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MISSION AND SABBATH



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JAATA

Volume 5, 2014—2015

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Editorial Policy

The Journal of AIIAS African Theological Association is an annual journal that seeks to publish quality biblical-theological papers, in the context of the African Seventh-day Adventist community of faith. Focus areas shall include, leadership, archaeology, historical theology, missiology and Church planting. However, the ideas expressed in the articles, dissertation abstracts, and book reviews are the entire responsibility of the authors and do not represent the thinking of the members of the AIIAS African Association.

All article submissions shall be original and unpublished. It should be sent to the General Editor in electronic form, preferably WordPerfect or MS Word. All submissions are subject to a peer-review process by the Editorial Board. When submitting an article, one must clearly double-check all the citations in the paper. The standard reference works are:

1. Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 8th ed., rev. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press editorial staff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

2. Shawna Vyhmeister, *AIIAS Research Standards and Writing Manual: Requirements and Recommendations for the Theological Seminary and the Graduate School*, 2nd ed. (Silang, Cavite, Philippines: AIIAS Publications, April 2014).

3. When using Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic in the article, BibleWorks fonts are preferred for Greek and Hebrew (Bwgrkl/Bwhebb). Because a wider readership is encouraged, all other ancient Near Eastern languages should be transliterated, following the well accepted conventions in the Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., *SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999), 25-29.

Each submitted article should be, 4000 words maximum, or 15 to 20 pages (double spaced) in a word processor.

Each submitted article is sent anonymously to at least one reader. For this reason all identifying information (name of author, academic affiliation, physical and/or email address) should be submitted separately. The criteria that determines the acceptance of the manuscript include, but not limited to, (a) original contribution, (b) argumentation, logic, style, and (c) adequate documentation. The final decision on whether or not an article will be published in JAATA is made by the editor(s) in consultation with the Editorial Board.

Critical book reviews on recent (not more than two years old) publication can be submitted to the Editor. The bibliographic reference of the review should comply with the following layout:

Title of book, by author. Trans. by [if applicable]. Name of series [if applicable]. Place: Publisher, year. Pp. [including Roman and Arabic numbers]. ISBN. Price [together with currency].

The book review should contain a brief and objective description of the content of the book which is then followed by critical interaction, an evaluation of the contribution of the volume, and the audience for whom it is most suited. Ideally, 40–50% of the book review should be dedicated to critical interaction with the book's content.

Each author (and/or book reviewer) is responsible to carefully read and correct his article after peer-review before returning it to the editor. If an author does not comply with this requirement, publication of the article may be delayed, or may not be published if no agreement is found between the author and the Editorial Board.

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PREFACE

The JAATA 5 (2014), a first online installment, is a special issue that focuses on Mission and the Sabbath from African perspectives and beyond. This journal intends to examine issues from Adventist African perspectives in variegated biblical, theological, and historical disciplines. It is an attempt to progressively develop a vital field of research.

The success of JAATA depends on the number of quality articles submitted for review. Each article goes through a peer-review. The Journal is envisioned as a forum for specialists and researchers to share their expertise in their various fields of research. This present volume is divided into two sections: the first one is dedicated to missiological issues; and, the second focuses on the divine institution of Sabbath.

Part 1 embraces three manuscripts, connected by a unifying theme—Mission.

“The Total Man in Mission: The Head, the Heart, the Hands, and the Habit,” (Pastor Youssry Guirguis); “Preparing University Students for Ministry Throughout Small Groups: A Case Study in Valley View University,” (Pastor John Appiah); and, “Recapturing the Medical Missionary Spirit: An Advocacy For Seventh-Day Adventist Nurses As Tools for Evenglism in Chana,” (Dr. Stella Appiah). These articles demonstrate important aspects of mission. Each paper provides invaluable insights and mastery investigation.

Part 2 focuses on the Sabbath. Four papers attempt to reconstruct the importance of Sabbath experience in African standpoints: “The Ashanti/Akans Sabbath In Context/Concept With The Biblical Sabbath: A Missiological Perspective,” (Pastors John Appiah, and Elisha Kwabena Marfo); “Funeral Rites Participation and Sabbath Observance Among the Akan Adventists in Ghana: Towards A Theological Dialogue,” (Dr. Robert Osei-Bonsu, and Pastor Daniel Dei); “The Sabbath As Missiological Bridge: A Case For The Adventist Church,” (Pastor Watson Mbiriri); and, “Should Non-Adventist Students Of Lukanga Adventist Boarding School Keep Sabbath?,” (Pastor Kambale Muhongya).

Each of these manuscripts specifies an example of a concrete and contextualized cultural perspective on Sabbath observance. Some case studies, because of subjects at stake, focus on specific groups of people.

The production of this journal would not have been possible without the tremendous support of the Editorial Board members, and we would like to express our genuine thanks to the entire team.

It is our earnest desire and sincere prayer that each of these articles should stimulate a sense of satisfaction in JAATA’s readers. We do hope that

more graduate students and professors would find interest in sharing their insights from African perspectives in future volumes.

Youssry Guirguis

THE TOTAL MAN IN MISSION: THE HEAD, THE HEART, THE HANDS, AND THE HABIT

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Abstract

The success of any missionary lies behind the concept of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) philosophy of mission, which embraces the thought of totality in man: the head, the heart, the hands, and the habit. Being a missionary oriented movement from its inception to the present time, the SDA Church philosophy of mission predestines to be holistic. The equipping of their teachers, pastor, and laymen in readying and producing missionary for God's cause is of vital prominence and occurrence. The preliminaries in posting off (foreign, local) missionaries is rewarding for His work. However, not all missionaries whether local or foreign are felicitous in the mission field, to numerate but a few: adapting, fitting, acclimate, be familiar with, and become acclimatized to variegated cultures is not for all. Therefore, this paper stimulates and gives incentives to any personage (laymen, pastor, local, or even oversees) who desires to be successful in his/her mission field. Thence, the SDA philosophy of mission, which encapsulates the concept of totality in man: the head, the heart, the hands, and the habit are approached.

Keywords: *Missio Dei*, Head, Heart, Hands, Habit, Asian Churches, Passion, *kruplos*, work, Megachurches in Asia, Estonian Proverb, and William A. Feather.

1. Introduction

As we consider missions many questions arise, such as, what is the mission? How am I going to adjust to different cultures and situations? How am I going to be able to speak the language....etc? Almost every missionary has his or her experience in mission fields. The sole purpose of this article is to portray the concept of holistic mission as carried out by the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church, which involves an Asian understanding. During the past years, "the church in Asian countries has

grown in quality as well as in quantity.”¹ It has contributed to an enormous degree in developing indigenous leaders, pastors, teachers, and in turn, articulated contextualized theologies, and in establishing of the assortments of varieties of missions; such as hospitals, and training institutions.

The word “mission” is defined by Noah Webster’s dictionary as: “being sent or delegated by authority, with certain powers for transacting business; commission; as sent on a foreign mission.”² Also, the Latin Christian Theological term ‘*missio Dei*’³ gives us the source of mission. It indicates that mission first and foremost begins with God who sends out missionaries. Referring to the sphere of mission Stefan Paas aptly says, “we must not limit ‘mission’ to countries far away.” In other words “mission should not be defined by an address or geographical location.”⁴

In order for any missionary: pastor or elder to be successful in the mission field; the ‘total man’- composed of the head, the heart, the hands and the Habit must be involved in missions. If these four things: (i) the heard, (ii) heart, (iii) hands and the (iv) Habit are involved in missions, our attitude towards missions will never be the same again.

2. Missions Must Begin in the Head

The head is where the brain or the mind is. That is where your cognizance is. That is where your thinking takes place. For you to believe old time religion you must take it into your mind.⁵ In relation to Asian countries including national leaders, such as M. K. Gandhi have faced challenges in the engagement of the mind as sole purpose of the gospel. They were ready to accept Christian humanitarian services in the variegated aspects of the mission except confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord. Yet, the ‘good works’ carried out by missionaries and Christians have always been understood to be an expression of their love and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Asians have by and large been willing to receive the former,

¹ Samuel Jayakumar, “The Work of God as holistic mission: An Asian Perspective.” *Evangelical Review Of Theology* 35, no. 3 (July 2011): 227-241.

² Noah Webster’s Dictionary, 1828, s.v. “Mission.”

³ “‘Mission of God,’ or the ‘sending of God.’”

⁴ Stefan Paas, “Prepared for a Missionary Ministry in the 21st Century Europe,” *Journal of Theology*, 20 no. 2 (2011): 119-130.

⁵ Few thoughts are taken from the Sermon: “The Head, the Heart, and the Hands” by W. Alderman.

but many have rejected the latter, saying: "we have our own saviours."⁶ With regard to the two exceptional missionary leaders of the twentieth century, J.R. Mott, and D.A. McGavran, who made an immense effect on the minds of the Asian Christian lay leaders, especially in India. Mott's ideas of mission initially come from the Enlightenment,⁷ being influenced by the well-liked evangelist D.L. Moody, whereas McGavran's ideas emanated from his three decades of missionary work in India. Both persons insisted on implementing the Great Commission.

The apostle Paul says in Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."⁸ The apostle admonishes the reader that the peace of God surpasses and excels above "all understanding." The word understanding is the Greek *nous*, the classical Greek word for the mind. This word refers to the ability to think, to reason, to understand, and to comprehend. It also depicts the mind as the source of all emotions.

In Greek, the word "mind" represents the inner power of a person and thus the place from which a person rules and controls his environment and the world around him. The Greek word emphatically depicts the mind as the innermost control center for a human being.⁹ Therefore, it was understood that the condition of the mind has what determined the condition of one's life.

Commenting on the significance of the mind, Ellen G. White says: "When the mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite, the effect on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate. In such communion is found the highest education. It is God's own method of development. "Acquaint now thyself with Him" (Job 22:21), is His message to mankind."¹⁰ This simply means that a posi-

⁶ Graham Houghton, 'The Foundation Laid by Christian Missionaries', Bishop M. Ezra Sargunam (ed) *Christian Contribution to Nation Building* (Chennai, Mission Educational Books, 2006), 2.

⁷ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the 19th and 20th centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 173.

⁸ *The Holy Bible : King James Version*. electronic ed. of the 1769 edition of the 1611 Authorized Version, (Bellingham WA: Logos Research Systems, 1995), S. Phi. 4:7.

⁹ Rick Renner, *Sparkling Germs from the Greek: 365 Greek Word Studies for Every Day of the Year to Sharpen Your Understanding of God's Word* (Teach All Nations: USA, 2003), 751.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1911), 126.

tive attitude toward God will affect and influence our thoughts, our feelings, and the way we behave or do things.

With this, one may pray as King David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Ps 119:18) or as David also prayed, "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." (Ps 119:34). This verse introduces my next thought. Once you have the mind to receive it, then may it go to your heart.

3. Missions Must Go to the Heart

The heart is the seed bed for the emotions. It is where you begin to feel and anticipate what you believe. It is where the Word of God has begun to do its faith work. We should remember that "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Some will have you to believe that faith is so sterile and that there is only a mechanical application of Truth. It is not quite, for faith will affect how you feel, but how you feel should not affect your faith; there is a great difference.

In other words, a missionary must have a passion for mission. As you study the Word of God in regards to missions, you should develop strong feelings or might I say convictions about the importance of missions or literally the planned program of going after souls according to the teachings of what we call the great commission. For instance, the primary motivation for the mission in India cuddled: the spreading of the gospel and the growth of churches. In the 1950s and 1960s, although Christian mission for evangelicals was the mission of saving the souls, it never lost sight of human misery¹¹—it had a passion for mission. Therefore, the definition for passion according to Webster's Dictionary is: "The impression or effect of an external agent upon a body; that which is suffered or received. A body at rest affords us no idea of any active power to move, and when set in motion, it is rather a passion than an action in it."¹² According to Siegfried H. Horn passion is a term frequently means, "a strong emotion or desire."¹³ Cassell's Concise English Dictionary comes with a similar view that passion is an "intense emotion overpowering affection of the

¹¹ Samuel Jayakumar, 227-241.

¹² Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, s.v. "Passion."

¹³ *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC)*, rev.ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1976-1980), 841.

mind," and an "ardent enthusiasm (for)."¹⁴ Thus, passion is intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction.

When the apostle Peter wrote to wives in 1 Peter 3:4, he instructed them to give special attention to the "hidden man of the heart." The word "hidden" is the word *kruptos*, which describes something that is hidden or veiled from the eyes. The word "heart" is the Greek word *kardia*, which is the Greek word for physical organ of the heart. The heart is the central, core, and vital organ of the body. Although it is invisible to the natural eye, the human body cannot live without it. The heart has a great impact on every single part of the human body as it pumps blood through arteries and many miles of blood vessels. Therefore, it influences the person's ability to live and function. The apostle Peter is giving the reader a powerful insight regarding the human spirit.

Similarly, the ancient Egyptian believed that: *"Every divine word has come into existence through the heart's thought and tongue's command..."*¹⁵ Here the Apostle Peter, as well as the Ancient Egyptians, used the word heart figuratively to refer to the inner person, the seat or source of feelings that drives our actions. In other words, if a person's heart is filled with the life of God, it will pump life into every part of that person's being. Therefore, whatever is in the heart is exactly what will be reproduced in a person's life and conduct.

This is precisely why the apostle Peter urges wives to take time and care to develop their spirits, which he calls "the hidden man of the heart." Because the human spirit is the life-force of any person, he emboldens women to not only fix their hair and their faces but to also beautify their spirits, even though the spirit man is invisible to the natural eye. The apostle declares that this "hidden man of the heart" is "incorruptible" in First Peter 3:4a, which refers to *something that is incapable of decay or something that is incapable of suffering the effect of wear, tear, and age.*¹⁶ The word "incorruptible" may suggest that the "hidden heart of the man" will never grow old or experience the effect of aging as a result of sin. As Ellen G White cogently observes, "Everyone in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace

¹⁴ Classell's Concise English Dictionary: Etymological and Pronouncing (London, UK: Cassell and Company, 1589), 300.

¹⁵ http://www.cosmic-mindreach.com/Egypt_Part1.html

¹⁶ Rick Renner, 751.

to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life."¹⁷

The state of our hearts will also influence our social lives, which is, how we relate to other people as we carry out our mission. The greatest accomplishments have happened when the SDA church has been "united." On the other hand, our (SDA) greatest defeats have happened when we were divided due to our inner state, the heart. The "civil war" "segregation," "adultery," "fornication," "uncleanness," "lasciviousness," "idolatry," "witchcraft," "hatred," "variance," "emulations," "wrath," "strife," "seditions," "heresies," "envyings," "murders," "drunkenness," and "revellings" (see Gal 5:19-21) are great examples of this. Christ also had this to say: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt 15:19). All these are done to the next person and they destroy our mission and unity.

The SDA church is a mission oriented church. No wonder Ellen G. White, calls the church's attention to unity and not division. She admonishes us as a church to:

Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ. Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God's sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set.¹⁸

One of the greatest stories about unity in action comes to us from Russell Brownsworth who tells the story of Lord Nelson of England. Lord Nelson of England was about to enter an important battle. He heard that two of his officers were at odds with each other. He called them in and said, Gentlemen, give me your hands. The two captains put their hands in the Commander's hands, and he squeezed them with a tight grip. Men, he said, Remember the ENEMY is OUT THERE!

¹⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1911), 13.

¹⁸ Ellen G. White: *Counsels for the Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific, 1991), 290.

This is a great story about the power of togetherness and the power of unity in action. Therefore, the question of mission is: is our mission onto action/unity? This is to follow Christ, proclaim Christ, and find Christ for the salvation of the whole world. In order not to lose direction in the mission, it will be of a major necessity for Christian worship, faith, and theology to be deeply rooted, and not diffused down. This, in turn, will lead some Christians at one point in time, to come out of cultural backgrounds, psychological buffers, and institutional protection, to preach Christ and Him crucified in action – to be a sermon in shoes. This must be done out of faith in the absoluteness of Jesus for the mission to be followed and discovered in all spheres. Moreover, this mission may involve one to get out in seeking men of different faiths and commitment according to the great commission of Matthew 28:19.

4. Mission Must Go to the Hand

The hands symbolize action. There are very few things that we do without our hands. We work with our hands, we talk with our hands, and we minister with our hands. We even fight with our hands. We use our hands to sign contracts, to adjust the microscope or play the violin and the piano. We use our hand to show joy or disgust. A child, for instance, can see his/her mother in his/her mind now dropping her hands in disgust after he/she is bringing her disappointment.

I wish to return to the thought that, “The hands symbolize action”. When the head is right about missions, and the heart is right about missions, then the hands need to be right. A good example of this is the emanating tendency in the Asian church growth is the rise of mega-churches in cities. In fact, the whole world is witnessing a mega-church movement. S. Gramby-Sobukwe and Tim Hoiland say, “Mega-churches are changing the global makeup of Christianity to the extent that some scholars are characterizing them as the harbingers of ‘The Next Christendom’ and the ‘African Century of Christianity.’”¹⁹ As we are acquainted with, Asia has the largest mega-church in the world—in South Korea (the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul led by David Yonggi Cho.),²⁰ and many other mega-churches have sprung up in China, Malaysia, India, Indonesia, and

¹⁹ S.Gramby-Sobukwe and Tim Hoiland, ‘The Rise of Mega Church...’, *Transformation* 26.2 (2009), 105-106.

²⁰ For a deeper understanding of Mega-churches, see, Clinton Wahlen in his article, “Do We Need Adventist Megachurches?” *Biblical Resreach Insititute Newsletter*, 2010, # 32, p. 1, 3-6.

Singapore. The Asian mega-church movement to a certain extent is a result of following the Great Commission to preaching, and evangelizing, hence, it advocates against idleness.

We need not be idle. We should use our hands, signifying our working with the whole body. This is the heart of community service in which we assist other people and ourselves with our physical labors. We should not wait for conditions in order for us to act in mission; it was the great American publisher and author, William A. Feather, who said: "Conditions are never just right. People who delay action until all facts are favourable do nothing." The Estonian Proverb militates against idleness saying: "the work will teach you how to do it." Above all, Ellen G. White has it right when says:

In our labor we are to be workers together with God. He gives us the earth and its treasures; but we must adapt them to our use and comfort. He causes the trees to grow; but we prepare the timber and build the house. He has hidden in the earth the gold and silver, the iron and coal; but it is only through toil that we can obtain them....Notwithstanding all that has been said and written concerning the dignity of labor, the feeling prevails that it is degrading. Young men are anxious to become teachers, clerks, merchants, physicians, lawyers, or to occupy some other position that does not require physical toil. Young women shun housework and seek an education in other lines. These need to learn that no man or woman is degraded by honest oil. That which degrades is idleness and selfish dependence.²¹

5. Mission Must Continue With the Habit

The idea that the totality of man in doing mission should also incorporate another crucial letter – H, which means the **habit** of the pastoral leader or the missionary. While the Bible does not particularly speak of "habits" as such, yet, much is said concerning the gist of the word: "a thing done often, and hence, usually done easily; an act that is acquired and has become automatic." It is "a settled or regular tendency or practice."²² The word is further defined as: "a tendency or disposition to act in a particular

²¹ Ellen G. White: *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1952), 214-215.

²² Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 345.

way; established custom, usual practice.”²³ In other words, we become what we repeatedly do.

We all have habits, whether good or bad. Even newborns may come into this world with the habit of already sucking their thumbs. Conversely, for the Christian, the whole of their lives is one of being transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom 12:2). This entails exchanging old (bad) habits for new (good) ones, in order to please the Lord. For instance, “Do all things without grumbling and complaining” (Phil 2:14) may stipulate a new-fangled habit on our part. We may need to develop a whole new blueprint of thinking, from negative to positive as “we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). With regard to the significance of attitude, Ellen G. White said: “Your attitude, your words, your spirit, are constantly making an impression upon those with whom you associate.”²⁴ Thus, in mission one needs to have “the attitude of a learner,”²⁵ in other words, habits are shaped by the repetition of particular acts, habit is overcome by habit.

While the Holy Writ states “Do not steal” means that we must cultivate the habit of being honest in all things. This may require a whole new habit for some. It is the “putting off” of our old nature and “putting on” of the new nature we are given when we are born spiritually into God’s family (Col 3:9-10). This is not an effortless thing to do and is, in fact, unfeasible in our individual vigor. But Paul reminds us, “I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13).

The habits are the customary things missionary do that makes up his character. Spiritual character to me should be the sum total of what the Christian head, heart, and hands do. The head, heart, hand without being connected to the Christian habit and character is in vain because habits determine destiny. It was Mahatma Gandhi who said: “As Your beliefs become your thoughts, Your thoughts become your words, Your words become your actions, Your actions become your habits, Your habits become your values, Your values become your destiny.” Then, I like to echo the words of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American author and humorist, who said, “Nothing so needs reforming as other people’s habits.” Therefore, it is wise to say

²³ Collins English Dictionary., Previous Ed.: 2005.; Formerly CLP., 8th ed., Complete & unabridged ed. (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2006).

²⁴ Ellen G. White: *Christ Triumphant*. 1999. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1999), 198.

²⁵ Ellen G. White: *Christian Leadership*. (Washington, DC: Ellen G. White Estate, 1985), 13.

that your attitude determines you altitude in the mission. Most importantly, we are told, "And whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

6. Conclusion

We must hold onto a balanced understating of the mission, one that is seen to involve (i) the head, (ii) the heart, (iii) the hands, and (iv) the habit. If you have truly learned what God's will is about missions, you will have a passion or conviction to do something about it. You will either be going if you already or not, or be helping with your prayer and finances to help those who are going. The desire of preparing Asian hearts to be totally committed to God's concept of missions is in line with fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:19, 20). Consequently, in order for someone to be successful in mission; the total man: the **head**, the **heart**, the **hands**, and the **habit** must be involved in mission. This great truth can be summarized, as someone has penned this remarkable saying: "Let the one who would worship God open his mouth in praise, his **heart** in receptivity, his **mind** in contemplation, his purse in dedication, his **hand** in fellowship, and his habit in reform."

This **total man** in the mission, which is composed of the **head**, the **heart**, the **hands**, and the **habit** is all about love. Love is not just action. Love is sacrificial action. Love always pays a price. Love always costs something. Love is expensive. When you love, benefits accrue to another's account. Love is for you, not for me. Love gives; it does not grab.

