camps in the CoP numbered eight (Onyinah, 2002).

William Wade Harris (1860-1929), born a Kru in Liberia, and who appeared on the Ghanaian scene (the then Gold Coast) in 1914, is considered a precursor to Pentecostalism in Ghana through the unprecedented renewal he

brought to Christianity through his prophetic ministry (Stride and Ifeca, 1971; Haliburton, 1971 and Shank, 1994). John Swatson (1855-c1925), a Ghanaian national, was born to an Nzema mother and European father. His prophetic work contributed immensely to the establishment of the Anglican Church in the Western and Central parts of Ghana (Haliburton, 1973 and Larbi, 2001).

Sampson Oppong (1884-1965) emerged in 1920 and concentrated his prophetic work in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions of Ghana. It is reported that his evangelistic work led to the conversion of as many as 10,000 people to Christ for the Methodist church in these regions (Opoku, 1990). These prophets, similar to Kimbangu of the Congo (Marie-Louise, 1975 and Hollenweger, 1997), and Babalola of Nigeria (Oshun, 1983 and Michell, 1970), introduced a new dimension into Ghanaian Christianity. However, the practises of these prophets, though influencing subsequent prophetic practices were not fully endorsed by the classical Pentecostals.

Prophetism in the Neo-Prophetic Churches

The 1990s has seen the emergence of the most recent expression of Pentecostalism described by Omenyo and Atiemo (2006) as Neo-Prophetism in African Christianity. Cephas Omenyo (2006) examined some Neo-Prophetic Churches in Ghana and showed how developments in the deliverance ministries were influenced by the primal aspirations of diverting curses. He argued that the idea of averting mishaps provided a conceptual framework for understanding of evil by the Ghanaian and the attempt to overcome it. As a

consequence prophetic ministries have arisen as a formidable force on the Ghanaian church scene.

Prophetism in the Neo-Prophetic churches in Ghana appropriate Western biblical hermeneutical tools, categories and methods in the African milieu, hence they appeal to a number of contemporary African Christians. The Neo-Prophetism typifies a high level of mixture, grounding their beliefs and practices in an African world-view while amalgamating practices of the older AICs, the Classical Pentecostal Churches, the neo-Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. No denomination is an island. It is therefore possible that Prophetism in the CoP may have traces of some of these prophetic groups.

Neo-prophetic churches believe in the Prophetic ministry, a feature that attracts a large following to them. Neo-prophetic churches are more often than not built around major prophetic figures or leaders, who are always the founders, and to whom their clients are attracted. Notable among them are Elisha Salifu Amoako of Alive Chapel International, and Owusu Bempa of Glorious Word Mission International Church both based in Accra, Ghana. The neo-prophetic Movement is vitalized by the assertion that God is reviving the gift of prophecy both the “predictive and the directive” for singular guidance. Some hold that the gift can only be passed on or imparted through a Latter Rain Movement (explained below) prophet, and gives the impartee special powers to speak the “*rhema* word” of God in power and judgment (Hamon, 1987). Ephesians 4:11-14 is used as the basis of the notion that God is reintroducing the five gifts of verse 11 in reverse order to how they were

“lost,” This is assumed to mean that God has already restored all but the last gift, that is Apostleship.

Since prophets were restored in the 1950s, they teach, that the ministry of the apostle was expected to be restored in the 1990s (Hamon, 1987). *Nkomhye* (prophecy) and *adiyie nsem* (revelation) is a prevailing and clear-cut phenomenon in the neo-prophetic churches which believe that to effectively deal with people's problems there is the need to identify a person's problem through either discerning of spirits, word of knowledge or word of wisdom. This view is significantly different from many of the classical Pentecostals; generally the classical Pentecostals believe that prophets must pray for their church members and then leave the rest of the problem to God who is sovereign.

Neo-Prophetism is growing rapidly in Ghana for a number of reasons. First, the phenomenon is relevant to the Ghanaian religious context. The prophet keeps a steady eye on the world in which his religious community lives and has been constantly concerned to adapt to it. Second, it is practical and consistent with most sections of the people. Third, the neo-prophetic phenomenon involves the use of a primarily oral form of communication. Again, it provides the youth with the opportunity to exercise their gifts and talents and includes phenomena such as dreams and visions in personal and public forms of worship (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2000, pp. 96-130).

Furthermore, such factors as the tendency to schism, internal competition, following membership recycling through sheep-stealing from

historic churches and the benefits from population growth have all contributed to the expansion of Ghanaian neo-prophetic churches, as is the case with Ghanaian Pentecostalism in general (Kalu, 2005). Adherents of neo-prophetic churches, like many African Christians regard the Bible as God's inspired word and the final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. They believe that they boldly reveal the truth in the Bible and make it relevant to the critical human condition in Africa.

The specific theological emphasis includes the concept of *atamfo* (enemy), the practice of *akwankyire* (guidance), *ngosra* (anointing), and various forms of exorcism and healing (Otiemo and Atiemo, 2006). Neo-prophetic churches view *atamfo* as humans through whom witchcraft, evil, juju or the spread of malicious gossip spread and as the actual spiritual beings perceived to be the agents of Satan with whom they are allied. *Akwankyire* or prophetic guidance expects the Prophet leader to give information that is supposed to explain a person's situation and also prescribe solutions.

Anointing is seen as synonymous with unction and authority bringing the power of God to bear upon the life of the individual. The anointing service, in which mainly oil is used on members, is a very popular activity among neo-prophetic churches in Ghana. The anointing service is viewed as a time of 'impartation' of spiritual gifts to empower the clients to realize wealth, obtain healing and see visions among other things (Ocran, 2004). Akrong (2001) has noted the whole Pentecostal-type movement in Africa (including neo-prophetic churches) as a "complex admixture of African Traditional Religious

ideas and philosophy and the faith of evangelical movement from North America.” Akrong’s observation could be sustained. Prophetism in the neo-prophetic churches is, enhanced by Christian materials such as cassettes, pamphlets, and books from some prophets and televangelists from North America. These materials seek to increase people’s awareness of certain spiritual manifestations, particularly the prophetic gift as it could be used to enhance people’s ability to supernaturally identify and address the ailments of others. Prominent among these are the materials by Bickle (1996/2008), Murphy, J and Murphy, C. (1994), Gentile (1999), and Hagin (2007), among others.

Their prophetic practices are sometimes seen by orthodox Christians to be ‘unconventional’, involving visions of people’s phone numbers, bank details and the colours of ladies’ underwears. These feats are aimed at convincing people that the Spirit of God is at work and can reveal the deepest secrets, and disclose the colours of underwear, panties, braziers of female worshippers to the cheering of the congregation. This sort of practice has been vehemently condemned by the larger body of Christians in Ghana thus calling into question the credibility of such prophets.

God has on occasions used his prophets in times past to uncover deep things about people especially when a gross hazard is about to overwhelm an individual, a city, or a nation and offer solutions on how to avert the situation (Ezekiel 11:1-4). Therefore the debasing of the process by imposters does not remove the actuality of genuine prophets.

Prophetism in the Pentecostal Churches

It is the view of the Pentecostal churches that the church of Jesus Christ cannot be all that God wants it to be, unless certain gifts to the church namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are in place (*The Church of Pentecost Constitution* 2010, p. 40-44; *Assemblies of God General Constitution* 2007, Article 5:12.1). While the five offices/officers/gifts above are very important, the prophetic office/gift stands out as specifically designated as the foundation of the church in close association with the gift of the apostle (Ephesians 2:20).

Assemblies of God and the CoP both hold to the view that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit. On the other hand the gift of diverse kinds of tongues used with that of interpretation of tongues is equivalent to prophecy (*CoP Constitution*, p. 3; *AG Constitution*, p. 3). According to Donald Gee, the gifts of prophecy, tongues with interpretation had much in common, but prophecy was to be used cautiously since it could be fallible (*Redemption Tidings*, April 1931, pp. 5-6).

In both the CoP and AG, it is believed that after one accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, there is the need to pursue another experience called the baptism in the Holy Spirit (*CoP Constitution*, p. 37; *AG Constitution*, p. 3). This baptism, it is believed brings with it gifts which includes prophecy. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is therefore seen as a *donum superadditum* (subsequent experience) to regeneration in the CoP and the AG. People who manifest the gift of prophecy are encouraged to develop in the

operation of the gift through attending teaching seminars organized by the leadership from time to time.

Those gifted are encouraged at these meetings to work on their moral lives, have deep appreciation of spiritual values such as worship, prayer, fasting, singing spiritual songs, having devoted daily Bible studies as well as being sensitive to spiritual things and sharing experiences with more mature prophets (J. E. Ameyaw, Area Head (Kaneshie); J. O. Amaniampong, (Area Head (Dansoman); Appiah-Adu, P. B. Area Head (Goaso); J. Appiah-Aidoo, Area Head (Suame, Kumasi): Personal communication, November 8, 2010, Pentecost Guest House, Gbawe, Accra). It is believed that a prophet can deliver a false prophecy. That however, in no way means that the people will not accept prophetic utterances. If a prophecy is rejected, it is suggested that the prophet must leave everything in the hands of the Lord to vindicate them.

In this section the researcher examines the origins of, and practices of Prophetism in the Pentecostal churches, to show that Prophetism in the CoP may be different from those of the AIC, and neo-prophetic churches. Findings in the study of Prophetism in the Assemblies of God, Christ Apostolic Church, Apostolic Church as well as the CoP have then been compared in order to show that Prophetism in the CoP may not have originated from Akan Traditional Religion and AIC connections. It has been suggested by some scholars that the Assemblies of God Church was the first Pentecostal Church in Ghana (Koduah, 2004; Ton-Laar, 2009). If this assertion means that it was the first Classical Pentecostal missionary sponsored church, then it is not far

from the truth. Otherwise, that assertion will not be accurate. This is so because before the Assemblies of God Church arrived in the Gold Coast in 1931 the Pentecostal revival ignited by Prophet Wade Harris had already had a large following. Kalu (2005) indicates that in 1913 Harris moved into the Gold Coast “to begin an extremely effective evangelical revival based on prophecy and healing. Christian communities were established and survived where no missionary had ever ventured.”

Wade Harris’ prophetic ministry may be classed under the type 2 category of the revivals in African Christianity noted by Kalu (2005). According to Kalu, these categories of prophets normally emerge from the ranks of the Christian tradition, “emphasizing the ethical and pneumatic components of the canon to intensify the evangelization of the community or contiguous communities” (Kalu, 2005, p. 281).

The Apostolic church entered the country in 1937. According to a delegation of the Twelve Apostles Church that visited James McKeown in 1939, before Prophet Harris left the shores of the Gold Coast in 1914, he prophesied that a white man would come and teach them; thus they saw McKeown as the fulfillment of the prophecy (Asem, 2005). Admittedly, Prophetism was already in vogue in the country before the arrival of the missionary sponsored classical Pentecostal Churches. The Assemblies of God Church started their missionary work in the northern part of Ghana where the Twelve Apostles’ Church, Musama Disco Christo Churches (MDCC), leading African Independent Churches (AIC’s) had no influence. For this reason, this

work argues that Prophetism in the classical Pentecostal churches, including the CoP, may be different from that found in the ATRs and AICs. Pentecostal churches do not also endorse some of the practices of the Neo-Prophetic Churches. Nevertheless, since no institution is an island on its own, AIC and Traditional Akan prophetic practices may have rubbed off on CoP prophetic practices even though the Church's prophetic practices originated from the United Kingdom.

It is worth noting what Gifford (2004) observes, if the rise of modern day Prophetism in Ghana is to be understood. Gifford notes that Christianity in sections of the Ghanaian community is about progress and success, but the crucial means to bring about a release into success and progress is what is known as the "prophetic unction" (Gifford, 2004, p. 90). In the Ghanaian scene today, in most meetings 'every act of release is committed to the prophet to execute' (Gifford, 2004). Gifford's observation may be true of the Neo-prophetic churches, but not the Pentecostal churches that see the ministry of the prophet as only one of many. Prophetism in the Ghanaian scene cannot be totally divorced from the wider worldwide Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity. There are names like Paul Cain, Bill Hamon, Peter Wagner, and Rick Joyner who are linked to the restoration of the office of the prophet (Gifford, 2004). Now, it is necessary to examine the understanding of Pentecostal churches of prophecy, and the characteristics of their prophets.

Characteristics of Prophets in Pentecostal Churches

A primary characteristic of prophetic self-consciousness in the Pentecostal churches is an awareness of a 'call' (M. Sumaila, Personal Communication, April 14, 2011 Evangel Assemblies of God Church Adabraka, Accra; J. E. Ameyaw, personal communication, April 14, 2011, Area Office CoP Kaneshie). According to Moses Sumaila and Jonathan Edmund Ameyaw, both leading ministers/prophets with Assemblies of God Ghana, and The Church of Pentecost respectively, a person first has a 'call' to salvation, followed by the baptism in the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the speaking in tongues. Thereafter, the call to an area of ministry could then follow. One is not recognized as a prophet just after the baptism in the Holy Spirit, even though the person may be known to prophesy. The call to be a prophet is viewed as coming from God by means of a word from God through the reading of the Scriptures. It could also come by means of a vision, a dream, or through an audition.

Other leaders, such as J. Appiah-Aidoo, J.O. Amaniampong, both from CoP (Personal communication, May 16, 2010 CoP Guest House, Gbawe) and Nana Agyepong of Assemblies of God (personal communication, May 16, 2010, AG Mission House, Tantra Hill, Accra) hold that the 'call' could also be through the mediation of another prophet. In a situation of that nature, the 'call' can be seen as a mandate. Other basic characteristics that have been observed in the prophets are: They are seen by church members as a class of professional persons, who are believed to be in intimate communication with

God and therefore capable of controlling the destinies of human beings. For that reason, it is intimated, that God enables the prophets, to predict the future and also give direction to people in difficult matters of policy and conduct. In the light of this, the prophets believe that they are called and appointed by God; not self-appointed, nor are they appointed by any human being. Thus they believe that they do not speak of themselves, but that they speak for God. They believe that they have had a divine revelation of God/Jesus Christ. Because of who they believe they are, and being God's representatives they are people of very strong character. Since they are normally sent to speak into very difficult and hard situations, it is not unlikely that their work requires people of strong character. They need to be tough to be able to go and do what God commands and where He sends them.

According to Moses Sumaila and J. E. Ameyaw, mentioned above, prophets are believed to be very intense in prayer. They normally do not have interests in things pertaining to this world. It is inferred from interactions with these prophets, they feel that one cannot be intimate with God and love worldly pleasures at the same time. They believe that total commitment to God should be the hallmark of every worshipper of God. According to D. K. Noble Atsu, one of the leaders of the CoP, (All Ministers and Wives Conference, 2011, Pentecost University, Sowutuom, Accra), prophets are sometimes difficult to work with, especially when they are immature Christians. They always stand for righteousness, and never compromise on their convictions, no matter what opposition prevails. One other characteristic is that their

messages are supposed to edify (build up), exhort (encourage) and to comfort the people of God in line with the guidelines in 1 Corinthians 14:3.

The researcher observed that in the churches, at times, messages being delivered by a prophet as a warning to an individual or a group of people are usually stopped by the one presiding over the service. Thus most of the messages that are delivered are those having to do with comfort, hope, salvation, and being successful in life. On questioning some prophets and apostles in the CoP concerning why “unpalatable” messages are not delivered, the researcher was informed that God-given messages must bring love, peace, joy, and other such pleasant things to the listeners. A careful examination of Scripture does state that prophecy should edify, exhort and comfort God’s people. However, that is not all that the Bible has to say about what prophecy can do. There are also messages of calls to repentance and judgments given in the Scriptures (Jeremiah 1:14-17; Revelation 2:4-5- HSCB).

Observations as well as interactions with some prophets in the Pentecostal churches revealed that their prophetic revelations are not some form of ecstasy. The Pentecostal churches view the prophetic unction as “the higher impulse stimulating [the prophets’] natural powers, and informing their minds with supernatural revelations, but never destroying either their personal identity, or their proper individuality” (Gentile, 1999, p. 164). Leaders in the Assemblies of God Church that were interviewed contended that it is not their practices to use emblems and symbols in their prophetic healing. Observations by the researcher of some AICs (Musama Disco

Christo Church, Apostles Revelation Society, African Faith Tabernacle Church), Neo-Prophetic Churches (Word Miracle Church, Royal House Chapel, Victory Bible Church) showed that symbols and emblems are employed in their prophetic practices. They use oil, aprons, and other items in their practices.

Prophecy, in the Pentecostal churches, observed by this researcher, is not very different from what occurred in the AICs, except for the fact that they do not subscribe to the use of symbols, emblems, and paraphernalia. The leadership normally cautions prophets, who advise people to use herbs and other physical elements for treating their ailments to desist from doing so. Thus most practices that closely resemble traditional African religious practices are frowned at. In some classical Pentecostal churches, the CoP being an example, prophets in the Prayer Camps/Centres give directives to people, heal the sick, and counsel those who need counseling from time to time. The CoP and Assemblies of God Church may not support the use of physical objects or paraphernalia because of their association with Western foreign missions. Nevertheless, Pentecostals argue that there is a difference in quality between prophecy in the AICs and that in Pentecostal circles. The Pentecostal position, however, is not easy to defend.

The researcher observed the following characteristics of prophecy in Pentecostal circles: From observation and study, the researcher observed that it seems that prophecy is a continuing phenomenon, that is, the gift continues to operate within the Christian church in the present time. Pentecostals place the

prophetic gift in the context of the fruit of the Spirit. It is by the fruit exhibited by the prophet that the gift is assessed. The prophet in the context of Christianity is expected to speak words that do not contradict clear Biblical injunctions. For example, they will not endorse a prophecy that subscribes to divorce and remarriage for every cause, nor will they endorse a message that smacks of division, vindictiveness, or any such thing.

Functions of Prophecy in Pentecostal Churches

In order to determine the precise function of the prophet in the Pentecostal churches it is necessary to discover the root or basic meanings of some terms. “*odiyifo*”, in Akan, that is, prophet/seer, is analogous to the Hebrew noun *nabhi*, prophet, which literally means a “spokesperson” or “speaker”. In the Akuapem translation of the Bible certain words are used to denote prophet/prophecy. In Acts 11:27; 13:1; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:29,32; Ephesians 4:11; Hebrews 1:1; 2 Peter 2:1, the word for prophets is *adiyifo*. Another Akan word for prophet is *nkomhyeni*, that is, one who prophesies. Interestingly, it is not used in the Akan Bible to denote prophet due to what this researcher believes, is associated with the work of the *akomfo* (traditional priests). To prophesy is to *hye nkom*.

Pentecostals believe that one has to have a mixture of certain gifts in order to qualify as a prophet. They therefore make certain distinctions between and among prophets. For them one needs to distinguish between one who does not receive messages from God through revelation gifts (the *nabi* prophet) from those who receive messages through revelation gifts (the *hozeh* or *roeh*

prophetic revelation, the *nabi* is an inspired hearer and speaker. Thus one whose messages are not received through revelation gifts (words of wisdom, words of knowledge, and or discerning of spirits) is said to operate in the simple gift of prophecy and therefore is not designated a prophet. The *nabi* emphasizes the active work of the prophet in speaking forth God's message. According to Pentecostals a person who receives messages through revelatory gifts such as words of wisdom, words of knowledge and the gift of discerning of spirits is recognized as a prophet. The *hozeh* and *roeh* focuses on the experience or means by which the prophet "sees or perceives" the prophetic word (Goll, 2004, p. 22). The *nabi* lays emphasis on the relationship of the prophet with the people, while the *hozeh/roeh* emphasizes the prophet's relationship with God (Goll). In the Pentecostal Churches, therefore, *nkomhyeni* (one with the gift of prophecy) is not necessarily an *odiyifo* (prophet). The *nkomhyeni* hears and speaks from God, but may not see into the spirit realm. The *odiyifo* sees into the realm of the spirit as well. Thus the *odiyifo* can predict the future, not so with the *nkomhyeni*. The examination of the Akan and Ga terms therefore are helpful in understanding Ghanaian Pentecostal worldview.

Even though many people in the Pentecostal churches may have the prophetic gift to prophesy, it was unanimously agreed by all ten (10) of the respondents that not everyone who prophesies could be designated a prophet. This researcher also observed that while some prophesied occasionally, others did so on a regular basis. In the CoP as an example, the ministry of prophet is understood as an office, not just a service to the body of Christ. The Prophet in

this context is viewed as an authority. With this status, decisions are greatly influenced by the prophet in the CoP.

The Assemblies of God Church (AG), though recognizing the ministry of the prophet, does not see it as an office (M. Sumaila, personal communication, April 14, 2011, AG Evangel Church, Adabraka, Accra). The Assemblies of God Church, along with other Pentecostal Churches believe in prophecy but do not believe that it has the same role as in the Bible (M. Sumaila, personal communication, April 14, 2011, AG Evangel Church, Adabraka, Accra). The messages of the prophets are accepted as revelations from God, but they are never accorded infallibility (M. Sumaila, personal communication, April 14, 2011, AG Evangel Church).

Adherents of the Pentecostal churches however believe that the prophets should be able to receive “a word from the Lord” to solve their teeming problems rather than only preaching to them. In this light Pentecostals view preaching to be different from prophesying. In Pentecostal circles, the prophets are believed to guide as well as guard the churches. Mediation between the human and the divine is the predominant function of the prophet. The prophet must hear from God and communicate the message to human beings. They are believed to discern the root causes of sicknesses and other happenings that are brought before them and prescribe solutions. Sometimes, the supplicants are told to fast a certain number of days as the Spirit of God directs.

In other cases, they are asked to resort to performing “a prophetic action” for example, by giving an offering or any other direction that may be given. Prophets are therefore believed to function as healers and guardians. Prophets in Pentecostal Churches function as spokespersons for God, give direction to the people, are anointed or empowered by God to break yokes of bondage – barrenness, sicknesses, as well as give directions for financial and material breakthroughs. They sometimes call the churches to their social responsibilities and actions.

Summary

In summary, the Akan word *kom*, is related to the act of prophesying. In the Akan language the word *okomfo* is used of a traditional priest or priestess, a medicine man or woman, of sorts who works with the spirits (*abosom*). The *akomfo* serve as intermediaries between the deities and devotees. They receive messages from the divinities and pass them on to the devotees. In this sense they could be regarded as prophets. Nonetheless, the *akomfo*, have been demonized by Western Christian missionaries as being in league with *obonsam* (the Devil). *Akom* is therefore seen as a derogatory term to be used in Christian circles. In Akan terminology, one who prophesies is *nkomhyefo* and *odiyifo* is used of one who sees into the spirit realm. Classical Pentecostals, like the Neo-Prophetic groups make a distinction between *nkomhyefo* (one who speaks by the gift of prophecy) and *odiyifo* (one who does not only speak, but sees as well). The element of prediction is evident in the ministry of the *odiyifo* and not the *nkomhyefo*. The researcher found out

that prophecy is real and not a mental disorder. Between 1900 and 1950 prophetic activity was in vogue in the southern part of Ghana.