PREPARING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR MINISTRY THROUGH SMALL GROUPS: A CASE STUDY OF VALLEY VIEW UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Equipping the laity for ministry is a biblical mandate of the minister (Eph 4:12-16). How to successfully mobilize and equip the laity for ministry, however, is a major challenge to ministry. One of the means to achieve this is through the small group ministry. Most of the literature on the small groups, however, concentrates on traditional church system. Institutional churches, especially, those in the universities are sidelined in most of the literature on small groups. This paper explores the how to prepare university students for ministry through the small group ministry at Valley View University. Other faith-based institutions will find this paper helpful on how best to in equipping university students for ministry through the small groups.

1. Introduction

Equipping the laity for ministry remains a major task and challenge to pastoral ministry (Eph 4:12-13). Most often, this is taken for granted. The small group ministry has proven to be an effective means to equip laity for ministry (Long, et al, 1995; Kwon, 2005; Peel & Larimore, 2010; Richardson, 2000; Knowles, 1997; Reisinger, 1982). A lot has been written on small groups, especially and its effectiveness in mobilizing and equipping the laity for ministry. Most of the literature on small groups, nevertheless, concentrates on the traditional church system (Dougherty & Whitehead 2011; Thumma & Bird 2009; Ellison et al 2009; Dougherty & Huyser 2008; Martin 2007; Easum & Atkinson 2007; Emerson 2006; Arnold 2004; Dougherty 2003; Dalton 2002; Neighbour 2000; Thomas & Jardine 1994; Wuthnow 1994a, 1994b, 1994c; Wilson et al. 1993; George 1992). Institutional churches, especially those in the tertiary institutions are neglected in the literature on small groups. Besides the Sabbath school units, the Valley View University has no other recognized small group ministry.

The need for small groups ministries at the institutional church of Valle View University is therefore pressing and appropriate.

The objective of this paper is to tackle small group ministry in the context of tertiary institutions. To do this, this paper discusses the following: biblical foundation of small groups, mission, spiritual formation, small group ministry in Valley View University. This paper also proposes some practical ways to equip university students for ministry through the small group model. Upon successful implementation of the strategies, other schools, and churches who want to ensure effective ministries of their laity may find it useful to adapt it to their own peculiar settings. The study employed a case study method, combining observation and archival methodologies (McBurney & White, 2007).

2. Concept Biblical Foundation of Small Group Ministry

This section analyses the biblical foundation of small group ministry in the church. The small group ministry has a solid biblical base. Genesis' creation account (Gen 1) portrays God in a small group setting (Gen 1:26). The Hebrew *Elohim* is plural and portrays the fact that God exists within the divine form of small group. The concept of the Trinity pictures a relationship within a group (McBride, 1990).

Exodus 18:21-26 records Jethro's advice to Moses concerning how he should lead the children of Israel during the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. He advised Moses to organize the people in small groups of ten, with a leader, for administrative purposes. These smallest groups formed group of fifty (five groups of tens), with a leader. They still formed a group of hundreds (two groups of fifties), with a leader. They formed another group of thousand (ten groups of hundreds), with a leader. Then, the nation formed one bigger group, with Moses as the human leader. In the view of Jethro, this makes for easier administration (Exod 18:22-23). It also ensures delegation and cooperate responsibility (Exod 18:21-22). Moreover, it serves as a remedy for burnout (Exod. 18:18). Moses heeded the advice and administered the children as such (Exod 18:24-26).

The Old Testament (OT) records of the Israelites also portray the notion and practice of groups of their individual and corporate identity. From national to family unit, large and small groups permeated the Jewish existence (Exod 18; Deut 49; Josh 7). The nation Israel was divided into twelve sub-groups (tribes) by virtue of their descent from the twelve sons of Jacob. The tribes constituted administrative units. These tribes were further divided into families or clans, which were also administrative

units. The various families were divided into households. A specific man, his wife and children was the smallest unit within the Jewish identity. A single family unit was the heart of the Jewish society- the primary small group. These identity groupings provided political, social, and administrative units in Israel (McBride, 1990).

The New Testament (NT) records some small groups as a key method of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus is portrayed as the greatest small group leader in history (McBride, 1990). Jesus' use of small group, therefore, becomes the rationale for local church's use of small groups as an integral part of its congregational life (McBride, 1990). Jesus began His ministry on earth by establishing disciples as a "small group" (Matt. 4:18-22; 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:13-16; John 1:37-49). Jesus used the small group context to teach and model spiritual knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. It was also His method for leadership training (McBride, 1990).

The early church also used small groups. Small groups were integral to the development and success of the NT church. The Jerusalem church was made up of household small groups (Acts 2:41-42; 5:42). The house church structure continued even in Gentile communities (Rom. 16:5; Philem. 2) until the time of Emperor Constantine, where church buildings, cathedrals, and basilicas began to displace the house churches (McBride, 1990). Ellen White (1946) stated: *"The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented to me by One who cannot err"* (Evangelism, p.115). Small group ministry, thus, has a divine endorsement.

2.1 Mission

Some people thing that only the minister/pastor should bear the burden of ministry. This notion, however, should not be so. God's designed that every member of the congregation should bear his/her part of the work. If the pastor is bears all the burden of ministry, he might be broken down and die earlier than he ought to. If the burden of ministry is shared by every member of the congregation, the pastor might live longer. Church members should be educated to emulate Christ's example and share the burden of the work. This education should be done by competent persons (E. White, 1948b; Knowles, 1997). E. White (1948b) added that no one should entertain the wrong notion that the ministry of the gospel should be solely done be the pastor/minister. God has given to every member some work to do with regards to the kingdom of God. Every Christian should work assiduously to advance God's cause and to share the gospel of Christ with the world. Every Christian should be a missionary and win souls for Christ (E. White, 1948b; Reisinger, 1982). It is easier agreeing with the above statements, than to put it into practice. How to get the

members equipped and motivated to minister remains the leader's burden (Knowles, 1997).

Moskala (2008a, 2008b) has explained that the main mission of God's people in the OT was to portray the correct picture of God to other nations where sin had tainted their view of God. He has pointed out that God's people could achieve their mission to the heathen nations if they had experienced God's selfless love towards them through their personal relationship with God. He emphasizes that "Personal relationship with God was basic to fulfilling their divine mission to the rest of the world" (p. 18-19). He continues thus: "When God calls His people into existence, He gives them a mission. There were no Old Testament people of God without a mission; there is no election without a commission. God's call presupposes a call for action" (Moskala, 2008b, 40). Weinrich (1981, Jan-Apr) agrees with Moskala when he explained that "the history and the nature of the Christians Church is intricate with the mission activity" (p. 61). The essence of the Church is mission (Weinrich, 1981, Jan-Apr).

Hassel (1983) highlights the importance of development the educational ministry that will empower church members to participate in future-responsive mission. Ortlund (1981, Jan-Mar) opines that "The problem most churches face is not that they do not do anything; they do plenty. The problem is that they are not doing the right things" (p. 3). Ortlund (1981, Jan-Mar) has emphasized the importance of doing the right thing in equipping the congregation for mission. The laity should be train to minister in their various capacities for the progress of the church (Knowles, 1997).

2.2 Spiritual Formation

A recent study (Dougherty & Whitehead, 2011) has discovered that small group involvement increases ones appreciation of acceptance, church attendance, and positively impacts member's contribution towards church work. Small group involvement has become a powerful means to advance member's vitality in both big and small churches (Dougherty & Whitehead, 2011).

Mark 3:13-14 and Luke 6:12-16 give the basic steps Jesus followed in growing people. These include praying, calling, appointing (communion), mentoring (community), and sending (commission). Jesus sought divine guidance through prayer (Luke 6: 12-16). He concentrated on growing the individual (Luke 13:21), and through the individual, reached many (E. White, 1948). E. White (1952) points out that Christ "came to show how men are to be trained as befits the sons of God; how on earth they are to practice the principles and to live the life of heaven" (Education, p. 74). E. White (1948) underscores the importance of working thoroughly for the individual, and the multiplying effects. E. White (1941) also states, "The

object of the Christian life is fruit bearing, the reproduction of Christ's character in the believer that it may be reproduced in others" (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 67). Clouzet (2001, 1997) laments the seeming absence of character development of students in Christian institutions. He considers the example of Christian educators as a prime factor to influence the character development of their students. He explains that if the mentor's character is transformed; it positively influences the transformation of the student's character. He states that the challenge of leadership formation has to do with whether our students can see God in the mentor/instructor/teacher.

A recent study (Lau, 2012) has found that character development come first skill training in effective leadership development. It also reveals that "Christ-like character, spiritual maturity, and a willingness to serve are more important than a person's natural abilities and talents" (iii, iv). Smith (2007) stresses the need to transform Christian ministry of our time. He recommends the need to emphasize the spiritual formation of the character of lay leaders in order to sustain lay leaders in Christian ministry.

Berry (2009) has noted that the focus of the teachings of Jesus was on the spiritual preparation of the heart, to prepare the audience for eternal life. Banks (2002) has stressed that Christ's earthly devotional life had an influence on the spiritual development of the disciples. He has pointed out Jesus's prayer life and use of Scriptures were examples for the disciples. S. Smith (2013) has identified the effectiveness of lay witness at the workplace. Fully equipped, the lay person can reach people that church leaders alone may never reach (S. Smith, 2013; J. Smith, 2007).

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education fosters a balanced development of the whole person-spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially(*Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial and Theological Education*, 2001). The education and training of the youth should focus on development of character. If ministers and teachers could appreciate their complete obligation, the world would be a better place today. E. White (1968) has stressed that the divine purpose for establishing Seventh-day Adventist universities and colleges is to save souls. Seventh-day Adventist education ought to prepare students for service. (E. White, 1943).

2.3 Valley View University

Valley View University is one of the over 100 universities and colleges owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Oyibi campus has a student population of over 6000. The Techiman campus has about 2000 students. It is located within the South and the North and Ghana Union respectively, in the West African Division (WAD) of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Valley View University offer the following
Schools/Faculties/programmes:

1. The School of Theology and Missions comprises the Department of Theology and the Department of Religious Studies
2. The Faculty of Science comprises of the Department of Computer Science and the Department of Information Studies
3. The School of Business Studies comprises of the Department of Accounting, the Department of Marketing, the Department of Banking and Finance, the Department of Management Studies, and the Department of Human Resources
4. The School of Education, Development Studies comprises of the Department of Education, the Department of General Education,
5. The School of Health Science comprises of the Department of Nursing and the Department of Development Studies
6. School of Graduate Studies comprises of Master of Business Administration (Banking and Finance), Master of Business Administration (Strategic Management), Master of Business Administration (Human Resources Management), Post Graduate Diploma (Education), Post Graduate Diploma (Pastoral Ministry). In collaboration with Adventist University of Africa (AUA), the School also offers Master of Business Administration in Accounting (cohort and regular); Master of Business Administration in Information Systems (cohort and regular); Master of Business Administration in Management (cohort and regular); Master of Art in Biblical and Theological Studies (cohort). In collaboration with Andrews University, the School offers Master of Science (International Development)
7. Pre-university programme: American High Certificate. (Retrieve April 4 2014, 4:40pm)
8. Valley View University, as a Christian institution of higher learning, has an objective to prepare students and graduates for ministry both in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and in the wider society. Her mandate to prepare holistic products for ministry remains a privilege and a challenge. With the current surge in number of students, this mandate should be given a greater priority. It is the purpose of this paper to offer practical suggestions to ensure that the holistic education of Adventist Christian education become a useful tool to prepare lay people to service through small group ministries. There is no small group ministry at View University, with the exception of Sabbath school units, which meet every Sabbath morning before the divine service to discuss the Sabbath school lesson for the week. The Sabbath units, how-

ever, need to improve their functions like visiting absentee members in their apartments/halls. The small group ministry at Valley View University will improve the functions of the Sabbath school units and establish units in other departments of the church.

3. Small Groups Ministry

What is small group ministry? There are many advantages of Small Groups. They include (1) they help group members to grow as disciples of Jesus; (2) they build deep relationships between believers and a strong sense of community in the church; (3) they help believers develop their spiritual gifts, releasing the ministry potential of the church, and freeing pastors for the specific work they have been called to do; and (4) they also help more people come to faith in Christ (Kuntaraf, 2013). Small group ministries also ensure teambuilding, which in turn (1) produces more fruit; (2) gathers a variety of gifts/resources; (3) generate more ideas; (4) ensures accountability; (5) provides encouragement and support; and (6) helps train future leaders (Park, 2013). Small groups attract people of similar interest of different ages, race, marital, and economic status. They may also attract more people who might not want to commit themselves to long-term covenant groups, and favor people whose schedules change frequently (Hipp, n.d.).

3.1 The Need for Small Groups Today

A study (as quoted in Dougherty & Whitehead, 2011) has revealed that "The strength of a group and the commitment of its members will be a function of the specific ways the group is put together" (Kanter, 1972, 75). Kwon (2005) argues that the main problems of modern society are pervasiveness of human isolation and individualism. These problems exist both in the society and the church. The effects are that church members experience isolation as churches grow in size and numbers. Even family members feel isolated from one another. In his opinion, the church should respond to this social disintegration with the "Living Cell" project, which is a person-to-person interaction among believers, and between believers and non-believers that will lead to the creation of brother or sisterhood in Christ" (pp. 21-22). He explains that the Living Cell project could train members for the missionary work and also provide fellowship for them. Members will share one another's love and pain, gain knowledge from each other, and long for contacts and interactions with one another. Thus, the Living Cell could serve as an innovative spiritual family in God. Studies (Dougherty & Whitehead 2011; Martin 2007; Dalton 2002; Thomas &

Jardine 1994; Wuthnow 1994b, 1994c) have discovered a strong evidence of benefits when church members are involved in small group ministries.

Long, et al, (1995) have proposed the small group ministry as a means to fulfill students' deep needs for security and significance through friendships and community. Richardson (2000) has affirmed the influence of the small group ministry in the church. In addition to increased prayer life, members enjoyed fellowship with other members of the group, and invite non-Christians friends to join group meetings. Members become a community to each other and a team together in witness. Peel and Larimore (2010) have identified the opportunity to form small informal groups at workplace using common needs, common gifts and talents, common location, and common concerns. They underscore the need for Christian influence at the workplace, allowing the Christians to express their faith through overflows from in which God is actively at work.

3.2 How to Form Successful Small Groups

The first stages of a new group are very important. Primary steps to guarantee a healthy and mature new group include (1) deciding the purpose of the groups; (2) praying for God's guidance; (3) determining the needs of the church through observation; (4) enrolling leaders with matching vision for the groups; (5) meeting with and training leaders; (6) assisting leaders discover right resources for the groups; (7) inaugurating the small group ministries in a memorable way; (8) arranging for people to follow-up group members; (9) arranging for leaders meeting with staff and group leaders within the first month of inauguration; and (10) preparing a handbook for the leaders (Moore, 2002; Richardson, 2000; Mittelberg, 2000; Hipp, n.d).

4. Proposed Guidelines for the University Context

The successful formation and maintenance of Small Group spiritual formation and training units at Valley View University Campus begins with the researcher. The researcher will develop devotional life to benefit from the discipline. In 2 Timothy 3:15-17 Paul states the study of the Bible can make one wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (v. 15). He also states that all Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (v. 16). It makes the student complete, and thoroughly equipped for good works (v. 17).

The researcher will then begin to form a core group of 6 people including me. The researcher will grow the people he will call by following Jesus' example. Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve — designating them apostles — that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach (Mark 3:13,14). The researcher will follow the principles of praying, calling, appointing, mentoring, and sending. The researcher will follow Wagner's suggestion on how leaders should pray. The researcher will increase my prayer life, develop the habit of group prayer, enlist personal intercessors, and be aware of spiritual issues (Wagner, 1984).

Following the guidelines for forming a team (D. White, 2000), the core group members whom the researcher will call should be teachable, who get along with me and everyone on the team, who share a burden for the work, who are dependable, who can take responsibilities, who have maturing faith, and who live consistent and healthy lifestyles. Moreover, the researcher will call a broad spectrum of people, including established and new members, males and females, seasoned and potential leaders, persons from community of church plant, administrators, prayerful persons, and older and a younger persons. When appointing the members of the core group, The researcher will consider the principles of how Jesus appointed the Twelve Apostles (Mark 3:14). The researcher will seek the guidance of the God through prayer. The researcher will ask God to guide me choose people who will help advance His work.

The researcher will also mentor the core group members, following Jesus' example (Mark 3:14). The researcher will make them members of my family (E. White, 1940). The researcher will also admonish the core group members to devote time for daily Bible study and prayer. The researcher will organize weekly meetings during which we will pray, study, and plan. The researcher will provide a model for caring and follow-up, and minister to each person in the group. The researcher will admonish each member to establish a closer relationship with Jesus because that is the only way that group can get closer to one another. The researcher will organize Upper Room weekend retreats, plan, pray (Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013).

In our Upper Room Retreat Weekend, we will do as many things together as possible. We will worship, eat, pray, and stay together. We will divide into two-member brainstorming groups, determine grouping together for ministry, and appoint each team to a meaningful ministry. Moreover, the researcher will encourage the two-member brainstorming groups to plan and form a small group of six people each, teaching them how to multiply and replicate the process I have outlined above. As Jesus sent the Apostles, the researcher will "send" them to multiply themselves, having thoroughly equipped them (Mark 3:14; Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013).

In forming the core group, which will later develop into small groups, the researcher takes note of the following: that where two or three people gathered together in Jesus' name (to seek the lost) there Jesus will be in the midst (Matt 18:20). The researcher will also transform existing groups, and begin with the Bible study group. The core and the small groups will also stay balanced, beginning with community in our meetings before transition with prayer. We will also study the Bible inductively, minister to the missing members of the group, and reach out to the empty chair, praying and calling others to join the newly formed small groups. We will pray and plan to reproduce the blessing, by multiplying the groups (Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013).

On transforming existing groups, the researcher will begin with the Bible study group. We will stay balanced by turning committees into communities- each time the members meet together they should spend a balanced time for communion, community and commission. We will begin with community, sharing something that has happened in people's lives since the previous meeting, whether at home, in school, at work, about recreation, church, good news, or bad news. We will transition with prayer by making what members share their prayer list with the group. Praying for one another is one of the most caring and memorable things we can do for others (Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013).

We will also study the Bible inductively through the use of Bible stories. We will also print and send out Bible passages, and have people study it before the meeting (Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013; <http://bible.gospelcom.net/languages/>). On ministering to missing members, we will appoint someone as a secretary who will have the needed contact information, keep track of attendance and coordinate the follow-up. We will reach out to the empty chair. We will have an empty chair in the group and pray each week for a specific person that will come and fill the chair and become a member of the group. We will reproduce the blessing since "A little leaven, leavens the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9; Kuntaraf, 2013; Park, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The successful implementation of Small Group Ministries at the Oyibi campus of Valley View University would supplement the equipping of students for ministry to the wider society and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The strong biblical foundations of small groups both in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen G. White provide hope for its successful implementation.

The formation of small groups for ministry has strong biblical foundation. The creation account portrays God in a small group (Gen. 1). Jethro advised Moses to administer the Israelites in small groups (Exod. 18:23-27). In the Old Testament, the nation Israel practiced small groups for their individual and corporate identity (Exod. 18; Deut. 49; Josh. 7). The nation Israel was divided into twelve tribes which constituted administrative units. These tribes were further divided into families or clans, and households. A specific man, his wife and children was the smallest unit within the Jewish identity. A single family unit was the heart of the Jewish society- the primary small group. These identity groupings provided political, social, and political administrative units in Israel. In the NT, Jesus Christ and the NT Church both practiced small group ministries (Mark 3:13, 14; Luke 6:12-16; Act 2:42, 47; 5:42; Rom. 16:5; Philm. 2). In starting a small group ministry there are steps to follow. These include praying, receiving a vision for the groups to canvassing for information regarding specific needs, to actual recruitment of leaders, advertisement, kick-off, and follow-up.

To ensure a successful implementation of the Small Group Ministries at the Oyibi campus of Valley View University, the following strategies will be used: (1) the researcher will begin with Bible Study groups, an existing ministry; (2) the researcher will seek divine guidance through prayer and thorough research on small group ministries; (3) the researcher will form a core group of six people; (4) the researcher will follow Jesus' example in Mark 3:13, 14; and Luke 6 by praying, calling, appointing, mentoring, and sending. He will make a balanced use of community, communion, and commission; and (5) the core group, it is hoped, will develop into smaller groups, which will reproduce itself until it leavens the whole congregation and the larger community.

The above strategies suggested would ensure effective Small Group Ministry at the Oyibi Campus of Valley View University. The suggested strategies, if successful, would also be replicated in other campuses of the University. As a pilot project, its successful implementation would also encourage other churches, local conferences and missions in the two Ghana Unions, and other interested organizations to emulate in their respective areas of ministries.

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RECAPTURING THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY SPIRIT: AN ADVOCACY FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST NURSES AS TOOLS FOR EVANGELISM IN GHANA

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Abstract

Medical missionary is a unique way of spreading the Seventh-day Adventist message across the world by health workers. The Seventh-day Adventist Church knowing the importance of medical missionary work and the role nurses can play in this mission, has established schools of nursing to pursue the evangelistic agenda. However, it has been observed that the medical missionary spirit of the pioneers keeps dwindling in the church as the years go by. This article synthesises how the medical missionary spirit can be recaptured among Ghanaian nurses working in the Seventh-day Adventist health care institutions. Perspectives on nursing in providing spiritual care, the need for gospel workers by the church and the need to train nurses as medical missionaries have been well discussed. Recommendations on how to recapture the medical missionary spirit among Seventh-day Adventist nurses in Ghana have been provided.

Key words: Medical missionary, Adventist Nurses, Nursing, Ghana, Seventh-day Adventist Church

1. Introduction and Background Information

Meeting the spiritual needs of patients by nurses is very important to the achievement of quality care and immediate recovery. This is because nursing care, by its very nature, is spiritual (Yang and Mao, 2007). Not only is nursing care spiritual in nature, but nurses have a better understanding of their own spirituality which helps in providing quality patient care (Koren, Czurylo, Epsom, Gattuso, Stark, Zastrow and Basu, 2009). Thus, most nurses know that spiritual care is an essential component of holistic care (Berman and Snyder, 2014 and Thornton, 2012). However, many will acknowledge that it is rarely given the same priority as other dimensions of care (Reig, Mason & Preston, 2006 and Baldacchino, 2015). Nurses by virtue of their training and work, come into contact with people from all walks of life young or old, rich or poor, educated and uneducated with

different needs such as spiritual, suffering and dejection. Patients in the contexts of suffering, disability, terminal illnesses, and dying are often struggling with the meaning of life and death (Puchalski, 2002). This is where the Adventist Nurse comes in as a medical missionary to present Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith to such patients. The spiritual care provided during this time goes a long way to aid fast recovery.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, a Christian denomination which observes the seventh-day Sabbath, knowing the importance of medical missionary work and the role nurses can play in this mission, has established schools of nursing to pursue the evangelistic agenda. It is important that "those in our institutions are to give evidence that they understand their part in the genuine gospel medical missionary work" (White, Letter, 102, 1900). Thus, the various individuals who have dedicated themselves to teach in the Seventh - day Adventist health institutions should appreciate the fact that they are training people to spread the gospel through medical work in the needed communities. Over the years the agenda of using nurses as evangelists appears to be dying down or neglected by the church. Meanwhile, the church keeps producing large number of nurses in the various nurses' training institutions throughout the world who are better prepared for the evangelistic work which promotes church growth. In addition, the church has numerous health care facilities that are filled with nurses who are to continue the compassionate care of Christ. It has been written that in every "place where the sick could be brought to Him, was to be found His hospital" (White, Ministry of Healing, pp. 17, 18.).

Medical missionary work is the most effective mechanism by which the ground is prepared for the sowing of the seeds of truth, and the instrument also by which the harvest is reaped (White, Review and Herald, 1908). In effect, medical missionary work is the helping hand of the gospel ministry. There must be no separation between the genuine medical missionary work and the gospel ministry. Seventh-day Adventist nurses on medical missionary work is consistent with the professional expectations for spiritual care which have been established in the Code of Ethics of nurses (American Nurses Association, 2001). This indicates that "the Lord has ordained that Christian physicians and nurses shall labour in connection with those who preach the word" (White). She added that "Angels of God will make the impression, and under the hallowed influence of the Holy Spirit, hearts will be touched". Nurses therefore use systematic approach to meet the spiritual needs of the clients that are put under their care.

If a nurse is able to meet this spiritual need, the patient builds confidence and trust in him/ her. By this, the Adventist Nurse can take the opportunity to evangelize patients while meeting their spiritual needs. Eve-

ry medical missionary has a remedy for the sin-sick soul as well as for the diseased body. This means that as nurses meet the physical sicknesses of patients placed under their care, the spiritual needs will also be met. It has been recognized that there is no work that is so successful in winning souls especially in new fields as medical missionary (White, Medical Ministry, 239). By "faith in Christ, he is to act as an evangelist a messenger of mercy" (White, Medical Ministry, 39.2). In other words, the medical practitioner is to work as an individual preaching the gospel to the world through medical care. Thus, in practice spiritual needs should be given equal and sometimes greater precedence than physical needs (Sartori, 2010). Nurses need to consider psychological, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of care to help patients understand the meaning of their experience. The purpose of this article is to recapture the medical missionary spirit among SDA nurses and advocate for them to be used as tools for evangelism in Ghana. Among other things, the article provides perspectives on nursing profession, the role of nurses in meeting the spiritual needs of patients, spirit of prophecy considerations of the medical missionary work, and recommendations on how to make the Seventh-day Adventist Nurses effective in evangelistic work.

2. Perspectives on Nursing

Henderson indicated that "the unique function of the nurse is to assist the individual, sick or well, in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery (or to peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will, or, and to do this in such a way as to help him gain independence as rapidly as possible" (Henderson, 1966 as cited by Berman, & Snyder, 2014). American Nurses Association (ANA) described nursing practice as "direct, goal oriented and adaptable to the needs of the individual, the family, and community during health and illness". Thus nursing is a science that deals with human needs and related health problems. These needs are physical, intellectual, psychological and spiritual. Spirituality may include religion and reflect one's values and beliefs. Nurses' help people satisfy their unmet needs and solve problems in their lives. This is because all people have certain fundamental needs that they strive to satisfy. Nurses care for individuals of all ages and cultural backgrounds who are healthy or ill in a holistic manner based on the individual's physical, emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, and spiritual needs.

The profession combines physical science, social science, nursing theory, and technology in caring for those individuals (Berman and Snyder, 2014). Nurses may follow their personal and professional interests by working with any group of people, in any setting, at any time. This means

that if well equipped, Adventist nurses can be evangelists and win souls for Christ due to their professional preparation. They can do this in both Adventist and non Adventist health care facilities. This will not be out of place since historically; nurses were mostly from Christian community and performed various duties reflecting the teachings of Christ (DeWit, 2009). During the early years of the Christian Church, St. Paul sent a deaconess Phoebe to Rome as the first visiting nurse. She took care of both women and men. This means that, "Before the foundation of modern nursing, nuns often provided nursing-like services (Nightingale, 1820–1910)."

Thus, the Christian churches have been long term patrons of nursing and influential in the development of the ethos of modern nursing. From its earliest days, and following the edicts of Jesus, Christianity had encouraged its devotees to tend the sick and that Priests were often also physicians ((DeWit). This therefore goes to affirm the fact that if Adventist nurses evangelize to their patients by sharing the second coming of Christ with them, they will be performing the old mandate of the profession as pioneered by its leaders. The religious influences of the nursing profession is well recognized in the history of nursing because workers who were involved in nursing were often trained in the doctrines of the church including unquestioning obedience, humility, and *sacrificing one's self for the good of others* (Kelly, 2008). In fact, an individual nurse did not make independent decisions but followed instructions given by a priest. Florence Nightingale been the mentor and mother of nursing indicated her desire to pray frequently and visit the people and take care of the sick individuals (Dossey, 2010).

The religious influence is very important for the total well being of the patient because in the health sector, the spiritual needs are often ignored, forgotten, and never dealt with. If done, there is often insufficient nursing time or privacy to allow the patient to discuss their spiritual beliefs (Kelly, 2008). A patient who sees a nurse meet this need become attached and connected. Meanwhile, championing spirituality for all patients forms part of the holistic nursing care. Sharing the Adventist message of hope with patients and significant others will make a difference. Through the healing hands of the Adventist nurse, different groups of people will come to appreciate the good works of God. Since health is a universal requirement, everybody in his/her life time will need it. The nurse can therefore be an evangelist to the client and their families (Kelly).

3. Advantages of Nurses as Medical Missionary Workers

Nurses have greater advantages as medical missionary workers due to the various roles they assume when providing care to clients in different set-

tings (Berman & Snyder, 2014). According to White (CME, 1912, p18) “the Lord wants wise men and women acting in the capacity of nurses, to comfort and help the sick and suffering as these men and women use conscientiously the knowledge they gain, they will increase in capacity and become successful missionaries pointing souls to the Lamb of God”. Some of these roles of the nurse are: caregiver, communicator, teacher, client advocate, counselor and so on (Berman and Snyder). These roles are essential for evangelism since “skills of listening, observing, and presence are inherent in nursing and support spiritual care” (Reig et al, 2006). In the health sector, nurses are the largest health care providers and as such are seen as the hub of the health care team. Using their numbers, nurses can meet different needs of clients. There is the need for consecrated nurses to carry out the evangelistic work of the church (White, 1946).

The caregiver role has traditionally included those activities that assist the client physically and psychologically while preserving the client’s dignity. The care giving encompasses the physical, psychosocial, developmental, cultural, and spiritual levels. Concerning the communication role, Kozier et al, 2008 states that, communication is an integral part of all nursing roles. Nurses communicate with the client, support persons, other health professionals, and the people in the community. In the role of *communicator*, nurses identify client problems and then communicate these verbally, or in writing to other members of the health team. As a teacher, the nurse helps clients learn about their health and the health care procedure they need to perform to restore or maintain their health. The nurse assesses the client’s learning needs and readiness to learn, set specific learning goals in conjunction with the client, enact teaching strategies, and measures learning.

According to Kozier et al, (2008) and Berman and Snyder (2014), the nurse as a client advocate acts to protect the client. In this role the nurse may represent the client’s needs and wishes to other health professional, such as relaying the client’s wishes for information to the physician. Counseling is the process of helping a client to recognize and cope with stressful psychologic or social problems, to develop improved interpersonal relationships and to promote personal growth. It involves providing emotional, intellectual, and psychologic support. The nurse counsel’s primarily healthy individuals with normal adjustment difficulties and focuses on helping persons develop new attitudes, feelings, and behaviours by encouraging the client to look at alternative behaviours, recognize the choices, and develop a sense of control. Performing these roles, the nurse is in a better position to reach out to the unbelievers who happens to be under her care.

In order words, the nurse evangelist has a greater advantage of winning souls for Christ due to the various roles she plays in the health care

environment. In care giving, communicating, teaching, advocating and counseling, she can seize the opportunity to present Christ in a mission and non-mission health care environment. By asking patients if prayer plays a role in their lives, if comfortable, she can offer a prayer which can be a starting point. This opens a dialogue with the patient regarding the purpose and meaning of life. Looking at the roles she performs, she always has audience for the word of God. What is required is for her to be well equipped with the techniques of evangelism and soul winning because the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. That is why Adventist nurses need to be reminded of their medical missionary role and revisit its precepts for the growth of the church.

4. The Need for Gospel Workers by the Adventist Church

The great inspirational writer of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has articulated that, "Time is short, Workers for Christ are needed everywhere. There should be one hundred earnest faithful laborers in homes and foreign mission fields. (White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 1903, 488). She added, "God calls for consecrated workers who will be true to him—humble men who will see the need of evangelistic work and do not draw back but do everyday's work faithfully, relying upon God for help and strength in every emergency (Ez. 22.3). The message is to be taken up by those who love and fear God. Lay not your burden upon any conference. Go forth, and as evangelists, in a humble way present a "Thus saith the Scriptures"—Letter 43, 1905. 24.3 Evangelism. By this, she emphasized that "Every medical practitioner whether he acknowledges it or not, is responsible for the soul's as well as the bodies of his patients" (White, MM 31.1). The fact is that the second coming of Christ is very near so the gospel message needs to be spread fast.

She further added that, "Every physician should be a devoted, intelligent gospel medical missionary, familiar with Heaven's remedy for sin-sick soul as well as with the science of healing bodily disease. (White, MM 31.1). Furthermore, "He who acts as a guardian of the health of the body should have tact to work for the salvation of the soul, the Redeemer expects our physicians to make the saving of souls their first work" (White, MM37.2). Therefore, "There is great work to be done. Take hold of it intelligently. God will help everyone who does this" (MM 38. 2). Again, the Adventist nurse is been reminded to have an evangelistic spirit "Let them remember that if they do not work for the healing of the soul as well as for the healing of the body, they are not following the example of the great Medical Missionary." Therefore, sharing the Adventist health message with those who have not heard is a mandate of Adventist nurses in mission and non-mission health care institutions.

5. Why Training Nurses in Evangelism?

Seventh-day Adventist nurses need to be given the necessary knowledge and skills in evangelism so as to be able to witness for God in their daily practice. This is carefully written by the inspirational writer that we should "Let medical missionary study the word of God diligently, that they may be familiar with its promises and may be able in tenderness and love, to point sinners to the Great Healer". The purpose of Adventist health facilities have been well articulated that "It was to bring spiritual as well as physical healing to the sick that our sanitariums were established" (White, MM 40.1). She explained that when nurses respond to His invitation, they will know that they receive the things they ask for. Their minds will be enlightened by wisdom from above" (MM 40.5). In addition, she indicated that "the Christian physician has a high calling. With his fuller knowledge of the human system and its laws, he is in a position to preach the gospel of salvation with much efficiency and power" (CME, 43.3). It is therefore important that nurses receive the necessary education in evangelism in order to do the work better. This she said, "The education of students in medical missionary lines is not complete unless they are trained to work in connection with the church and the ministry" (Counsel on Health, 557). It can also be stated that "Our workers are to become intelligent in regard to Christ's life and manner of working". The Lord will help those who desire to cooperate with Him as physicians, if they will become learners of Him and how to care for the suffering. He will exercise His power through them for the healing of the sick." (White, LLM, 6.7). In all, it is imperative that nurses receive necessary educational training on how to win souls for Christ so that their approach will be effective.

Lack of knowledge regarding the specific beliefs of a patient's religion and how to facilitate those spiritual needs are other potential barriers to quality nursing care (Kelly, 2008). A significant barrier that nurses identify is discomfort due to a perceived lack of competence to provide spiritual care (p. 2005). The idea of training nurses has been expounded by inspirational writer that "After carefully considering the light that has been sent to us, it must be the Lord's plan that a medical missionary school should be carried forward here, with a course sufficiently complete to thoroughly qualify nurses for their professional duties, and to work as educators in medical evangelistic work" (LLM 6.7). That's health education and health evangelism are the vanguard of community acceptance and effective soul winning (Waddell, 1973). Therefore, "Let Seventh-day Adventist medical workers remember that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Christ was the greatest Physician that ever trod this sin-cursed earth. The Lord would have His people come to Him for their power of healing. He will baptize

them with His Holy Spirit, and fit them for a service that will make them a blessing in restoring the spiritual and physical health of those who need healing" (White, LLM, 6.7). And the fact that "soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical-missionary work" makes it imperatively mandatory upon every worker in the Seventh-day Adventist institutions especially nurses to prepare themselves as quickly and as thoroughly as possible for efficient service in this most important work.

6. Why the Ghanaian Context?

In Ghana, the Seventh-day Adventist church has ten (10) hospitals and thirteen (13) clinics that employ both Adventist and non-Adventist nurses. These facilities are scattered throughout the country, and can be found in cities as well as villages for the provision of health services. These health facilities enjoy greater patronage from the general public and serve Adventist and non-Adventist alike. In some places of the country, the Adventist health services are the only source of health care for the inhabitants. For instance in some clinics, it is the nurses who are in charge of health care provision without the presence of a medical doctor or medical assistants. This means that, there are already prepared grounds for the evangelistic work of the Seventh-day Adventist nurse. If given the necessary preparation and perspective, they will have no barriers for evangelism since the hospitals and the clinics are established for that purpose. In every place the sick may be found, and those who go forth as workers for Christ should be true health reformers, prepared to give those who are sick the simple treatments that will relieve them, and then pray with them (White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 320).

In addition, there is a chaplaincy department in the facilities to facilitate the mission of evangelism. Even the Adventist nurses who are in the non-Adventist institutions have equal opportunities to reach out to their patients who do not hold the Adventist faith through the various roles they perform for their patients. Also, there are two diploma health training institutions as well as a university for the education of professional nurses within a Christian environment dedicated to the provision of high quality holistic care to individuals, families, groups and communities. Thus, preparing Christian nurses for service to God and humanity and emphasizing the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. The goal of these training institutions is to prepare competent nurses who are committed to compassionate Christian service.

An important and effective tool for the Ghanaian context is the strong body of association that serves as an umbrella for all Adventist health

workers including nurses called, Adventist Health Association (AHA). This association brings all nurses and other health care providers working in Adventist and non-Adventist institutions together. Members have regular meetings which are once in a month and discuss issues affecting Adventist health sector and the country at large. The meetings are regional base with active participation of all health care providers including the chaplains in the health facilities. This can serve as avenue for emphasizing the evangelistic role the nurse needs to perform in the care of the patient entrusted to her. It is therefore important to recognize that "true medical missionary work is of heavenly origin. It was not originated by any person who lives." (White, Medical Ministry, p. 24). Christ, the great Medical Missionary, has left us an example for us to follow in His steps and minister in His name (Thrash, n.d.). Medical missionary cannot be satisfied with ministering only to the body. In fact, His primary burden, never forgotten, is for the eternal salvation of those for whom He labors. Therefore "we should ever remember that the object of the medical missionary work is to point sin-sick men and women to the Man of Calvary, who taketh away the sin of the world" (White, Ministry of Healing 144).

7. Recommendations

Considering the contributions that the Ghanaian Adventist nurse can make in the area of evangelism if given the necessary background training, I would like to recommend the following;

1. The Adventist Health Association be given due recognition by the Personal Ministries Department of the church so that they can involve them in their activities.
2. The Health Ministries Department liaises with the School of Theology and Missions of Valley View University to organize workshops/Seminars on evangelism for Adventist nurses and to remind them of the mandate given them.
3. The Nurses' Training Institutions of the church should include in their curriculum a subject on evangelism that can prepare these nurses from the school level before they enter into the job market for practice.
4. The Health Ministries Department in conjunction with the Ghana Adventist Health Services and the Personal Ministries Department should organize orientation programs for newly employed nurses into Adventist health institutions.
5. The Church should come out with simple to read Adventist health books and tracks in the hospitals and clinics to be distributed to patients by nurses as they care for them.

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THE ASHANTI/AKANS SABBATH IN CONTEXT/CONCEPT WITH THE BIBLICAL SABBATH: A MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The Ashantis/Akans through their culture and traditional beliefs give valuable conceptual understanding on major areas of doctrinal issues. Their beliefs, observance and practices on the Sabbath are not an exception. The Sabbath is an important theological concept in the Bible. This article presents and contextually analyzes the biblical Sabbath in relation with the Sabbath beliefs and practice of the Ashantis/Akans. The missiological approach of the church to have greater impact in spreading God's word among the Ashantis is also discussed. In particular, Ashantis/Akans Christians, whose traditional belief encourages such practice, find a biblical confirmation in perspective. By engaging the Ashantis/Akans in their cultural and traditional beliefs, the church may enlarge its basis for outreach and evangelism thereby increasing its membership in Ghana.

1. Introduction

Both the Old and New Testament of the Bible contain several references to the Sabbath. While the opening chapters of the Bible affirms the establishment of the Sabbath for God's people (Gen 2:1-3), the aftermath chapters and books indicate that Sabbath-keeping will be an integral part of the restoration following the impending judgment (Isa 56:1-6; 58:1-14).

In fact, Sabbath-keeping bears an eschatological significance, for when God creates the "new heavens and new earth," the Lord will be worshipped on the Sabbath (Isa 66:23).¹ The connection between Sabbath-keeping in Bible and in the cultural beliefs of people has been an issue of interest especially to Seventh-day Adventists, even though other ques-

tions are often raised on the concept of Sabbath for missions. This study seeks to understand the concept of Sabbath in its context and other related issues. This article undertakes a survey of the concept of the Sabbath in Bible, and among the Ashantis/Akans, seeking to clarify meanings of the concept and how the church can capitalize on that to advance its mission among the Ashantis/Akan and Ghana as a whole. In what follows, the concept of Sabbath in the OT will be considered.

2. Concept of Sabbath in the Old Testament

The seventh-day Sabbath is importantly portrayed in the books of the Old Testament. The Sabbath is discussed in the various literature of the Old Testament. The Sabbath hinges on God's divine work of creation. Without creation the Sabbath cannot stand and will be meaningless and nonexistent. The Sabbath takes its roots from creation which is a major theme in the Old Testament and as such the Sabbath is a major theme in the Old Testament.

2.1 The Sabbath in the Pentateuch

The Old Testament contains several references to the Sabbath.² In its appearance in Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, and exodus 31:12-17, biblical motivation and justification for the observance of the Sabbath is provided and a biblical view of the origin of the Sabbath is established. The Sabbath is grounded in the divine creation. The seventh day is the climactic apex of the whole story³ of creation. The goal of the whole creation and of man is God's Sabbath. The creation of the world reaches its completion only through the Sabbath, the seventh day.⁴ The Sabbath in the Old Testament is God's signature on creation (Gen 2: 1-3). Genesis 2: 1-3 forms the conclusion of the Biblical creation account.

Kenneth A. Strand argues that the expression "the seventh day" appears more than two times and four main ideas are associated with the

² Abraham J. Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1951), 12.

³ Jiri Moskala, "The Sabbath in the First Creation Account," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 13/1 (Spring 2002): 57-58; Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis, The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 14-17.

⁴ John H. Walton, *Genesis, NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 35-36, 39-41, 65, 163.

seventh day: (1) God had finished His creative work on the day; (2) God rested from all His creative work on that day; (3) God blesses that day; and (4) God made it holy.⁵ The separation from the seventh-day from the six working days is a gift from the creator of the whole world and creature like mankind in it. God has separated the seventh day and the seventh day is God's day for mankind as a whole and not merely His day for the Israelites. It is because of God's separation of the seventh day from the six working days and His assigning holiness to it⁶ that the Sabbath is designated a "holy Sabbath"⁷ (Ex. 16: 23; 31: 14, 15; 35: 2; Isa. 58:13).

Gerhard F. Hasel argues that the Sabbath is a divine and not a human invention and institution by giving out seven implications.⁸ These implications affirm divine institution of the Sabbath. Exodus 16 presents an occa-

⁵ Kenneth A. Strand, ed., *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1982), 21-30; C. Westermann, *Genesis* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1974), 231-233. Kenneth A. Strand, "The Sabbath," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen, et al (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 495. See also Gerhard F. Hasel "The Sabbath in the Pentateuch," in *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1982), 23.

⁶ Westermann, *Genesis*, 236.

⁷ Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 25.

⁸ Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Origin of the Biblical Sabbath and the Historical-Critical Method: A Methodological Test Case," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 4/1 (1993): 19-12. Hasel outlines the following seven implications. (1) Since the origin of the Sabbath is rooted and grounded in God and not in man, it follows that God has control over the Sabbath. (2) Since the Sabbath originated with God at creation, long before there were any Hebrews, or Jews, in existence, the Sabbath cannot be properly said to be originally a Hebrew day of worship or celebration. (3) Since the Sabbath has a creation origin, it is a creation order, a creation memorial, and a creation model. Anyone who interferes with this order, memorial, and model interferes with an institution of God's creation order and not with one man. (4) Since the origin of the Sabbath is linked with creation, anyone who changes, removes, alters, or abolishes that Sabbath engages in an alteration, abolishment, removal, or change of a divine creation institution. Such interference is an act of human hybris. (5) Because the Sabbath was first celebrated by God at the end of the six days divine creative activity, God himself provides the example of Sabbath observance for humankind to emulate. (6) The text reveals that the divine Exemplar "hallowed," "sanctified," and made the Sabbath "holy." Humans do not make a day holy by keeping it or resting in it. The Sabbath is made "holy," "sanctified," and "hallowed" by an act of God. (7) As the Sabbath originated in creation and is linked to the universality of creation, so the universality of the seventh-day Sabbath for all human beings is rooted in the universality of creation.

sion that show God's gift of the Sabbath. The gift of the manna from heaven as it also serves as a miracle from God to His people in times of distress. Sabbath here is seen in the forefront God instructed the Israelites through Moses that gives a bread would rain from heaven; on each of the first five days a portion had to be gathered in, but on the sixth day "it shall be twice as much as they gather daily (v. 5)."⁹ In verses 22-30 they were to gather twice as much as they take daily on the sixth day since the Sabbath God was not going to rain the manna. They are commanded by God to bake what they want to bake and boil what they want to boil (v. 23) for the holy Sabbath of the Lords comes. Moses tells the people to eat the manna on the Sabbath for they will not field some of the manna on the field (vv. 25, 26). Manna is given every day with exception of the Sabbath, with explicit instructions about how to relate to it (Exo 16).¹⁰ Strands explain it precisely by pointing out that "exodus 16 contains key notions regarding origin, purpose, function, and meaning of the Sabbath. It reveals that the Sabbath institution was known before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai."¹¹

In exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 the Sabbath is portrayed and emphasized in the Decalogue. The commandments of God are given to humanity in the form of a Decalogue. The fourth commandment speaks of the Sabbath which is to be remembered and to be kept holy (Exo 20:8; Deut 5:12). In both accounts God's Sabbath is to be kept holy. Ekkehardt Mueller convincingly states that "the Sabbath commandment in Deuteronomy agrees completely with the one found in Exodus 20 that the Sabbath should be kept holy and that after six days of labour on the specific seventh day, the Sabbath, humanity should rest."¹² It can therefore be stated that the fourth commandment provides the reaffirmation, from the very mouth of God, that the Sabbath had its origin in Him and through Him at creation.¹³

⁹ Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 26.