In this work, it was discovered that prophecy is perceived differently by a number of Pentecostal denominations. Some Bible scholars perceive prophecy as preaching or charismatic exegesis. Prophecy is perceived in the CoP, however, to be the reception of and subsequent transmission of divinely inspired message to edify, exhort and comfort God's people.

Classical Pentecostals do not subscribe to the use of paraphernalia in their prophetic practices. In this they differ from the other prophetic groups discussed in this chapter. In spite of the difference, Classical Pentecostal Churches have Akan traditional resemblances because of Pentecostal prophets unintentionally explaining the existing Akan religious and cultural worldview in an attempt to respond to the social, physical and material needs of the adherents. Prophetism in Assemblies of God and the CoP is linked to North American and British perceptions and in the CoP it cannot be divorced from the visit of the Latter Rain Movement (LRM) to the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1952. The CoP's destiny was greatly impacted by the beliefs and practices of this Movement. It is against this backdrop that the researcher proceeds to examine the practice of Prophetism in the CoP.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROPHETISM IN THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

In chapter four, Prophetism in Ghana was examined. In summary it was found out that Prophetism in Classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana, is linked to North American and British perceptions. Nevertheless Prophetism in the CoP has Akan traditional resemblances. This is so in that some prophets adopted American and British prophetic perceptions and adapted them to suit existing Akan religious and cultural worldview in an attempt to respond to the social, physical and material needs of the adherents.

Prophetism in the CoP cannot also be divorced from the visit of the Latter Rain Movement (LRM) to the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1952. The destiny of the CoP was also greatly impacted by the beliefs and practices of this Movement. It sparked off a proliferation of Prayer Camps/Centres and as at 2006 there were as many as 48 registered ones (Guidelines for Operating Prayer Centres in the CoP 2006: Head Quarters, Accra). Some of the Centres were fraught with human rights abuses (chaining of the sick) and their leaders refused to account to the Church. They resisted any financial accountability to the Church, while some leaders had moral issues and therefore the Church in many cases broke ranks with them.

In this chapter, the researcher analyses his research findings on Prophetism in the CoP. He examines the genesis of Prophetism in the CoP, the call and training of a CoP prophet, reception of the prophetic word, the functioning of the CoP prophet, and the types of 'prophets' in the CoP. The form and content of prophecy is discussed, and the notion whether prophecy is a ministry or a gift in the CoP are evaluated. The role of directive prophecy in the Church is evaluated. The process of prophecy is examined as well as the institutionalization of prophecy in the CoP.

Genesis of Prophetism in the CoP

The CoP holds that there are five ministry or leadership gifts of the ascended Christ. These are Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher (Ephesians 4:11). Article 15.1 of the CoP constitution reads: "According to the teaching of the New Testament, there are ministers through whom the ascended Lord governs the Church, which is His body (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-13)" It is however, the prophetic that is the focus of this dissertation.

In the first and third chapters the genesis of Prophetism in the CoP through the AFC and the AC were discussed. The call of James McKeown (1900-1989), founder of the CoP, to the Gold Coast was through a prophecy delivered by an inter-area prophet (Wyllie, 1974; Leonard, 1985). McKeown did not respond immediately to the directive prophecy because of the manner in which they were uttered until 1937 (Onyinah, 2004). Nevertheless, it was this kind of "Prophetism" according to Opoku Onyinah that was to enhance

McKeown's own ministry, and the legacy he left for the CoP. McKeown's hesitancy about being directed by prophecy in his life according to Leonard (1989), was due to the fact that "as he drew closer to the inner circle, he came to believe that so-called directive prophecies were manufactured to fit in decisions which men had already made" (Leonard, p. 20). McKeown noted, "I found out that they were using prophets and prophecy to carry out their own design, 'the hands being the hands of Esau and the voice being the voice of Jacob'" (Wyllie, 1974, p. 114). McKeown had earlier refused to affirm the Apostolic Church's first constitution of 1935 "because of its defined scope of ministry of inter-area, area, district and assembly prophets, each with his sphere of authority" (Onyinah, 2012, p. 125).

This arrangement was to find its way into Prophetism in the CoP. McKeown felt that the constitutional amendments smacked of racism and therefore, he seceded from the Apostolic Church (AC) to form the Gold Coast Apostolic Church which in 1962 assumed the name the Church of Pentecost (CoP). Before the arrival of the McKeowns, there had been a prophecy in The Twelve Apostles Church headed by one John Nackabah that Harris, a prophet from Liberia, who ministered in the Gold Coast in 1914 had said, before he left Ghana that a white man would one day come to the then Gold Coast (now Ghana) to direct them in the ways of God (Bredwa-Mensah, 2004). Bredwa-Mensah (2004) notes that in December 1939, Pastor James McKweon received an invitation from John Nackabah to come from Winneba to help them in Prestea, Western Region. The delegation visited McKeown and this visit, was reported by McKeown in an article he sent to the *Herald of His Grace*, in

December of 1939 (McKeown, "Gathering gold in the Gold Coast," p. 41). McKeown described John Nackabah, one of the leaders of the Twelve Apostles Church as "a man seeking after God with his whole heart" yet McKeown could not teach them (McKeown, 1939, p. 41). McKeown could not work with The Twelve Apostles Church because he could not accept some of their practices especially their innovative ritualistic exorcisms (Leonard, 1989). Again doctrinal differences could not keep McKeown and the Twelve Apostles Church together leading to a break between them (Leonard, 1989). The legacy McKeown left in the Twelve Apostles Church was that he fulfilled Harris's prophecy. Thus Prophetism in the CoP did not have its roots in indigenous connections but American and British Apostolic prophetic practices.

McKeown believed that God could speak to people through prophecy. The minutes of the Apostles and Prophets' meetings as well as General Council Meetings of the CoP indicate that McKeown gave much time to prayer and prophecy. The minutes indicated that he prophesied himself. He is recorded to have prophesied three times in the General Council Meeting in 1959 (*Minutes of 10th Session of General Council*, Obo-Kwahu, October 27-November 3, 1959). It seems that at every significant juncture of the life of the CoP prophecy guided the Church, as the minutes from 1950 to the present would show. The CoP in Ghana therefore mirrored the Apostolic Church in the United Kingdom in terms of theology and praxis.

Prophetism in the CoP cannot be divorced from the visit of the Latter Rain Movement (LRM). Some of their main points of emphasis were: restoration of the “five-fold ministries of Ephesians 4:11; “impartation of gifts” by laying on of hands; the use of travelling Presbytery Teams to get other Churches involved; directive prophecy to control and influence both individuals and churches. They held to a premillennial return of Christ that will be preceded by an outpouring of the Spirit of God. This group also believed that spiritual worship is of utmost importance and that this worship atmosphere is conducive to prophetic manifestations (Gentile, 1999).

The LRM, that visited the Apostolic Church (AC) in Ghana in 1952 advocated local autonomy and the expression of the five-fold ministry (a belief that the ascended Lord, gave to the Church universal, five leadership gifts: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and or Teachers as shown in Ephesians 4:11) within each congregation, free of any national governing body, a feature which disturbed and continues to disturb the CoP leaders.

Procedures such as making appointments to church offices on the basis of prophecy, or the writing down of new prophecies had earlier been condemned outside Apostolic Church circles (Hathaway, 1933). Nevertheless, the CoP adopted it. The Latter Rain group heightened the use of directive prophecy. During their visit, Reverend Adams McKeown, a brother of James McKeown, and a Latter Rain prophet, singled out and through prophecy named J. E. Paintsil and F. K. Diaba as called to be apostles. C. E. Apau-Asante was called through prophecy to be a prophet, while Albert Yaw was

called to be a pastor (Apostle J. K. Ennin, personal communication, June 26, 2012, Residence, Ashaman, Lebanon). According to Apostle Ennin, Paintsil's calling into the office of apostle evoked serious contention since he had been in ministry for only three years. This was problematic in that the CoP is unique among Ghanaian Pentecostals in recognizing the present-day office of prophet, with particular outworking through church government. This researcher agrees that the contention about Paintsil's ordination was a genuine concern because the biblical injunction that a leader should not be a novice (1 Timothy 3:6) was being overlooked. The issue here also is how local autonomy and the use of prophecy for directing the entire Church can be reconciled. Nevertheless, Paintsil was not ordained until a year later.

The Call and Training of the CoP Prophet

According to the CoP constitution, after one accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, that person needs to have another experience called the baptism in the Holy Spirit (*The Church of Pentecost Constitution*, p. 37). This baptism, evidenced by speaking in a tongue unknown to the speaker, is believed, to bring with it gifts which include prophecy. The researcher asked Prophets J. E. Ameyaw, P. B. Appiah-Adu, and J. O. Amaniampong (personal communication, November 10, 2010, CoP Guest House Gbawe, Accra) how people recognise that they have the prophetic call. They gave the following answers: "Not all prophetic calls are alike. People are unique in the ways they are called." They explained that for some people God uses a series of dreams, and visions to indelibly impress clearly the call to the prophetic ministry.

Some also sense certain things in them which when told people, are known to be fulfilled. "With such happenings one is usually identified as a potential prophet". According to the researcher, for respondents, these potential prophets usually have a burning desire to preach the word of God, and help other believers to have a daily walk with the Lord. They also usually have a strong passion to warn people of impending hazards, a desire to encourage and uplift believers. If that urge does not usually fade over time it is deduced that it is not merely an emotional feeling. The person's call must be borne by the fruit of the ministry, that is, how his or her messages affect people, bringing them to repentance or a changed lifestyle for the better. In short, the results of the person's ministry must see to the forward march of God's kingdom (it must bring souls, increase the church's finances, as well as aid people to aspire to fulfill their God-given passions).

When the researcher asked some of the key prophets in CoP such as J. E. Ameyaw, P. B. Appiah-Adu, J. O. Amaniampong (Personal communication, November 10, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe, Accra) as to how the prophetic call is known and received, they hinted that the following general characteristics are descriptive of those having the prophetic call. They have a strong dominant personality, since prophets are usually sent into very hard and difficult situations. According to the respondents, prophets need to be tough so that they can stand for God. They are believed to be very intimate with God, continually in prayers, fasting, and the study of God's word. For this reason, they find it very difficult to understand Christians who are not

committed to God. Prophets are observed to be issue oriented, dealing more directly with facts no matter who is involved.

Again, when the researcher asked how the gift is developed, the respondents disclosed that the people who manifest this gift of prophecy are encouraged to develop the operation of the gift through attending teaching seminars organized by the leadership from time to time. They are encouraged to align with other believers, since they can easily end up being deceived because they have to deal with the human spirit, demonic spirits as well as the Spirit of God. At the national level these seminars, noted for the significant impact they have on Church growth, are usually held annually. These training sessions are, normally chaired by an executive member of the Church with some leading Apostles and Prophets in attendance. The seminars are meant to prevent excesses as well as caution people against setting up 'personality cults.'

According to J. E. Ameyaw, J. O. Amaniampong, P. B. Appiah-Adu, leading prophets in the CoP and J. Appiah- Aidoo, an Apostle of the Church in an interview granted to the researcher on November 8, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe, those with the prophetic gift are encouraged at these meetings to work on their moral lives, have deep appreciation of spiritual values such as worship, prayer, fasting, singing spiritual songs, having devoted daily Bible studies as well as being sensitive to spiritual things and sharing experiences with more mature prophets. This personal consecration ensures that messages received conform to sound biblical doctrines. In the Church, one graduates

from being a lay prophet to a recognized prophet after ordination as a prophet by the Apostles and Prophets on the recommendation of the Executive Council of the Church. For one to qualify to be ordained as a prophet, that one must have been first called to the full time ministry of the Church, been observed to prophesy on a regular basis, as well as know things supernaturally. The person's revelations must have been tested over time to be fulfilled. The person must also have a proven record of integrity in money and other issues including how he conducts his household affairs. Article 15.1b of the CoP constitution reads: Approved proven men of God are called to these offices by divine revelation, directive prophecy or recommendation by the Executive Council for ratification by the General Council.

One with a prophetic call is first of all, recommended by a mature presbyter to the local presbytery (the highest policy making body in the local assembly) if the one is ministry material. From the local assembly level, the candidate is then observed by the elders for a while, checking the genuineness of the messages and revelations whether they come to pass as well as conform to Scriptural guidelines. The person's level of financial integrity as well as ability to keep things revealed to him and to act wisely are some of the criteria by which one with a genuine prophetic call, is evaluated. The said candidate is then recommended to the district presbytery (the highest policy making body in the district, made up of a number of local assemblies' presbyters made up of elders, deacons and deaconesses). The local presbytery is headed by a Presiding elder, while the district presbytery is headed by a district minister, who is a full time worker.

When a candidate goes through the time of observation, and the assessment of his character successfully, he is then presented to the Area Presbytery and interviewed by an Area Ministerial Committee, headed by an Area Head (an Apostle/Prophet/Evangelist or pastor with many years of ministry experience). A candidate who is successful at the Area level is then presented to the National Ministerial Committee. At this level, if nothing adverse is noted about the candidate, he is then accepted into the full time ministry of the Church. The candidate then proceeds for Ministerial Training at the Pentecost University College for a year after which he is given a station to start his ministry. He could later continue the training for a degree programme in theology after about five years of practical work on the field. The number of years could be waived for those who excel in ministry.

A full time minister undergoes two years of probation to ascertain whether the person's call is genuine or not. At this stage the candidate's character, preaching and teaching ability, prayer life are watched closely by his Area Head to see if the person is really suitable for ministry. At this stage he is designated as a Probationary Overseer. Another test is to find out whether the church the minister is pastoring is experiencing growth spiritually (knowledge of the Scriptures, prayer life, testimony of sound moral life), numerically and financially. After the two years of probation the successful person is then confirmed as an Overseer and given three further years to prove his gifting. This, however, may be waived if his ministry is outstanding. The fruit of the person's ministry, that is souls won, number baptized into Church membership, baptized in the Holy Spirit, tithes and other financial obligations

met (targets are given), as well as the prayer life of the congregation he pastors and how effective home Bible studies are conducted within his jurisdiction are assessed. After this period, he could be called into the pastorate.

If the person has a proven prophetic ability, he could then be called and ordained into the office of prophet after a few more years following his call into the pastorate. Article 15.7 of the 2010 Constitution of the Church reads, Prophets: "These are Ministers who exercise the prophetic Ministry and are called into the office of a Prophet . . ." (pp. 53-54). Thus in the Church of Pentecost, one has to pass through many stages to become a prophet. A person is not called a prophet just because he prophesies. The scope of the prophet's functions in the Church – giving direction, warning the Church and individuals about impending disasters, as well as discerning false workers, the work of evil spirits, and others, calls for maturity on the part of the prophet.

The Church believes that the gift must not be used to disgrace, intimidate, or embarrass people publicly. The gift needs to be handled maturely. No special type of clothing is prescribed for prophets in the Church. There is no distinction in appearance between one who is a prophet and one who is not. Prophecy in the CoP is believed to be a message coming from God (the Supreme Being), through divine revelation and not derived from reason, observation, speculation, imagination or some innate sagacity. From this research there is overwhelming evidence to demonstrate that almost everyone in the Church believes that genuine prophecy in the Church comes from God and is analogous to the prophetic institution in Israel as recorded in the Bible.

This is so because the CoP believes that any manifestation or utterance that does not pass the Biblical standards for testing prophecy should be rejected. The uniqueness of the kind of prophecy in the CoP is apparent when one observes analogous phenomena among the spiritual churches as well as the local shrines in Ghana. Isechei's (1995) classification of the CoP as one of the Spiritual Churches whose prophets are depicted as the ecstatic type is in error.

Again, divinatory practices (observation of physical phenomena to explain or predict happenings), including questioning sufferers before treatment are vehemently condemned by the Church's leadership. That explains why leadership has issues with the Prayer Camps/Centres. However, this researcher disagrees with the Church's condemnation of almost all practices at the Prayer Camps/Centres. This is so because Jesus Christ was a prophet, yet there were times that he asked the sufferers questions about their situations (Matthew 20:30-34; Mark 5: 9-10; 9:21-22; John 5:5-9). It is therefore not out of place for a prophet to extract information from the sick before attending to them. Some leaders view the practice of prophecy in the CoP to be a resurrection of the Akan 'abisa' system (Onyinah, 2002). This position, however, ignores the fact that the covenant that God enacted with the founders of the CoP warned against adopting any practices not in conformity with sound biblical teaching on prophecy and any other practice (Arkhurst, 1980).

The prayer centre leaders' use of paraphernalia to heal the sick is condemned by the Church's leadership. Asked by the researcher as to why

certain practices are evident at the Centres and not evident in the practices of the ordained prophets Deaconess Grace Mensah explained. The prayer centre leaders use what is known as “prophetic words” as well as “prophetic actions” (Grace Mensah, personal communication, May 6, 2011, Edumfa). “Prophetic words”, according to her have to do with the prophet speaking under inspiration at the spur of the moment what the Spirit is telling him or her about the suppliant. “Prophetic action” she intimated also has to do with the prophet giving the suppliant a directive to perform an act in order to receive healing or otherwise.

The leadership of the CoP condemns practices of these kinds. So in her opinion, the ordained prophets do not want to offend the leadership of the Church. “They will prefer offending God to offending the leadership.” However, the researcher argues that to deny that some biblical use of the prophetic gift defied human reason would mean doing a great disservice to the scriptures. Take a situation where Jesus meets a blind man, spits on the ground, makes clay of the spittle, rubs the eyes of the blind man, and instructs that same blind man to go to the pool of Siloam to wash his face. The blind man did that, and came back to Jesus seeing (John 9:5-7). Again, Paul is mentioned as using handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched his body to heal sick people (Acts 19:11-12). Jesus and Paul used different methods to effect healings some controversial, others not. The prayer Camp/Centre leaders are known to use some unconventional methods like those biblical methods mentioned above. It is the contention of this researcher that similar directives could be given to contemporary prophets. Nevertheless, this work posits that

when a practice becomes the norm, or if prophets sell paraphernalia for pecuniary benefits as occurs in certain neo-prophetic churches, as well as some Prayer Centres/Camps in the CoP, then the practice must be reconsidered. Prayer Camp/Centre leaders with recalcitrant attitudes are excommunicated (expelled) from the Church. Edumfa Prayer Camp leader, Mrs. Rebecca Bedford, expelled from the CoP in 2013, is an example.

The prophets in the CoP claim to be recipients of divine revelation, and their preaching and teaching is under the psychological conviction that God speaks His mind to them and commands them to speak His words to the church. If the prophets are to be taken seriously, then a necessary prerequisite for a proper understanding of their utterances is a careful consideration of the prophets' conviction that they receive revelations from God. Prophets in the CoP are convinced that they have a divine call and commission to speak God's words. The convictions that they are speaking from God is manifested in their declarations by the formula "the Lord of hosts has spoken" "*dom hene safohene na ose.*" Despite the differences in the various prophetic groups outlined above, they have certain features in common: They all have a profound religious experience, a vision, a dream that may result in prophetic speech and actions, healing and society building. From the researcher's findings it was noticed that the prophets also function as intercessors.

Examination of prophecies in the CoP Council Meetings' minutes from 1990 to 2011 for example, one hardly comes across prophecies of rebuke or judgment, as was the case at the early stages of the Church's life. One

prophetic utterance delivered during the 39th Session of the General Council Meetings 5 to 7 May 2011 is cited below to buttress this point:

I promised since the times of your predecessors that I will walk with you. I know my Church. I want to remind you that my ways are different from the ways of man. I do not behave as man expects but according to my desires. My Church may climb or descend but although the way is slippery, I have promised to walk with you. I want you to understand the times and to understand what you are to do because I am coming soon. ... I will continue to open up my hands to you so that you will see and know what I have for you. It is not every time that people will agree with you, but do not feel disappointed because I know what I am doing. As this meeting gets to a close, I would do as I desire and not as the people want. (Prophecy delivered by Prophet Appiah Agyekum: May 6, 2011).

Reception of the Prophetic Word

When Prophets J. E. Ameyaw, J. O. Amaniampong, and P. B. Appiah-Adu, were interviewed by the researcher as to how the prophetic word is received, they had this to say: "The prophetic message is received as an

irresistible word from God causing the prophet to become restless until the word has been delivered” (Personal communication November 12, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). It is believed that the word of prophecy comes to the prophet from God speaking to the spirit or heart of the prophet as is also indicated in Ezekiel 2:1-2; 3:24. This position seems to agree with Battenweiser’s (1914) view about how prophets received the prophetic word: “The great basic truths or principles of which they were cognizant through their moral consciousness, and which [constituted] their revelation from God, formed the centre and essence of prophecy” (Battenweiser, 1914, pp. 150-152).

According to the respondents the prophetic word could also come to a prophet by means of an audible voice as illustrated in the first chapter of the book of Ezekiel, “...I heard the voice of one speaking” (Ezekiel 1:28). God also communicates with His prophets by means of mental pictures (visions). A biblical example is Isaiah 6:1 where it is stated, “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord seated upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple” (HCSB). Visions in the CoP are of three kinds: The first kind is the open vision, a vision that the prophet receives when the physical eyes are wide open (J. E. Ameyaw, P. B. Appiah Adu, personal communication, November 12, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). The prophet sees into the realm of the spirit. The second kind is known as a closed vision, which is received when their physical eyes are closed. The third kind of vision is the trance. In this case, the physical senses of the prophet are suspended while he sees into the realm of the spirit. In this state, the prophets sometimes receive

messages and prescribe solutions to people's problems. In the CoP a prophetic message could operate in different forms. Prophecy can come as an immediate prophetic word, when the believer is under the influence of the Spirit of God (Prophet J. E. Ameyaw, personal communication November 10, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). The prophet is also believed to speak prophetically in what is called prophetic prayer. In this case, a prophetic word is delivered in a prayer setting to the one being prayed for.