¹⁰ George W. Reid, "Faith under Pressure: The Sabbath as Case Study," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 9/1-2 (1998): 142.

¹¹ Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 27.

¹² Ekkehardt Mueller, "The Sabbath Commandment in Deuteronomy 5:12-15," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 14/2 (Fall 2003): 149.

¹³ Hasel, *The Origin of the Biblical Sabbath and the Historical-Critical Method: A Methodological Test Case*, 24.

2.2 The Sabbath in the Writing

In the Old Testament writings, it is clear that the Sabbath remains a part of the covenant walk with God, designed as a blessing to God's ple.¹⁴ Strands posit that the Sabbath doubtlessly functions as a covenant sign of the Sinai covenant.¹⁵ He further correctly states "the Sabbath is a covenant sign through which God has pledged that the present proleptic experience of freedom, liberation, joy, and communion on the weekly Sabbath is but a foretaste of the ultimate reality in the glorious future."¹⁶ E. Edward Zinke eloquently states that "the Sabbath is a perpetual sign and everlasting covenant of relationship between God and His people in order that they might know who it is that created them (Exo 31:17) and sanctifies them (Exo 31:13) , and that they might recognize Him as the Lord their God."¹⁷

2.3 The Sabbath in the Prophets

The concept of the Sabbath is prominent in the prophetic books of the Old Testament especially the book of Isaiah. Daniel K. Bediako argues that Sabbath-keeping bears an eschatological significance, for when God creates the "new heavens and new earth," the Lord will be worshipped on the Sabbath (Isa 66:23).¹⁸ He further concludes giving four main concept of the Sabbath in the book of Isaiah.¹⁹ Hasel explains it precisely to the

¹⁴ Reid, 142.

¹⁵ Strands, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 36.

¹⁶ Ibid., 37.

¹⁷ E Edward Zinke, "A Theology of the Sabbath," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 2/2 (1991): 149.

¹⁸ Bediako, "Sabbath in the Book of Isaiah," 162-175.

¹⁹ Ibid, 172-173. He concludes on his studies on the Sabbath in the that "The concept of the Sabbath appears four times in the book of Isaiah (1:13-15; 56:2-6; 58:13-14; 66:23 (1) Isaiah 1:13-15 indicates that merely formalistic Sabbath keeping is detestable to the Lord; by keeping the Sabbath without the requisite spiritual renewal, the people of Judah were inviting cursers upon themselves instead of blessings. (2) While Isa 1 contains an invective against improper Sabbath-keeping, in Isa 56 Sabbathkeeping sums up religiosity and fear of the Lord. It also takes on a universalistic tone, where foreigners are expected to join the covenant community in keeping the Sabbath. (3) As does Isa 56, Isa 58 reveals that Sabbath-keeping epitomizes righteousness, so that proper Sabbath-keeping will have to characterize the aftermath of the exile. That Sabbath-keeping encapsulates covenantal faithfulness explains why Judah's prosperity and continual inheritance of the land are contingent upon proper Sabbath-keeping (58:12-14). In this regard, Sab

point that “most significant aspects of prophetic proclamation regarding the Sabbath are its links with covenant, sign, and faithfulness, . . . eschatology and new creation. The inevitable impression is that the Sabbath will remain as God’s gift to man from the first creation even to the new heavens and the new earth (Isa. 66:22, 23).²⁰ Moskala asserts that the Sabbath can be seen as “a gift of God to humanity, allowing humanity to maintain its true human value. Sabbath is in essence God in relationship with man.”²¹

3. Concept of the Sabbath in the New Testament

The word *σάββατον*, “Sabbath,” occurs 69 times in the New Testament (NT) in seven different grammatical forms. Sabbath occurs 11 times in the Gospel of Matthew, 12 times in the Gospel of Mark, 30 times in Luke-Acts, and 13 times in the Gospel of John. It also occurs once each in 1Corinthians 16:2; Colossians 2:16; and Hebrews 4:9. Out of the 69 occurrences of Sabbath, 56 are in the Gospels (20 times in the Gospel of Luke and ten times in the Acts of the Apostles).²² It occurs 43 times in the Synoptic Gospels.

The Seventh-day Sabbath and its role in Christianity has been a battlefield for biblical scholars.²³ According to Bacchiocchi, three main views

bath-keeping plays an integral role in the future restoration and mission of God’s people (58:12-14; cf. 56:2-7; 66:18-24). (4) the universal significance of the Sabbath in Isa 56 reaches its climax in the ‘eschatological’ text of Isa 66, where “all flesh” will worship the Lord on the Sabbath day and the new moon. This might suggest that the Sabbath will be observed in the “new heavens and new earth” (vv.22-23).

²⁰ Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 53.

²¹ Moskala, “The Sabbath in the First Creation Account,” 59; Sakae Kubo, *God Meets Man: A Theology of the Sabbath and Second Advent* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1978), 16.

²² Specht identifies sixty-seven occurrences of *σάββατον* in the Greek New Testament, fifty-six in the Gospels. He explains that *σάββατον* in means *week* in six references, five references in connection with the *first day of the week*, and fifty references to the *seventh-day Sabbath*. See Walter F. Specht, “The Sabbath in the New Testament,” in *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1982), 93.

²³ Herold Weiss, “The Sabbath in the Synoptic Gospels,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 38 (1990): 13.

come up on the Sabbath in the New Testament.²⁴ These are (1) Abrogation of the Sabbath: sees that there is a radical discontinuity of the Sabbath between the Old and New Testaments. (2) Transference of the Sabbath: sees that the principle of Sabbathkeeping in the New Testament as transferred to Sunday rather than abrogated. (3) Permanence of the Sabbath – Sees the principle of seventh-day Sabbathkeeping in the New Testament as being not nullified but clarified and enriched by Christ's teaching and redemptive ministry.²⁵ The debate on the issue of the Seventh-day Sabbath in the

²⁴ Samuel Bacchiocchi, *The Sabbath in the New Testament: Answers to Questions* (Berrien Spring, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1986), 19-27. The author has also authored several books on the Sabbath. See his *From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity* (Rome, Italy: Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977); idem, *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness: A Theological Study of the Good News of the Sabbath for Today* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1988); idem, *The Sabbath Under Crossfire: A Biblical Analysis of Recent Sabbath/Sunday Developments* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1998).

²⁵ For full discussion see Ibid, 19-27; Paul K. Jewett, *The Lord's Day: A Theological Guide to the Christian Day of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 82-84; Donald A. Carson, ed., *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Grand Rapids, 1982) 1-444; Willy Rordorf, *Sunday: The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church* (Philadelphia, PA: 1968); Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, 223-235. Other scholars present these views as (1) Sunday sabbatarianism (transfer modification), (2) non-sabbatarianism (fulfilment transformation), and (3) Saturdaysabbatarianism (reformation continuation). Norman R. Gulley, "The Battle Against the Sabbath and Its Endtime Importance," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 5.2 (Autumn 1994): 90. The Sunday sabbatarianism (transfer/modification) view considers Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. This view posits that the Sabbath of the Old Testament (OT) was transferred to Sunday in the New Testament (NT), with adjustment of Sabbath keeping rules. The non-sabbatarianism (fulfillment/transformation) view considers the Sabbath as fulfilled in Christ. This view consider the Sabbath of the OT as fulfilled by Jesus, and the symbolism of the Sinaitic Sabbath having been transformed into other symbols in the new covenant. The Saturday sabbatarianism (reformation/continuation) considers the Seventh-day (Saturday) as the continued Sabbath. This view, held by Seventh-day Adventists, consider the Sabbath of the OT as continued in the NT. The Seventh-day Adventists believes that Jesus Christ kept Jesus and reformed Sabbath keeping by disregarding the human regulations that bound it. "This reformed Sabbath of the OT continues to be the Sabbath of the NT." (Gulley, "The Battle Against the Sabbath and Its Endtime Importance," 90). However, Lutz Doering has six different scholarly views. These include the following: (1) Jesus was against the Sabbath commandment; (2) Jesus was against only the Pharisaic halakah and not the Sabbath commandment itself; (3) Jesus was not fundamentally against the Sabbath commandment but only against its universal and inflexible application; (4) the free stance of Jesus vis-à-vis the Sabbath is marked by the

NT, and its role in Christian today has become a major issue with diverging views.²⁶ The author of this article believes that the New Testament views the principle and practice of Sabbathkeeping, not as being abrogated or transferred to Sunday, but as being valid and valuable for Christians.

3.1 Sabbath in the Gospel

The attitude of Jesus to the Law of Moses and specifically to the Sabbath observance has produced several theories and interpretations among the New Testament scholars. A careful study of the four Gospels reveals that the Seventh-day Sabbath was one of the main areas of controversy between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders of His time. A careful study

eschatological stamp of his teaching and work; (5) Jesus views the law not as a rigid ordinance but in terms of its intent; and (6) Jesus lived in full conformity to the Sabbath praxis of the day (Lutz Doering, *Sabbat: Sabbathalacha und -praxis im antiken Judentum und Urchristentum* (TSAJ 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 399–400, in Donald A. Hagner, "Jesus and the synoptic Sabbath controversies," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 19.2 (2009): 215).

- ²⁶ In the *Perspectives on the Sabbath: 4 Views*, four scholars present exegetical, theological, and historical positions, each with a different perspective on the doctrine of the Sabbath. The first presented the seventh-day Sabbath as being in existence from the Creation of the earth, still useful and needed for the human race, and will closely connected with the images of the New Earth in both the OT and NT. (Donato, ed., *Perspectives on the Sabbath: 4 views*, 9–29, 99–118, 172–186, 262–277, 359–374.) The second presented the Sabbath as existing only in the Old Testament until the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which changed the Sabbath from the seventh-day to Sunday. (Ibid., 73–82, 119–171, 205–215, 277–285, 374–387.) The third presented the Seventh-day Sabbath as exclusively Jewish; the Christian should rest and worship any day. (Ibid., 90–99, 197–205, 216–261, 292–304, 387–396.) The fourth understands the Sabbath in light of Christology. All the regulations of the OT were fulfilled in Christ, and the Sabbath has acquired a new perspective. Since Jesus has brought the true Sabbath rest into the present, the Sabbath commands are no longer valid for believers. (Ibid., 82–90, 187–197, 286–292, 305–358, 396–411.) Christopher John Donato, ed., *Perspectives on the Sabbath: 4 views* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2011); Carson, and Ratzlaff endorse a non-sabbatarian view. They allege that in NT Christ fulfils and replaces the Seventh-day Sabbath. For them, the Seventh-day Sabbath was for Israel in the OT. They explain that the Seventh-day Sabbath, which is a type of the salvation-rest Christ brought, differs from the creation Sabbath. They allege that the Sabbath commandment met both its reality and fulfilment in Christ like the priesthood, sacrifices and Messianic prophecies. For them, the Seventh-day Sabbath has undergone transformation from physical rest to salvation instead of transference from Saturday to Sunday. Dale Ratzlaff, *Sabbath in Crisis* (Applegate, CA: Life Assurance Ministries, 1989–1990); D. A. Carson, ed., *From Sabbath to Lord's Day, A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982).

of the gospels, also, seems to reveal the Sabbath conflicts as deliberate, and meant for the instruction of the church on Sabbath keeping.²⁷ The issue of the Sabbath, therefore, is important in the theological frame of the Gospels, particularly in the Synoptic Gospels.²⁸

Two main events are taken into consideration in determining the Christian position about the Sabbath observance in NT. These are (1) the accounts related to the resurrection of Jesus, and (2) the stories about the Sabbath controversies in the Gospels.²⁹

3.2 Sabbath in the Acts

The concept of the Sabbath is prominent in the prophetic books of the New Testament especially the book of Acts of the Apostles. Ringe posits that in Acts the Sabbath is also acknowledged as a proper day on which to gather for prayer (often, but not only, in the synagogue) and to hear Torah read and interpreted.³⁰ He further states that "The writer of Acts describes Paul as beginning his ministry in the various cities by going to the synagogues on the Sabbath to teach (Acts 13:13-43; 17:2; 18:4). In Philippi, he is said to have sought out a women's gathering for Sabbath prayers "outside the gate by the river" (Acts 16:13) as the site for his initial teaching in that city."³¹ This emphasizes the importance placed on the Sabbath by the apostles and the fact that the Sabbath was observed by them.

On his comments on the observance of the Sabbath in the letters of Paul, Ringe asserts that:

²⁷ Ibid., 94.

²⁸ Tonstad, "The Seventh Day in the New Testament," 182.

²⁹ Some scholars use this event to support the Sunday Sabbath observance, whereas others consider the event as strengthening the observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath. For full discussion see Karen Pidcock-Lester, "John 5:1-9," *Interpretation* 59.1(2005): 63; John P. Meier, "The Historical Jesus and the Plucking of the Grain on the Sabbath," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 66.4 (2004): 561. For the Sabbath healing stories in the gospels see (1) Mark 3:1-6//Matt. 12:9-14//Luke 6:6-11: Man with a Crippled Hand, (2) Luke 13:10-17: Afflicted Woman, (3) Luke 14:1-6: Man with Dropsy, (4) John 5:1-18: Crippled Man, (5) John 9:1-41: Man Born Blind, among others Luke 6:6-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; John 5:1-18; 9:1-41; Mark 3:1-6; Matthew 12:9-14. See Daryl D. Schmidt, "The Sabbath Day: To Heal or Not to Heal," *Dialogue* 27.4 (1994): 125.

³⁰ Sharon W. Ringe, "'Holy, as the Lord Your God Commanded You', Sabbath in the New Testament," *Interpretation* 59.1 (2005): 18.

³¹ Ibid., 19.

The letters unquestionably attributed to Paul do not mention Sabbath observance. In fact, Col 2:16 is the only epistolary reference to the Sabbath, and it simply urges the addressees of the letter to let no one condemn them "in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths." Nothing is specified about their practices in those matters, but the suggestion is that those groups follow patterns different in some way from those of other groups of Jews in their communities.³²

4. Concept of the Sabbath to the Ashantis/Akan

Who are the Ashantis/Akans? What is their culture and traditional belief in congruence with the biblical Sabbath? The Akans are a nation and indigenous ethnic group residing on the Gulf of Guinea in the southern regions of the former Gold Coast region in what are today the republics of Ghana and the Ivory Coast in West African. Akans are the largest ethnic group in both countries and have a population of roughly 20 million people. Akans are not a racially homogenous ethnicity and they encompass a range of phenotypes.³³ The Ashantis/Akans of Ghana are traditionally accustomed to celebrating different rituals which are enshrined in their cultural life.

Seventh day Sabbath observance is the eternal covenant sign between God and His people (Ex. 31:16–17). The seventh day Sabbath is traditionally acknowledged and observed in Ghana and some parts of West Africa among the Akans because it remains for the people of God (Heb. 4:4, 9; cf. Luke 4:16, 31). The Akan have two names for Saturday. One of the Akans name for Saturday "Memeneda" which literally means "the day of I am that I am" and the other is "Homeda" which literally means "a day of rest." The "memeneda" is in congruence with God's name "I am that I am" which He revealed to Moses when God had encounter with Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:14), while the "homeda" is in congruence with the Sabbath as a day of rest (Gen. 2:1–3; Exo. 20:8; Deut. 5:12).

One of the traditional Akan names for the Almighty God of creation is "Tweaduampon Kwame", that is, "Saturday-born God." The name "Kwame" is a personal name given to a male born on Saturday. The

³² Ibid.

³³ "Akans," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akan_people.html (accessed 15 December 2014)

Akans belief that God completed his work of creation on Saturday, hence God is named "Kwame" among the Akans. Again, this traditional belief is in congruence with the Biblical truth of the seventh day as a special day of God. It must be said that "Akan religion recognizes only one Supreme Deity, Onyamee or Onyankopon Tweekuampon Kwaame, the...God of Saturday, synonymous with the Jehovah of the Jews."³⁴ The seventh day Sabbath, the only divine commandment dating to creation (Gen. 2:1-3) which the Creator commands men to "remember to keep holy" (Ex. 20:8-11; Mark 2:27), is almost intrinsic to the African and is etched deep in his consciousness. Among the Akan people, the seventh day of the week is a day when no work, no funeral, no marriage, no festivities, should be performed. They are known as the forbidden day which is reserved for the creator God. Bradford maintains that:

There is growing evidence from the African continent that a Sabbath consciousness exists among its peoples, and has from time immemorial. This consciousness long predates Christianity, and certainly does not derive from the European ecclesiastical establishment, which apparently strove mightily to suppress it.³⁵

Jacob Nortey posits that, in the Ghanaian context, and especially within the people forming the Ashanti or Akan nation, Saturday has been a traditionally holy day, a day for worship of God.³⁶ The history of the seventh day Sabbath is deep-rooted in the culture of the Ashanti/Akan people. This experience of Sabbath rest enables Akans to keep and maintain contact with the invisible world of the Supreme Being (God), gods and ancestors. Owusu-Mensa eloquently points that:

Oral traditions and modern scholars and research into Akan traditions and customs affirm Saturday as Onyamee Kwaame's special day in Akan land. Writing in the early twenties, Rattray, the British anthropologist, discovered that the Ashante name for God is Onyamee or Onyankopon Kwaame 'whose day of service is a Saturday' adding

³⁴ Kofi Owusu-Mensa, *Saturday God and Adventism in Ghana*. (New York, NY: P. Lang, 1993), 2.

³⁵ Charles E. Bradford, *Sabbath Roots The African Connection* (Barre, VT: L. Brown and Sons, 1999), 25-27.

³⁶ Jacob J. Nortey, *Independent African Churches-Are they Genuinely Christian?* *Spectrum*, Dec. 1989, 30.; Bradford, *Sabbath Roots The African Connection*, 25-26.

that, 'this Ashante God is the same as the Jehovah of the Israelites, whom they worshipped on the Sabbath or Saturday'.³⁷

Interestingly Akans call the White man "Akwasibronii," which literally the one who brought Sunday worship, instead of the traditionally acknowledged Seventh day Sabbath. The Akan people of Ghana treasure a great African heritage in Onyamee Kwaame, the God of Saturday. Long before the European Akwasi Bronii anchored at the shores of Ghana in 1471 A.D.³⁸ The Akan peoples of Ghana worshiped the Creator on Saturday long before the first Portuguese ship anchored off the coast in 1471. So prior to the coming of the Portuguese the Akans knew God.³⁹ Akans, however, did not know Jesus but they knew God. It was the missionaries who brought the Gospel of Jesus to Akans but not the knowledge of God.

In the 1920's Asante records have it that the queen mother and women of Asante presented a silver stool as a gift, through the British governor in the Gold Coast (Ghana's colonial name), to Princess Mary of Britain.⁴⁰ The message that accompanied the gift were:

We pray that the great God Nyakopon, on whom men lean and do not fall, whose day of worship is a Saturday, and whom the Ashanti serve just as she [Princess Mary] serves Him, that He may give the king's child and her husband long life and happiness, and finally, when she sits upon this silver stool, which the women of Ashanti have made for their White queen mother, may she call us to mind.⁴¹

The queen mother's allusion to the Akan God of Saturday, Onyame Kwame, indicates their knowledge and belief in God and the Sabbath as the day of the Lord.

5. Missiological Implication

Since the introduction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) in Ghana in the late 19th century, the Church has made tremendous strides in the country. The church is stronger among the Ashantis because some

³⁷ Kofi Owusu-Mensa, *Onyamee Kwaame, the Akan God of Saturday* (Accra, Ghana: Advent Press, 1990), 17-20; Kofi Owusu-Mensa, *Saturday God and Adventism in Ghana* (New York: P. Lang, 1993), 32.

³⁸ Owusu-Mensah, *Saturday God and Adventism in Ghana*, 29.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Bradford, *Sabbath Roots The African Connection*, 25-26.

⁴¹ Ibid., 27.

beliefs, teachings and practices of the Church are similar to the Ashanti culture and lifestyle.⁴² Out of the 24 million population of Ghana, more than four hundred thousand are seventh-day Adventists. Ghana has more than 100 ethnic groups. Out of over four hundred thousand Seventh-day Adventist in Ghana, about half are Ashantis. The similarities of the Ashanti culture and practices with the beliefs, doctrines and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church presents missiological prospects and challenges for the SDA in Ghana.

5.1 Prospects in Mission

5.1.1 *Common Grounds for Evangelism*

Seventh-day Adventist evangelism among the Ashantis has recorded greater numbers of baptisms than other areas of the country due to similarities of SDA beliefs, teachings and practices.⁴³ There are prospects for speeding up church evangelistic activities among the Ashantis in Ghana. Friendship evangelism may serve as an effective means of reaching the Ashantis. Church members should be trained to do personal evangelism, introducing their friends, relatives, and love ones to Jesus. They would better be able to answer questions, enquiries and concerns of their close friends and relatives about Jesus and the Church. Other types of evangelism should also be engaged to complement the friendship evangelism for efficient and effective missionary endeavour to the Ashantis.

5.1.1 *Church Schools and Hospital*

Since the Ashantis are industrious they take initiatives to establish church schools are hospitals. There are six senior high schools, one college of education, and one nurses training college. There are many Junior High, and basic schools in the area. The aim of SDA philosophy of education is to

⁴² Some of these include belief in the Trinity, non-communicable attributes of God (Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Eternal, Immutable), ornaments like earrings, and the Sabbath.

⁴³ As at today, there are six local conferences of the church in the Ashanti territory. There is large number of Ashantis in the other parts of the country.

redeem and restore the student and provide them salvation. These students later become means of reaching their communities for Christ. Their changed lives bear living testimonies to the power of God. Their positive influence in the community and society at large encourage other parents to enrol their wards in SDA schools. They bear living testimonies that no sermon could accomplish. They go out to live Christ in their homes, workplaces, and in the community. They become living epistles to the world.

There are eleven SDA hospitals and clinics in the Ashanti territory in Ghana.⁴⁴ The existence of church schools and hospitals facilitate evangelism of the areas of operations. These hospitals and clinics are evangelistic tools to reach the community. Church health workers introduce their clients (patients and relatives) to Jesus. They teach them about health reform to improve their lives. Since sick people are generally open to the gospel, SDA health facilities are effective means of evangelism. With the SDA health messages, people in the community patronize Adventist health facilities in Ghana. Their presence in the Ashanti communities helps spread the gospel to people in their catchment areas.

Experience in Ghana has shown that communities where SDA schools and hospitals are located tend to become SDA dominated communities within some period of operations. One reason seems to be the annual evangelistic efforts sponsored by these schools and hospitals in the community. The presence of these SDA facilities with dominant SDA workers seems to be another reason. These SDA workers impact positively on the communities that, within some time, the communities tend to be won to the church. Most children who attend SDA schools later become church members or church sympathisers. They tend to become means to reach the families with the Adventist message.

5.2 Challenges to Mission

5.2.1 *Seventh-day Adventist as an Ashantis' Church*

The use of the Twi (Asante) dialect as a medium of instruction and worship in most churches in Ghana deters most people of other dialects (and)

⁴⁴ These are Dominase, Konkoma, Asaaman, Obuase, Wiampoase, Kwadaso, Apaa, Akomaa, Naboam, Namon, and Anyinasoso. There are 13 clinics, 10 hospitals, 2 nurses training colleges, one University in Ghana. There are about 916 Seventh-day Adventist operated schools and hospitals in Ghana.

tribes from becoming Seventh-day Adventist in Ghana.⁴⁵ New converts and visitors, who are from the other tribes other than Asante, tend to be put off from attending the church after some time.

5.2.2 Church Schools and Hospitals

There seems to be an uneven distribution of SDA schools and hospital in the country. Since the existence of church schools and hospitals facilitate evangelism of the areas of operations, their sparse distribution or non-existence adversely affect church evangelistic efforts in these areas of the country. Since church members have no schools to attend or send their children, they are enrolled in other faith-based schools or public schools. Since the aim of SDA philosophy of education is to redeem and restore the student and provide them salvation, these unfortunate students may later leave the church. If they remain in the church, their influence seems minimal. These eventually affect their education.

5.3 Strategies

5.3.1 Intensification of evangelism among the Ashantis.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church should maximize her successes in reaching the Ashantis in Ghana. The marked similarities of her teachings and practices with the Ashantis should spur the Church to reinvigorate her evangelistic effort in the Ashanti communities. Friendship evangelist may serve as an effective means of reaching the Ashantis. Church members should be trained to do personal evangelism, introducing their friends, relatives, and love ones to Jesus. They would better be able to answer questions, enquiries and concerns of their close friends and relatives about Jesus and the Church. Other types of evangelism should also be engaged to complement the friendship evangelism for efficient and effective missionary endeavour to the Ashantis.

⁴⁵ A Seventh-day Adventist Pastor and lecturer at Valley View University recounts his ordeal when he converted to the church. As a Ga (Adangbe), an old woman called him and warned him not to become a member of an Ashantis' church since he was a Ga (Adangbe). Friends and relatives jeered at him because he has joined an Ashantis' church.

5.3.2 Maximise the benefits of church schools and hospitals in the Ashanti areas.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church should take advantage of the industrious nature of the Ashantis to establish more schools and hospitals in their communities. The success of the existing schools and hospitals give the Church an urge to compete for more students and patients, and establish more schools and hospitals among the Ashantis in Ghana. The success stories of former students of Seventh-day Adventist schools have made these schools a first choice for many parents and students who seek admission for their wards or for themselves in the country. The Church's educational philosophy which aims to redeem and restore students, have Seventh-day Adventist schools a desired choice for many Christians and even people of other religious faiths. The changed lives of students of Seventh-day Adventist schools bear living testimonies to the power of God. Their positive influence in the community and society at large encourage other parents to enrol their wards in SDA schools. They bear living testimonies that no sermon could accomplish (1T, 190-191). They go out to live Christ in their homes, workplaces, and in the community. They become living epistles to the world. The Church should, therefore, take advantage of the goodwill already established in the Ashanti areas to establish more schools in these communities.

The Church should take advantage of the eleven already-existing SDA hospitals and clinics in the Ashanti territory in Ghana to establish more hospitals and clinics. These hospitals and clinics should be encouraged to expand and multiply themselves in the country. Other communities in the Ashanti territory, where these hospitals and clinics are not located, should also be encouraged to initiate their establishment some in their respective communities. Since the existence of church schools and hospitals facilitate evangelism of the areas of operations, it could further boost the Church's evangelistic efforts.

5.3.3 Debunk the notion that Seventh-day Adventist Church is an Ashanti church among the other tribes in Ghana.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a universal movement, ordained by God to gather the remnant to meet their lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This should be made plain in the church's efforts to reach every nation, tribe, tongue, and people (Rev 14:6). Whilst she makes maximum use of the similarities of her teachings and practices with the Ashantis, the Seventh-

day Adventist Church should also endeavour to identify with the other people groups in the country by finding identifiable similarities with the other tribes and emphasizing on them in their respective communities. This could also be evangelistic means of reaching these people groups in the country.

5.3.4 The use of other languages for church instruction and worship (in context)

Language, they say, is powerful. The use of local language in the church would reduce the notion that Seventh-day Adventist Church is an Akan Ashanti Church. When the local languages are used, it would enhance the image of the churches in their communities. Native visitors and new converts would feel at home in the church. The possibility of their continual visits and membership retention would improve. It would also ensure the participation of the natives in church programmes and activities.

5.3.5 Establishment of church schools and hospitals among other tribes in Ghana to ensure fair and equitable distribution.

Churches in other areas of the country should be encouraged to initiate church projects like schools and hospital in their areas of operations. The other local conferences and the local mission on the Northern Ghana should be encouraged to make such projects their priorities. Districts, Zones, organized churches, and companies that should be endeavour to mobilize resources for such projects. Since experience has shown that communities where church schools and hospitals are located later become Seventh-day Adventist concentrated communities, effective education and encouragement of church members would enlist their support for such projects.

6. Conclusion

This paper attempted to study the concept of the Biblical Sabbath with the Ashanti/Akan Sabbath. The study established that Sabbath as a biblical concept is a theological statement of both the OT and the NT which is in congruence with the cultural beliefs of the Ashanti/Akans. Prior to the introduction of Christianity to the Ashantis/Akans, the Sabbath was observed and accorded the dignity as the Bible presents. It is in this sense that the Seventh-day Adventist church should maximise and strategize in

mission along this cultural beliefs to increase its membership and its impact among the Ashantis/Akans and Ghana as a whole.

FUNERAL RITES PARTICIPATION AND SABBATH OBSERVANCE AMONG THE AKAN ADVENTISTS IN GHANA: TOWARDS A THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE

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Abstract

For the sake of the value placed on departed relatives in the Akan community and most tribes in Ghana, funeral rites are perceived to be very significant that no true child of the family of the deceased can afford to stay aloof in times of death. As a result, Adventists in these communities face a dilemma of a religious nature anytime death strikes. This situation becomes challenging in the instance of losing a non-Adventist relative. In this situation, fixing the funeral rites on Saturday, the Sabbath, becomes non-negotiable. Though the Adventist church offers some directives on the issue of Sabbath observance and funeral participation on Sabbath, this study finds those directives too generalized to be relied upon by Adventists in communities such as that of the Akan. Through the method of a dialogue, this study reveals that the optimal thing to do in such circumstance is for the church to show comfort and sympathy to the bereaved members as well as to the entire bereaved family in a manner agreeable with sound biblical and missiological outlooks.

Key words: Akan, Adventist, Funeral rites, Sabbath observance, religious dilemma, bereavement.

1. Introduction

The following is a narration that one of the authors of this paper encountered:

In the year 2008, I had the opportunity to conduct an evangelistic campaign in the city of London. In the course of the campaign, a visitor (Comfort) who had taken delight in the presentations was introduced to me. In the course of my frequent visits to her home, Comfort confided in me her desire to join the Church through baptism. Comfort asked many questions which I joyfully answered. As a result of her

understanding and appreciation of our teachings she accepted Jesus as her personal savior.

However, on the appointed Sabbath for the baptism, when I went to Church I could not find her and all attempts to reach Comfort failed. At the end of the service, I visited her home to find out why she couldn't make it. She told me that her sister visited her from Holland on the Sabbath when she was about to come to Church for baptism. Comfort told her about her new found faith and her decision to be baptized. Her sister was shocked that she was joining a church that does not permit its members to attend the funeral of their parents, siblings, husband and children on the Saturday. The sister asked her, who will bury your parents or husband when they die? As a result, she could not be baptized.

Comfort is not alone, there are others who love the Adventist teaching and would love to be part of the church but are hesitant because of the perceived unsympathetic attitude of the church towards those who attend funerals of deceased relatives on Saturdays. In some instances, members are disfellowshipped or censored for attending the funeral of their parents, siblings or close relatives on Sabbath. This perceived antisocial attitude towards Sabbath funeral attendance has led to the church not gaining root in certain parts of the country and among some tribes in Ghana. This paper attempts to call for a theological dialogue on appropriate Christian attitude to show towards bereaved church members who cannot help but to participate in funeral rites of their dear ones or close relatives that fall on Saturdays.

2. The Akan Community of Ghana and Funeral Rites

The Akan, originally "Akane" or "Akana" and meaning "foremost" or "genuine" (Danquah, 1968: 198), live in the coastal south and forest zone of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire (Crentsil, 2007: 5). Tracing their origin to an Akkad or Agade or Akana, an ancient non-semitic Babylonian race who lived on the Tigris and Euphrates, Danquah (1968: 198) notes that they were driven from their settlement on the bend of Niger "by the Almora-vides (Molaththemum or Muffled Moslems) in A.D. 1076." He continues that they settled in West Sudan. According to the Ghana demographic record, the Akans constitute about fifty per cent of the population of Ghana (Crentsil, 2007:5; Nkrumah, 2005, pp15-16; Aboagy-Mensa, and Hama, 2000, p. 289). The Akan tribes are found mainly in the southern half of Ghana, excluding the south-eastern corner. The present-day Akans are made up of many sub-groups such as the Ashanti, Fanti, Akim (Akyem),

Akwapim, Assin, Kwawu (Kwahu), Bono (Brong), Ahafo, Adansi, and Nzema (Danquah, 1968: 198; Crentsil, 2007: 5). Their basic occupation is agriculture, though some also engage in some fishing on the coast. When it comes to inheritance, they are by and large, matrilineal.

These sub-groups are marked by different dialects of the Akan language—mainly Twi or Fanti. But they all have a society that is composed of corporate lineages—“*mmusua*, sing. *Abusua* (Crentsil, 2007: 5).” For Crentsil (2007: 1), these lineages “*emphasize the welfare of individual members for the good of the whole group.*” Such prime value on the unity of the community and particular attention given to individuals in the Akan community fit the society well into Louis Dumont’s (1986) portrayal of a holistic society. As on other occasions such as weddings and naming rites, this cohesion among the people is seen in the planning and performance of funeral rites.

J. B. Danquah (1945: 5; Debrunner, 1967: 2) a respected politician and sociologist, points out that “the word *okanni* [Akan] ordinarily means a nice, refined, well-mannered man, a civilized or cultured person.” In view of this definition, an immense value is placed on “ordered behaviour and on character training in Akan education. By this a man should prove himself polished and gentlemanlike.” As result, emphasis is place on well cultured speech that makes use of idioms and proverbs to demonstrate ones upbringing (Debrunner, 1967: 2). It is interesting to note that Akan tradition and society are engraved in Religion. As John Pobee (1979: 44) points out, Akan cultural activities and social institutions are “inextricably bound up with religion and the spirit-world. Birth, puberty, marriage, death, widowhood, harvest, and installations to traditional offices all partake of a religious nature.” This suggests that religion and traditions are intertwine in the worldview.

In the Akan society, the death of an individual affects the whole community. Opoku (1978: 134)notes that “it brings about a complete physical separation and constitutes a great loss not only to the immediate family in which it occurs but also to the whole community.” Anytime death strikes, whole communities plunge into a state of sorrow and despair—a situation that calls for an assembly of distant and close relatives, friends, and acquaintances (Bosman, 1967: 230). In his observation of an Akan funeral ceremony, Cruickshank (1966: 214) describes the agony death brings thus “the sting of a serpent, or the application of a horrible instrument of torture, could not produce more excruciating distortions than we behold them suffering, while writhing under the first stroke of their bereavement.” Perhaps this explains why death is known by many names in the Akan community. Some call it a “monster,” others call it an “animal,” and still more refer to it as a kind of wicked “spirit” (Mbiti, 1991: 117). But this mournful situation is temporary. This is because death only severs the

bond between relatives physically but not spiritually. "It is only a change of status, from lesser to a higher authority (Opoku, 1978: 135)."

Such consideration of death finds its basis in the context of the Akan worldview concerning family unity. The Akan community extols a family that is made up of the continuous interaction between the living and the dead (Mbiti, 1991: 119, 122; Opoku, 1978: 133, 135, 137). This explains Gyekye's argument that the ontology of the Akan community is "essentially or primarily spiritual, the Akan universe is a spiritual universe, one in which supernatural beings play significant roles in the thought and action of the people. What is primarily real is spiritual (Gyekye, 1987: 69)."

From such worldview, one can infer the dependence of the living upon the departed family members. These departed ones are referred to as ancestors, collectively referred to as *nananomnsamanfo* (Crentsil, 2007: 38). These "(a)ncestors symbolise the continuity of the social structure and social relations created by kinship and descent (Fortes, 1965: 137)." They are regarded as "that part of the clan who have completed their course here on earth and are gone ahead to the other world to be elder brothers of the living at the house of God (Gyekye, 1987: 68)." These dwell in a place called *Asamando*, the Neitherworld (Gbedegesi, 1991: 93; Gyekye, 1987: 69; Opoku, 1978: 133). From here, these ancestors play meaningful roles in the daily life of their living relatives. For this reason, they have unsurpassed honor among the living (Pobee, 1979: 68). Busia (1951: 39) asserts that the living reverence these ancestors because the "solidarity" and "continuity" of the family depend on them. In this vein, "meticulous care is taken to fulfill the funeral rites, and to avoid causing any offence to the departed (Mbiti, 1991: 119)."

From the honor due their ancestors, members of the Akan community derive certain obligations. One significant obligation of the living towards the dead is to perform funeral rites for the departed in a fitting manner. Concerning this duty, one cannot fail. Opoku (1978: 133) opines that "it is the responsibility of the living to perform the funeral rites of the dead properly and to give them a fitting burial." At the extreme, it is believed that these ancestors rain either "blessings" or "curses" on the living depending on how such rites are performed (Mbiti, 1992: 119; McCaskie, 1989: 428).

Consequently, participating in funeral rites appears to be an opportunity for the living relatives or associates to express feeling of sorrow and loss and at the same time point to the fact that "death is not the end of one's existence (Opoku, 1978: 133)." Thus, the funeral ceremony happens to be a form of reunion between the living and the dead as well as between the living members of the family who might live apart from each other (Bosman, 1967: 229). The gathering of the living members of the Akan family at the instance of death is significant that some scholars have

emphasized it as being the most important aspect of the performance of funeral rites in Akan communities (Appiah, 1992; Van Der Geest, 2000: 107). Though the primacy of the social dimension of the Akan funeral ceremony is yet to find more support among scholars, it appears more likely to have influenced the choice of *memeneda*, Saturday, as a day for organizing funerals in modern Akan societies. This is because Saturday is generally thought of as a free-day for all. For this reason, it is highly inconceivable for any member of the community to absent himself or herself from funeral programs without any convincing reason. Bosman (1967: 230) rightly points out that "he who is negligent being sure to bleed freely if he cannot urge lawful reasons for his absence (non-participation)." Such a behavior is thought of as an upfront to the norms of the society and disrespectful to the dead, who might respond with curses on the entire community.

3. Seventh-day Adventist and Sabbath Observance

Seventh-day Adventists are a specialized group of Christians who "accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teachings of the Holy Scriptures (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2005: v)." With regard to name, this divine movement is defined by two central doctrines of the Bible that are representative of other core doctrines of the Bible—the Seventh-day Sabbath and the second appearing of Jesus Christ. Since the former has relevance to the aim of this study, we have chosen to throw more light on it.

The Sabbath has root in the creation and points us to God as the Creator (Exod 31:17) and the One who Sanctifies us (Exod 31:13; Ezek 20:12). For this reason, the Sabbath does not only have universal significance (Exod 20:11; 23:12; Deut 5:13; Isa 56:1-8), but also serves as the basis of all true worship. Andrews (1873: 575) has noted correctly that the Sabbath "lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this." Thus the Sabbath is a period designated for the worship of our Creator and Redeemer and for building better relationship with our Creator and other human beings.

The Sabbath begins from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset (Gen 1; Mark 1:32). The Bible intimates principles that should guide the observance of the Sabbath (Ex 16:29; 20:8-11; 34:21; Isa 58:13; Ne 13:15-22). It is worthy of note that keeping the Sabbath Holy does not imply inactivity on the day. The Scriptures are replete with passages calling on humankind to care for and alleviate the suffering of others on the Sabbath (Ex 23:12; Matt 12:10-13; Mark 2:27; Luke 13:11-17; John 9:1-21). The need for

rest on the Sabbath is very significant and it implies both physical (Ex 23:12; Isa 48:13; Matt 12:1-8; Je 23:32; 2 Kings 4:23) and spiritual rest in God (Matt 11:28; Gen 2:1-3; Isa 56:1-8).

The seventh-day Sabbath began to be kept by Adventists starting from 1844, a period following the disappointment (Dederen, 2000: 526). Rachel Oaks, T. M. Priebe, and Joseph Bates were among the earliest Sabbath advocates (Dederen, 2000: 526). The practice of Adventists during the Sabbath hours follows from scriptural evidence for the Sabbath. Based on the Bible,

SDAs have adopted the practice of keeping Sabbath from sundown Friday night to sundown Saturday night. All of these hours are considered sacred to God. They are a time when personal pursuits and interest are set aside for spiritual refreshment (Dederen, 2000: 528).

Further, Adventists find in the writings of E. G. White useful information regarding the use of the Sabbath hours. One significant reference in this regard is the statement below:

The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds (White, 2007: 207).

Elsewhere, White continues that "the Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment (White, 2010: 355) such as "devoting this day to pleasing ourselves, to being involved in secular interests, conversations, and thoughts or to be engaging in sports" these would "detract from communion with our Creator and violate the sacredness of the Sabbath (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2005: 296)." Thus in Adventists' thought, a true Sabbath observance calls for cessation of all manner of personal work on the Sabbath.

4. Religious Dilemma of the Akan Adventist

These principles notwithstanding, the Akan Adventist seems to face a dilemma of a religious nature when funeral rites of a close non-Adventist

relative is held on Saturday, the Sabbath. Should one simply ignore the Sabbath and participate in these funeral rites or one must observe the Sabbath and ignore such funeral rites? Determining the exact line of action in such situations has always been a difficult call to make.

To help resolve this dilemma, the Adventist Church holds that as much as possible the practice of holding funeral rites on the Sabbath should be avoided unless the climate or the conditions pertaining to the geographical area necessitate the conduct of the funeral service on the Sabbath without any delay. "In Some instances a memorial service could be held on the Sabbath, and interment take place later" (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, 1990: n. p.). Samuel Bachiochi traces the background of this directive to the Old Testament era. He writes

it is advisable to avoid conducting funerals on the Sabbath, since these disrupt the spirit of rest, joy, and the celebration of the Sabbath. It is noteworthy that in Biblical times, even mourning was interrupted on the Sabbath in order to experience the Sabbath joy and delight, which were seen as a foretaste of the blessedness of the world to come (Bachiochi, 2000: n. p.).

He however indicates that it is required of Christians to comfort the bereaved on the Sabbath by sharing with them the hope of the resurrection and of the new world, of which the Sabbath is a symbol, Luke 23:55-56 (Bachiochi, 2000: n. p.).

Similarly, the Biblical Research Institute, an institution of the Adventist church that has been established to present "biblical principles and Spirit of Prophecy guidelines that will assist the church members as they endeavor to follow the leading of the Lord (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, 1990: n. p) has given biblical explanation to the directive of the church concerning funerals (as cited above). Central to these guidelines is the underlining notion that the only period that a funeral could be organized on the Sabbath would be when the climate or the conditions of the dead do not allow for keeping it for long. Sometimes the climatic conditions may necessitate the burial of the person immediately death occurs out of respect for the deceased (Deut 21:23; Acts 5:10; 5:6; 8:2). Since the Sabbath is a memorial of God's Creation, and not a day of grief (Isaiah 58: 13), it is advised that when it becomes necessary for one to be buried on the Sabbath, the church should not lose sight of the sanctity of the Sabbath and at the same time respecting the deceased and his/her family, Gen 50:1-3 (Yvinec, 2013: n. p).

In such circumstance, the Biblical Research Institute indicates that "arrangements should be made in advance with morticians and cemetery employees to perform their routine tasks for the deceased in advance of

the Sabbath day, thus reducing the labor and commotion on the Sabbath (Yvinec, 2013: n. p).” From this perspective, therefore, the instances leading to the holding of the funeral service of Elder James S. White and the wife, Ellen G. White on the Sabbath should be clear.

5. Reflections

Incidentally, the issue of participating in the funeral of a relative or a dear one on the Sabbath is neither in the Bible nor in the writings of Ellen G. White. It has, therefore, become imperative for the church leadership in a given locality or community to determine whether holding a funeral service on the Sabbath is in consonance with the general idea of Sabbath observance or not—Hence the directive of the church above.

However, these directives appear too generalized to apply to communities such as the Akan community in Ghana, where such services, as implied by the Bible Research Institute, are not almost always available. Where they are available, the fee is so exorbitant that the deceased family, with an average income, cannot afford. In a situation such as this, how may the church respond to a bereaved member who organizes or participates in funerals held on the Sabbath for reasons beyond their control? Again, it seems the Guidelines of the Church only addresses the situation that pertains to a deceased member without addressing what should be done in case of a non-Adventist relative dying and the funeral being held on the Sabbath. Should the bereaved Church member attend the burial and interment service of the relative or be at worship?