In the Church gatherings, prophetic utterances are regulated to conform to the New Testament guidelines as given in 1 Corinthians 14:26-33. In public meetings two or at most three prophetic utterances are permitted. The messages are sometimes given in tongues and should be by course, that is, one after the other and another is allowed to interpret and explain. It is not the practice in the Church for one to give a message in tongues and interpret the message at the same time. This is done to prevent deception of immature Christians through the use of a spiritual gift. This, however, may be permitted if there is no interpreter in the meeting. (M. K. Yeboah, Lecture notes on 'Prophecy', Pentecost Bible Training Centre, Madina Accra, May 1990, p. 7): "In public meetings let it be by two or at the most by three . . . and let one interpret and explain. The regulations for prophecy are similar to those governing tongues." To say that only three messages are permitted at a time could not be the whole truth. The researcher also observed situations where more than three prophetic utterances were allowed. This however normally happened during what is known as impartation services. These are services where people are prayed for with the laying on of hands to impart gifts to

them. In such situations, the leader would want to know how many have received the prophetic gift and other gifts for record purposes. Regulation of the prophetic utterances according to the understanding of the Church is not for suppression but stimulation, for the Scriptures admonish believers to “be eager to prophesy” (1 Corinthians 14:39 - HCSB) and advise that “everything must be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40 - HCSB)

In the CoP, ecstatic behavior called by some as “prophetic frenzy” (Freeman, 1968, p. 23) and equated by some scholars to the “so-called ecstatic behavior of the early Hebrew prophets” (Freeman, 1968, p. 23) only identifies one either as a novice in the area of prophecy or one under demonic influence. Ecstatic prophecy in the CoP is frowned on. Those who prophesy may be corrected or directed to live pure lives, prophesy in a public setting so that the utterance could be judged to see if it agrees with biblical principles. Prophecies that are not in conformity with Scriptural teachings are rejected outright. For example a prophecy that instructs someone to divorce his spouse and remarry is rejected outright. It needs to be noted that some prophetic messages may be mystical and not fully understood at the time of delivery except in the hearts of the people they may be specially intended. Even some of the Old Testament prophets prophesied things beyond their own understanding, diligently seeking to know in part the meaning of their mystic pronouncements (1 Peter 1:10).

The place of praise and worship in Prophetism in the CoP cannot be overemphasized. Music usually invokes the supernatural presence of God into the midst of the worshippers paving the way for prophetic utterances. Many of

the songs used in the Church are normally received in an atmosphere of praise and worship. In all the prophetic types, the writer observed, messages were sometimes received via music or song. Thus, songs can come through a prophet operating in the simple gift of prophecy, a prayer camp leader, or an ordained prophet. According to the prophets interviewed by this researcher, music sets the tone for the prophet to receive a prophetic word (P. B. Appiah Adu, personal communication, November 8, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). Prophecy would normally be given during devotional times, the reason for this being that it is normally considered very difficult to bring forth a prophecy during a debate (J. E. Ameyaw, personal communication, November 8, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe).

Types of Prophecies in the CoP

A cursory observation of prophecy in the CoP may suggest that there are two types – those operating in the gift of prophecy, and the ministry as exhibited by the ordained prophets. However, a careful observation unearths three categories of prophets, the spirit and gift of prophecy, the prayer camp type analogous to neo-Prophetism, and the ministry gift.

Some Pentecostal churches namely Assemblies of God and Foursquare Gospel Church recognize only two categories, the gift, and the ministry. In the CoP there is a distinction between ordained prophets and those operating in the simple gift of prophecy (*The CoP Constitution*, 2010 p. 39). There is also the third type exhibited by those at the Prayer Camps/Centres. Those who prophesy at the simple gift level do not give directive prophecies. From

observation by the researcher those learning to prophesy at this level may shake, cry, and sometimes find it difficult to control themselves. They may sometimes fall on the floor. However, people who shake violently, cry, fall, and exhibit other emotional outbursts when prophesying are considered novices or to be under demonic control in the CoP.

The CoP's notion of different categories of prophets seems to accord with the view of Ellis (1977). Ellis is a New Testament scholar who holds that the New Testament distinguishes prophets who prophesied occasionally from those who had a lasting gift (professional prophets) (Ellis, 1977). Even though the CoP recognizes different types of prophecies, none of the prophetic types equals the Christian Scriptures or is above it. That explains why the Church holds that every prophetic utterance has to be tested using biblical principles – whether it promotes peace, unity, encouragement, and does not conflict with biblical ethical teaching. At this juncture the work now examines the types of prophecies in the CoP.

The Spirit and Gift of Prophecy

The researcher asked interviewees as to the types of prophecies they know about. The answers he received from Pastors David Addo of the Church of Pentecost Santa Maria in Accra, Nyarkotey Quao, a pastor with the CoP Headquarters, Accra, as well as documentary evidence (Antwi, 2013), show that the Church distinguishes between the spirit/gift of prophecy, and the office. The first type of prophecy has to do with those who operate in the spirit of prophecy that graduates into the simple gift of prophecy. The simple

gift of prophecy, the CoP believes, is for exhortation, edification and comfort. This type of prophecy is not as problematic as that found in the prayer camps in the CoP.

The reason is that in the simple gift of prophecy there is no prediction neither does it evoke any directive element. It is also not diagnostic in its operation. Again, it does not involve the use of paraphernalia. This, the Church holds, is open to every believer in the church. The Church's leadership maintains that those in this category need teaching, guidance, and need to involve themselves in certain spiritual exercises like prayer, fasting, Bible study, fellowship, holy living and other activities like paying tithes faithfully, and being generous in supporting all who are in need in order to grow in the gift. For the leadership of the Church, one has to be called by God into the full-time ministry to grow through the ranks, be recognized by the leadership, and ordained by the Church's leadership to qualify to be called a prophet. In this light, Josiah Coffie Quaye was the first Ghanaian called into the office of prophet during a Ministers' Council meeting at Agona Swedru in 1948 (J. K. Ennin, personal communication, June 26' 2012, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon).

Some scholars understand the Spirit of God in Judaism as the 'Spirit of prophecy' (Dunn, 1980, pp. 132-136; Isaacs, 1976, chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6; Menzies, 1994, chapters 2-5; Turner, 1996, chapters 3-5). For these scholars, the Spirit of prophecy according to Jewish usage did not suggest that the Spirit was given primarily for the purpose of giving out prophecies. For them the

Jews meant something wider, “namely the Spirit acting as the organ of communication between God and a person, typically inspiring at least four types of gifts” – charismatic revelation and guidance, charismatic wisdom, “invasively inspired prophetic speech”, and “invasively inspired charismatic praise and worship” (Turner, 1996, pp. 8-13).

However, it is taught in the CoP that the spirit of prophecy may rest occasionally upon individuals in the congregation. The spirit of prophecy for the CoP occurs in a time of intense period of worship when anyone not usually given to prophesying, under the unction of the Spirit, receives and delivers a prophecy (Yeboah, 1990). The gift of prophecy is viewed in the CoP as one of the gifts (*charismata*) or manifestations of the Spirit of God. It is distributed to individuals, according to the will of the Spirit. When the frequency of the spirit of prophecy increases in the life of a person that one then moves into the realm called the gift of prophecy.

The gift is given to believers for believers; that is, the gift of prophecy, is exercised by a believer for the benefit of other believers. According to Apostles J. W. D. Cudjoe, Aflao Area Head of the CoP, Moses Ladejo and S. K. Ansong (retired ministers), the gift has strict limitations on its function and use (personal communication, November 10, 2010, Area Mission House, Aflao and November 16, 2010, Residences, New Aplaku, Accra, respectively). 1 Corinthians 14:3 reads: “The one who prophesies speaks to men for edification, and exhortation and consolation” (NASB). The CoP interprets the

passage to mean that the gift of prophecy has little to do with judgmental or directive “words”.

It is not future oriented but is currently applicable to people’s present physical, emotional and mental situations. The CoP further teaches that there is also a function of the gift of prophecy as it relates to an unbeliever who comes into the Church gathering by which he is convicted and convinced of the presence of God. The gift of prophecy abides permanently, and like the “Spirit of prophecy” is primarily to edify, exhort and comfort believers, while the office of the prophet operates in a governmental role to give direction to the Church.

According to respondents the researcher interviewed, the Church advocates that prophecy must portray both the nature as well as the plan of God since God’s purposes for his people reflect his character. Nevertheless, such a portrayal describes a functional distinction that is both useful for this work and forms an identifying feature of the function of prophecy in the CoP. A host of Pentecostal churches encourage the use of prophecy, but the Church of Pentecost recognizes the office of prophet and the role of prophecy in church government (*The Church of Pentecost Constitution*, p. 46).

The Prophetic Office

As to who a prophet is in the CoP, the researcher, at this juncture quotes Prophet M. K. Yeboah (CoP Chairman, 1988-1998): “Those who prophesy are prophets, certainly, but they are not (prophets) Ministerial Gifts

in the grand sense either of the Old Testament or the New. For the prophetic office (Ministerial Gift) and the gift of Prophecy (Spiritual Gift) are distinct . . .” (Lecture Notes on Prophecy: Pentecost Bible Training Centre, Madina, May 1990). Yeboah’s understanding is also the CoP’s position.

The office of the prophet is very crucial at the Church’s Council meetings. The prophet effects changes in the Church through transfer of personnel, calling people to higher offices and giving direction generally. An examination of the minutes of the Church’s Council meeting from 1950 to date shows that prophecies from the ordained prophets in the Church dealt with transfers, appointments, and direction for the Church. From interviews and observations of the exercise of the prophetic, the CoP prophet is seen to bring the mind of God to bear on decisions in the Church by seeing, and or hearing and speaking from God. The prophecies also dealt with themes of the loving-kindness of God, the rapture of the church, and the need for one to live in holiness.

Prophets in the CoP hold that they operate in gifts of revelation: a word of wisdom that is Spirit-imparted fragments of the measureless resources of God’s wisdom. It is not the gift of wisdom, but a word of wisdom. The gift of wisdom is to be sought by all (James 1:5). It is an abiding gift in a believer who has sought for it. This is not so with a word of wisdom. The word of wisdom is given at the spur of the moment to meet a need having to do with a future course of action. The prophets also operate in the gift of word of knowledge, a manifestation of a word, a small portion, of God’s revealed

knowledge revealed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to meet a specific need. It is past or present oriented that is revealing present and past happenings. The third type of revelation gift evident in a prophet's life is the gift of the discerning of spirits, a divine enabling given to the prophet to see and hear into the spirit world. The gift allows the prophet to know the nature of spirits, whether they are divine, human, or demonic. It also allows the prophet to know perhaps the names, number and strength of demons or otherwise.

In prophetic revelation, prophecy in the CoP is believed to be analogous to the work of the Hebrew *nabi*. The work of the Hebrew *nabi*, the Church believes, has to do primarily with inspired hearing and speaking while that of the *roeh* or *hozeh* (seer) is primarily visual. This notion is in agreement with what has been noted by Goll (2004). Goll noted that the prophet has to do with "the communicative dimension and the seer is the receptive dimension." Goll summarizes the distinction thus:

Whereas *nabiy*' emphasizes the active work of the prophet in speaking forth a message from God, *ra'ah* and *chozeh* focus on the experience or means by which the prophet 'sees or perceives' that message. The first lays emphasis on a prophet's relationship with the people; the second on a prophet's revelatory relationship with God.

It is intimated by the prophets that these revelatory gifts have nothing to do with the kind of knowledge that comes from spending several years in school in order to have a university degree. This notion is worth noting since in Paul's writings, he linked prophecy closely to his understanding of revelation (Hill, 1989). Clifford Hill notes, "For Paul therefore divine truth is not received through an intellectual process but through direct communication with God's people through the Holy Spirit." From the Old Testament, even though the words "*nabi*", "*hozeh*" and "*roeh*" are sometimes used interchangeably to denote the ministry of the prophet, this researcher notes from the biblical text and observation of the prophetic in the CoP that the terms do not seem to be the same. The term "*nabi*" has to do with inspired speech, "*roeh*" has to do with "knowing by intuition" while "*hozeh*" refers to seeing in the realm of the spirit. The researcher observed in this work that the scriptural text standing alone is not enough to guarantee sound teaching. Experience must inform doctrine.

The biblical accounts give us a picture of different categories of prophets. The biblical classification, however, may be distinguishable from that of the CoP. The Church distinguishes between the *nkomyeni*, analogous to the Hebrew *nabi*, (translated prophet) and the *odiyifo*, similar to the Hebrew *roeh* and *hozeh* (translated seer). Even though some scholars, such as Moytyer (1962), and Freeman (1968) see the terms *nabi*, *roeh* and *hozeh* as sometimes synonymous, Goll's observation is very insightful when he wrote: "All true seers are prophets, but not all prophets are seers. A prophet may have the particular grace to hear and proclaim the word of the Lord The seer, on

the other hand, may move quite remarkably in this visionary dream capacity yet not be as deep in the inspirational audible graces of hearing and speaking. Nevertheless, both move and operate in the prophetic realm, but in different capacities or dimensions” Goll (2004, p.23).

What Goll implies is that a seer may see and declare what he has observed. The *nabi* on the other hand may speak out what he has by intuition and not in vision form. Freeman (1968), however, notes that in Israel, there was no standard precondition for someone to become a prophet. What made one a prophet was divine inspiration, and it was this inspiration that caused the prophet to speak out and to be listened to as a legitimate spokesperson for God. The CoP distinguishes between one operating in the simple gift of prophecy and the ministry of the prophet, which the researcher has also noticed in his findings to be a genuine observation.

The CoP prophet functioned first of all as a preacher of God’s word. He exhorts the Church, calling her to holy living and reminding her of God’s covenant with the Church to evangelize the world. While preaching or teaching is part of the function of the prophets, no one “tests” the preaching. The reason could be due to little knowledge of the Scriptures. This explains why the vision of the Church’s leadership places so much emphasis on Bible study in all the assemblies of the Church. From observation, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs can come via prophecy. They are not songs sung out of a songbook, but given by inspiration by God’s Spirit:

(1) To minister to one another: "*Oye na n'adoye wo ho daa*" 2x, *Oye, Yehowah ye oye na n'adoye wo ho daa*" 2x: meaning "He is good and his mercies endure forever. He is good, Jehovah is good and his mercies endure forever. This is given to encourage the congregants of God's mercy and loving kindness, thus calling on them to rely on God.

(2) To minister to self: "*Obekasa ama me. Obedi ama me. Me Jesus bekasa. Obekasa ama me. Obedi ama me. Me Jesus bekasa* (2x):

Meaning, "He will speak for me. He will defend me. My Jesus will speak. He will speak for me. He will defend me. My Jesus will speak." This kind of prophetic song is given to encourage the prophet personally in time of discouragement.

(3) To minister to God: "*Yehowah, ne wo din kese. Atiasefo Nyame ne wo. Wo ne me Nyankopon enne da yi. Mede me ho nyina ma wo*" meaning "Jehovah, your name is great. The God of the living is my God today. I give myself wholly to you." This is a prophetic song exalting God and reminding God of our reliance on Him. This song gave to the CoP, its theme for 2008 'The God of the living is my God today', which was received by the Chairman, Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah.

(4) To bring God's comfort to the congregation "I will build my Church for my own glory. I will build my Church for my own glory. And the gates of hell shall not prevail. I say, I will build my Church." Chorus then goes like this: "The Church is marching on. The Church is marching on. The gates of hell

shall not prevail. The Church is marching on.” This happened when the Church was facing difficulties and needed God’s comforting words. This is what most of the time people regard as prophecy. Prophecies can be directed to self, others, and even through the Spirit, be directed Godward via song to exalt God. The songs function as words of encouragement, comfort, exhortation just as prophecy does according to 1 Corinthians 14:3.

Prophecies in the CoP gave directions as well and also predicted the future. Those who operate in the gift of prophecy were observed to preach, teach, exhort, comfort and edify the congregations. No predictive element was found in their prophecies. The CoP Constitution (2010, p. 54) reads, “The office of a Prophet is complementary to that of the Apostle in calling, directing, and ordaining Ministers and other Officers of the Church (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-13). The Office is distinguishable from the exercise of the gift of prophecy which edifies, exhorts and comforts the saints (1 Corinthians 14:3, 4).” For the CoP, Prophets are people (ministries gifts) and not manifestations (gifts of the Spirit). Jesus gives his ministry to the Church through gifts of people, selected by Him to the Body (Church).

Jesus operates through His ascension gifts as Apostle, as Prophet, as Evangelist, and as Pastor and Teacher. This means that one can prophesy at every congregation of the Church and still not be a Prophet given to the Body. The types of words given by the Prophet are primarily to the collective, corporate people of God. Before the year 1961, callings to apostleship, the pastorate, as well as transfers were done through directive prophecies, that is,

messages believed to come from the divine Spirit giving the leadership directions as to the courses of actions to follow (*Minutes of 11th Session Akim Oda, November 24-30, 1961*). For example, the minutes of the Council meetings held from 19th to 24th September 1955 gave the following directive prophecy: "Pastor Mintah should be transferred to Akroso, J. C. Quaye, to be transferred to Agona Swedru while still residing in Asamankese. An evangelist is to be placed at Agona Swedru ..."

From 1950 to 1961 the minutes show that directive prophecies were very much in use in the Apostolic Church. For example, in the Eastern Province of the Gold Coast, at Pastors, Overseers and Elders' Council meeting held at Mangoase from 25-26 September 1953 prophecies through J. C. Quaye and M. K. Yeboah, nominated Diaba and Paintsil to apostleship, Overseer Yaw to Pastor, and Apau-Asante to the office of prophet in confirmation of Latter Rain prophecies concerning them. There were murmurings after the calls but a prophecy through Pastor Hammond was delivered to calm down the meeting. In 1961, for example, McKeown is said to have told a gathering of ministers that the word of the Lord came to him to call five pastors, including the first African Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, F. S. Safo, into the office of apostle (*Tell the Next Generation* vol. 2, 2008).

After 1961, the apostles and prophets carried out most of the callings based on recommendation rather than through directive prophecies. This became so because McKeown had his reservation of directive prophecies, as captured in his statement, "We should prove and test all prophecies and see

what spirits they are possessed” (*Ghana Apostolic Church Minutes*, November 24-30, 1961, p. 2). Respondents noted: “Prophetism practised by the ordained prophets has sometimes led to hatred, divisions, envy, insecurity, embarrassment, disaffection and the like.” When the researcher asked why, he was told that this was so “because some ministers wait eagerly at Council meetings to be located through prophecy for appointment which never happened.”

According to all the prophets who were interviewed, J. E. Ameyaw, P. B. Appiah Adu, J. O. Amaniampong (personal communication, November 8, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe) when someone who is used to operating in the gift of prophecy grows in the revelation anointing (operate in gifts of word of knowledge, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits), that person is seen to begin to operate in the ministry of the prophet. When a person’s prophetic ministry begins to impact whole people, groups, the church, et cetera, he moves into the office of the prophet. This is the point at which the prophetic ministry is recognized and the person is called and ordained.

The ministry of the Church of Pentecost has been enhanced by prophecy. According to Apostle D. K. Arnan (personal communication, September 29, 2003, Pentecost University College, Auditorium), after the split in 1962, due to misunderstanding that ensued between McKeown and the Apostolic Church Bradford, those who joined the McKeown faction were mainly the poor, destitute, and lowly educated. According to Arnan, the McKeown faction prayed for God to bring into the Church people of high

standing in the society such as lecturers, doctors, engineers, the rich and so on. To this, according to him God told them by prophecy that if they followed his directions including the ones that are enumerated below, then He (God), would bring up all categories of influential people in the Church.

The directions God gave them included the following: Holy lifestyles, honest to God and humans, commitment to God and the leadership of the Church, love and care for one another, prayerful lifestyles, hard work, not to imitate from other groups but to hear from God and take His instructions from time to time, faithful tithing as well as generous giving to support His work in bringing souls into the Kingdom of God, and that the Church's passion should be to evangelize, among others. He also said that God told them that there would be two categories of workers in the Church: Full time workers and lay workers (who would not be full time workers).

According to Apostle Arnan God told them that the full time workers must not engage in any money earning ventures but should concentrate whole heartedly in winning and nurturing souls for him. If they did that he (God) would supply all their needs, as well as bless them and their children tremendously. The lay workers, Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses, on the other hand, were to continue to do their own jobs, support the ministers materially, financially, pray for them as well as relate well with them by submitting to them. In so doing, he (God) would bless them and their children. As part of the covenant, the lay workers were not to demand anything from the Church as other groups do.

The Church could do things for them in appreciation of the work they are doing, but they (the lay workers) must never demand anything from the Church. If they did, they would have already received their reward and blessing. It is believed that the state of the Church today is a witness to God's faithfulness to the prophetic word given at the beginning of the Church. Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses in the Church who are prosperous in every way according to the respondents are a proof of God's faithfulness and the faithfulness of the founding leaders. In the Church, therefore, the Prophet not only speaks as a gifted person but also as an authority. This status of the prophet helps to effect changes in, as well as give directions to the church.

The Bible Training Centre in Accra, now Pentecost University College was established based on a prophecy given out by James McKeown to the Church in 1952 (McKeown, May 1952, Pastoral Letter CoP., H/Q. Accra). According to the prophecy, McKeown stated that God had revealed to him that a Bible Training Centre was to be situated in Accra to train ministers.

'Prophets' at the Prayer Camps/Centres

From section 15.7 of the constitution, it appears there are two types of prophets and prophecy. However, the third type of prophecy in the Church is found in the prayer Camps/Centres in the Church. Prophetism in the Prayer Camps/Centres resemble what Omenyo and Atiemo have identified as neo prophetic. The prayer camps are the places where residential facilities are made available for the sick until they are healed of their ailments, whereas the

prayer centres are without residential facilities. In the Church prophecy is said to occur when an individual speaks forth a message believed to emanate from God in the native language of the people assembled (or another language that could be interpreted). 'Prophets' who operate at the prayer camps and prayer centres, operate like those found in the neo-prophetic churches.

Their prophecies concentrated mainly on how one can succeed in life as well as be in good health. Prophetic practices from the Camp leaders are usually strongly condemned by the Church's leadership. In spite of the condemnation by the leadership of the Church, the researcher observed that the camps were much more patronized than meetings held in the local assemblies. Reasons adduced for this state of affairs has to do with the fact that the Centres operate in line with the African worldview. The sick can be prayed for in the local assemblies. In addition to that the Camp leaders also diagnose the problems behind the mishap. Basic elements in the operations of the Camp leaders include the following: praise and worship, the offering, and the sermon. The praise and worship is very exuberant and unrestrained. The sermon is often followed by ministration to the people and offerings being made to thank God and to remunerate the 'prophet.' There is no uniformity in the ministration as the prophet may move around singling people out for treatment; he could also call out groups of people and lead them in rigorous prayers. The 'prophet' or 'prophetess', by virtue of their 'anointing' is able to identify problems, cancel curses and effect blessings.