When a relative of an Adventist dies, there is the need for the Church leadership to meet with the bereaved family to sympathize with them and to plan how the church could assist them in the funeral and interment of the deceased. It is important for the church to show concern and be present to sympathize with the bereaved including the Adventist relative. Similarly, Church members could assist the bereaved Adventist to perform some of the labor that the funeral may require before the actual day of the funeral rites. If the bereaved church member participates fully in the events leading to the funeral rites and does not attend only on the Sabbath, there is a high possibility that the animosity and acrimony they sometimes experience from non-Adventist relatives could be reduced or possibly eliminated. Also, we have found that Adventists, in a situation such as we have described, who refrain from publicly announcing their inability to participate but seek permission from family authorities only avoid such undue confrontations.

Arguably, these difficulties call for a consensus building among church leadership in our part of the world. The building of consensus will go a long way to help the church build better relationship with the bereaved

family and not close the door to evangelism. Such consensus building opens up query into the issue of funeral rites participation and Sabbath observance in Ghana. Should the Church, as a general body in a given locality, decide for those who attend funeral on Sabbath especially when it is a close relative or should the Church leave that decision to the discretion of the bereaved member? When one is mourning the death of a close relative, should the church insist on the bereaved coming to church on Sabbath while their deceased relative is laying in state or interred? Will the bereaved, if compelled to come to church, be fully edified? More importantly, will God accept the worship of the bereaved member who sobs internally during the entire worship? Is it possible for the Adventist Church to visit the deceased family and the bereaved Adventist in the home on the Sabbath morning to have morning devotion with the family as we do sometimes when it is not on a Sabbath? If the Church decides to hold a service on the Sabbath morning for the family of the deceased will that be tantamount to breaking the Sabbath or will it help to build missiological bridges? Since there is need for the church to be close to comfort the bereaved in their bereavement, which place can this be better done than in the house of the bereaved for the benefit of the whole family?

The question of funeral service on Sabbath is indeed a grey area that calls for further dialogue to help the church come to sound biblical and missiological conclusions. Such conclusions will contribute immensely towards the removal of set-backs to evangelism particularly in the Ghanaian society. Additionally, such conclusions would bridge the social distance between the Adventist church and the members of the community in general.

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THE SABBATH AS MISSIOLOGICAL BRIDGE: A CASE FOR THE ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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1. Background of Study

The importance of the seventh-day Sabbath is for the Seventh-day Adventist Church is reflected in the name of the Church, making it an integral part of the organization's very identity.¹ The Church understands itself as a remnant living in the last days of earth's history, a time characterized by widespread spiritual apostasy.² As such, the Church understands itself as having a mission that calls the world to worship the Creator at a time when the devil is also employing deceptive machinations to receive worship from the world.³ In this scenario, the Sabbath is understood as the ultimate test of loyalty between those who truly worship the Creator

¹ "SDA Church," *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, Revised Edition in Commentary Reference Series, Vol. 10 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1976), 1325; Nancy J. Vyhmeister, "Who are Seventh-day Adventists?" in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*. Commentary Reference Series, Vol. 10 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 1, 2; George R. Knight, *A Brief History of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 3rd edition. Adventist Heritage Series. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2012), 63; Emma E. Howell, *The Great Advent Movement* (Takoma Park, Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1935); C. Mervyn Maxwell, *Tell it to the World: The Story of the Seventh-day Adventists*, revised edition (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1977), 145. For a more elaborate discussion on this, see "Seventh-day Adventist," *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, 1324; J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1909), 351.

² Hans K. LaRondelle, "The Remnant and the Three Angels' Messages" *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* Roul Dederen (Editor), in Commentary reference Series (General Editor, George W. Reid) Vol. 12. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 866 – 880.

³ Hans K. LaRondelle, 872 – 880; "SDA Church," *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, 1325. Knight points out that the special significance of the Sabbath in the context of prophecy and eschatology represent some of Joseph Bates' lasting theological contributions to the Adventist Church. Knight, 39 – 42. See also Rich and W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers to the Remnant: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*. Revised and updated edition (Nampa, ID: 2000), 164 – 166.

God and those who do not.⁴ This is especially expressed by Ellen White, a co-founding member of the Adventist Church....⁵ The Sabbath is also understood to be linked to many other faith aspects as well as just about all dimensions of a believer's life.⁶

In spite of such compelling holistic and eschatological understandings of the Sabbath alluded to above, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa seems to have largely remained indifferent if not altogether oblivious to large Sabbath-keeping communities prevalent in their sphere of influence. These faith communities believe and practice seventh-day Sabbath observance as an integral part of their worship experience. Almost all of them do so exclusively on the basis of a 'thus says the Lord,' according to their reading of the Old Testament. In most instances however, they are without elaborate theological expositions in the way the Adventist Church has a theology of the Sabbath.⁷ This paper seeks to proffer some approaches the Church in Southern Africa could take to enhance its outreach to and among non-Adventist Sabbath-keeping people groups and faith communities

⁴ Kenneth A. Strand, "The Sabbath," *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 513; Hans K. LaRondelle, "The Remnant and the Three Angels' Messages" *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 878, 887, 888; Donald Ernst Mansell, *The Shape of the Coming Crisis: A sequence of end-time events based in the writings of Ellen G. White* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1998), 58 – 82.

⁵ Ellen White states that "The Sabbath will be the greatest test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve him not....the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator." (*Great Controversy*, 605).

⁶ Kwabena Donkor, "Sabbath, the Doctrine of the" in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopaedia*, 2nd ed. Ed. Dennis Fortin and Jerry Moon, (Hager's Town, Maryland: Review & Herald, 2013), 1115–1118.

⁷ "They emphasize and practice Sabbath keeping, but this results in little if any academic Sabbath theology." Stefan Höschele "On Sabbath Keeping and Sabbath Theology among Younger African Churches" *Spes Christiana* 18–19, 2007–2008, 39.

2. The Sabbath-keepers

To begin with, there are numerous Sabbath-keeping African Initiated Churches (AICs) in Africa.⁸ Some of these churches were founded in Zimbabwe and others in South Africa.⁹ In 2000, AICs were estimated to constitute 36% of Zimbabwe's population. The significance of this statistic is perhaps best appreciated when compared to the 24% statistic for all other Christians (Catholics, Protestants and Anglicans).¹⁰ The largest of the AICs and perhaps the second or third largest Christian denomination in Zimbabwe is African Apostolic Church of Johane Marange (AACJM), whose membership was, in 1999, estimated at one million, in Zimbabwe alone.¹¹ The denomination established by Johane Marange (1912 – 1963), has a presence in many countries in the region and beyond.¹²

Marange had numerous dreams and visions from the time he was six years old. In 1932 he reported that a voice (presumably God's) had spoken

⁸ Stefan Höschele, After noting that Sabbath observance has remained marginal in the western world, Höschele goes on to point out that "Interestingly, a reverse situation is found in Africa. On this continent, the greatest concentration of Saturday keeping Christians is found today with more than 15 million Sabbatarians in denominations founded in the last one and a half centuries... Among the Sabbatarian churches of Kenya are the following: Roho Israel Church of God, Nomiya Fueny Maler, Nomiya Luo Sabbato, Roho Revelation Church, Luong Mogik (God's Last Appeal Church), Roho Singruok, Roho Mowal, and Musanda Christian Church of Kenya" (cf. Kuhn, Marko: *From African Consciousness to Sub-Conscious Enculturation: A Study into African Independent Churches (AICs) in Nyanza/Kenya*. Diploma thesis, University of Freiburg, 2001.), 39 - 41.

⁹ A 1945 count showed that there were 800 AICs of which 25 had names that showed they were seventh-day Sabbath observers. Many others who also observed the Sabbath did not however use the word 'Sabbath' in their organizational names according to Sundkler, Bengt: *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961, 354 – 374, as quoted in Stefan Höschele, 41.

¹⁰ Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Africa World Press, 2001), 114.

¹¹ Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 116; Stefan Höschele, 41; Jules-Rosette, Bennetta: *African Apostles: Ritual and Conversion in the Church of John Maranke*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975; Mazambara, Phillip Denhe: *The Self-Understanding of African Instituted Churches: A Study Based on the Church of Apostles Founded by John of Marange in Zimbabwe*. Aachen: Mainz, 1999.

¹² The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Zionist church: South African Religion," <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/657514/Zionist-church> (Accessed April 10, 2015).

to him, identifying him as a new "John the Baptist, an Apostle." As such he was ordered to preach the gospel to all peoples. In obedience to this voice, Marange preached, baptizing those who accepted his message and taught them to observe the Pentateuchal laws¹³, including the seventh-day Sabbath.¹⁴ On the basis of these revelations, the AACJM was founded in that year, with an initial baptism of 150 people in his home area in Eastern Zimbabwe. In the thirty years of his ministry, he preached in Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and central Congo.¹⁵ His followers can be found as far afield as "Uganda and even Ghana."¹⁶

A contemporary and religious twin of Marange was Johane Masowe (John of the wilderness), formerly Shonhiwa (c.1915 – 1973) who, in the 1930s, founded the Apostolic Sabbath Church of God.¹⁷ As the name suggests, this church too, was a Sabbath-keeping movement. The difference they had with AACJM Church was in their Ethiopianism which advocated for black people's complete separation from all activities that have to do with white people, who at the time, were the face of colonialism.¹⁸ As such, this church did not, and still does not, as many others after it, allow members to go to schools, hospitals or to be in formal employment. Members were to have no formal registration and identification. All these being sectors and activities that were dominated and controlled by the colonial government at the time the church was founded. As such, the members learnt some crafts which made them self-sustaining.

A similarly Sabbath-observing church is the Apostolic Mission of Africa (AMA) started and led by Paul Mwazha. These seem to feel some affinity with the Adventist Church, from whom they got the Sabbath message

¹³ Marange, as did other AIC leaders, had early contacts with some Apostolic Faith Mission preachers who had emphasis in these same aspects as well as others that were later practiced in his movement (see Allan Anderson, 116).

¹⁴ Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 116.

¹⁵ Ibid. 117, in 1964, 10, 000 people in southern Congo attended the church's special festival.

¹⁶ Ibid. 116.

¹⁷ Ibid. 118.

¹⁸ According to The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Ethiopianism: African Religion." Ethiopianism was a "religious movement among sub-Saharan Africans that embodied the earliest stirrings toward religious and political freedom in the modern political period." <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/194224/Ethiopianism>. (Accessed, April 10, 2015).

anyway.¹⁹ These regularly buy Adventist literature such as hymnals, Sabbath school study guides among others. Some among their leaders have in the past sent their children to Adventist schools.

In the same way, there are indigenous Sabbath-keeping churches in South Africa as well. Two are especially notable by their membership size. The first one is the Nazareth Baptist Church, better known as “amaNazareth” (the Nazarites)²⁰ or “isonto lamanazareth” (Church of the Nazarites) and “Shembe Church.” This is the largest AIC among the Zulu people. The church was founded “by Mdlwamafa Mloyisa (Isaiah) Shembe (c. 1869 – 1935).”²¹ Shembe started out as a Methodist, before getting baptised into an African Baptist Church c.1900. He eventually left this church also, owing to irreconcilable differences between him and the leadership of this church, arising from his unique understanding of the Pentateuchal laws on the Nazarites which he believed were supposed to be adhered to.²²

After his departure from the African Baptist Church, Shembe went on to found a Sabbath-keeping church.²³ Among other things, the church’s

¹⁹ The writer was reliably informed by Pr. Lovemore Chitura who was instrumental in having prophet Paul Mwazha’s eldest son accept the seventh-day Sabbath. Pr. Chitura was working as a literature evangelist at the time. Mr. Mwazha jnr. Challenged his father, until the later adopted Sabbath as the day of worship for their church, in a bid to retain his son in his church. Mr. Mwazha jnr. went on to join the Adventist Church anyway where, owing to his charisma and means, he went on to be an influential member, becoming a delegate to the GC session at one time. Mr. Mwazha jnr. Since re-joined his father’s church, in circumstances dominated by faltering financial fortunes as well as issues related to polygamy. This narrative was independently confirmed by Pr. Solomon Bundo, who previously worked with Pr. L. Chitura, as a colporteur. The writer visited Mr. Mwazha Jnr in the company of Pr. Bundo, at one time.

²⁰ Based on the Nazarite vows of Numbers 6. Browne, *Shembeism and the Rainbow Nation*, 99.

²¹ Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 106.

²² Ibid. 106.

²³ Absalom Vilakazi, *Shembe: The Revitalization of African Society* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986), 86. Browne, *Shembeism and the Rainbow Nation*, “Saturday is the main day of worship for Shembeites because they claim that this was the day that God told people to worship in the Old Testament of the Bible, which is what they follow rather than the New Testament like most Christians,” 102; According to Wikipedia “Isaiah Shembe,” “He advocated worship of the biblical Sabbath rather than Sunday. Associating Sunday worship with the Jesus of the white missionaries, he chose to identify instead with the Sabbath of God, Jehovah. He saw the Sabbath as essential to the wholeness and well-being of Africans.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaiah_Shembe, accessed, 10 January 2016.

liturgy is characterised by such things as removing shoes when in a place of worship, leaving hair uncut and observing kosher laws of the Old Testament, including avoiding the consumption of pork.²⁴ They also practice circumcision, as the Sotho, contrary to Zulu customs.²⁵ The sacraments of amaNazaretha are baptism by immersion, night Lord's Supper services with foot-washing, and seventh-day Sabbath observance.²⁶ These are observed along with the *hlonipa* (respectful avoidance) rules of Zulu tradition, as the church represents "a unique blend of Christianity with the best of Zulu culture."²⁷ Shembe was also a prolific hymn writer and a naturalist. As late as 2005, it could still be said that "The Shembe religion is the fastest growing religion in South Africa."²⁸

The second is the International Pentecostal Church (IPC). This church was founded by the late charismatic cleric, Rev. Fredrick S. Modise (1914 - 1998). Modise started out as a leading minister in the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) a Sunday-keeping church. He eventually, in a situation of personal financial misfortunes and severe illness, claimed to have received a series of divine revelations in September, 1962 while hospitalized in Johannesburg. In these special revelatory encounters, Modise claims that a voice announced to him just when exactly he would be healed and thereafter get discharged from the hospital. He subsequently received his healing and discharge from the hospital on a Saturday, October 3, 1962.²⁹ The voice which spoke with him informed him that that day was the Lord's Sabbath, to be observed as the holy day that it is. As confirmation for authenticity of what the voice told him, Modise was instructed to pray for fifteen people from among those admitted together with him in the

24 Browne, "Shembeires adhere to culinary injunctions of the Old Testament that define followers of Judaism, the Eastern Coptic Church and Islam," 103. Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Africa World Press, 2001), 106.

25 Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 108.

26 Browne, "They do not work on Saturday, nor will they eat hot food prepared on Saturday. They only eat cold food prepared on Friday for the Saturday meal. They do not light fires on Saturday, nor do they cook or bathe," 91. Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Africa World Press, 2001), 106, 108.

27 Allan Anderson, 108; Dallas L. Browne, "Shembe is a syncretic religion. It blends Christianity with acceptance of selected aspects of traditional African Culture..." 97, 98.

28 Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 91.

29 IPHC, s.a. International Pentecost Holiness Church. Johannesburg: IPHC.

same hospital.³⁰ When this was done, they all got miraculously healed. He gained fame as a faith healer. It may be worthwhile to point out that here are similarities between Modise's experiences and the circumstances surrounding the elder C. D. Brooks mother's conversion and acceptance of the Sabbath.³¹

In 1964, Modise went on to establish the IPC that rapidly grew in membership. Sabbath observance has been the practice of that church to this day, as evinced by the fact that "the main activities of the church take place from Friday night throughout Saturday."³² Some years ago, the IPC popular choir produced a music album titled *Sabata* (Sabbath).³³ The title track is popular with other Sabbath-keeping AICs in the region.

In spite of its name, Modise did not only abandon such things and speaking in tongues and prophecies, which are characteristic of Pentecostalism and most AICs, but was also heavily critical of the same.³⁴ For instance, there is no talking in tongues in the church he founded. Though an AIC, it is quite different from the rest of them as it looks westernised in many forms. The combined membership of the Shembe followers and the IPC is computed in millions in South Africa alone.³⁵

³⁰ Allan Anderson, "Frederick Modise and the International Pentecost Church: A Modern African Messianic Movement?" (Institute of Theological Research: UNISA, 1992), 5.

³¹ His mother Mattie Brooks, then a in the Methodist Church, received direct special revelation, pointing out the need for her to observe the Sabbath. At the time, she was seriously ill, in St. Louis Catholic Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina, USA. This was in December 1930. Shortly afterwards, she recovered from her illness. Although she immediately began observing the Sabbath, it would be years later that she would make contact with the Adventist Church. Charles D. Brooks, in "Heritage Series Interview" with C. A. Murray and Jim Gilley (3 Angels Broadcasting Network, TLB008529) at 13 Minutes; cf. Stephen Chavez, "Charles D. Brooks: Gospel Herald" in *Adventist Review* (2016). <http://archives.adventistreview.org/article/2413/archives/issue-2009-1506/charles-d-brooks-gospel-herald>

³² Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 111.

³³ The lyrics are *iSabata namhla Nkosi/Bayavuya abantu bakho/bakethwa baya vuya/Ncinani iSabata*. (Oh Lord, it is Sabbath today/your people are rejoicing/the chosen ones are rejoicing/(oh people) keep the Sabbath).

³⁴ Allan Anderson, *African Reformation*, 111.

³⁵ Stefan Höschele, 41.

3. Cultural 'Sabbath'

Besides the overt knowledge of the seventh-day Sabbath among AICs, there seems to be a covert awareness of the same too in local religious traditions. In Zimbabwe for instance, Shona people have the concept of one special weekly day called *Chisi*. This is a day during which no work is allowed in a community, especially work in the fields.³⁶ It is "a mandatory day of rest."³⁷ The day is understood to be sacred and it thus enforced as such by chiefs and other traditional leaders within any given community. It is believed that if work is done on that day, misfortunes, especially lack of rain, will befall the offending community. Offending in this point is thus considered as posing a threat to the very existence of the whole community.³⁸ Such offenses are punishable by penalties.³⁹ If repeated, a person is expelled from the given locality.⁴⁰ This day however, falls on different days of the working week in different communities throughout the country. Whichever day it may fall on, its being understood as a sacred day is uniform and so is its enforcement.

Among the peoples of southern Zimbabwe is a unique ethnic group, the BaLemba. These claim to have Semitic, in particular, Jewish origins. This claim seems to be authenticated by a number of similarities of practices they apparently share with those found in Judaism.⁴¹ This particular ethnic group has been studied closely in recent years. Repeated scientific studies seem to authenticate their claim to Jewish ancestry.⁴²

³⁶ Zachaeus Mathema, "Towards an Understanding of the African Worldview," in *The Church, Culture and Spirits: Adventism in Africa*, edited by Kwabena Donkor. (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2011), 41.

³⁷ Netsayi Noris Mudenge, "Knowledge Production and Dissemination in Land Resettlement Areas in Zimbabwe: The Case of Mupfurudzi" Graduate Research School for Resource Studies for Development, October, 2005, 162.

³⁸ Stefan Hörschele, "In traditional cultures, specific prohibitions commonly mean security; if such safety measures are disrupted, the whole system can disintegrate," 49.

³⁹ Anita Jacobson-Widding, "Pits, Pots and Snakes – An Anthropological Approach to Ancient African Symbols," in *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 1 (1): 5-26 (1992), 6.

⁴⁰ Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel, *The Rebirth of Bukalanga: A Manifesto for the Liberation of Great People with a Proud History*, Part 1 (Maphungubwe News Corporation, 2012), 186.

⁴¹ Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel, 196 – 200.

⁴² *Ibid.* 208, 209.

The Chisi concept is found among the Shona people of Zimbabwe as well as the BaKalanga of whom the Vendas are thought to have been a part. The Mwali religion of the Vendas “seems to have links with that of the Jews in Israel.”⁴³ To pre-colonial Zimbabwe, they were what the house of Levi was to Israel. A family of priests, according to Pathisa Nyathi.⁴⁴ Both northern and southern Zimbabwe traditions seem to concur that the religion came from Great Zimbabwe.⁴⁵ The central shrine manned by these priests at Njelele within Matobo Hills, where they functioned from a big cave. “This is the equivalent of the holy of holies”.⁴⁶ Pathisa Nyathi points out that “Njelele is associated with the strict observance of the seventh day.”⁴⁷ The identity of the seventh day as the Sabbath clearly seems to have been lost, perhaps due to societal disruptions in history. The idea, however, of the sacredness of one day in seven has endured, since “even to this day all the agriculturalists under the influence of Njelele observe the Wednesday - *Chisi* as it is called in Mashonaland.”⁴⁸

Many Adventist church members who have not appreciated this concept have antagonized their communities by blatantly violating the *Chisi* sanctity with a claim that only the Sabbath is sacred.⁴⁹ By so doing, the voice of their witness is drowned in the ensuing controversies. A winsome approach is one adopted by other church members who do not necessari-

⁴³ Pathisa Nyathi, “*BaKalanga: Any Links with the Semitic World?*” in *Cultural Heritage*, Bulawayo24, June 15, 2014; Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel, 186.

⁴⁴ Pathisa Nyathi, “*Seeking to Understand the Njelele Shrine*” in *Cultural Heritage*, Bulawayo24, June 15, 2014 (<http://bulawayo24.com/index-id-opinion-sc-columnist-byo-42201.html>).

⁴⁵ The southern traditions emphasize the relocation of the Venda people to South Africa first before moving to Njelele. To this end, the Vendas are thought to have come from across the Limpopo in the northern provinces of modern South Africa during the time of the Torwa State. The Rozvi Empire and the Ndebele state adopted their religion.