Ten (10) Apostles and Prophets or leaders in the Church were interviewed. They all said that the men and women at the prayer camps/centres are not to be called prophets and prophetesses but healers. The type of Prophetism practised in the prayer camps/centres according to the Church's leadership cause deep-seated problems in the assemblies. Here, sometimes holy herbs (*nyame ahyiraso*), holy water, holy clay, and other paraphernalia are employed as a result of prophetic directives to solve people's problems. These practices, the leadership holds are not scriptural and must be stopped. The leadership of the CoP insist that prayer is sufficient to deal with any problem and that one does not need physical aids to get their problems solved. The prayer camp/centre leaders, however, think differently. Their large patronage is therefore a source of worry to the Church. The camp leaders teach suppliants to clap their hands vigorously in prayer, and imprecatory prayers are said over their enemies, a practice detested by the Church's leaders. Imprecatory prayer is prayer one prays, asking God to kill, maim, curse, send eternal damnation, or otherwise on one's enemies. In spite of the tension between the camp leaders and the Church's leaders, the Camps, however, have done a lot of good to the Church in winning multitudes of souls for the Church.

At this juncture prophetic practices at the Edumfa Prayer centre exemplifying the second type of prophecy is now highlighted. The place is chosen because it was the most patronized (between 6,000 and 15,000 persons weekly) as at the time of this research). Its practices can be representative of what happens in the other prayer camps, even though there are slight

differences depending on the gifts and focus of the camp leader. The Edumfa Prayer Centre (not now with the CoP) happened to be the second oldest prayer camp in the Church (founded 1962) after Okanta at Suhum in the Eastern Region of Ghana, founded in 1958: (Elder C. Nanor, personal communication, August 9, 2014, Pentecost Mission, Somanya). Edumfa was the most developed of the camps in the Church. Edumfa Prayer Camp was under the leadership of Deaconess Grace Mensah. She was believed to be about 88 years old as of the year 2009 (Deaconess G. Mensah, personal communication, November 12, 2009, Abura Dunkwa). She was born into a family that attended the Methodist Church before she later accepted Christ. According to her, she accompanied her husband to the then Apostolic Church (UK branch) in Ghana where she was miraculously baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

Deaconess Grace Mensah believed that she was called into the prophetic ministry through a revelation. Before her call she lived in the Ivory Coast (Bontuku) with her husband Elder Joseph Mensah. While there she developed some serious illness related to a pregnancy. This led her to return to Ghana. According to her, three months after her delivery she and her husband went to consult a prophet in the Central Region of Ghana. After an initial refusal to answer a supposed call of God, she finally yielded in 1962 after an encounter with God. She is believed to be a prophetess and according to her, she hears from God and sees into the future. Her ministry had lasted for about fifty years as of 2012. She rose to international fame with consultations from nationals of the United States of America (U. S. A.), Germany, Ivory Coast

and so on. She informed the researcher that the late Colonel I. K. Acheampong (a former Ghanaian Head of State) and some other political figures consulted her at various times. According to her, and confirmed by some witnesses, the Lord gave her a message to the effect that if Kwame Nkrumah, the first Prime Minister of Ghana went on his trip to Hanoi, China, he would not return to Ghana and this prophetic word came to pass.

The researcher asked some people at Edumfa about examples of prophecies they had heard. According to Elder Biney (personal communication, June 7, 2009, Edumfa Camp) who kept records of some messages given at the camp, Deaconess Grace Mensah had a prophetic word for General Akuffo that in 1976 if he did not hand over the reins of government to the civilians, his government would be overthrown and that he would be executed. Akuffo did not heed the warning and died just as predicted.

On May 21 1980 at Edumfa, God, through a revelation given to Elder Colonel Napoleon Arkhurst, gave a programme he had for leadership changes in the Church in a document "Birth of a Nation." Prophet M. K. Yeboah presented the document at the Council Meetings at Koforidua on 21st May 1998. The prophetic direction stated among others that Apostle F. S. Safo would be appointed the Chairman of the Church in 1981(Arkhurst, 1980). It went on to state, that five years after he assumed leadership he would die and that after his demise Apostle A. T. Nartey would conduct Safo's funeral service (Arkhurst, 1980). Going through the minutes of the Church's Council

Meetings, the researcher noted the regularity of a name connected with prophecies in the Church by name David Addo. When asked about Safo's death, he told the researcher that Safo's death had also been revealed to him about which, he informed some executive members, namely, Apostles A. T. Nartey and P. Asaiamah. (Pastor David Addo, personal communication, June 5, 2012, CoP, Mission House, Santa Maria, Accra).

The prophecy from Edumfa, delivered by one Elder Colonel Arkhurst went on further to state that after the death of Apostle Safo, Prophet M. K. Yeboah would take over the mantle of leadership of the Church. From the researcher's personal observation, however, Prophet Yeboah's second term in office (1993–1998), was not without serious challenges. There was disaffection among a number of people in the Church concerning his reelection. There were prophets who also had other candidates in mind. The prophecy also said that, "after him I have appointed a young pastor after my own heart ... to take over the administration of the Church" (Arkhurst, 1980, p. 2). This was interpreted to apply to the calling of Apostle Michael Kwabena Ntumy, a young 40 years old minister as chairman in 1998. According to Pastor Yirenkyi-Smart, however, Apostle Safo just before his death, nominated Apostle Opoku Onyiah to be Chairman after him (J. Yirenkyi-Smart, personal communication, November 5, 2009, Pentecost University, Auditorium, Sowutuom, Accra).

Nevertheless, the choice of Apostle M. K. Ntumy was confirmed through prophecy at the 1998 Council Meetings at Koforidua and ratified by

majority vote. The document containing the prophetic direction for the Church was kept by a few leading members of the Church and they watched keenly to see the unfolding of things. This researcher happened to secure a copy of the document in 1998 from Prophet M. K. Yeboah. The Church therefore thinks that "The spiritual growth of the Church of Pentecost and its spread throughout the world is a fulfillment of God's covenant with the founders of the Church at its beginning (from 1931)" (The Church of Pentecost Song book, 2004, pp. 147-149).

At the Sixth Extraordinary Council Meeting of the Church held in Koforidua in April, 1999, the General Council decided that the Church members be taught these covenants (below) for them to know God's fulfillment of His side of the covenants and what they must do to fulfill their responsibilities in God's plan for the Church as found in the Church's Songbook (pp. 148-149). God promised to call men from time to time, equip, provide, protect, prune His Church, and reveal His presence to His people in many ways. The Church on its part is to be holy, blameless, and pure. The Church must neither love the world, nor its ways (money minded, selfish, covetous, proud, arrogant and stubborn in its ways). Holiness should be the Church's watchword. It should not owe anybody, borrow or seek financial assistance, loans or grants from anywhere since He (God) is its "Eternal Riches, Treasury and that He (God) is able to sustain the Church in all its needs." The Church is admonished to control the gifts that would be poured into it so that Satan would not use them to his advantage. Sin must not be harboured in the Church.

In order to fulfill these obligations the Church is to: Set aside every first Wednesday of the month to pray and offer money for missionary work. Every first Tuesday of the month was to be set aside by the women in the Church to pray for the expansion and growth of the Church, spiritually, numerically, and financially. Callings and elections to high offices were to be subjected to confirmation through divine intervention and general consensus of the people. Christ is to be presented as Saviour and emphasis is to be placed on salvation through Christ and the need for the new birth in all preaching and teaching. The foursquare gospel is to be emphasized: "He came to save me. He came to heal me. He came to fill me with His Spirit and He will come back to take me with him to reign forever."

The researcher's critical view is that for the Church of Pentecost, its doctrinal stance, practices, core values and operations are based on the prophetic directive given by the Holy Spirit to the founding leaders at the beginning of the Church and confirmed at Edumfa in 1980 through a prophecy by Elder Colonel Arkhurst. Practices at Edumfa and other camps have, been vehemently criticized by some key leaders in the Church. Peculiar and curious practices at the camp included the following: asking suppliants to "offer" money as a means of "summoning" adversaries of the suppliants to God; selling of traditional herbs, known as "*nyame ahyiraso*" (God has blessed) to the attendants at the camp. It is believed that these herbs have the power to drive away spiritual enemies, cure illnesses when applied and to perform other miraculous feats for the suppliants. At prayer sessions, toffees, handkerchiefs,

biscuits and other elements are distributed to suppliants as “points of contact” in order to invoke God’s power into situations.

Prophecies come in two ways – as prophetic words and as prophetic actions. Prophetic words have to do with words coming from the prophet or prophetess through divine inspiration to give direction to the suppliants. Prophetic actions deal with the prophet asking the suppliants to do a physical act like touching a physical object for example a handkerchief or drink some concoction to receive what they need from God. Sometimes people have to stay in long queues waiting their turn to receive directions (*akwankyere* in Akan) from the prophetess for their lives. Another very important practice is a directive for suppliants to sleep between the hours of 10.00 in the morning to 5.00 in the evening daily expecting angelic visitations.

There is also the practice whereby suppliants are to walk around an uncompleted auditorium building (symbolizing the walls of Jericho) seven times daily with a dose of prayer in order to deal with their problems. Suppliants are also sometimes made to put themselves in certain postures in order to wage warfare against their enemies. Testimonies abound as to the effectiveness of following these directives by suppliants. Multitudes have testified to having been healed of various diseases and ailments, delivered of evil spirits, financial disasters and many other problems. According to her, there are lessons that people can learn from what God told her, namely: that she should be careful of money, she should have a job doing and not to rely on people’s monies. She was told to take to farming as her vocation and not to

rely on the gift. According to her God told her that not all who have been called by him are pleasing him. According to Deaconess Grace Mensah, God told her that for one to be effective and end up in Heaven that one must be humble, loving, patient, studious of God's word, prayerful and have seasons of fasting in order to control lustful desires and to live in holiness.

Form and Content of CoP Prophecy

In spite of what has been said about prophecy in the CoP setting, Turner (1996) has noted that there are two differences between New Testament prophecy and contemporary prophecy. For him in contemporary prophecy there is an absence of distinctive forms of speech and a tendency towards simultaneous reception and transmission of the message. However, from observation by this researcher and from interviews of five key prophets in the CoP it can be asserted that sometimes the prophet "wrestles" with a message for a period of time before delivery. The CoP like Cartheledge (1994) has observed that prophecy is a spontaneous event. The above situation calls for a clear cut understanding of what elements make up genuine New Testament prophecy since the CoP holds that its prophetic practices are patterned according to New Testament guidelines. Chant (1990) highlights four basic elements in New Testament prophecy. These are: revelation (Acts 11:27-30; 13:1-2; 17:3; 21:10), edification (that is, building up, strengthening – 1 Corinthians 14:3, 5, 17), exhortation (encouragement – 1 Corinthians 14:3, 31; Acts 15:32), and consolation (that is, comfort – 1 Corinthians 14:3; Acts 15:32).

These are all evident in CoP prophecy. According to Chant (1990), the element of rebuke or correction is much more an element of Old Testament, rather than New Testament prophecy. As a rejoinder to what has been noted by Chant, this work notes that rebuke or correction is not exclusively an Old Testament element of prophecy as Revelation 2:4-5, 16-17, 21—23; 3:14-19 indicate. Prophet M. K. Yeboah, Chairman of the CoP (1988-1998), in addition to Chant's observations added certain basic elements to New Testament prophecy, namely: "To learn (1 Corinthians 14:31), to convict the unbelievers and make manifest the secrets of their hearts (1 Corinthians 14:24-25)" (Yeboah, 1990). In order to have a clearer understanding of the prophetic phenomenon in the CoP, it will be necessary to note that the Church differentiates talents and skills from gifts of the Spirit of God: In the first place, it will be imperative to understand what a talent is. It is an 'innate ability, aptitude, or faculty; above average ability; a talent for cooking; a child with talent.' (*Collins Concise Dictionary* 2001, p. 1537). The Church believes that Prophets/prophecy are spiritual gifts given to believers in God; they are not born with them. Talents are natural inherited abilities and interests given to people generally, whether they believe in God or not, but not so with the gift of the Prophet/prophecy. Talents are natural human abilities given at birth by God through parents (CoP Lay Leaders' Training Manual, 2010). They are given to benefit people generally and become more obvious through instruction tutelage and exercise, not so with the gift of prophecy or the ministry of the prophet.

This position agrees with Strong's understanding that Spiritual gifts are given at conversion to Christ that is, at one's second birth (Strong, p. 429). They are given to benefit the Church (1 Corinthians 7, 25-31; 14:5, 12, 31-33). This researcher, however, notes that having spiritual gifts does not necessarily make a person more spiritual than others. For a message to function as prophecy it must first be recognized as revelation when it is uttered: the content, the delivery and form of speech assists to identify the act as a prophecy. Normally, formulaic expressions are used freely to demonstrate the divine origin of the prophetic utterance. This is apparent from a document highlighting God's covenant with the Church of Pentecost. In particular is the Church's earlier view on the infallibility of divine utterance. Some of the prophecies in these churches foretell future events, which actually come to pass. On May 29, 2011, one of the leading prophets with the Church of Pentecost, Jonathan Edmund Ameyaw delivered some prophetic messages to some seven members of Shalom Worship Centre at Akweteman where the researcher worships, and those messages all came to pass within a period of three months. The prophecies had to do with certain happenings that were to take place in their lives in the immediate future. The seven included Sampson Harrison, Emmanuel Abrokwah, and Samuel Adu, all elders in the congregation. In spite of the above, some leaders in the churches feel that people need to be wary of so called prophetic messages. It is pointed out that a prophetic utterance can be in error. A prophetic word is said to occur when a Christian hears, sees or senses a prompting from the Holy Spirit and speaks what he or she has received. It is a spontaneous utterance, a revelation given in

words to the prophet to be delivered as it is given to people in a known language of those gathered.

The CoP believes that she stands “wholly within the Hebraic tradition by viewing prophecy as inspired utterance” (Gentile, 1999, p. 163). Prophecy in the CoP lies in the prophetic awareness in the church of the overruling divine providence directing all events of the Church’s history toward one central purpose, God’s divine purpose in history in general enshrined in the covenant God made with the Church’s founding leaders. In the light of the above, the form and content of prophetic utterances in the church follow the directions as outlined in the covenant made with the church’s founding fathers.

Influence of Latter Rain Movement (LRM)

The LRM influenced Prophetism in the CoP to a very large extent (Onyinah, 2012). While the LRM recognized the gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers as important, the Prophetic gift stood out distinctly. The prophetic ministry in the CoP is specifically designated foundational to the church in close association with the gift of Apostle (*CoP Constitution*, 2010 pp. 43-44). Prophetism, it has been shown, was already in operation in the CoP at its inception, yet its practice was enhanced with the visit of the Latter Rain Movement to the Gold Coast in 1953 (Onyinah, 2008). The role and function of the prophet became prominent in the Church. Directive prophecies were given calling certain personnel in the Church to certain offices as well as transferring ministers to various stations.

Directive prophecies were seriously used until 1962 at the Extraordinary Council meetings at Kaneshie, Accra 23 – 25 October when some of the prophets began to question the sources of some of the prophetic utterances. Some felt that some of the postings smacked of favouritism and vindictiveness. Some transfers were seen as punishments while those sent to well-endowed stations were considered as rewards for some good done to the prophet. In that meeting, according to the minutes Prophet M. K. Yeboah cautioned the prophets not to prophesy on hearsay. In spite of this the minutes of the General Ministers Council Meetings at Winneba from 16–20 April 1963 showed the following directive prophecies delivered to the gathering: First a prophecy through Pastor Appau-Asante instructed that A. B. Mensah and J. W. Kesse should be ordained as pastors. Again, another prophecy through M. K. Yeboah indicated that one Apenyadu, Wilson Asante and Karikari be ordained as pastors. Prophecy through one Prophet Thomas Nyarko instructed thus: Apau-Asante was to leave Tamale on transfer to Accra, "I purposely sent him to the north and I am now sending him to Accra." In the same meeting, a prophecy through one D. M. Asante, informed the leadership to keep Apostle Egyir Paintsil in Kumasi, Pastor Bimpong was to leave Asamankese for Cape Coast while one Pastor L. A. Nyarko, was to be transferred to Saltpond.

While the main feature of the CoP is divine government through prophets and apostles, the proportion of prophecy that gives full guidance on administrative matters is very little. The minutes of the second General Ministers' Council held from 20 to 24 March 1964, shows that this state of affairs led Prophet Patrick Asiamah, one of the leading prophets at the time to

warn the Church through prophecy to be careful not to forsake God's guidance. In 1983 at the 23 Session of the General Council at Labone in Accra from 1 to 4 April prophecies were delivered by Opoku Onyinah, J. K. Ennuhm, K. K. C. Gadzekpo, Seth Ayi-Mantey, D. T. Okyere, and confirmed by Addo David and F. B. Yeboah as to the course of direction to take as a church.

Reading through the minutes of the Church from 1962 through to 1987 directive prophecies were sparingly used. The reason for the little use of directive prophecy during this period was because of confusion that was setting into the Church. For example one of the prophets had prophesied that Pastor McKeown was intending to hand over the leadership of the Church to a Ghanaian. This was evident in the Ghana Apostolic Church, General Council Minutes, Sekondi, 10-22 April 1957. However, this was not his intention at all. Even though Prophetism was still in practice in the Church within the period, the calling of people to the office of Prophet was discouraged until 1988 when M. K. Yeboah, became Chairman of the Church. Yeboah himself was a known prophet in the Church, and this could be the reason why he greatly encouraged that gift. During his tenure of office 1988-1998, J. K. Ennuhm, S. K. Osei, J. S. Gyimah, J. E. Ameyaw, J. O. Amaniampong and Appiah Agyekum were ordained as prophets, a number larger than two thirds of those ordained to that office between 1937 and 1987 (Apostle J. S. Gyimah, personal communication, October 12, 2013, Pentecost Theological Seminary, Gomua-Fetteh). The researcher's respondents had this to say. "Yeboah, being a

prophet himself might have sought to underscore the importance of that ministry.”

In 1991 directive prophecy through Prophet Patrick Asiamah (by this time Apostle) located and called pastors L. A. Nyarko, F. E. Antwi, S. K. O. Chemel and Peter Ayerakwa to the office of Evangelist. This is found in the Minutes/Report of Executive/Apostles/Prophets/Heads Meetings held at James McKeown's Sanctuary, Korle Gonno, Accra 19-23 November, 1991, (p. 27). In that same meeting, Prophet J. K. Ennuhm prophesied that Pastor S. K. Osei be called to the prophetic office.

Prophecy as a Ministry or Gift

The Church makes a distinction between prophecy as a gift and prophecy as a ministry. This is contained in *The Church of Pentecost: Lay Leadership Training Programme*, 2011, pp. 30-35. The Church of Pentecost believes that hierarchically, in the Christian fold apostles come first and then the prophets. In spite of the importance of prophecy in the Church of Pentecost, many have been uneasy about its use. Prophets feel that Apostles in the Church must give them a free hand to operate in the Church. The prophets argue that the Church's constitution states that the apostolic ministry and the prophetic ministry are complementary to one another. During the researcher's interview sessions, prophets P. B. Appiah-Adu and J. O. Amaniampong remarked: "They, the apostles, say that we are women, and therefore we should learn to be silent just as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35" (personal communication: November, 10, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe).

Akan terminologies will aid us understand the CoP's understanding of prophecy. According to Opanin Kofi Agyekum, in Akan terminology a vision is *anisoadehunu* (beholding something with the eyes) and revelation is *adiyisem* (knowing by intuition). It is in the light of this distinction that the Church of Pentecost calls the prophet *odiyifo* (one who sees and or has revelations), that is, someone who has visions and revelations. Prophecy is *nkomye* in Akan, and the one who speaks forth the *nkomye* is known as *nkomyeni*. Thus in the CoP those who speak forth God's messages but do not reveal or see anything from the Spirit world are believed to operate in the gift of prophecy. Such are not designated prophets. They are *nkomyefo* (those who speak forth God's messages by inspiration, yet do not see). M. K. Yeboah, Chairman of the CoP (1988-1998), and a leading Prophet in the Church in his Lecture notes on Prophecy, p. 4: Pentecost Bible Training Centre, 1990, states thus:

To understand this difference we must narrowly scan not only the word "Prophet", but also the word "gift." Both the offices Ephesians 4:8, 11 – and the endowments of the Spirit – 1 Corinthians 12:28, 30 – are called "gifts." But the offices (Ministry Gifts) are the gifts of Jesus to the Church (men with divine ministries – Ephesians 4:8-11), while the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 are the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the individual. And again (N. B.) both holders of the prophetic office (Ministry) and holders of the "gift of prophecy" are called

“prophets”; yet there is a difference, a difference which is clearly seen in Acts 21:9-10; where Philip’s four daughters who do prophesy are put in deliberate contradistinction to a certain prophet named Agabus who in inspired mimic action foretold how Paul should go to Jerusalem and what should befall him there.

It is interesting that the word *nkomhyeni* is not used in the Akan version of the Christian scriptures. Ecstatic techniques exhibited by a prophet in the church are considered an aberration. Such a prophet is considered a learner or novice. It is held in the CoP that the mature prophet must have all his faculties intact when in communion with the divine Spirit or delivering messages from Him. In Akan and Ga/Adangme societies prophets could be males or females. It is however interesting that the CoP, though accepting prophecies from females, does not ordain women into the office of the prophet. This, the researcher argues, is a case of gender imbalance that needs to be rectified.

Whereas in Akan traditional shrines the *akomfo* operate independently at their own shrines, and may be consulted by people without any further recourse to an *Okomfopanyin* (senior prophet) prophets in the Church of Pentecost are not permitted to operate independently of other ministers. From this researcher’s interactions with five (5) apostles and five (5) prophets, all of them held that the prophet is higher than the one who operates in the gift of

prophecy. The prophet is believed to be a ministry gift, and is one of the five-fold ministry or leadership gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. For example, at the First All-Ministers and wives' conference of the Church of Pentecost held from the 5th to 9th January 2011, Apostle D. K. Noble Atsu, treating the topic "Prophets and Prophecy" stated, "Do not prophesy above your level", quoting Romans 12:6 to buttress his point. This position is highlighted in *The Church of Pentecost: 1st All-Ministers and Wives Conference, 2011*, (p. 39). This was explained to mean that only ordained prophets are permitted in the Church to give directive prophecy. Even though the exegesis of the text may not be correct, it nevertheless highlights the Church's position on the prophecy/prophet controversy. This conception of the practice of prophecy brings with it myriads of challenges and may not have a future, since lay prophets believe that their prophecies are equally authentic.