⁴⁶ Pathisa Nyathi, “*Njelele Shrine.*”

⁴⁷ Pathisa Nyathi, “*BaKalanga.*”

⁴⁸ Pathisa Nyathi, “*Njelele Shrine.*”

⁴⁹ David Nedziwa Mbiriri (grandfather to the writer. 1910 – 2008) is one example. He would not even pay the fines that the community leaders imposed upon him when he was found to have repeatedly worked on Chisi. Though his children begged him for his permission to settle the required fines, he would not allow them. His argument at the chief’s court was that only the seventh-day Sabbath, not chisi was ever mandated by God.

ly believe in the sacredness of the day, but rather, seek to do their household chores which are not prohibited under *Chisi* regulations. Many pastors and lay preachers have driven home the message of the Sabbath by capitalizing on the *Chisi* concept with great success.⁵⁰

For the Sabbath to be a missiological bridge, the Adventist Church will have to be intentionally focused in its evangelistic thrust. The Church should perhaps, in addition to personal evangelism, seek especially to work also with the said and some such other faith communities. To this end, there is need to capitalize on the commonality of Sabbath observance between the Church and the people they seek to reach. It is especially significant when one considers that according to Adventist eschatology, the Sabbath will be the most definitive testing truth in the final spiritual showdown of this world's history.⁵¹ With this in mind, it is all the more the reason the Adventist Church in Southern Africa should take special interest in Sabbath-observing groups in their territory. In doing this, the Church will not be innovating, but rather reverting to a tried and tested model used several times in the New Testament and other periods of Christian history.

4. The Bible Model

Jesus' mission was obviously the salvation of the whole world (Gen 3:15; Jhn 3:16). However, he was strategic about his mission in ways that should be exemplary to all who carry out his Gospel commission to the whole world. His strategy involved reaching out to Jews first and he was clear about it. This could explain his declaration to the Canaanite woman in the region of Tyre and Sidon, to whom he categorically stated that "I was sent to the lost sheep of Israel," (Matt 15:24). It was his custom to attend worship services in the synagogues on Sabbath days (Luke 4:16).⁵² In this way, the Sabbath, among other reasons for his observance of the

⁵⁰ Stefan Höschele, 42, highlights the importance of 'rituality' in the way the Sabbath is observed. It is probably this sense of 'rituality' that makes a natural link to be made between the *Chisi* and the Sabbath (cf. Theo Sundermeier, *Nur gemeinsam können wir leben: Das Menschenbild schwarzafrikanischer Religionen*. Gütersloh: Mohn, 1990, 67; Jules-Rosette, Bennetta, *African Apostles: Ritual and Conversion in the Church of John Maranke*. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1975, 156). An example is the now retired Pr. E.C. Ishewekunze of East Zimbabwe Conference who specialized in reaching out to traditional leaders in the different communities he worked in.

⁵¹ M. L. Andreason, *The Sabbath: Which Day and Why?* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 2002), 90.

⁵² Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 239.

same, became a missiological bridge by which he connected with those he sought to reach with his message.⁵³

Consistent with this strategy, when he sent out his disciples on outreach mission, he specifically charged them to go neither to Samaritan towns nor to Gentiles, but “rather to the lost sheep of Israel” (Matt 10:5, 6). Even when Jesus gave the gospel commission, he told his disciples they were to begin in Jerusalem and move outward to the rest of the world (Acts 1:8, cf. Matt 24:19, 20). For this reason, he also told his disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, where a mere ten days later, the church was launched to a predominantly Jewish audience at Pentecost (Acts 2). The early Church followed this model in its evangelistic outreach. Reaching out to Jews and then to the gentiles, in that order (Rom 1:16; 2:9; 2:10).

Perhaps there is no better exemplification of this in the early Church, than the ministry of Paul, who followed this model, as he always sought to establish the church through contact with synagogue congregations in the cities he ministered (Acts 13:14,⁵⁴ 14:1, 17:1ff,⁵⁵ Acts 18, Acts 19:8). The Sabbath provided the perfect opportunity for such ministry, as such it was of strategic importance in Paul’s missiology.⁵⁶ This model seeks the path

- 53 “It seems that Jesus often made use of the opportunity afforded by the assembling at the synagogues of Judea and Galilee, to teach them (see Matt. 4:23; 12:9; 13:54; Mark 1:21; 6:2; John 18:20; e.Lc) even as Paul later did in foreign lands (Acts 13:14, 15, 42). Francis D. Nichol (editor), *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary in Seven Volumes*, vol. 5 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1980), 727.
- 54 “As often, Luke points to a continuance of Jewish piety on the part of Christians. They represent an old religion come to flower, not a suspiciously new religion only coming to bud,” Gundry, 515.
- 55 William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary*, edited by Art Farstad (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1637.
- 56 According to Stott, “Paul on his missionary journeys seized the opportunity to preach the gospel as opportunity arose in the synagogues on the Sabbath day and this was his custom (Acts 13:5, 14, 44; 14:1; 16:13; 17:2, 17; 18:4; 19:8).” W. Stott, “Sabbath” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Edited by Collin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971), 410. Darrell L. Bock, Acts in *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 469; cf. Barret C. K. A *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 1: Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts 1–XIV (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 667; David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles in The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, General editor, D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 403; “Like his Lord (see Luke 4:16), Paul was habitually present at the Synagogue services on the Sabbath day... The Apostle Paul obviously had a double purpose for this – he wished to make effective spiritual contact with the Jews, and to keep holy the Sabbath day “according to

of least resistance by capitalising on the commonalities first. It was not until the Jews had categorically rejected Paul and his teachings that he eventually was directed to turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46 – 48, cf. 22:21).

Even when Paul turned to the gentiles, he always sought ways to establish common ground between himself and those he sought to reach. By narrowing this gap, he hoped to gain a much more favourable audience. Paul employed this strategy at Athens when he quoted one of the Greek poets to his listeners (Acts 17:28).⁵⁷ This is probably summed up by his statement “I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible” (I Cor 9:19 – 23, NIV).⁵⁸ Similarly then, the commonality of the Sabbath between Adventists and other faith communities in Southern Africa could be valuable point of missiological contact to the later by the former.

5. Historical Example

In the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Sabbath has always had a very special place in the church’s missionary outreach, especially with regards to relations with other faith communities. One group that has had a special relationship with the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the Seventh Day Baptist Church (SDB). To begin with, one will easily see how the names are almost identical. Since the latter of the two is by far older, it is not impossible to imagine how the one who suggested this name and those who seconded it in 1860 may have been influenced by their admiration of this special group of Baptists’ which though few in number, maintain a principled stand on the Sabbath question. Needless to say, though the Seventh-day Adventists have become the leading proponents of this sacred institution, James White never forgot that they had learnt this from the SDBs, through Rachel Oaks (1809 – 1868).⁵⁹

the commandment” (Luke 23:56), Francis D. Nichol (editor), *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary in Seven Volumes*, vol. 6. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1980), 285.

57 Francis D. Nichol, *Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 353.

58 Ibid. “God’s ministers must be ready at all times to adapt themselves and their ministry to the nature of those for whom they labour...Paul did not unnecessarily violate the law of the Jews...nor did he refuse to conform to that law when he could do so without compromising principle...he was anxious to do everything possible to create a favourable impression and so be in a better position to convince those ‘under the law’ of the truth of the gospel (see Acts 15:24-29), and thus ‘gain’ them,” 733, 734.

59 “Preston, Rachel (Harris) Oakes” in *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia, Commentary Reference Series*, vol. 10. Edited by Don Neufeld (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1976), 1149 – 150.

Owing to this confluence of convictions with regards to the Sabbath, relations between the two churches was cordial for many years. The cordiality is seen in that the two churches would, for many years, send each their clergy to attend and fully participate in deliberations in official meetings each of the other church.⁶⁰ The Adventist Church has perhaps never enjoyed such cordial relations with any other Christian organization, let alone any other religious body. In this case, the initiative was taken by the SDBs. Ellen White who highly esteemed SDBs called for harmonization and closer cooperation between the Adventist Church and the SDBs.⁶¹

The relationship between the two churches eventually succumbed to a number of onslaughts from Adventist preachers who took full advantage of the Sabbath bridge to reach out to SDBs members in winsome ways. The result was that it often divided or even ruined whole SDB congregations, especially where fault lines were already present.⁶² Sensing the impropriety of such an approach to our mission, James White was prompted to counsel SDA Church members to be more courteous, especially when relating with SDBs. Another challenge however related to irreconcilable differences on other doctrinal points.⁶³

Apparently, the link between SDBs and their counterparts in Sabbath proclamation, the SDB, is also attested in Africa. The Church main missionary centre and hub of operations in Malawi is the famous Malamulo mission, previously Plainfield Mission of the SDB.⁶⁴ Well known for its hospital, publishing house and other schools. This mission station was sold to the Adventist Church by the SDB Church in 1902. Perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that Joseph Booth, who had established that mission station, also converted to the Adventist Church and was assigned as one of the first two Adventist Missionaries to Malawi. The other one being Thomas H. Branch and his family.⁶⁵ It is possible that the SDB Church preferred to sell to the SDA Church, perhaps ahead of other po-

⁶⁰ Jerry Moon, "Seventh Day Baptists," in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopaedia*, 2nd edition, edited by Dennis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: 2013), 1153.

⁶¹ Jerry Moon, "Seventh Day Baptists," 1153, (cf. SSW, Oct. 1, 1886).

⁶² Such would probably have been the approach of Jesus' disciples if he had not counselled them to leave alone those they had seen, preaching a message similar to theirs (Mark 9:38–41; Luke 9:49, 50).

⁶³ Jerry Moon, "Seventh Day Baptists," 1153.

⁶⁴ Don F. Neufeld, (Editor), *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, Revised Edition. Reference Series, Vol. 10 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1976), 839.

⁶⁵ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, vol. 10, 839.

tential buyers. Charles Bradford's words would suggest so.⁶⁶ In such a scenario, it is not difficult to see how the Sabbath consideration would have played a role in such a decision, that alone being instructive of the potential inherent in commonality of belief and practice with regards to the Sabbath.

The Adventist Church in the Southern African region owes its very existence to Sabbath as a missiological bridge. It was the Sabbath that brought the Adventist Church to Southern Africa, through the Republic of South Africa (RSA). A Dutch farmer, Pieter Wessels, who by 1885 had been convicted about the Sabbath after reading the Bible, came into contact with a few other Sabbath observers at the diamond diggings in his town, Kimberly. One of these was J.G. Van Druten. Together they met John Hunt, a recent convert to Adventism who had then just arrived from California.⁶⁷

Having learnt of the existence of a whole church that kept the Sabbath in America, they wrote to the church and in the letter enclosed enough money to send two missionaries to come. Wessels had previously thought he was the only Sabbath-keeper in the whole world. The Wessels family went on to immensely support the work of the Adventist Church in Africa, America and Australia, through their unique connection with Ellen White.⁶⁸ All this boils down to the first common denominator. The Sabbath.⁶⁹ Likewise, in Ethiopia, many early converts to Adventism came from a religious group originally founded and led by Sheikh Zaccharias. He had converted to Christianity and had had visions and dreams in

⁶⁶ Charles E. Bradford, *Sabbath Roots: The African Connection* (Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1999). "Seventh-day Adventists and Seventh day Baptists are the only mission churches that insisted on the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath as a day of rest binding on all Christians in perpetuity. But the Seventh day Baptist mission to Africa did not continue for very long. They turned over to the Seventh-day Adventists at least one of their mission stations, Malamulo, or Ten Commandments, mission station in Nyasaland (Malawi). So the Seventh-day Adventists are the only Euro-American-based Sabbath-keeping Church in Africa" 191, 192.

⁶⁷ Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, 217, 218; Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. two (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1962), Gary Land, "South Africa," in *Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists*, second edition (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 311; "South Africa," in *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, 1209.

⁶⁸ See. Watson Mbiriri, "Ellen White's Position on the 1894 Solusi Land Grant: A Biblical/Historical Evaluation" (Unpublished paper presented at the AIIAS Theological Forum, 2015), 18, 19.

⁶⁹ Loughborough, 424.

which he had learnt about the coming of white missionaries and the Sabbath among other things. When Adventist missionaries arrived, many of his followers who already knew these things, converted to Adventism.⁷⁰

From the Kasai province of Congo (formerly Zaire) comes another illustrative example of how the Sabbath has been a missiological bridge in the Church's history. In 1972 and 1973, being perturbed by the uncontrolled proliferation of unregistered (Independent) churches, the national government ordered all unregistered churches to either close and disband, or align themselves to existing registered churches. Registration stipulations were stringent and unattainable for many AICs.⁷¹

At that time, many Sabbath-keeping Christians from AICs (Masowe, Marange and Kimbanguists) applied to join the Adventist Church in unprecedented numbers. "Seventh-day Adventist Church journals report that between 1972 and 1975, 75,000 to 300 000 members of Independent and other churches requested affiliation with the Adventist Church in the Kasai. By 1985, some 44,000 had actually joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kasai."⁷² In Bradford's words, "multiplied thousands of Zireans reached out to their Sabbath-keeping brethren for fellowship and mutual support."⁷³ The Adventist Church did their best while responding to this unforeseen situation. One can only imagine the benefit that could accompany intentional effort by the Church in reaching out to Sabbath-keeping AICs.

6. Proffered Model

The Adventist Church, has, perhaps most likely, more than any other of the Sabbath-keeping faith communities in Southern Africa, explored the Sabbath in its multifaceted-dimensions. As such, the Church could take

⁷⁰ "Ethiopia," in *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia*, vol. 10, 384.

⁷¹ F. Duane MacKey, *History And Analysis Of The Relationship Between The Seventh-Day Adventist Church And Several Independent Churches In The Kasai Province Of Zaire, 1972 To 1985* (Andrews University, 1989), 68, 69.

⁷² Bradford, basing on SDA Statistical report, 1996.

⁷³ Bradford, 193 – 197; their identity with the Adventist Church could possibly, in addition to the commonality of Sabbath observance, have been encouraged by a perception of the Adventist Church in Africa as an African Church indeed. In this regard, Stefan Höschele, argues that "The Comparison of African Instituted Churches and African Adventists reveals striking similarities....indicates that it is as much African as churches that trace their origin to African prophets," *Sabbath Keeping Among African Churches*, 41.

initiatives to lead out in 'Sabbath Conferences' that seek to explore these dimensions in ways that enrich members of other faith communities.

One of these dimensions relates to Sabbath and family. The family and the Sabbath, are the only two institutions that came from the Garden of Eden (Gen 1:27, 28; 1:31 – 2:1 – 3). The unit between these two institutions is also seen in the Ten Commandments when God gives the Sabbath commandment in the context of the family (Ex 20:8 – 11; Deut. 5:12 – 15). The potential social benefits of the Sabbath could be of great interest to many in Southern Africa, a region greatly affected by disintegration of family and other social ties. This could be helpful especially if implemented from the Family Ministries dimension.

Similarly important can be the impact of Sabbath on health for individuals, families and communities. The Adventist Church is distinguished as the only world-wide community constituting a blue-zone.⁷⁴ All others are local, such as the Sardinians of Italy, the Hunza of Parkistan, the Okinawas of Japan and others. Alongside diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors, the Sabbath has been repeatedly singled out as important in fostering good health. Drawing on this, the Church has much to draw from and share with other members of the Sabbath-keeping community. This could make a special effect especially if implemented through the Health Ministries department of the Church. Millions of persons in this region could be encouraged to live healthier and happier lives, drawing from the Sabbath, which they already hold in high regard.

Most of the Sabbath-keeping faith communities in this region, as in other parts of Africa, are not strong in the study of the history of the Christian Church. The Adventist Church could capitalize on its strong resources in this area to hold meetings that teach history of the Sabbath in Scripture and history. The history of the Sabbath cannot be given outside of the general context of church history. As such, people get to have an understanding of the story of Christianity in the context of the great controversy. A knowledge of the history of Christianity opens up people to understand the great prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, especially the eschatological role of the Sabbath. This then brings one to the heart of the three angels' message (Rev 14:6 – 14),⁷⁵ a message which defines the very mission of the Adventist Church.

⁷⁴ Dan Buettner, "An American Blue Zone" in *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2008), 117 – 162.

⁷⁵ "At the same time, such practices also reinforce a sense of separation between worshippers and non-worshippers. Sabbath theology may therefore also be understood as both contributing to constituting a community and as dynamics of

The examples above are by no means intended to be exhaustive, but just illustrative. Many similar connections could be made between the Sabbath and other Adventist doctrines. All this could be shared through, 'Sabbath Conferences,' literature, multimedia resources and other channels such as radio, internet and television. Without this intentionality and focus, it may be easy to present the Sabbath in a way that either only remains confined to theological abstractions or worse still, emphasise areas of disagreement more than areas of agreement.

An important component in all this is a paradigm shift in the way the Church is carrying out its mission in this region of the world. Characteristically, the approach is the standard one of apologetics and polemics. This approach seems perfect in the context of the western world where, due to the historical role of the Roman Catholic Church in that civilization where the majority of the people are culturally oriented toward Sunday observance. Contextualization of the message should help the Church to adopt more of a cooperative rather than a confrontational approach currently used in evangelistic campaigns, mainly aiming to convince attendees of the identity and perpetual validity of the Sabbath. Surely this approach is still needed, but the tragedy comes when it becomes the only approach, while there are numerous Sabbath-keeping faith communities, far larger than the Adventist Church in this region, completely overlooked.⁷⁶

The needed paradigm shift would need to be supported by policy provisions and changes in the way pastors are being trained. Currently, Adventist pastors trained in this region are likely to learn more about Girolamo Savonarola and never so much as hear about Isaiah Shembe or Johane Marange in their classes.⁷⁷ This kind of training remains not only

disassociation from the environment. This observation can be derived from both African Instituted Churches and African Adventists," 45.

76 It has been severally observed that African Instituted Churches have been found to defend the Sabbath as much as the African Adventists, according to Stefan Höschele, 45 (cf. Shorter, Aylward: "Recent Developments in African Christian Spirituality." Edward Fasholé-Luke et al. (ed.): *Christianity in Independent Africa* (London: Rex Collings, 1978) 531–544; Sundkler, Bengt: *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 188–189.

77 Perhaps instructive in this regard is the way Ellen White gave considerable attention to Sabbath-keeping Ethiopians, alongside her discussion of the Waldenses, some of whom she mentions were Sabbath-keepers. For more in this, see Benjamin J. Baker, "Africa's Sabbath Heroes" (May 2011) <http://blacksdahistory.org/africa-s-sabbath-heroes.html>.

inadequate, but also irrelevant in many instances.⁷⁸ The result is that the church carries out its missionary endeavours without giving due regard to the need for contextualization of its message. As such then, one of the most important aspects of this approach would be sponsoring of researches that inform policy-making.⁷⁹ Such focused research is a missing dimension to the Adventist Church's missionary endeavours in Southern Africa.

7. Conclusion

The Adventist Church in Southern Africa is faced with a great opportunity for missionary outreach to members of numerous AICs and other Sabbath-keeping faith communities in that region. This missionary potential is yet to be unlocked, as there has yet been intentional efforts to study and reach out to these faith communities in mutually respectful and winsome ways. Such outreach would require using inter-departmental linkages that can work together to bring out the multi-faceted dimensions of the Sabbath in ways that perhaps many even in the Church have never seen or known. An approach like this would represent a paradigm shift that begins with awareness and the training of Adventist pastors to work with such intentionality. The groundwork could be done through public affairs and religious liberty department. The Church may not faithfully carry out its task, while ignoring such a large and significant constituency. In this regard, the Church's current approaches may be at variance with the missiological approaches of both Jesus and Paul.

⁷⁸ Allan Tippet, *Introduction to Missiology* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1987), 106.

⁷⁹ In this regard, notes perceptively points out that "In contrast to African Instituted Churches, relatively little research has been devoted to African Adventism so far, which may be explained by the fact that it does not emphasize its Africanness very much," Stefan Höschele, 41.

SHOULD NON-ADVENTIST STUDENTS OF LUKANGA ADVENTIST BOARDING SCHOOL KEEP SABBATH?

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Non-Adventist boarding students at the Adventist University of Lukanga, hereafter referred to as UNILUK,¹ think that Sabbath observance should not be mandatory for them. When students enrol at UNILUK, they receive a manual which summarizes ethical conducts for the school, among which is the Sabbath.² Students make a commitment to observe the school ethics by signing a document, regardless their religious affiliation.³ However, after quite a time on campus, non-Adventist students generally complain that Sabbath observance is a matter of worship and should never be compulsory. They claim that UNILUK violates their conscience by inflicting them a religious law. This article provides a biblical ground for UNILUK to require Sabbath keeping from non-Adventist students. The case of the "mixed multitude" of Exod. 12:38 is used as an essential background.

Key words: Sabbath, "mixed multitude," non-Adventist students, and UNILUK.

- 1 UNILUK is a French acronym for Université Adventiste de Lukanga (Adventist University of Lukanga). It is an Adventist institution located in central Africa, more precisely in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the province called North-Kivu, in Lukanga village.
- 2 Université Adventiste de Lukanga, Manuel de l'Etudiant, 2013-2014, 11-12.
- 3 Ibid., 23.

1. Identification of the “Mixed Multitude” of Exodus 12:38

When the people of Israel came out of Egypt, “a mixed multitude went up also with them” (Exod. 12:38).⁴ This “mixed multitude” (*‘ereḥrab*)⁵ could possibly be composed of some native Egyptians, or the remnants of the Hyksos, or other Semites made captives in Egypt, or coming from inter-marriages between Jews and Egyptians.⁶

Nevertheless, what is certain is that the “mixed multitude” was not part of the children of Israel. In fact, it is constantly distinguished from the people of Israel. It is referred to in Exod. 12:38 only after mentioning the children of Israel and their numbering in verse 37. In Numbers 11:4, the “mixed multitude” is identified as a rabble in the midst of the people of Israel.⁷ It is when the rabble manifested a craving desire that the people of Israel also wept (Num. 11:4). Moreover, the same Hebrew word *‘ereḥ* (mixture) is used in Neh. 13:3 and Jer. 50:37 to describe Gentiles.⁸

Furthermore, the Bible mentions foreigners who were in the midst of the people of Israel in the wilderness (Deut. 29:11; 31:12). Since Exod. 12:37-38 specify that those who departed from Egypt were composed of the Israelites and the “mixed multitude,” the foreigners who are referred to as being within the Israelites’ camp (Deut. 29:11; 31:12) are the same as the “mixed multitude.”⁹ Therefore, the “mixed multitude,” was Gentiles, foreigners.¹⁰ Some scholars hold that it was composed of native Egyptians

4 All Bible passages referred to in this paper are taken from the King James Version.

5 The Hebrew noun *‘ereḥ* means mixture and the adjective *rab* means multitude.

6 For different views about the identification of the “mixed multitude” see Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment*, Commentary Reference Series (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1978), 1:556-557.

7 Many scholars argue that the “mixed multitude” of Exod. 12:38 and the rabble of Num. 11:4 refer to the same group. See Allen Ross and John Oswalt, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, With the Entire Text of the New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2008), 1:377.