It is taught in the CoP that apostles are higher than the other gifts. One can therefore rise from the office of prophet to be an apostle and not the other way round. In 1995, J. S. Gyimah was called to the office of prophet, but was elevated to the office of apostle, two years later. Prophet J. E. Ameyaw however sees it as a change of ministry rather than an elevation (personal communication: November 10, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). The group, that believe that apostles are higher than prophets base their argument on 1 Corinthians 12:28. In agreement with Gaibelein (1976) they suggest that Paul was ranking the gifts in order of importance. Gaibelein wrote, "The order of the gifts is instructive. The first three – apostles, prophets, and teachers – are in

the same order as in Ephesians 4:11 (cf. Romans 12:6,7) and, as placed first, are to be considered of greatest importance.”

This researcher, however, agrees with Fee (1987) concerning his examination of the above text: “As before, his concern is neither with instruction about gifts and ministries nor with ranking them. Rather, the preceding illustrations implied that the body has both different kinds of parts and differences within the same kind” (p. 617). Paul’s concern in the passage is diversity within unity. Again, this researcher differs from Gaebelien’s view that the order of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:28 is the same as in Ephesians 4:11. The order in 1 Corinthians 12:28 is as follows: Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, et cetera, while in Ephesians 4:11 the order is Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Again, if the writing of 1 Corinthians is put around AD 55 and the fact that hierarchical Church government had not been clearly evident in the Christian church until around AD 200 (Toon *et. al.*, 2004), it can be deduced that Paul was not discussing a hierarchy per se. If one examines Luke 11:49 Jesus stated that God had sent prophets and apostles to his people, placing prophets before apostles. Pentecostal denominations, however, view the status of the prophet differently because institutions differ in their approaches in applying biblical models.

The CoP sees the prophet as a recognized office. However, Grudem (1988) intimated that the term prophet did not require any formal recognition. As much as this researcher agrees with Grudem (1988) that the term Prophet in the New Testament did not require ‘some kind of formal recognition (such as a

public announcement or a vote of approval from the congregation or an ordination ceremony) before they can be called prophets” (Grudem, 1988), not everyone who prophesied was called a Prophet as 1 Corinthians 12:29 and 14:1,5 seek to imply.

The ordained prophets are those in the prophetic ministry who give direction primarily to the church generally. This type of prophecy is fully endorsed by the Church’s leadership even though not without serious challenges. A detailed examination of this will be done later in this work. The researcher interviewed four (4) prophets, J. E. Ameyaw, P. B. Appiah–Adu, J. O. Amaniampong, B. A. Adoba and four (4) apostles, Appiah Aidoo, Ousmane Zabre, Ekow Badu Woode and S. K. Ansong (personal communication between November 10-15, 2010, CoP Guest House, Gbawe) about the categorization of prophetic people in the Church. They were unanimous in their observation that, even though the CoP recognizes all ministers in the church as *asofo* (people performing priestly functions), not all are *adiyifo* (prophets).

The CoP holds that prediction is evident in the work of the *odiyifo* while the *nkomhyeni* only speaks to edify, exhort and comfort people without any predictive element in his or her messages. That is not to say that the one person cannot be both. Thus it seems that in the Church the work of the *odiyifo* seems to accord with the Israelite *hozeh* or *roeh* (seer), while the *nkomhyeni* is associated with the *nabi*, a spokesperson. This notion is in accord with Leon Wood’s, observation of the two Hebrew words translated seer referring “to the

revelational aspect of the prophets' work, when they heard from God and discerned His will." D. P. William also identifies the seer as "one that sees in a trance, endowed with the faculty of seeing in the Spirit by Divine intuition, and of looking through the darkness of the then present hour with illumination upon and toward the future" according to Gentile, (1999).

Even though 1 Samuel 9:9 tells us that the prophet was in the old time known as a seer, 2 Kings 17:13 distinguishes between the two: "The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: 'Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets'" (NIV). Thus, the terms *roeh* and *hozeh* emphasize the subjective element – 'a personal reception of divine revelation by visionary seeing or insight' (Gentile, 1999, p. 389). Seers were believed to be the contemplative (solitary figure) type of prophet "who went about in bands or companies and appeared to live in community" (Gentile, p. 389).

It must be noted, however, that unlike heathen soothsayers, the leadership of the Church believes that the prophets in the CoP should not predict the future to satisfy curiosity, nor to draw attention to themselves. Any prophetic utterance in the Church that touts that line is totally rejected. Prophecies, the Church teaches, must exalt only Christ. This is usually the area of conflict between the recognized or ordained prophets and the lay prophets at the prayer camps. The lay prophets sometimes draw people's attention to

themselves. The different prophetic types portray in the Church the important distinctions made with regard to authority.

During the researcher's interactions with Apostles Appiah Aidoo, J. S. Gyimah, F. E. Antwi, Ousumane Zabre, and Prophet J. E. Ameyaw, when the researcher wanted to know the status of the camp/centre leaders, the answer that was given was this: "As much as the Prayer Camps/Centre leaders are permitted in the Church to make use of their gifts when necessary at the Church's gatherings, they are dissuaded from using the designation of 'prophet' or 'prophetess'" (personal communication: 6 July, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). Camp leaders are permitted to use the titles of Elder, Deacon or Deaconess, but not the title prophet.

Calling to the office of Prophet (of course there are no ordained prophetesses) or ordination to any office in the Church is the prerogative of the Executive Council of the Church. This is found in the Guidelines for operating Prayer Centres, CoP, Accra, 2006. Directive prophecies that instruct the leadership to call people into higher offices are often disregarded if such messages do not come from ordained prophets. This was the case during the Church's General Council meeting in 1999 when a pastor prophesied that one pastor, D. K. Noble Atsu, be called to the office of apostle. The prophecy was disregarded because it did not come from an ordained prophet. Explanation to councilors by Apostle M. K. Ntummy Chairman of CoP, at the time was that Pastor D. K. Noble Atsu already had his name on their list of people to be

called to apostleship that year. They, however, had to delay the call in order not to set a bad precedence.

In the CoP, the governmental function of prophecy has to do with discovering God's plan, given in terms of both general instruction and identifying workers or personnel for the church. In the CoP like her predecessor, the AC, it is customary to read from the white paper (an annual document spelling out decisions of the Church's Executive) phrases such as "call to". An example can be found in the Executive Decisions for the 40th Session of the General Council meetings May 8 – 11, 2013: The paper read, Call to the Office of Apostle

Evangelist Amos Jimmy Markin

Pastor Samuel Antwi . . . (p. 7).

It is in the area of appointment of ministers that the prophetic element in the CoP becomes very sharp. The appointment of ministers to higher offices in the church generally comes through prophetic direction rather than from expressions of interest. Ordained prophets would normally nominate one who was to be called. However, apostles, on receiving a direct revelation from God, had authority to ordain anybody to any office. It is interesting to note that the Missionary Committee at Bradford (United Kingdom) and the leadership of the Apostolic Church at Penygroes, had to unanimously endorse a prophetic word that called James and Sophia McKeown to missions in West Africa specifically the Gold Coast in 1937.

With this background therefore, one can see the part prophecy plays in the scheme of things in the Apostolic Church and then the CoP. Of the five Chairmen who have led the Church from 1937 to date, three were singled out and called to the office through directive prophecy. McKeown (1937-1982), founder of the Church, was called as a missionary to the Gold Coast through prophecy (Leonard, 1989). Prophet M. K. Yeboah (1988-1998) and Apostle M. K. Ntumy (1998-2008) were called through prophecy (CoP Council Minutes, 1988). The first Ghanaian Chairman, Apostle F. S. Safo (1982 – 1987) was appointed by McKeown. Safo died in 1987 in fulfillment of a 1980 prophecy that stated that Apostle Safo would take over the mantle of leadership from McKeown at the end of 1981, but will die five years later. This information is found in “*Birth of a Nation*”, document presented at CoP General Council Meetings, Koforidua in May 1998.

In 2008, however, another case of nominating the Chairman via directive prophecy was not endorsed by the Electoral College (a meeting of Apostles and Prophets, Area Heads, Ministry Directors and Chairmen of Boards and Committees) of the Church, as required by the Church’s constitution. One Prophet J. O. Ampofo prophesied that Prophet J. E. Ameyaw be made the Chairman (Pastor Nyarkotey Quao: personal communication, June 14, 2010 at Pentecost University College, Auditorium). One Pastor S. A. Tetteh, a retired minister with the CoP argued that since Apostle Ntumy was a beneficiary of a directive prophecy, Ntumy should have allowed the prophecy to stand (personal communication, August, 10 2014, Residence, Darkuman).

Nevertheless, like all other prophetic utterances, it was put to the usual constitutional test (voting).

The prophecy was not endorsed. In spite of the rejection of the prophetic word eight out of ten leaders in the Church who were interviewed all felt that directive prophecy should continue in the Church. They however, conceded that the prophecies should be tested as has always been done in the past. That notwithstanding the researcher contends that a genuine prophetic word can be rejected as has been shown elsewhere in this work. It needs to be pointed out that there have also been appointments made without the use of prophecy, which were rejected as well. A case in point occurred in 1993 at Koforidua Council meetings where the researcher happened to be present. One Apostle R. Asomaning Sarpong was nominated by the then Chairman, Prophet M. K. Yeboah and the Electoral College for the position of General Secretary of the Church, but his candidature was not endorsed. Pastor Albert Amoah, who had been in ministry for only four years, however, was duly elected as General Secretary.

While other Pentecostal denominations may settle issues by consensus debate, the CoP will resort to the divine government model in the operation of prophecy to solve issues. Prophecy could also be used to lay down parameters for dealing with administrative problems. Doctrinal ambiguity, however, is normally not settled through prophecy, in the Church but through biblical teaching.

The CoP has set certain parameters or guidelines regarding the content as well as number of prophetic utterances at any one gathering of the congregations. At the local church setting the content of prophecies are restricted to edification, exhortation and comfort (Prophet Ameyaw, personal communication, July 6, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe). Genuine prophecies, the CoP teaches must not cause fear, division, or confusion. As to the number of prophecies permitted at any gathering of the Church, therefore, the number is restricted to only three. This, the Church teaches, is to give way to other activities rather than spend almost a whole service to prophetic ministrations.

The researcher asked respondents as to how the prophetic word was received. According to prophet Ameyaw, some prophecies, according to him carry a sense of urgency and would sometimes grow, most of the time through the initial stimulation of reading of the Scriptures, until the full text of the prophetic word is known. According to Prophet Ameyaw, and confirmed by Prophets J. O. Amaniampong and Appiah-Adu, the prophets sometimes “carry” a word, even sometimes “wrestle” with it for some time before delivering it. It is not always the case for a prophet to receive the whole content of a prophecy prior to the time of delivery. The message is sometimes received in part and as the prophet begins to speak the rest is given.

The Process of Prophecy

By process of prophecy is meant the growing in levels in the exercise of prophecy in the Church. Prophets in the church, as has already been noted elsewhere in this work refer to those whose gifts are recognized and who have

been officially ordained as such. The more experienced a prophet becomes the more senior he is considered to be. Experience has to do with the prophet's participation at council meetings, regularity of delivering prophetic messages, wisdom in delivering messages, their fulfillment, or how his messages bring unity, encouragement, and comfort. A prophet could be rated according to whether he is in the Executive Council or is a Regional or an Area Head (political regions are divided into areas for easier administration).

It seems that a prophet's rating could be determined by his election into the Executive Council of the Church. In this position, he is considered higher than those not within the Executive Council. Regional Heads are also higher than those at the Area levels. A case in point was an incident that occurred at the Church's Council Meetings in the year 2004. There happened to be a directive prophecy instructing the leadership of the Church to call one senior pastor into the office of an apostle. The directive was not carried out because for the leadership, it came from a lay prophet and not an ordained prophet. In the CoP, there is an important distinction made with regard to authority. The ordained prophets are perceived to be higher in authority than those who are not designated prophets in the Church. With this invaluable background in mind, the researcher sought to observe and examine in detail what was expected of prophets in the Church. Prophets were required to "wait on the Lord" for revelation. Prophecies were normally given during times of devotions, for the reason that it is usually during sessions of prayer that prophetic utterances would normally be given.

Between 1950 and 1988 when Prophet M. K. Yeboah became the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost only eleven (11) persons had been called and ordained into the prophetic ministry, the number of apostles being more than two times the number of prophets. The minutes of the 25th Session of the General Council Meetings of the Church held at the Ghana Secondary Technical School (GSTS) Takoradi 14-16 April 1988 showed only one (1) Prophet M. K. Yeboah and twelve (12) Apostles in attendance. The reason could be that the prophetic ministry was becoming very problematic, thus the need to curb its activities.

Apostle F. S. Safo became the Chairman of the CoP in 1981. He was very much against the practice of Prophetism in the CoP when he wrote in 1985 that ministers in the Church should desist from the practice of *abisa* (consultation), which was fast gaining grounds in the Church (Onyinah, 2002). After his death in July 1987, however, there was a resurrection of the use of directive prophecies in the CoP. In 1988, and in 1998, when little progress was being made as to who was to be appointed Chairmen of the Church at the apostles and prophets' meetings, they had to break proceedings for prayer, during which time prophecies were delivered nominating Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Apostle M. K. Ntumy respectively to the chairmanship of the Church. These actions according to some of the respondents bring about confusion because for them the use of directive prophecy in the Church is seen as a way of bringing certain ministers to enviable positions. A perusal of the minutes of the AC Pastors, Overseers, and General Deacon's Meetings at Koforidua March 19-22, 1951 indicates that there were no callings through

prophecy but by consensus. However, the minutes of the Pastors and overseers' meetings held at Winneba in the Central Region of Ghana from the 3-8 April 1952 showed the use of directive prophecy. After cautions against hasty selections of workers a prophecy was delivered by E. Apau-Asante calling Overseer Kesse to the Pastorate in Akwapim to be assisted by Overseer Emmanuel Ampiah. Overseer J. E. Wilson was also called into Pastorate to help Pastor C. K. Diaba in Trans-Volta Togoland in the same meeting. Two workers, namely Odoom and Chemel, were also called into the full-time ministry.

Between 1950 and 1962 it seemed that at every meeting of the leaders of the Church and at their conventions, the expectations for the prophetic ministry were very high. This notion led one Pastor Hammond to highlight at the Gold Coast Apostolic Church's Council Meetings held in Kumasi (21-24 September 1954) that, prophetic utterances needed to be judged. He outlined the following as the test of genuine prophecy: (1) It must agree with the written word of God (Scripture) (2) Practical experience (the coming to pass of the prophet's word) (3) There should be the inner witness of the one in charge of the meeting. "The Chairman remarked that the state of the hearts of both the prophet and the one who prophesied determines the nature of the prophecy."

Prophetism in the CoP from 1962 to the Present

In this section, the researcher examines Prophetism during this period with the view to noting the various ways prophecy has been handled from 1962 to the present in order to see the way forward. Prophecy before this

period was viewed as an infallible guide to the Church as noted above. However, from 1962 onwards prophecy no more guided the Church at every turn. The Church from 1962 made a significant departure from dependence on the prophetic for determining decisions. Currently, it seems that there is a decline in the preeminence prophecy had previously enjoyed. Prophetic messages are acknowledged as divine in origin but influenced by human minds to conform to a certain doctrinal stance.

In the CoP the handling of the prophetic word was supposed to be the purview of the General Council (the highest policy making body in the Church). In practice, however, it was realized from interviews conducted by this researcher that this was the preserve of the Apostles and Prophets. Presently, there are only five (5) active ordained prophets in the Church in Ghana with more than forty Apostles. Thus, the Apostles had the responsibility to elaborate and act on prophetic revelations. It was the responsibility of the congregation to submit to the authority of the Apostles. The district minister, and his presbytery, made up of elders, deacons, and deaconesses were expected to elicit the compliance of the congregation with respect to the decisions of the Apostles. There was no hint therefore of democracy in the Church's government. Prophetism took on a different form from 1962 when the Ghana Apostolic Church took on the name The CoP. Perusing through the minutes of the Church from 1937 through to 1962 it emerges that prophecy was used to a very large extent. Thereafter, it was sparingly used due to the observations noted by McKeown himself as quoted earlier in this work. Apostle J. K. Ennin, a retired minister of the CoP presently residing in

Ashaiman, Ghana, and called into the full-time ministry by McKeown himself, notes that McKeown believed strongly in prophecy, and also prophesied himself (J. K. Ennin, personal communication, June 26, 2012, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon). Apostle Ennin claimed that one day in 1967, McKeown called him to La in Accra and prophesied to him confirming a prophecy he had received in 1963 at Bibiani, his home town: McKeown gave him this message, "Ennin, it is time for you to join the ministry."

Apostle Ennin mentioned an incident to the researcher in connection with one Elim minister by name David Mills. After the severance of relations between the CoP and the Apostolic Church, United Kingdom, and with the desire to have fellowship with the worldwide church, the CoP established links with the Elim Pentecostal Church in the United Kingdom in 1972. David and Margaret Mills who had earlier attended a CoP convention in 1969 were recommended by the Elim Church to work closely with the CoP (The Church of Pentecost, General Council Minutes, Kumasi, March 12-18, 1971). According to Apostle J. K. Ennin, David Mills did not initially believe in the operation of the gift of prophecy. One day in 1975, McKeown heard Mills teach in the 1975 Council meetings about the subject of prophecy from a cessationist point of view. McKeown interrupted the lesson and gave Mills an analogy. "An Englishman in the United Kingdom was admitted to the hospital, gasping for air, and was supplied with an oxygen pipe. However, somebody decided to sit on the pipe thus cutting off the supply." (J. K. Ennin, personal communication: June 26, 2012, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon). Thus, for Apostle Ennin, McKeown viewed prophecy as the Christian's oxygen pipe.

According to Apostle Ennin, despite McKeown's conviction that prophecies were to be handled with care, he held that if the Church did not value and use prophecy it cannot be what God intended it to be.

The use of prophecy was so important that some even claimed that the change of the name Ghana Apostolic Church to the Church of Pentecost as from August 1st 1962 was through a prophecy delivered by Reverend George Alfonse Woode at the Kaneshie Central Chapel (Bredwa-Mensah, 2004). However, another view holds that the name was arrived at after a discussion by the Church's leadership at that time (Apostle Larbi Wetey, personal communication: June 19 2013, CoP Mission House Darkuman, Accra).

Prophecy is now seen as the intermingling of the human mind with the Divine. Given the conviction that the value of prophecy declined from 1962 to the present, the mix of divine and human in revelation is weighed towards the human element that has also brought with it its own challenges. Between 1937 and 1953 the Church held to the notion that prophecy was purely God speaking to His people. Current understanding in the CoP however is that prophecy is a divinely inspired message but that it passes through the theological lenses of the one speaking. Thus the present prophets tend to interpret what is happening today as in continuity with the Old Testament and the New Testament era. Keeping this valuable background in mind, this work investigated and examined what people in the church say about the gift of prophecy, what they feel the functions of the prophets should be and who should wield authority in the church.

The Role of Directive Prophecy: Merits

Prophetic guidance has done a lot of good to the Church. Its use has prevented situations of uncertainties, thus preventing the Church from taking wrong decisions. Ministers called to higher offices on the basis of prophecy performed very well in their ministry settings according to the researcher's respondents. However, prophetic directives have also been ignored leading to serious challenges. The people resigned from the Church to start their own independent works. That does not also mean that all who left to start their independent works did so because directive prophecy was ignored. However, there were cases where people were appointed or transferred without recourse to prophecy that also caused serious challenges for the Church. Interview of Pastor Andrews Tetteh brought this to light:

Some members and officers of the CoP feel uneasy when Church policy suggests that the use of directive prophecy should be curtailed. They hold that such organizational developments would lead to loss of spiritual fervor and to deviation from the intentions of the founders of the Church. (Personal communication: July 24, 2014).

Directive revelation may help people to overcome their natural resistance to God's leading as happened in the life of Peter in Acts 10. The episode in Acts 10 brought about a difficult theological change of a basic teaching then held by the young church, the gospel being offered only to Jews.

Under normal circumstances, the CoP would have preferred an older apostle to a younger one like apostle M. K. Ntummy if it had not been for the use of directive prophecy.

From the study of the history of the Apostolic Church the call of William Hutchinson to leadership was through prophetic direction (Worsfold, 1991). The use of prophecy has been a very important component of the CoP's Church polity. The choices through directive prophecy of Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Apostle M. K. Ntummy to the Chairmanship in 1988 and 1998 respectively were unanimously endorsed through the ballot box to show the overwhelming support for the choices. "The choice of M. K. Yeboah was a relief to the entire Church since at that time there were three contenders to the position" (Apostle J. K. Ennin, personal communication, June 26, 2012, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon).

Apostles S. K. Ansong, Moses Ladejo, leading apostles in the CoP, expressed the same view. Apostle Ennin said: "In all cases in the church so far, the persons chosen by prophecy were the least expected to be nominated" (personal communication November 6, 2011, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon). He also informed the researcher that some persons were recommended to higher offices by the Apostles and Prophets of the Church. That is to say, not all callings were by prophecy. Under F. S. Safo the first African Chairman of the CoP, Church membership grew from 135,690 in 1983 to a membership of 186,526 in 1988 (The Church of Pentecost, Heads' Meeting Minutes, GSTS Tarkoradi 14-16 April, 1988).

Prophet M. K. Yeboah was nominated Chairman of the CoP through prophecy at the 25th Session of the General Council meetings, held at the Ghana Secondary Technical School (GSTS) Takoradi 14-16 April 1988. According to the researcher's respondents including Apostles S. K. Ansong, J. K. Ennin, and Pastor David Addo, among others, there was a serious contention whether to accept or reject the prophecy. The reason was that M. K. Yeboah was the least expected by the majority of those gathered to be a candidate for the highest office in the Church. At this time the Caretaker Chairman of the Church according to the respondents was one Apostle F. D. Walker. Other contenders to the high office of Chairman of the Church were Apostles A. T. Nartey, Patrick Asiamah, D. K. Arnan, and S. K. Ansong, who were all executive members of the Church at the time. However, when all the ministers met at what is known as the General Council (the highest policy making body of the CoP) a prophecy through one young minister Emmanuel Achim Gyimah, who was then not in the first meeting and knew nothing that had earlier transpired at the Head's meeting, confirmed the choice of Prophet M. K. Yeboah as Chairman of the CoP. The full text of the prophetic message is given below:

I have called you for a purpose. This is the time that I should act. I know your desire before coming and you are here for one purpose. Your desires are mine and my desires are yours. I can no longer wait whilst my children are crying to me. The membership is crying to me. Your hearts will not

rest until I tell you that I am here to declare. I have found a man amongst you who has learned of me and who is after my heart. He is meek, gentle and humble in heart. He is able to serve me, and the flock. I know him and he can serve. This is the man after my heart and I cannot keep you in suspense any longer. I have called him; I have ordained him and through me he will bring peace. At this crucial time in the history of the Church, no mighty man but a man of peace that I have found after my heart. I call him today – my servant M. K. Yeboah – he is my chosen. He is my appointed. I have revealed him to all my prophets and I have placed him on their hearts. This is what I have and I present him.

A number of ministers endorsed the prophecy as authentic with prophetic ministries including K. K. C. Gadzekpo, S. Ayi-Mantey, Appiah Agyekum, D. T. Okyere, and T. C. Amoah. In spite of the confirmation of the prophecy, the choice of Prophet M. K. Yeboah was put to vote. Out of 295 councilors present and voting, 293 voted for the choice of Prophet M. K. Yeboah. Prophecy was thus used to prevent what could have led to an otherwise volatile situation.

In spite of the above prowess, in 1990, Achim Gyimah was invited to a meeting of apostles and prophets where he was cautioned to desist from giving

directive prophecies since he was then neither a prophet nor an apostle. This became necessary because at a meeting to welcome the then Chairman, M. K. Yeboah and General Secretary R. Ato Addison, "Achim Gyimah prophesied nominating Apostle R. A. Sarpong as minister – designate to the U. S. A." (S. Y. Antwi, personal communication, November 23, 2011, CoP Mission House Odorkor). Pastor Achim Gyimah was advised to "limit prophecy what comes through him to the Scriptural basis of comfort, exhortation and edification" (S. Y. Antwi, personal communication, November 23, 2013)). According to Antwi, Achim Gyimah was counseled to forward all directive prophecies to the Executive Council "for them to judge" (S. Y. Antwi, 2013).

According to Antwi, the reasons, for this intervention was to avoid confusion in the Church, as well as "to safeguard the Church from embarrassment" (S. Y. Antwi, 2013). The leadership appointed one Pastor A. K. Awuah in 1990 as the missionary designate to the United States instead. In May 1994 at the KNUST Council Meeting in Kumasi, Pastor Awuah was to accept a transfer to Accra to head the Mataheko District. He refused and resigned from the CoP ministry to start his own independent work in the USA. Again the CoP appointed her first missionary to the Canada in 1992 in the person of Apostle Alex Osei Bonsu. He was later transferred to the United States to oversee the work there. In 2005, however, Alex Osei Bonsu was to assume the position of Dean of Students at the Pentecost University College. He declined and resigned from the Church and later started his independent work in the United States. There are other cases that cannot all be listed here

for want of space. The use of prophecy to make appointments seems to be more advantageous for the Church than human appointment.

A certain atmosphere must prevail if the Church is to receive maximum benefit from directive prophecy. Mature prophets hold that directive prophecy functioned better when the one delivering the message was not privy to discussions, and in fact took no part in the day's deliberations. Such was the case for example when Emmanuel Achim Gyimah, now an Apostle with the CoP, prophesied concerning the choice of Prophet M. K. Yeboah to the office of Chairman of the CoP in 1988. Achim Gyimah was absent from the earlier meetings that the ministers had held, but he correctly prophesied about things that had happened in the earlier meetings. Nevertheless, records have it that Achim Gyimah in another meeting in 1990 prophesied nominating one Apostle Robert Asomaning Sarpong as missionary-designate of the CoP to the U. S. A. This nomination through prophecy was however, not endorsed by the leadership of the Church.

The value of prophecy in the CoP is evidenced by the overwhelming church growth seen in the ministries of leaders chosen through prophecy. During Prophet M. K. Yeboah's tenure of office the Church membership grew from 186,526 in 1988 to 779,199 in 1998 (The Church of Pentecost, General Council Meeting Minutes, Koforidua, April 14-16, 1998). Apostle Ansong intimated, "Even though McKeown appointed Apostle F. S. Safo to the Chairmanship of the church in 1981, his choice fulfilled a prophecy in the document *Birth of a Nation* (1980)." According to Apostle S. K. Ansong, who

had been an executive member of the church for not less than fifteen years, and other apostles including J. W. D. Cudjoe, Area Head in Aflao, Volta Region of Ghana who were interviewed, few in the Church would have expected Prophet M. K. Yeboah or Apostle M. K. Ntummy to be favourites for the highest office in the Church.

J. E. Ameyaw, a leading prophet of the church, at the time of his ordination as a prophet, was speaking at a level beyond what would be known as the gift of prophecy. He prophesied at the national council meeting in 1998 that "my servant Ntummy" should be set aside to lead "my church." (CoP Minutes of Heads' Meeting Koforidua April 14-16, 1998). The phenomenal growth of the Church from 779,199 in 1998 to 1,788,114 in 2008 (Minutes of the Executive Council, Apostles, Prophets, National, Regional / Area Heads and Movement Directors' Meeting held at Koforidua Central Tabernacle 16 – 19 May 1998, p. 26; The Church of Pentecost 2008 Annual Report Accra: Information Management Department, 2009) seems to suggest that Ntummy's nomination was from God. From the work there was no indication that nomination of people by prophecy to certain places and positions led to retrogression in the growth of the Church as evidenced by Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Apostle M. K. Ntummy's nominations. The church's founding leaders' view of prophecy shaped prophetic practice in the early days of the church. Prophecy guided the church at every turn. The church's practice of using prophecy to nominate local officers, transfer ministers, appoint leaders, call people to higher offices in the church drew criticism from the church and other Pentecostal groups. This system was slowly abandoned between 1960

and 1988, when the system begun to be resurrected with the nomination of Prophet M. K. Yeboah in 1988 as chairman through prophecy by J. K. Ennuhm, the then Regional Head of the Church in the Volta Region.

The CoP has followed a path of declining reliance on directive prophecy. This state of affairs has come about both by deliberate decision of the General Council of the Church and as an indirect consequence of various shifts in prophetic practices in the Church and the spiritual atmosphere. Presently, government in the Church is consultative, with prophecy in the main performing a subordinate role. However, this is not altogether irrational. The Church has shifted considerably in its comprehension of the nature of prophecy from the infallible "word of the Lord" as in the early days of the Church to the "divine human mix" expressed in the present day. The instruction of Rowe (1960) to the AC is very insightful when he wrote: "Some uninformed opinions resist any suggestion of government or control in the sphere of prophecy. This has led to much fanaticism, which is marred testimony of Holy Spirit movements throughout the world. There are principles for the governments of prophets and prophecy laid down in the Scriptures" (Rowe, 1960). The researcher found out that there is confusion in the CoP concerning the practice of prophecy and the functioning of prophecy. It is not out of place for prophetic direction to be given to an individual or an entire congregation or even a nation. If the Bible alone were enough to give Christians guidance and direction for their lives, it would not be necessary for prophets to be given to the New Testament Church (Ephesians 4:8-11). Again, Paul told the Church in Rome: "For I want very much to see you, that I may

impart to you some spiritual gift (*charisma pneumatikon*) to strengthen you, that is, to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine" (Romans 1:11-12).

Role of Directive Prophecy: Demerits

The challenge of the CoP has been and will no doubt continue to be, the use of prophecy in Church government. In this work the researcher has outlined with several examples the deficiencies of prophetically guided Church government but that in no way negates the validity of this practice drawn from the New Testament. Human frailties, most often expressed as jealousy and ambition, division, self-centredness, favouritism and the like require restraint if they are not to undermine effective church government. Prophecy has been very important in the CoP, yet its practice has led and continues to lead to hatred, insecurity, and disillusionment through abuse. Directive prophecies could be manipulative, controlling and could come from insecure prophets who would want to advance their favourites to higher positions. Again, unsound prophetic utterances can wreak havoc in an individual, an assembly, a denomination, or even a nation. There are times when God speaks prophetically, yet there are times when He may be silent. Directive prophecies were seriously used until 1962 when at the Extra-ordinary Council meetings at Kaneshie, Accra 23 – 25 October some of the prophets began to question the sources of some of the prophetic utterances. In that meeting, according to the minutes Prophet M. K. Yeboah cautioned the prophets not to prophesy on hearsay. Reading through the minutes of the Church from 1962 through to

1987 directive prophecies was sparingly used. The reason for the little use of directive prophecy during this period was because of confusion that was setting into the Church. There is the need to avoid the confusion and embarrassment which may take place when a prophetic message uttered publicly is not accepted as divine, a situation that may not be healthy for the Church.

In the CoP, the single biggest feature that demonstrates the importance of prophecy happens to be the conditions that the Church places on the exercise of the gift. The gift was and is only to be exercised in the church under the supervision of the local presbytery; it was not to be privately used in homes unless "an elder or higher" officer was present and the occasion was a recognized church meeting. On this note, it was the handling of prophecy that was the purview of the Electoral College made up of Apostles, Prophets, Area Heads, as well as the Ministry Directors, and Elders. What the congregation was to do therefore was to submit to the authority of the above leaders. Where these have not been put in place there is the need to fear the use of directive prophecy.

Apostle J. K. Ennin informed this researcher that one Apostle C. C. Hushie complained to the CoP leadership years gone by that it seemed that prophets could not mention Ewe (one of the Ghanaian dialects) names and names of people from minority tribes. For that reason, Hushie argued that ministers from Ewe and other minority tribes were not subjects of prophetic nominations. Apostle Hushie realized that those called to higher offices

through prophecy bore only Akan names that could easily be mentioned by the prophets (Ap. J. K. Ennin, personal communication, June 26, 2012, Residence, Ashaiman, Lebanon), not so with the Ewe names. Be that as it may, the researcher also argues that nominations without recourse to prophecy could equally be discriminatory.

Problems that could surface in the misuse of prophecy motivated M. K. Yeboah who himself was a prophet to prepare material to teach on the use of prophecy. The contemporary church has moved a significant distance from the position of relying on prophecy for decision-making. From the outset of the Apostolic Church group, it had been customary for the prophet to nominate a candidate for prayerful consideration by the college of apostles and prophets. When this candidate was accepted, he was then presented to the General Council, the highest decision-making body of the church for voting. If the candidate received not less than two-thirds majority votes of the persons present and voting, he was considered elected. If the votes in his favour fell short of the two-thirds majority, a second candidate is presented to the house by the electoral-college through the college of apostles and prophets. If this candidate also fails to gain two-thirds of the votes, it then settles on a simple majority vote.

Prophecy has been accepted by the wider section of the CoP and has played a great role in the area of callings, transfers and other decisions. That is not to say that prophecies have always been accepted. Being a human institution, certain messages are sometimes rejected. Sometimes there have

been conflicting views even among apostles and prophets as to the authenticity of a prophetic message. In conflicting situations messages have had to be accepted or rejected through the ballot box. The times when directive prophecies have been used most have been in the choice of the three highest positions in the Church: Chairman, General Secretary, and International Missions Director. In this situation certain guidelines are given:

Where there is a directive prophecy on a candidate, it shall be judged on its own merits by the Electoral College. The Candidate so accepted by the Electoral College shall be presented to the General Council to be voted upon. (CoP Constitution 2010, p, 37).

Because of this state of affairs some people in the Church feel that prophetic utterances should be completely ignored to allow for all decisions to be settled through the ballot box. When a prophecy is rejected, it leads to bitterness, disillusionment, insecurity and embarrassment to the candidate whose nomination was rejected. It also causes embarrassment to the prophet who gave the message. Again, many in the Church felt that the prophetic gift could be misused and that it was possible that some prophets could use the gift to nominate their favourites to certain enviable positions.

The researcher argues that among the largest Classical Pentecostal groups in the world, Assemblies of God (64.4 Million: AG Statistical Report 2012); Four Square Gospel Church (8.0 million: 2008 Yearbook of American

and Canadian Churches); and the Church of God in Christ (6,942,585: 2012 Church of God Minutes), directive prophecy is not used to elect leaders to higher offices. In short, prophecy does not rule the Church.

Hutchison-Dennis initially equated prophecy with the Scriptures. However, prophecies must be tested against the Bible in order to ascertain their authenticity. Most Christians believe that the Bible is higher than prophecy. The function and fulfillment of directive prophecies in the AC as well as the CoP was not without difficulties. The prophets were sometimes plunged into "doubt and despair" (Worsfold, 1991, p. 136). Hutchinson was well aware of these setbacks and admitted publicly in 1915 that the experience of the Catholic Apostolic Church prophets was very helpful to him in the dilemma he was facing, while the recanting of one of his own prophets E. C. W. Boulton that he had been prophesying from his own mind was very insightful (Worsfold, 1991). This serves as a lesson to the CoP and any group that will resort to the use of directive prophecy. In 1930 Henderson William, an Elim overseer insisted that prophecy was not for guidance but for edification, exhortation and comfort, while the Assemblies of God Church held that contemporary prophecy did not include revelation of the future (*EE*, 24 October 1930, pp. 675-676).

Perusing through the General Council minutes of the Church of Pentecost from 1937 through to 1962 shows that prophecy was used to a very large extent. Thereafter, it was sparingly used due to the observations of abuse noted by McKeown himself. Directive prophecy before 1962 was viewed as an

infallible guide to the Church as noted above. However, from 1962 onwards prophecy no more guided the Church at every turn. Rather the Church departed a considerable distance from the point of counting on the prophetic for determining decisions. Nevertheless, the practice keeps on resurfacing from time to time. Prophecy is now seen as the intermingling of the human mind with the Divine. Given the conviction that the value of prophecy declined from 1962 to the present, the mix of divine and human in revelation has weighted towards the human element, bringing with it its own challenges.

Dependence upon prophecy may make many to shirk their responsibility to hear directly from God. Church members continue to roam from prayer camp to another seeking "a word from the Lord". This state of affairs may produce immature Christians. People's focus may turn to prophets rather than to God. Prophecy could mislead, since it could be used as a means of control. Sometimes, messages from immature prophets have brought divisions, confusion and other problems into congregations and homes.

Prophecy can be misused. This has led the CoP leadership to rule that directive prophecies should be the preserve of the ordained prophets in the Church. This work found out that in the Bible there is no distinction between divine utterances coming from ordained prophets and others from lay prophets. The practice in the CoP may not have a biblical basis yet it serves to curb abuses that may occur. In attempts to curb rifts in the practice of the prophetic, however, leadership is saddled with finding an amicable settlement. This is also not without its own challenges. There is therefore the need to seek a

reconcilable balance to this state of affairs. In the concluding chapter therefore, the researcher has given suggestions, which if considered will help in that direction. Finally, both the Church leadership and the prophets themselves need to be clear as to the prophet's function and place in the Church.

The operation of directive prophecy in the CoP in Ghana has been fraught with challenges. In spite of the acceptance of the prophetic gift, there has not been unanimous agreement as to the functions of the prophet for it seems the role of the Prophet has not assumed clarity. The conceptions of Prophetism in the CoP are by no means uniform, entire or unchanging, some evolution of thought is apparent. The following have been observed by many in the Church to be the dangers in the use of prophecy to appoint people to higher offices or to transfer Church workers to various stations: The use of directive prophecy risks placing immature and inexperienced ministers into sensitive positions resulting in retarded growth. Biblical guidelines for the appointment of leaders are sometimes ignored in the process.

Another challenge with regards to the use of directive prophecy has to do with the distinction made between an ordained prophet and a lay prophet. The Bible considers prophecies from the canonical and non-canonical prophets as authentic and at par with each other. There is therefore no need for distinction of messages from ordained prophets and lay prophets. Maturity of prophets may be the issue in the CoP and not the designation as to whether one is ordained or not.

The use of directive prophecy seeks to give gradings to the prophetic gift. This work has noted different prophetic types in operation in the CoP. However, prophetic messages are not to be graded. An ordained prophet may refuse to give out a prophetic word that does not satisfy his wish. Again, there can be a situation when an ordained prophet can be wrong and a lay prophet right. The views about who can give directive prophecies are assumed rather than argued. Again, a genuine prophetic message can be rejected. Sound decisions can be made without the use of directive prophecy. A serious problem can occur when two or more prophets nominate different candidates for the same office. It is very difficult to reconcile local autonomy and the use of prophecy for directing the entire Church.

People's interest in Prophetism in contemporary Christianity is because of the quick solutions it offers them. Nevertheless, it can produce many unwarranted problems in the Church. Individual relationship with the Lord is violated. Again, there is the tendency for people to seek prophetic short cuts in finding the will of God. This sort of pursuit should not be entertained, for the sake of all involved. For example, the problems that arose in the Corinthian church are indicative of the abuse that sometimes occurs when prophecy is being exercised. This sometimes happens when people prophesying act immaturely. For this reason the use of directive prophecy in the choice of the three principal officers in the CoP namely the Chairman, General Secretary and International Missions Director has been an issue of serious debate in the Church. Apostles Appiah Aidoo, Ekow Woode, and Ousmane Zabre when asked by the researcher as to their views on the use of directive prophecy had

this to say: Firstly, choices made without recourse to prophecy do not necessarily make those choices unacceptable. They also argued that there were times when there happened to be a definite calling and commissioning by the Holy Spirit as is also evident in the New Testament (Acts 13:1-3).

Again, they pointed out that the New Testament indicates occasions when very ordinary, or natural, methods were employed. Matthias was chosen to join the apostolic band through the casting of lots (Acts 1:23-26). This, they intimate was done after certain requirements had been set. The respondents, using biblical precedence held that Luke was chosen as a leader possibly through some kind of voting by the churches. They also intimate, the elders of the churches in Asia were chosen by the apostles Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:23). "Prophecy did not rule the early Church at every point. It must not be used to rule the contemporary Church" (Personal communication, November 12, 2011, CoP Guest House, Gbawe).

It is argued in this work that decisions on spiritual issues need to be handled with utmost care. Prophetism in the CoP smacks of serious gender imbalance since women are not ordained into the prophetic ministry.

Handling of Prophecy in CoP

On May 16, 2012, the Executive council of the church and the Area Heads, after having reviewed the results of workshops that were conducted by the Heads in 2010 and workshops conducted by ministers and their wives in January 2011, affirmed that God does speak to His church through prophecy.

It was agreed that the Bible instructs believers not to despise prophecy. Rather, believers are enjoined to test prophecy (1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 John 4:1). The challenge however, facing the church is: "How do we test prophecy so as not to cause confusion in the church?" A document was therefore presented spelling some means by which prophecy could be tested in the Church thus:

Presiding officers of every service must weigh every prophetic utterance. They may either give comments or not, depending on the leading of the Holy Spirit based on the word of God (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 14:29). Since the Spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet, another means of control is for those wanting to prophesy to move to the front to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:29-33). This avoids the situation where two or three people speak at once. ('Document on Handling of prophecy', May 16, 2012, p. 1).

On this note, it is the handling of prophecy that is the purview of the Electoral College made up of Apostles, Prophets, Area Heads, as well as the Ministry Directors, and Elders. What the congregation is to do therefore is to submit to the authority of the above leaders. The document further outlined some factors to consider in judging prophecy as follows:

Does the prophetic utterance conform to the word of God? (1 John 4:1-4:2 Corinthians 1:17-20)? Does the lifestyle of the person prophesying conform to the Scripture (Matthew 7:15-18)? Does the prophecy edify or create confusion (1 Corinthians 14:3)? Do the individual members in the congregation have inner witness regarding the authenticity of the prophetic utterance (1 John 2:20, 27)? Does the body (the Church) have corporate peace regarding the content of the prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:37-40)?

In line with the above biblical guidelines, the Executive Council in consultation with the Heads, also reviewed the issue of directive prophecy concerning nominations to the office of the Chairman, General Secretary or the International Missions Director, which, sometimes take place during the Church's elections. The aim of the Executive Council and the Heads is to forestall the situation where those with prophetic gifts may be competing among themselves as to who was the first to prophesy about a candidate. It now appears that the candidate whose name is mentioned first in any directive prophecy during the Head's meeting or General Council Meetings gets immediate attention. It has been observed that, in the past, there have been attempts to counter such directive prophecies.

Again, the Executive Council and the Heads want to avoid the confusion and embarrassment, which takes place when a prophetic message uttered publicly is not accepted as divine. The Executive Council, the Heads in Ghana and the external branches as well as the Ministers and their wives in Ghana believe that this situation is not healthy for the Church. Accordingly, the Council and the Heads, after a careful and prayerful discussion of the matter, proposed the following for further consideration by the Councilors of the 13th Extraordinary Council Meetings (May 17-20 2012):

1. Even though the church strongly believes in, and encourages the operations of the gift of prophecy, it discourages the public utterance of directive prophecy;
2. All directive prophecies concerning candidates for consideration for the position of the principal offices (Chairman, General Secretary and International Missions Director) to be communicated verbally or in writing to the Executive Council through the Chairman of the Church;
3. Where the incumbent Chairman has completed one term of office and may be eligible for a further term, such prophecies should be communicated to the Executive Council through the General Secretary of the Church;
4. That the Constitutional provisions on directive prophecy should be amended to include items 1, 2 and 3 above.

On interviewing some key leaders in the Church as well as some senior ministers as to what they felt about the writing down of prophecies, Pastor Joseph Ackah of Adabraka District in Accra informed the researcher of an

incident that he experienced at a pastor's farewell service. According to him, even though a prophetic utterance in the service was addressed to the minister, who was being seen off, he, Ackah was greatly encouraged by the prophecy (J. Ackah, personal communication, January 8 2014, PTS, Gomoa-Fetteh). This could not have happened if it had been written down and handed over to only the Chairman of the meeting. In spite of that this work holds that it is dangerous to make hasty conclusions on a message while it is being delivered.

It will be safer to listen attentively and prayerfully, reserving all final judgments later when we have the prophecy before us in written form as suggested by Hamon (1987). The proper procedure for judging and evaluating the prophecy could then be followed later. Hamon's observation here is insightful when he wrote, "Our emotional, mental and physical posture while receiving a prophecy is simply not conducive to proper evaluation" (Hamon, 1987, p. 171). The CoP needs to learn from lessons of the past and be wary of the way spiritual issues are handled in the Church.

For Ernest Gentile observes:

There is a law of religion that seems as settled and proven as the natural law of gravity: A religious order that begins with an experience of the Holy Spirit, enthusiasm, sincere love, a burning message, effervescent vitality and crusading leaders will

evolve, with the passing of time, into a settled organization with established rules and tenets of faith, maintaining its onward momentum more by structure and set message than by the inspirational experience of its founders (Gentile, 1999).

In the light of the above observation six (6) out of ten (10) of the researcher's respondents held that spirituality in the Church has waned due to restriction of form which has virtually replaced spiritual freedom.

Prophecy: Institutionalization

In this section, the researcher has sought to show from the study that if a church wants to see the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, a sort of structure to govern and shepherd the prophetic manifestations need to be in place. This has to be so if the injunctions in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, and 1 Corinthians 14:29-33,39-40 must be applied. Even though the ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are interdependent, this work notes that in keeping with Akan socio political organization, there must be some sort of order in the church if certain injunctions are to be fulfilled. This may have informed the CoP to allow for some rankings among the ministry gifts.

It is very enlightening to note that the CoP beliefs and practices seem to be patterned after Akan socio-political organization where there are different levels of the *akomfo* as has been noted by Ekem (2009). There are

two categories of the lay prophets, those at the prayer centres and those who prophesy in the local assemblies. Ordination may be important to give recognition to a prophet in an institutional setup.

Larry Christenson's question is of importance here; "can free-flowing charismatic power live under the discipline of the Church without losing its spiritual dynamic? Can a Church rejoice in the free exercise of spiritual gifts and yet retain structure and order?" (Christenson, 1972). The questions are very important in that the institutionalizing of the early Church is believed to have led to the demise of prophecy and prophets (Gentile, 1999). Gentile defines institutionalization as "The process whereby the Church of Jesus Christ becomes an established, recognized organization, a structured and highly formalized institution, often at the expense of certain spiritual factors originally thought to be important" (Gentile, 1999, p. 244). Tidball (1983) defines institutionalism as:

"The process by which the activities, values, experience and relationships of the [religious] group become formalized and stabilized so that relatively predictable behaviour and more rigid organizational structures emerge. It is the name for the way in which free spontaneous and living [Church] movements become structured and inflexible" (Tidball, 1983, p. 124).

In the light of the above all prophetic types in the CoP need to be submitted to the Church's leadership. Historically, in the CoP the greatest errors inflicted upon the Church have come when people who had some kind of prophetic ministry have started to take authority over a Church. Two examples are the late Owusu Tabiri of Sunyani and Kwaku Nii of Mount Horeb Prayer Ministry at Mamfe Akuapem.

Daniel Powell Williams, one of the early Apostolic Church leaders had earlier noted that a gift imparted by God's Spirit would be found unprofitable if the person operating in the gift would not be "ruled and guided by ordinations" (Williams, 1931, p. 87). What Williams strongly intimates is that the revelation via the prophet is to be evaluated and expounded by the apostle (Williams, 1931). Williams borrowed from an unnamed source by utilizing the metaphor of the hand to represent church government. The "index finger of the prophetic ministry" is directional in nature in that it points the way, but it is itself controlled by the thumb, which represents the apostles who provide wisdom and judgment of divine revelation (Williams, 1931). Williams initially held the view of the infallibility of divine utterance (Williams, 1931). This was a dangerous position in view of the fact that Williams, though an apostle, was known to prophesy. A leader must allow others to prophesy so that he can judge the utterance. James, a brother of Jesus Christ and an apostle claimed that "we all stumble in many ways" (James 3:1-2) and Paul also confirmed that we prophesy in part (1 Corinthians 13:9)

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From biblical examples and what is happening in the CoP, it can be concluded that the prophetic ministry could be life changing. Nevertheless, prophetic guidance cannot continue in this manner, change may be necessary. This researcher suggests that it will be very helpful if Christians apply wisdom for solving Church problems than solely rely on prophecy. This work agrees with Gentile (1999) when he wrote:

We must practice the principle that “with many counselors there is deliverance” (Proverbs 11:14, HCSB), and not allow a single prophecy or prophet to guide our lives. We need two or three witnesses, not two or three prophecies, for confirmation. Confirmation obtained from counseling with wise leadership and from the written word of God, as well as the confirmation of our own personal spiritual peace must be considered.

That assertion in no way means that the researcher does not accept the prophetic phenomenon. The admonition of the Apostle Paul is timely for all Christians, past and present: “Therefore, my brothers be eager to prophesy ...” (1 Corinthians 14:39, HCSB) and at the same time “but test all things, hold on to what is good. Stay away from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). If a Church sets up a national council with judicial powers over all the churches within its ambit, it faces a gradual reduction of influence and individual charisma. If institutional structures become inflexible, individuals

will feel boxed in, leading to tensions and even splits. But to quote Forbes (1997, p. 250), "There is nothing that can demonstrate a priori that prophecy is incompatible with grown institutionalism". Robeck (1978) has suggested an ideal balance:

Ecclesiastical position or office without the accompanying *charisma* would seem to bring lifeless organization to the fore. On the other extreme, gifts exercised without proper ecclesiastical structure or order often lead to bedlam. The two projects balanced, bring stability and growth to the Church as a whole (Robeck, 1978, p. 18).).

That notwithstanding, Scripture should be the final court of appeal, not a gift and also prophecy is not the only gift through which God directs his church.

Summary

Prophecy in the CoP is believed to be a message coming from God (the Supreme Being), through divine revelation and not derived from reason, observation, speculation, imagination or some innate sagacity. Thus the Church believes that there can be genuine divine revelations in contemporary times. For this reason, the cessationist position is flawed since there is ample evidence in this work for the place of contemporary prophecy.

It is apparent from the above discussions that the Church of Pentecost perceives prophecy to be primarily an expression of God's mind. Prophecy seeks to draw people closer to God, make people to love God more dearly, to comfort, exhort, encourage, them. The prophet, however, helps give people future courses of direction to take in order to fulfill their God-given destinies. The CoP views prophecy as a gift to be used in a congregational setting. The Church uses prophecy in church government, a practice that is its defining feature. It has been noticed in this work that, it is quite impossible to treat Prophetism in the CoP as an isolated phenomenon. It grew out of a background of AFC, AC, LRM and Akan socio-religious practices. Directive prophecy in the CoP is used to address the needs of the Church. Of all the assemblies of the Church visited it was discovered that interest in directive prophecy was very high but its use differed from one assembly to the other.

It is this desire to know the way forward that has produced among all nations the numerous forms of soothsaying of which prophecy is, a part. It is therefore not out of place that prophecy has played a major role in the scheme of things in the CoP. The CoP views her prophetic practices to be modeled after the Israelite tradition. Prophetism in the CoP is linked to and modeled after North American (AFC) and British (AC), perceptions. The LRM heightened the use of Prophetism in the CoP who adopted the North American and British practices, and adapted them to suit Akan socio political organization. Thus, there is a grading of prophecy into the gift, neo prophetic type, and that coming from the ordained prophets (the highest level prophecy). The ordained prophets are those who are permitted in the Church to give

direction to people and the Church leadership because of experience and maturity in the practice of prophecy.

Apart from those prophets at the Prayer Camps/Centres, none used paraphernalia in dealing with people's problems. Nevertheless, those who used paraphernalia as directed by the Prayer Camp and Centre leaders believe in the potency of the used mediums. The work shows that the CoP views God as a personal God, desiring to have fellowship with every human being. Yet, not all desire to hear from God. Prophets have therefore been set in the Church as God's mouthpiece to bring His message to humankind.

Prophetism has brought with it hatred, division, embarrassment to people who gave messages, which were not endorsed, as well as antagonism among people who were ambitious to occupy certain positions in the Church. Earlier in this work, it was realized that prophecy was considered a flawless gift. Current understanding of prophecy in the church is markedly different: prophecy is seen in the church as the intermingling of the human mind with the Divine. Due to this understanding, prophetic revelation is now heavily weighted towards the human component. Issues that emerged during the research brought about many valuable questions as to how the leadership can identify the sources of the prophecies. The Church leadership also has the challenge of how to understand and answer the questions as to how the sources, principles, origin and purpose of prophecy can be understood. With the downgrading of the prophetic by the leadership the apostolic ministry

(ordained ministers in the CoP who exercise apostolic gifting) is no more complementary to that of the prophetic.

The apostolic ministry is now considered to be above the prophetic. A consequence of this position is that the apostles were to nominate individuals to office rather than simply confirming prophetic revelation. A careful observation of the CoP unearths three categories of prophets, the spirit and gift of prophecy, the prayer camp type analogous to neo-Prophetism, and the ministry gift, the office of the Prophet. In the CoP those who speak forth God's messages (*nkomhyefo*) but do not see anything from the Spirit world are believed to operate in the gift of prophecy. Such are not designated prophets. The prophet (*odiyifo*) is believed to be a ministry gift, and is one of the five-fold ministry or leadership gifts. This is a genuine observation. Preaching or teaching is part of the function of the prophets, yet the preaching is not tested. From observation, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs can come via prophecy. The songs are not sung out of a songbook but given by inspiration by God's Spirit. In Akan traditional shrines the *akomfo* operate independently at their own shrines, and may be consulted by people without any further recourse to an *Okomfopanyin* (senior prophet). Prophets in the CoP are not permitted to operate independently of other ministers.

In the Old Testament, the words "*nabi*", "*hozeh*" and "*roeh*" are sometimes used interchangeably to denote the ministry of the prophet. In the CoP, however, the terms do not seem to be the same. The scriptural text standing alone is not enough to guarantee sound teaching. Experience must

inform doctrine. Different categories of prophets are distinguished in the Old Testament. The biblical classification, however, may be distinguishable from that of the CoP. The Church distinguishes between the *nkomhyeni*, analogous to the Hebrew *nabi*, (translated prophet) and the *odiyifo*, similar to the Hebrew *roeh* and *hozeh* (translated seer). Even though some scholars see the terms *nabi*, *roeh* and *hozeh* as sometimes synonymous, it has been shown in this work that not all prophets are seers. A prophet hears and proclaims the word of the Lord, the seer, on the other hand, moves in a visionary dream capacity. Nevertheless, they both move and operate in the prophetic realm, but in different capacities or dimensions. In Israel, there was no standard precondition for someone to become a prophet. What made one a prophet was divine inspiration, and it was this inspiration that caused the prophet to speak out and to be listened to as a legitimate spokesperson for God. Prophetism has been found in this work to be a perennial phenomenon.

Prophetic guidance has done a lot of good to the Church. Its use has prevented situations of uncertainty. It has helped the Church from taking wrong decisions. Ministers called to higher offices on the basis of prophecy performed very well in their ministry settings. Prophetic directives that were ignored led to serious challenges. Ignoring directive prophecy could lead to loss of spiritual fervor. Its use aids people to overcome their natural resistance to God's leading. Prophecy has been used to decide on very crucial issues in the Church.

Directive prophecies could be manipulative, controlling and could come from insecure prophets who would want to advance their favourites to higher positions. Again, unsound prophetic utterances can wreak havoc in an individual, an assembly, a denomination, or even a nation. There are times when God may speak, yet there are times when He may be silent. Confusion and embarrassment may take place when a prophetic message uttered publicly is not accepted as divine. People may shirk their responsibility to hear directly from God but roam from prayer camp to another seeking "a word from the Lord". Thus, immature Christians may be produced. People's focus may turn to prophets rather than to God. Prophecy could mislead, and could be used as a means of control. Messages from immature prophets can bring about divisions, confusion and other problems into congregations and homes. To forestall confusion prophets are graded, spelling out those who can and who cannot give directive prophecies. Worsfold, one of the AC leaders makes a very insightful suggestion when he wrote: "It is human to err, but apostolic to act." Ordination may be important to give recognition to a prophet in an institutional setup. The work now examines the use of directive prophecy.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION ON THE USE OF DIRECTIVE PROPHECY

In the work, the following research questions were asked:

1. What is the concept of prophecy in the CoP?
2. Should prophecy be relied upon every time for direction in the calling, and nomination to different offices, as well as in the transfer of people to different places in the church?
3. What is the relation between a Prophet in the CoP and a prophet in biblical times? How did the prophet function and what was prophecy's effect on the organizational structure and the running of the churches in the biblical accounts?
4. Who make up the CoP? How is the Church organised, nurtured, controlled, and maintained through prophetic practices?

The CoP understands prophecy to be the reception and subsequent transmission of divinely inspired message to edify, exhort and comfort a gathering of people. In the light of this understanding prophecy is to be used in the presence of constituted leadership, not privately in homes. Three categories of prophets are noticed in the Church – the spirit/gift of prophecy, the ministry of the prophet, and 'prophets' in the Prayer Centres/Camps who are

recognized as healers and not designated as prophets. Females are not designated as prophets, a case of gender imbalance in the Church.

In this work, misuse of prophecy has led the CoP leadership to rule that directive prophecies should be the preserve of the ordained prophets in the Church. However, the Bible makes no distinction between divine utterances coming from ordained prophets and others from lay prophets. The practice in the CoP may not have a biblical basis yet it serves to curb abuses that may occur. In attempts to curb rifts in the practice of the prophetic, however, leadership is saddled with finding an amicable settlement of how prophets should function. This is also not without its own challenges. Directives from lay prophets are ignored, a source of hatred, bitterness, vindictiveness, and others. The rejection of Emmanuel Achim Gyimah's prophecy in 1990 led to transfer of Pastor Awuah being sent to the United States.

Awuah's appointment as missionary designate to the United State later led to division in the Church in the United States. An amicable settlement can be reached if all categories of prophecies are accepted equally, if tested to be scripturally and intellectually sound. However, a prophet's position as an Executive member or Area Head decides his status in the Church and how his words can help effect changes in the Church. The challenge of the CoP has been and will no doubt continue to be, the use of prophecy in Church government. The researcher has outlined with several examples the deficiencies of prophetically guided Church government but that in no way negates the validity of this principle. It is true that human frailties, most often

expressed as jealousy and ambition, division, self-centredness, favouritism and the like, require constraint if they are not to undermine the Church system. Notwithstanding the above challenges, Emmanuel Achim Gyimah, now an Apostle with the CoP, prophesied concerning the choice of Prophet M. K. Yeboah to the office of Chairman of the CoP in 1988. Evidently, Achim Gyimah, not an ordained prophet was absent from the earlier meetings that the ministers had held, but he accurately prophesied about things that had happened in the earlier meetings. Thus it is not only ordained prophets who can speak accurately into a situation. Directive prophecy has done a lot of good to the Church as noted in the work.

In the early days of the founding of the CoP, prophecy was understood to be an infallible guide but later as a divine human mix, thus, fallible. This therefore called for control in handling the gift. Free flowing charismatic power under the discipline of the Church needs to be carefully handled or else the spiritual dynamic may be lost. However, the gift of prophecy must never be considered infallible. Though mistakes may occur, this researcher argues that the fact that there happens to be a plane crash does not mean that people will have to quit travelling by air. We do not get rid of prophetic directions just because of observed and possible abuse of directive prophecy. Again, choices made without recourse to prophecy do not necessarily make them acceptable. The case of Apostle R. Asomaning Sarpong is a clear example. He was proposed by Prophet Yeboah to be voted as the General Secretary of the CoP. However, the General Council of the Church did not endorse his nomination. Directive prophecy must not be rejected without sanctified justification.

There is historic continuing link between prophecy in Old Testament times, prophecy in the New Testament era and prophecy in CoP. The Hebrew words *nabi*, *hozeh* and *roeh*, though all translated, as prophet may not be the same. As noted in chapters three and five of this work all true seers are prophets, but not all prophets are seers. This distinction makes the CoP to identify seers as prophets, while those who are not seers as those operating in the simple gift of prophecy. Thus, there may not be any confusion between the prophet and one who operates in the gift of prophecy. Nevertheless, both can give prophecies that are genuine.

The CoP prophet, like the biblical prophet may visit God's people, bringing gifts and good things for the people, bringing inspiration, encouragement, imparting spiritual gifts, and generally blessing the church. The CoP seems to portray a high level of involvement on the part of all members of the Church except that women are not ordained into full time pastoral ministry.

The CoP in Ghana forms a distinct denomination within Ghanaian Pentecostalism on account of its practice of "divine government", in the sense that the Church believes that God guides and directs her through prophecy. The CoP belongs to the group of Pentecostals who hold to a two works of grace pattern who put conversion and entire sanctification together into one finished work and then supplement that with a pattern that focuses on conversion and a subsequent baptism in the Holy Spirit with attendant prophetic giftings. A prophet in the Church is only distinguished by the degree

of his gifting. One needs to be a full time minister before he graduates to become a prophet. This work has also shown that the cessationist position that prophecy ceased with the closing of the Biblical canon is untenable. Genuine prophecy in contemporary times leads people to be heavenly minded, and to live holy lives to glorify God. It has been shown in this study that the CoP holds that God still speaks to people today via prophecy.

The ordained prophet/lay prophet controversy may not be valid. What happens when an ordained prophet refuses to give out a prophetic word that does not satisfy his wish? An ordained prophet is not always right and the lay prophet wrong. This position is evidenced in this work. This state of affairs brings into question the role, function, content, as well as the validity of a divinely given prophetic word. The view that only ordained prophets can give directive prophecies is assumed rather than argued. It does not also mean that a genuine prophetic message cannot be rejected. Who determines which prophetic word is authentic or not is difficult to determine. In the Church prophetic guidance leading to centralism (that is, concentration of power and control in the central authority of the Church) is an expedient philosophy. However, centralism in this manner cannot continue. It may need revising to enhance its usefulness. Sound decisions can also be made without recourse to prophecy. That does not also mean that decisions not based on prophecy are not fraught with challenges. This has been noted in this work. Directive prophecies were used in the nominations of Prophet M. K. Yeboah in 1988 and Apostle M. K. Ntummy in 1998. Though both nominees were not favourable candidates to Chairmanship in the CoP the directive prophecies were

unanimously endorsed through the ballot box to show the overwhelming support for the choices. This prevented a rather explosive situation, since there were many contenders for the highest office in the Church. The Church's growth, numerically, financially, and spiritually during their tenure of office attest to the fact that their choices may have been God ordained. Both persons enjoyed much national prominence, being members of the Council of State in Ghana. While caution needs to be exercised about hastily accepting a prophetic word, there may be great power in what the prophet says. Paul admonished Timothy to use prophetic words spoken over his life to "strongly engage in battle." In a similar vein, it was through the gift of prophecy that a gift (charisma) was imparted to Timothy showing the importance of prophecy.

The contributions of women in the Church are enormous. Statistics of the Church show that women form the majority of the membership. Their contributions have led to the growth and sustenance of the CoP. Of note is Mrs. Christiana Obo who made personal sacrifices by offering her precious jewels for sale in order to support the ministry of Rev. James McKeown. It can also be shown in the records of the CoP that women form the greater bulk of the prophetic leaders of the recognized prayer camps in the CoP. The camps led by the women received the largest attendance – Edumfa at Abura Dunkwa in the Central Region of Ghana attracted not less than 15, 000 in attendance weekly before the year 2012. At Goka in the Brong Ahafo Region prayer sessions recorded 32,000 in average attendance, while Ablekuma camp in Accra recorded about 8,000 during prayer sessions. The significant impact of women came out clearly in how the Church demonstrated its recognition of

Mrs. Grace Mensah of Edumfa Bethlehem Revival Centre (Abura Dunkwa) and Mrs. Sarah Donkor of Goka Prayer Centre noted 'prophetess-healers' during the 36th General Council Meeting at the Pentecost University College, Sowutuom, in Accra (11 – 14 May, 2006).

These women had citations presented to them while the then General Secretary Apostle Alfred Koduah presented gifts to them on behalf of the Church. In spite of this recognition, in the area of Prophetism it cannot be said that women fully realized their ministries in the CoP. No woman is called into the ordained ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher in the CoP. The highest a woman can attain in the CoP is a deaconess, and or a women's leader in the Church. Nationally, or internationally, a woman can aspire to be the Women's Director of the Church. In this position, she can attend the Head's meetings, all Council meetings, but she is never proposed for membership of the Executive Council of the Church. This is a case of gender imbalance that needs to be looked into by the Church's leadership.

The CoP has followed a path or progression of reducing the importance of prophecy. This state of affairs has come about both by deliberate decision of the General Council of the Church and as indirect consequences of various shifts in prophetic practices in the Church and the spiritual atmosphere. While some leaders feel that the changes will bring stability and authority to their actions, others hold that such organizational developments will lead to loss of local action, loss of spiritual fervor and to deviation from the intensions of the Church's founders. Those who believe in the authority of scripture feel upset

and hold that the constitution ought not become the dependable source by which differences and matters of concern in Prophetism should be determined.

This is so because the CoP has a high view of scripture. Changes, made to achieve smooth running and accountability, can begin a process leading to institutionalization, the tendency to observe the rules and regulations as the rationale for an institution's existence, rather than a means to achieve its aims and purposes. It can also be said that unrestrained and unexamined prophecy can also lead to the imposition of ecclesiastical limitation and supervision.

Presently, government in the Church is consultative, with prophecy predominantly performing a subordinate role. However, this is not altogether irrational. The Church has shifted considerably in its comprehension of the nature of prophecy from the infallible word of God as in the early days of the Church to the "divine human mix" expressed currently. The following instruction could be very insightful and beneficial to the CoP. Some uninformed opinions resist any suggestion of government or control in the sphere of prophecy. This can lead to much extremism, which has impaired the testimony of Holy Spirit movements around the world. There are principles for the control of prophets and prophecy laid down in the Scriptures. First, a person giving out directive prophecy should be well known by the leadership or the Church. Second, prophecy should not be used to rebuke someone in authority. It is not the Biblical order. Corrective words need to be submitted to the leadership for prayer and judging.

People's interest in Prophetism in contemporary Christianity is driven by, among other things, the quick solutions it offers them. Nevertheless, it can lead to many unwarranted problems in the Church. Individual relationship with the Lord is violated. Again, there is the tendency for people to seek prophetic short cuts in finding the will of God. Unfortunately, many fervent persons spend huge sums of money travelling to prophets to seek a "word from the Lord." For this reason people begin to gravitate towards one who will give them a prophetic word. This sort of pursuit should be carefully looked at, for the sake of all stakeholders.

It appears to be that the Prayer Camps in the CoP like the Neo-Prophetic Churches are a revival or reformed form of the older AIC's. This is so because of their use of holy herbs, anointing oil, handkerchiefs among others. Some other practices include the use of lime, 'koko' (a millet or maize gruel eaten in Ghana), hand clapping, and bombing and shooting of one's enemies. The CoP views these practice as unacceptable and unscriptural. The work found out that the diagnostic and consultative types of prophecy are strongly based on Akan cosmology. This is understandable since there are Old Testament passages which either directly or indirectly show reference to the use of *Urim* and *Thumin*. The methods used in the above cases are diagnostic cases, having parallels in the methods adopted by some of the prophets in the Prayer Camps/Centres. The observation of Harvey Cox is therefore very insightful when he wrote that Pentecostalism was a recovery of "primal spirituality." What the Church needs to do is to attempt to marry the three prophetic types for amicable operation by giving them equal recognition.

In this work, the researcher has examined Prophetism in the CoP within the context of Akan culture. It has been shown in this work that consultation is deeply entrenched in the Ghanaian understanding of Prophetism. In Ghana, the consultative system is an integral part of the Akan religion. For this reason, it is not surprising to note the consultative aspect of Prophetism in vogue in the Church because its practice was adopted from the Apostolic Church and adapted by the CoP particularly the Prayer Centres/Camps to suit Akan socio political organization. The type of Prophetism in the Prayer Camps is more appealing to the bulk of the members of the congregations than the type exhibited by the ordained prophets whose practices are viewed as alien to their cultural setting. Even though the researcher found out that there are Old Testament parallels to the prophetic practices in the Prayer Camps and Neo Prophetic groups, there are no roots of those practices in the New Testament. Therefore contemporary Prophetism should be rooted in New Testament and not Old Testament practices.

For example, the problems that arose in the Corinthian church are indicative of the abuses that sometimes occur when prophecy is being exercised. This sometimes happens when people prophesying act immaturely. For this reason this work noted that the use of directive prophecy in the choice of the three principal officers in the CoP namely the Chairman, General Secretary and International Missions Director has been an issue of serious debate by the larger Church body. This study has shown that choices made without the use of prophecy do not necessarily make those choices unacceptable. Sometime directive prophecies were employed to decide

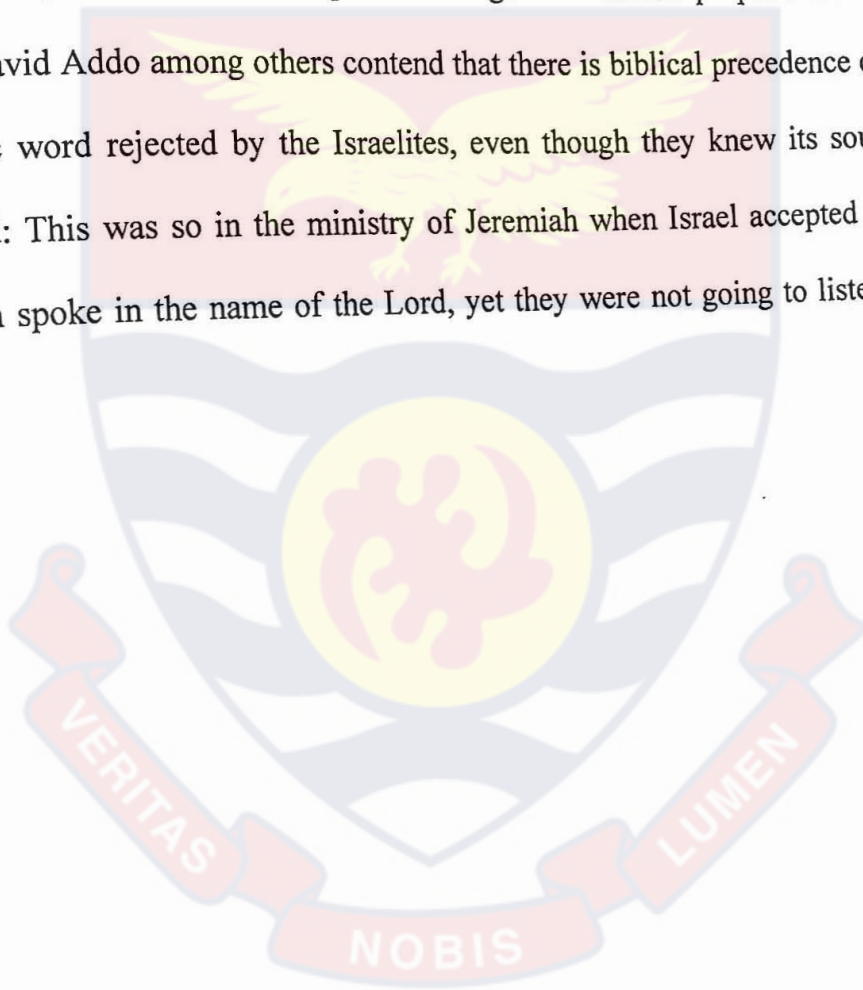
callings and commissioning. In spite of the above very ordinary, or natural, methods were sometimes employed such as the casting of votes. This is usually done after certain constitutional requirements had been met. The respondents argued that prophecy did not rule the early Church at every point, therefore, "It must not rule the contemporary Church."

Prophetic directives though helpful to the Church have not been without serious challenges of prejudice and discrimination, fraught with envy, vindictiveness, hatred, division, and so on. In spite of this, other methods of calling people to higher offices in the Church could be faced with the same challenges aforementioned. This researcher has noted in this work that decisions on spiritual issues need to be handled with utmost care. To the credit of the leadership of the CoP, prophecy is not necessary for every occasion. Nevertheless, the challenge remains, concerning how we can maintain Pentecostal fervor and manifestations without the excitement of prophecy at every decision.

Even though the Church intimates that equal access is offered to both males and females, that is not wholly the case. The CoP holds to only male ordained prophetic ministry. Again, there is disagreement in the functioning of prophecy since different roles are assigned to the different prophetic types. The researcher tried to understand Akan and Ga terms used for prophet/prophecy for the purpose of understanding the prophetic in the CoP. In the discussion however, the researcher concentrated on Akan terms because of

the ten Assemblies visited only one used the Ga dialect throughout the service. Thus Akan was the predominant language used in the services.

It has been observed in this work that prophetic utterances have done a lot of good to the CoP in the choice of leaders. However Pastor Andrews Tetteh argues that the genuineness of a prophetic word does not also mean it cannot be rejected, even when spoken through an ordained prophet. He and Pastor David Addo among others contend that there is biblical precedence of a prophetic word rejected by the Israelites, even though they knew its source was God: This was so in the ministry of Jeremiah when Israel accepted that Jeremiah spoke in the name of the Lord, yet they were not going to listen to him.



CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the CoP, a prior focus of prophecy at the governmental level was the transfer of ministers and other personnel in order to preserve or maintain, if not to accelerate, the progress of the denomination. In the use of prophecy it needs to be understood that there can be times when things disclosed prophetically can either yield to personal agenda or simply be subjected to well-meaning but ill-conceived direction. It is also necessary to ensure that prophecy is not corrupted or degenerate into plain or simple reminders of well-known truths or repetition of Scripture texts if the utterance is to have a direct effect or impact farther than the immediate setting. In this situation, there is the possibility that well-meaning prophets, who are convinced of the importance of prophecy may bring up messages, which are at variance with cherished apostolic practice.

The efforts to regulate the operation of prophecy in recent years show a desire on the part of the leadership to avoid the failures of the past. However, elements of centralist course currently finding expression will, without doubt hinder progress. It is now abundantly clear that the distinctive upon which, the Apostolic Faith through the Apostolic Church to the CoP was founded is that divine government of the Church will have to rise to a level where such a

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the CoP, a prior focus of prophecy at the governmental level was the transfer of ministers and other personnel in order to preserve or maintain, if not to accelerate, the progress of the denomination. In the use of prophecy it needs to be understood that there can be times when things disclosed prophetically can either yield to personal agenda or simply be subjected to well-meaning but ill-conceived direction. It is also necessary to ensure that prophecy is not corrupted or degenerate into plain or simple reminders of well-known truths or repetition of Scripture texts if the utterance is to have a direct effect or impact farther than the immediate setting. In this situation, there is the possibility that well-meaning prophets, who are convinced of the importance of prophecy may bring up messages, which are at variance with cherished apostolic practice.

The efforts to regulate the operation of prophecy in recent years show a desire on the part of the leadership to avoid the failures of the past. However, elements of centralist course currently finding expression will, without doubt hinder progress. It is now abundantly clear that the distinctive upon which, the Apostolic Faith through the Apostolic Church to the CoP was founded is that divine government of the Church will have to rise to a level where such a

Testament, this work noted that ^{seems} ^{coming through the New} ^{University of Cape Coast} ^{https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui} apart from Matthias, no New Testament apostle was 'appointed' in a technical sense at all. Prophetic direction therefore may have value in the Church. It is crucial that the roles of prophets and other ministries like apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers are not confused. In the Bible, few leaders were designated prophets – examples being Moses, Elijah, Agabus and Silas. Prophets seldom held positions of authority over the people, but rather they were called to serve those who were in authority. Even those who anointed the kings submitted to the kings. In a similar vein, prophets in the Church must be submitted to the Church's leadership. This researcher suggests that a proper working together of both leaders and prophets is essential if the work of God is to be completed – but the leaders must refrain from doing the work of the prophets.

Genuine prophetic ministry is essential for true Church life in the way God intends it to be. God uses the prophet who is part of the body of Christ to speak to His people in a personal, present sense, and this brings a sense of the presence of the Lord like few other ministries can. Prophets are called watchmen in the Bible and other ministries may not function properly on the level of authority until the prophets are functioning properly. With the growth in prominence of the prophetic there will be the need for an increase in apostolic function with prophecies being endorsed and acted upon with apostolic authority.

The resurgence of interest in contemporary, biblical prophecy is a worldwide phenomenon, not confined to Ghana alone. To borrow the words of Gentile, "prophetic experience belongs perpetually in Church life and its presence is a sign of spiritual health. The prophecy is lost only when it is neglected". By the 1940's the uses of prophecy were under review by the General Council of the AC in Great Britain. It was a grave concern for prophets to speak too much on governmental or administrative matters. The gift of administration is available and may be employed to help the Church avoid abuses. The use of directive prophecy does not make our choices infallible for prophets can only prophesy according to the proportion of faith they have received.

The fact that Hutchinson preferred the prophecies of his son-in-law and Mrs. Kenny as against prophecies coming through Jones Williams highlighted the challenges of directive prophecies. Hutchinson was suspicious of prophetic utterances because his closest minister E. C. Boulton, an accredited prophet in AFC later confessed to prophesying from his mind and not by the Spirit of God. Spiritual gifts, no matter how extraordinary they may be, are bound to be imperfect, incomplete and fragmentary. A gift is not to bring about confusion, thus the New Testament charges Christians to test all things and hold fast to that which is good in order to forestall confusion.

Recommendations

The researcher makes the following suggestions. When prophecy refers to transition in life such as transfer, callings to higher offices, and appointments, it will be important that the leaders should never make hasty changes until intensive prayer, godly counsel and much reflection have been made. When a directive prophecy is given, the leadership should devise a strategy to bring the directive word from God to the Church. Core leaders must be solicited and time spent to pray and discuss the message before presenting it to the entire body.

Further, this researcher suggests that prophets today need to follow the example of Peter who would not do anything for personal gain but for God's glory alone. True prophetic vessels should be spokespersons of God and not of the Church. True prophets must speak what God wants them to say and not what Church leadership wants them to say. Again, the researcher is yet to find a place in the New Testament where believers stood in a long queue waiting their turns to receive a word from the Lord. That practice at the prayer centres needs to be reviewed. This work has noted that most of the personal prophecies in the New Testament were words of warning – not blessings or guarantees of prosperity.

The researcher proposes a few safeguards to operating in the prophetic: The CoP needs to be careful not to elevate any spiritual gift above the written word of God and people who are aided through the prophetic gift must desist from elevating charismatic figures above Jesus Christ. The findings in this

work have brought out some implications for the CoP. Prophetism is not new; it has been a perennial phenomenon metamorphosing into one form or another. Any attempt to suppress it will prove difficult with possible adverse consequences. The place of prophecy in the Church seems significant: A careful reading of the history of the Apostolic Church and the 'Latter Rain' highlights one thing above all: that church leadership and congregations should remain open to God and His sovereign will, or else they run the risk of sitting down to a banquet of consequences.

Although the claims of the revelations of prophets in the CoP may require careful and difficult discernment, the prophetic gift properly exercised often has positive impact on the life of the Church. Despite the challenges of the prophetic phenomenon such as discerning between the true and the false, healthy and unhealthy prophetic charisma, the confusing roles and functions of the prophetic people, it nevertheless leads to purified, renewed and revitalized faith. The ministry of the prophet also functions in the area of healing of the sick as well as preservation of the Church. It is therefore argued in conclusion that prophecy is a gift from God to the Church, but like any other gift can be misused. Therefore, misuse is no grounds for disuse.

Directive prophecy may be used occasionally to rebuke a Church that has taken a path other than what God intended to bring them in line. A leader needs to be surrounded by other mature believers who are not afraid to speak their mind to be able to correctly judge a directive prophecy. If directive prophecy is to be endorsed, leadership could seek confirmation from mature

prophets from other Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations who accept the operation and use of prophecy. A neutral group will be a sure confirmation of a prophetic directive. Counsel from other mature leaders from outside the Church serving as a neutral body could be of help here in deciphering the true prophetic direction. The function of prophecy is clearly delineated in Scripture. Prophecy may not be used regularly to give authoritative direction, call people into offices in the Church; neither may it be used to impose a rule of conduct on members of the Church.

Patience is sometimes needed, on the part of the prophet and leadership, until the prophecies, are validated by an appropriately constituted body of believers. If this is not done the prophets may feel that their spiritual liberty was being somewhat silenced. In the absence of any such safeguard then directive prophecy may be ignored.

This work holds that directive prophecy may have a place in the Church, albeit it needs to be sparingly used only when there is a case of uncertainty and when immediate decision is needed.

The apostles of the CoP need to find the best way possible to curtail confusion and disaffection in the Church. It is noted in this thesis that an unrestrained use of the gift of prophecy could lead to exclusivism and fanaticism. On the other hand, dead institutionalism could also lead to the stifling of the move of God's Spirit. A prophetic call over someone's life is not sufficient to recognize someone as an apostle, prophet, a leader, or otherwise; prophecy must be augmented by judgment on the merits of a person's

ministry. This in no way also endorses cases where genuine callings may be rejected in place of the practice of nepotism. Hatred, envy, vindictiveness, nepotism, and the like must not have a place in God's kingdom.

Due to the spontaneous, unpredictable nature of the prophetic message, some people may feel that it must be permitted to happen at will. However, prophecy in a congregational setting functions best under some form of control or supervision. This researcher recommends that there should be some form of control in the functioning of the prophetic. In the choice of leaders, certain guidelines will be helpful: Wisdom and the use of basic Bible principles like the moral life of the prophet, how he takes care of his family members, and his social relations must be employed for solving problems above the gift of prophecy or the word of a prophet.

In the appointment of someone for any of the highest offices in the Church recommendation must come from Area Presbyteries from among the apostles and prophets in the Church after much prayer and fasting. Second, all apostles and prophets must meet to discuss three candidates with most votes. Third, various viewpoints must be expressed on the candidates. Fourth, a collective decision must be reached before any ordination should be made. In order to deal with hatred, envy, vindictiveness, nepotism, discrimination, and to forestall disunity, no individual should have the prerogative to nominate someone to any office as is enshrined in the Church's constitution. The constitution reads, The Chairman, "during the short absence of the General Secretary and the International Missions Director, not exceeding six (6)

months, be responsible for appointing an Acting General Secretary or International Missions Director from among the Executive Council members or Apostles and Prophets” (*CoP Constitution*, 2010, p. 36:12.2 g). The choice of the candidate must be based on nomination. It must not rest upon appointment by one person. A collective decision is needed in such matters.

If prophecy is to be valued in the Church training sessions for people with the prophetic gift must be held at least two times annually at the national level to educate them on the use of prophecy. There must also be regular teaching sessions at the local assembly levels. To maintain discipline in the Church those with prophetic gifts who refuse to avail themselves of the training sessions must not be permitted to exercise the gift in a congregation of the Church. This will aid to curb abuses and enhance its profitability to the Church and society.

One of the serious challenges the CoP will have to grapple with is barring women from ordained ministry. The reason is, women have made an immense contribution to the spiritual and material support of the Church. For this reason, one can argue that there is a high demand for ‘gender justice’ in the recruitment of the pastoral staff in the Church. The researcher therefore recommends that women be considered for ordained ministry as well as executive positions in the Church. Their voice must also be heard in the Church. Directive prophecy has done a lot of good to the Church and therefore should continue. Nevertheless, if prophetic guidance is not properly handled, tensions could arise due to reduction of the importance and personal charisma

of the prophets. That could lead to rifts and secessions in a Church. It is recommended that different methods be employed in the appointment of leaders at different times and different places. These methods could include prayer, identifications of qualifications of the candidates, nomination, and casting of lots (vetting process). The CoP may employ any of the above methods in conjunction with prophetic guidance. Prophetic guidance should not be the only means of guidance. Leadership will do well to give equal weight to messages from all the prophetic types. If that is not done a domineering leader could use the medium of prophecy for manipulative purposes.

This study has taken on an exploratory nature, and areas that need further investigation include the following: (1) the impact and implications of the ministry of the Apostle on the effective operation of the Prophetic ministry, and (2) The administrative structures that will suit the smooth operation of prophecy in a church in order to avoid schism. This researcher trusts that this work will make significant impact in the on-going development of African Christian theology.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



APPENDIX B**Interview format:****Section A (background of interviewee)**

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Age
4. Educational level
5. Position in the church

Section B (guiding questions)

6. What is Prophecy?
7. Do you believe in prophecy?
8. Are you a prophet?
9. How did you become a prophet?
10. Were you trained to become a prophet?
11. Do you view prophecy as a gift?
12. Is prophecy a talent, that is, are people are born with it?
13. What are the relationships among talents, gifts, and ministries?
14. What do you think are the signs of a prophet?
15. Can everyone who prophesies be called a prophet?
16. Do you think one can prophesy and not be a prophet?
17. Who qualifies to prophesy?
18. Is it only prophets who can prophesy?
19. Can all Christians prophesy?
20. Is prophecy an intellectual exercise?
21. What is the difference between prophecy and intuition?

22. How often do you hear prophetic messages in the church?
23. How is the gift used?
24. Has prophecy brought about church growth, unity, division, hatred, or disillusionment?
25. Is prophecy a talent, a gift, or a skill?
26. What is your understanding of prophecy?
27. Is prophecy a ministry gift?

Section C (guiding questions on historical development and practice)

28. Have you ever come in contact with someone who prophesies? If yes how did you know?
29. How long have you come into contact with the prophetic phenomenon?
30. Have you ever come across someone prophesying?
31. How different is the practice in (30) above different from what happens in the Church of Pentecost?
32. How did the CoP come by their prophetic practices?
33. Should prophets be graded? Why, and what is the biblical basis for it?
34. How is prophecy acquired?
35. Can a person prophesy without knowing it? If yes or no, explain
36. Does having dreams or visions mean that one has the prophetic gift? If yes, or no, why?
37. How do prophets prophesy? How is a prophetic message received?
38. What is the source of prophecy?
39. Should prophecy be used to direct the Church? If yes or no give reasons
40. Can there be a false prophecy? If yes, how?
41. Do all who prophesy also predict the future? If not explain to me.

42. Can God lie or deceive?
43. Can there be a prophecy that may never be fulfilled?
44. Can a prophet always have a word from the Lord for everybody who visits him or her? If yes, explain, and if no, explain.
45. Can prophets know all things about a person?
46. What are the spheres of prophets? Can they heal, cast out demons, locate lost things and others? If yes, how?
47. Why do some prophets use paraphernalia like handkerchiefs, olive oil, water etc in their healing practices?
48. Are there any biblical examples?
49. Can't God work without the use of those items?
50. Are there some dangers of prophecy?
51. What is the scope of the prophets you know (local? national? international?).
52. How different is the prophet from a pastor or other ministers of the gospel?
53. Is there any relationship between the Christian prophet and the traditional priests? If yes, tell me.
54. Do you have some sort of training?
55. If yes, for how long do you undergo the training?
56. Can one lose his/ her gift? If yes, how? If no, how?
57. Does one need certain qualities to become a prophet or to prophesy? If yes, which? If no, why?
58. Is prophecy ecstatic?
59. What is divination? Is prophecy and divination the same? If yes, how? If no, how?

60. Why are people interested in prophecy?

61. How has the gift helped your church or yourself personally?

Section D (Interview Transcript)

Interviewer: Student

Interviewees: (Prophets J. E. Ameyaw, J. O. Amaniampong, P. B. Appiah-Adu: Personal information, 6 July 2011 Pentecost Guest House, Gbawe).

Interviewer: Particularly in regard to prophecy, what is your view about it?

Interviewer: Are there categories of prophets? How many can you mention?

How do you categorise them?

Interviewees: (Apostle J. K. Ennin: Personal information, 26 June 2012 Residence, Ashaiman Lebanon; Prophet B. A. Adoba, Apostles Ousmane Zabre, Ekow Badu Woode, Appiah Aidoo, S. K. Ansong: Personal information, 10-15 November 2010 Pentecost Guest House Gbawe).

Interviewer: What are the Akan terms for visionary and prophet? Are there differences between them?

Interviewee: (Opanin Kofi Agyekum: Personal information, March 26 2011, University of Ghana Language Department).

Interviewer: How is someone identified as having a prophetic call?

Interviewees: (Apostle Appiah Aidoo, Prophets J. E. Ametaw, P. B. Appiah Adu, J. O. Amaniampong: Personal information, 10 November 2010 at Pentecost Guest House Gbawe).

Interviewer: Do you know of any use of prophecy in the Church of Pentecost? Which? Are there limitations to the function of prophecy? What is a directive prophecy? Are there any merits and demerits of using directive prophecy? Has

directive prophecy a place in the future of the Church? Why do you think it has or does not have a future?

Interviewee: (Apostle J. W. D. Cudjoe, Moses Ladejo, S. K. Ansong: Personal information, 10 & 16 November 2010 at Pentecost Guest House Gbawe)

Interviewer: What do you know about directive prophecy? Should it be used? What are the merits and demerits of using directive prophecy? Has any prophecy been ever rejected? What is your opinion about the rejection of a prophetic utterance? What do you suggest for proper use of directive prophecy?

Interviewees: (Apostle J. K. Ennin: Personal information, 26 June 2012; Pastor David Addo; Stephen Nyarkotey Quao: Personal information, 16 April 2013 at Santa Maria Pentecost Mission House and Pentecost University College respectively.