8 William H.C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 2008), 364.

9 Nichole, 1058.

10 Fabry and Lamberty-Zielinski assert that the “mixed multitude” of Exod. 12:38 was composed of non-Israelites. See H. -J. Fabry and H. Lamberty-Zielinski, “II/III ‘rb II/III,” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)*, ed. G. Jo

stirred up by the plagues that had taken place.¹¹ The rabbinic literature supports this view as Gerald Aranoff demonstrated.¹²

The “mixed multitude” decided freely to join and journey with the people of Israel without being Israelites. Similarly, non-Adventist students choose freely an Adventist institution, UNILUK, as their *alma mater*, without being Adventists. Keeping this in mind, it is also important to find out whether the “mixed multitude” was converted to Judaism or not in order to strengthen the comparison between the “mixed multitude” and the non-Adventist students at UNILUK.¹³

2. The “Mixed Multitude” Within Judaism

The Bible does not actually give the reason why the “mixed multitude” decided to join and go with the people of Israel. Some scholars allege that the “mixed multitude” was collectively converted to Judaism.¹⁴ However, the Bible gives some hints showing that this “mixed multitude” was not converted to Judaism.

First, the “mixed multitude” was always the first to complain and to lead the people of Israel into rebellion (Num. 11:4-5). In both Exodus and Numbers the “mixed multitude” is portrayed as being the instigators of

Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David. E. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 11:332.

- 11 Arno C. Gaebele, *The Annotated Bible, Volume I: Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2009), 138; John Peter Lange, Philip Schaff, and Charles M. Mead, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Exodus* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2008), 42.
- 12 Gerald Aranoff, “The Mixed Multitude According to the Zohar,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 40 (2012): 128-130.
- 13 The parallelism between the “mixed multitude” within Israel and the non-Adventist students within UNILUK does not mean that non-Adventist students within UNILUK are Gentiles or that Adventists in UNILUK are Israelites. The comparison focuses on non-Sabbath keepers within Sabbath keepers.
- 14 Shaul Magid, “The Politics of (Un) Conversion: The ‘Mixed Multitude’ (‘Erev Rav) as Conversos in Rabbi Hayyim Vital’s ‘Ets Ha-Da’at Tov,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 95 (2005): 630-631.

God's wrath whereas the people of Israel are blamed for following the "mixed multitude" in rebellion.¹⁵

Second, the "mixed multitude" joined the people of Israel in haste, on the eve of the departure from Egypt,¹⁶ and could not receive circumcision as an initiatory rite into Judaism.¹⁷ Since circumcision was the sign of belonging to Judaism, the "mixed multitude" never belonged to Judaism. Circumcision was taken seriously that God instructed Moses and Aaron, during the Exodus, that no foreigner should eat of the Passover unless he complies with circumcision (Exod. 12:43-49). Joshua 5:5 declares that "all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people *that were* born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, *them* they had not circumcised." Thus, when the people of Israel entered in Canaan, God ordered Joshua to circumcise all those who were born in the way (Joshua 5:2-3). Since circumcision was performed neither at the beginning of the exodus nor in the wilderness, if the Egyptians identified as the "mixed multitude" were not circumcised, this would mean that they were not converted to Judaism.

Third, on the one hand Ellen G. White declares that the "mixed multitude" was constituted of the Egyptians who, incited by the signs and wonders wrought in Egypt, believed and decided to join the Hebrews and to serve their God.¹⁸ On the other hand she specifies that there was among the "mixed multitude" "a far greater number who desired only to escape from the plagues, or who followed in the wake of the moving multitudes merely from excitement and curiosity."¹⁹

Therefore, the fact that the "mixed multitude" joined the Israelites without being converted to Judaism is another factor that strengthens the comparison between the "mixed multitude" within Israel and the non-

15 Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 2008), 321.

16 Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1945), 3:225.

17 It is attested that circumcision was practiced in ancient Egypt, see H-C. Hahn, "Circumcision," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 1:307. However, it is not evident that all the Egyptians who joined the Israelites were circumcised. Even if they were circumcised their circumcision would still have had a meaning other than belonging to Judaism.

18 White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 224-225.

19 Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets as Illustrated in the Lives of Holy Men of Old* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1958), 281.

Adventist students within UNILUK. Like the “mixed multitude,” non-Adventist students at UNILUK are accepted within an Adventist institution without being Adventists and without even being required to become Adventists. Therefore, the way the “mixed multitude” was dealt with regarding Sabbath keeping can be considered as a background for dealing with non-Adventist students within an Adventist institution, UNILUK, regarding Sabbath keeping.

3. The “Mixed Multitude” and the Sabbath Keeping

The Pentateuch does not make any distinction between the “mixed multitude” and the people of Israel regarding Sabbath keeping in the wilderness. The first biblical occurrence of the word Sabbath appears in Exod. 16:23 in relation to manna collect during Israel’s pilgrim in the wilderness.²⁰ Manna fell during the days of the week except on Sabbath. No one should go out to seek for manna on Sabbath (Exod. 16:29). It is worth noting that even the “mixed multitude” of the Egyptians had to observe the Sabbath with the people of Israel in the wilderness for forty years. In fact, the instruction “let no man go out of his place on the seventh day” (Exod. 16:29) was addressed to everyone. Anyone who would go out to collect manna on Sabbath, Israelite or Egyptian, could not find any.

In addition, the fourth commandment expressed in Exod. 20:8-11 includes strangers in verse 10 which says, “But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the Lord thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates.” Sabbath is not to be kept by the Israelites only, but also by the animals and strangers.²¹ The stranger is cited at last because he or she is neither a son nor a daughter of the

20 The first biblical occurrence of the word Sabbath in Exod. 16:23 does not mean that Sabbath begins with the manna story. The terminology “seventh-day” used in Gen. 2:2-3 with respect to the cessation of God’s creative activity refers to Sabbath even though the noun *šabbātis* not used there. According to David Noel Freedman, Gen. 2:2-3 is a universal divine example of rest to be imitated by the entire humanity; see David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996), 5:851.

21 Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus: Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1991), 229.

household nor regularly in its care like the servants and cattle.²² Thus, the stranger mentioned in the fourth commandment is not part of the regular household.

Besides, the Hebrew word "*gēr*" (stranger) used in Exod. 20:10 means a sojourner or a temporary dweller.²³ It may refer to any of the Egyptians who freely decided to join themselves to the people of Israel.²⁴ When God was promulgating the Ten Commandments on Sinai, strangers were present and could also hear His voice. Though these Egyptians were not part of the covenantal people, they were required to observe the Sabbath together with the people of Israel. However, the phrase "thy stranger that is within thy gates" points also to Israel's settlement in the Promised Land because there were no gates in the wilderness. Even the promise "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" found in the fifth commandment in Exod. 20:12 suggests that Israel's future settlement in the Promised Land was also in view.²⁵ Thus, the stranger may also be a visitor stopping temporarily with the Israelite.²⁶

Moreover, the reason given for keeping the Sabbath, namely, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exod. 20:11), is universal and does not depend on being Jew or Egyptian. The fact that the animals (Exod. 20:10),²⁷ even the land (2 Chron. 36:21; see also Lev. 26:34-35; 26:43), need, also to rest suggests that Sabbath is not only for worshiping God (since animals cannot worship), but also for a renewal of God's creation. That masters should not require any work from their servants is another indication that Sabbath was made for the benefit of human beings. Since strangers need also renewal and

22 Benno Jacob, *The Second Book of the Bible: Exodus*, trans. Walter Jacob (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1992), 568.

23 Francis Brown, with S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (BDB), based on the lexicon of William Gesenius (1952), s.v. "*gēr*."

24 Nichol, 605.

25] Jacob, 568.

26 John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary 3 (Dallas, TX: Word, 2002), 289.

27 For more information about the rest of the animals, see A Rahel Schafer, "Rest for the Animals? Nonhuman Sabbath Repose in Pentateuchal Law," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 23 (2013): 167-186.

care, it is for their advantage to partake in the blessings of the Sabbath. Sabbath is not a burden but a blessing.

Furthermore, Deut. 5:15 specifies that the Lord commanded the people of Israel to keep the Sabbath because the Lord delivered them from slavery in Egypt. Yet, the “mixed multitude” of the Egyptians who joined themselves to the people of Israel had to keep the Sabbath even though they were not slaves in Egypt as were the people of Israel.²⁸ In keeping the Sabbath, the “mixed multitude” was also considered as slaves who had been delivered. This suggests that the deliverance from slavery mentioned as one of the reasons of keeping the Sabbath should not be limited to the Egyptian slavery, but could possibly include spiritual redemption (John 8:34), which reinforces the universal character of the Sabbath.²⁹

Therefore, the story of manna collect in Exod. 16 and the stipulation of the fourth commandment in Exod. 20:10 and Deut. 5:15 reveal that God did not make any distinction between the Israelites and the “mixed multitude” of the Egyptians regarding Sabbath keeping for forty years that they spent together in the wilderness. Even after Israel’s settlement in the Promised Land, a Gentile within an Israelite’s gates had to keep the Sabbath. Later, Isaiah wrote that foreigners who joined themselves to the Lord should not think that the Lord will deal with them differently regarding Sabbath keeping (56:2-6).

28 Some scholars assert that the “mixed multitude” was constituted of people who were oppressed under Pharaoh; see for example, James K. Bruckner, *Exodus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 119. However, no biblical evidence shows that the “mixed multitude” was also oppressed in Egypt like the children of Israel. Num. 11:4-5 is appealing, “And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? 5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick.” The claim “we did eat in Egypt freely” is more understandable when it comes from those who were not slaves, the “mixed multitude.”

29 Commenting on Deut. 5:15, Duane L. Christensen correctly pointed out that in Exodus the doctrine of creation dominates while in Deuteronomy it is the doctrine of redemption that dominates, see Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1-21:9*, Word Biblical Commentary 6A (Dallas, TX: Word, 2002), 120. Since the Bible describes the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of redemption as having a universal scope, the fact that the Sabbath brings these two doctrines together in Exod. 20:11 and Deut. 5:15 pleads for its universality.

4. The “Mixed Multiple” Face to God’s Punishment for Sabbath

Breaking

Numbers 15:29-36 is revealing regarding the punishment for Sabbath breaking. It reports,

29Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. 30But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him. 32And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. 33And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. 34And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. 35And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. 36And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

The story in Num. 15:29-36 does not specify whether the man stoned to death for breaking the Sabbath was an Israelite or one of the “mixed multitude.” However, some hints suggest that he could possibly be one of the “mixed multitude.” In fact, it is significant to notice that the account of his death (Num. 15:32-36) is immediately preceded by God’s instruction that there ought to be one law for both the children of Israel and the strangers and that any person who sins with a high hand, whether an Israelite or a stranger, shall be cut off (Num. 15:29-30).

Moreover, the case reported in Num. 15:29-36 is similar to that reported in Lev. 24:10-23.³⁰ In both cases (1) there is a capital offense (Sabbath breaking in Num. 15:32-36 and blasphemy of the name of the Lord in Lev. 24:10-14, 23), (2) the offender is brought unto Moses, (3) the offender is put in detention until God’s special revelation, (4) the offender is stoned

30 Phillip J. Budd says that the resemblance between both stories is unavoidable, Phillip J. Budd, *Numbers*, Word Biblical Commentary 5 (Dallas, TX: Word, 2002), 175; see also Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 2008), 398.

to death without the camp on God's command, and (5) there is a stipulation that the punishment is the same regardless being Israelite or foreigner (Num. 15:29-30; Lev. 24:16, 22).

Now, it is striking to notice that the offender in Lev. 24:10-14, 23 was legally a stranger (his father was an Egyptian and his mother an Israelitish). It is possible that he was put in custody to settle first the issue of the applicability of the blasphemy law to him.³¹ If this was the case, then the offender in Num. 15:32-36 who was also put in custody was most probably one of the "mixed multitude," especially because it was the "mixed multitude" who usually initiated rebellion (Num. 11:4). Anyway, the fact that the punishment was the same for both the Israelite and the stranger shows that both were treated equally regarding Sabbath keeping, and this constitutes a provision for similar cases such as that of non-Sabbath keepers within the gates of Sabbath keepers.

5. Sabbath Reinforcement in Nehemiah's Reformation

Nehemiah 13:19-21 is appealing. It reads,

¹⁹And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. ²⁰So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do *so* again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.

Nehemiah commanded the gates of Jerusalem to be shut during the Sabbath, which means that the transgressors of the Sabbath could not pass in the shut gates. Nevertheless, he still appointed some of his trusty servants by the gates to make sure that no porter would be tempted to reopen them by bribery or other reason.³² Seeing that, the merchants decided to continue doing their business on Sabbath outside the gates. In fact, verse

31 Clyde M. Woods and Justin Rogers, *Leviticus-Numbers*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2006), 144.

32 Loring W. Batten, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1913), 296-297.

20 —“so the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice”— reads in the Septuagint—“So all [the merchants] lodged, and carried on traffic without Jerusalem once or twice.”³³ Then Nehemiah threatened to lay hands on them (v. 20) and they ended the transgression.

Nevertheless, Nehemiah’s attitude and action need to be set in their context. After experiencing the Babylonian captivity because of infidelity to the Lord, Nehemiah knew that the existence of the nation of Israel depended on fidelity to the Lord.³⁴ He was aware of the doom that awaited Israel for Sabbath breaking and the blessings for Sabbath keeping (Jer. 17:19-27; Ezek. 20:12-24). Moreover, he was a governor in a theocratic regime where the religious and political laws were fused. Therefore, the way he carried out his reformation needs to be understood in a specific context. However, it still shows that those who lead God’s institutions where His law is to be magnified should take some precautions that promote obedience to God.

6. Conclusion

The case of the “mixed multitude” of Exod. 12:38 within Israel and that of non-Adventist students within UNILUK are similar. This similarity allows using the way the “mixed multitude” was treated regarding Sabbath keeping within Israel as a valid biblical background for treating non-Adventist students regarding Sabbath keeping within UNILUK. Therefore, requiring Sabbath keeping from non-Adventist students within UNILUK as it was required from the “mixed multitude” within Israel is not unbiblical.

33 Some commentators claim that when the merchants found the gates closed they were obliged to pass the night outside the city until the end of the Sabbath, see for example, John Peter Lange et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Nehemiah* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2008), 57. However, the reading in the LXX shows that the merchants decided to continue with their business on Sabbath, outside the city.

34 Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra-Nehemiah: Introduction, Translation and Notes* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 2008), 215.

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

TITLE: *An Exegetical Study of ארר in Genesis*

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Faculty advisor: Carlos Mora, ThD

The ארר (curse) formula occurs both in the active and passive form in the book of Genesis with a higher frequency for the latter. The usage of the passive curse formula by God or humans has disparate significances. When used by God, the curse is considered a decree enacted by God. When used by humans, the curse is either an oracle pronounced by God's authorized emissary or a petition addressed to God and utterly dependent on the divine for enactment. This understanding is however conflicting with the passive form of the verb which implies the absence of an acting agent.

This study investigates the occurrences of the ארר formula in the book of Genesis with the threefold objective of (a) clarifying the significance of the passive form when used by God or by humans, (b) understanding the effect of the speakers of the curse formula on its effectiveness, and (c) delineating a possible pattern in the usage of the formula. The study interacts with literature on the subject of curse while recognizing that a limited number deals directly with the objectives aforementioned.

The conclusions reached indicate that the usage of the passive form is a grammatical endeavor to focus on the result of an action and less on its agency. The passive form also conveys the idea that a curse formula is an expression of a change of state attained by an offender of direct divine command. The conclusions also point out that while God can both be the actor and herald of a curse, humans can only announce a curse. Further, the effectiveness of a curse is expressed through the punishment attached to it and is linked to the status of the speaker and the gravity of the offense perpetrated. Lastly, a pattern of formulation is delineated whereby the ארר (curse) formula exhibits three sections: the cause, the curse, and the punishment.

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEWS

Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise, by Zdravko Stefanovic. Nampo, ID: Pacific, 2007. 480 pp. ISBN 13: 978-0-8163-2212-1. Hardcover US\$34.99.

Zdravko Stefanovic, an Old Testament languages and biblical studies professor at Walla Walla University, challenges the popularized futurist, preterist and idealist systems of interpretation which is currently dominate the scholarly study on Daniel. The author affirms the historicist school of interpretation.

Stefanovic's approach is not commentary from a critical point of view, but an attempt to expound the message of Daniel and to relate its message to the contemporary life of the modern reader. The analysis reflects a comprehensive view of the historical context with a heavy interest in hermeneutics and connections with other New Testament passage, especially the book of Revelation. While the author points out that chapter seven is the "strongest interlocking element in the whole book because it combines the visionary material with text in Biblical Aramaic," he also considers "the literary/stylistic plan as the primary structure because it is based on the two dominant literary forms in the book: stories (chaps. 1-6) and visions with auditions (chaps. 7-12)." (p. 39)

The book is a well organized and written commentary that goes deep into most of the issues in the book of Daniel. It begins with introductory material that discuss major topics, including Daniel's life and career as a Biblical prophet, kingdoms of Babylon and Medo-Persia, religion in Babylon, literary features of the book, historical setting, date, authorship, its purpose and theology, as well as approaches to the book and its influence on the New Testament. Chapters one to six forming a section, is then treated under three major headings: a concise literary type analysis; exegetical analysis with the text divided into sections and an expositional explanation of the content; and theological and application of the major themes of the section analyzed. Chapters seven to twelve likewise is treated but from the perceptive of prophecy and history; prediction, fulfillment, and applications; and the applications of Daniel's Prophecies. One is expected to find surprises here. The standard critical conclusions are not presented. The stories that make up Daniel 1-6 are related to and from historical Daniel; the visions are within the date and originate in the sixth century BC. The last part of chap. 11 is accurate in portraying and applying to a political and religious character at the end time, and not the later life of Antiochus IV. Since Stefanovic asserts messianism to the prophecies of Daniel, the theological applications presented along the way highlights Christ as

"only a man who called Himself the Son of man . . . and He offers His victory to all who will believe in Him." (p.422)

The theological analyses are apt for many contemporary Jews. If one wants to introduce students to the historicist treatment of Daniel and its logical theological conclusions, Stefanovic's work is probably the best. Seminary students and scholars alike will immensely benefit from this commentary. Of special importance is how the author allows the word of God to elucidate our understanding of the historic narratives and prophecies of Daniel. Above all, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise* offers hope to the reader, showing that behind the cosmic events and histories' play and counterplay is God whose sovereignty and total control is enough for this world. Thus, "through God-given wisdom can we know how to live our everyday life in anticipation of the glorious future." (p. 452)

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What Does God Know and When Does He Know It?: The Current Controversy over Divine Foreknowledge, by Millard J. Erickson. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003. 268 pp. ISBN 0310247691 Hardcover \$24.99

Millard J. Erickson is an evangelical theology professor and an established writer of over twenty-five books and numerous articles in theology. He writes in *What Does God know and When Does he know it?* to engage in a conversation about a recent debate on divine foreknowledge. He begins his book reflecting of the reformation began by Martin Luther that sparked a change in church history. In his reflection he thought, perhaps *Open Theism* might have reformation type ramifications for the church. Therefore, he endeavors to examine if the *Open Theism* presents a biblically based position that needs to be accepted (9). However, he makes this cogent statement that "neutrality and impartiality" should be properly distinguished (9). This is the principle that weaves and connects the book. The book is organized into nine chapters. Chapters one and two discuss biblical positions of the two views. For each view claims to be biblical based and found. Chapter three which is connected to the first two chapters looks at hermeneutics. In particular, the methodologies used to arrive at conclusions. Chapters four and five discuss the historical development of the doctrine of divine foreknowledge. The notion is carried that through the course of church history the traditional view was well estab-

lished though at times points of emphasis changed. For example, there are three views of divine foreknowledge: (1) simple foreknowledge, (2) middle foreknowledge, and (3) Calvinism. However, the open view was also discussed yet is lacked support and prominence in the church. Chapters six and seven discuss philosophical influences. Chapter eight discusses practical considerations which have a bearing not only in academia but on the life and praxis of the church. Chapter nine concludes with theological systems of both the traditional and open views, which he saw crucial to tie everything together in the book.

The thesis of the book is stressed very well. The author makes the point that while a debate has ensued yet there is a necessity to revisit the issue in a tone that conveys impartiality. Erickson achieves this aim throughout the book. He consistently evaluates both views and shows inherent strengths and weaknesses. For example, he dedicates chapter one to issues related to open view. And chapter two to issues related to the traditional view. Moreover to begin with the open view demonstrates impartiality. This is a positive in the book. Some may label the book as accommodating but it will prove satisfying to a reader who is not clear on the issues in the debate. Yet Erickson is able to say at the end of the book that will, all things considered, the traditional view seems to make more sense because of greater evidential support and fewer problems in coherence and logic (255).

Erickson does a good work to clarify the heart of the matter in the debate. That is of the issue of divine foreknowledge—in particular, God's knowledge of the future (15). This is important to understand in the debate. Discussions can often be misguided and confusing. In fact, Open Theists and Traditionalists agree on many aspects. The real issue of contention is as he titles the book "What does God know and When does he know it?"—divine foreknowledge. A reader will find this rewarding and easy to grasp Erickson's arguments.

In chapter one and two Erickson discusses biblical basis' of both views. He shows that the major weakness of traditionalists is not paying close attention to the plain reading of the text but simply concluding on texts that talk about God as Anthropomorphic (38). He applauds open theist for helping to give some texts their plain sense (63). A good point that Erickson establishes is the primacy that is made between narrative and didactic portions of scripture that speak about God (73). The traditionalist prioritizes the didactic sections (39) while the open theist prioritizes the narrative sections (73). For Erickson, the didactic portions of scripture show a simpler form of understanding which avoid complication of the matter (60). This understanding is important for a good grasp of the issues involved. This proved helpful in reading.

The book is well written and represents a fair debate on the issue of divine foreknowledge. Erickson does a good job of maintaining an impartial spirit. This book is recommended for anyone who desires to know more about the issues involved.

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Mothers on the Margin?: The Significance of the Women in Matthew's Genealogy by E. Anne Clements. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014. 310 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1625640635. Hardcover US\$59.00.

One thing that has intrigued scholars and general readers alike is the inclusion of certain women in Matthew's all important genealogy of Jesus Christ. The fact that these particular women -Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, 'by her who had been the wife of Uriah', and Mary the mother of Jesus have been included, has raised some questions.

Anne Clements based this book on her doctoral research. In it, she argues that Matthew's gospel contains a counter-narrative focused on women. The presence of the five women in the genealogy shows that the birth of the Messiah will bring about a crisis in Israel's identity in terms of ethnicity, marginality, and gender. Clements goes on to narrate the women here signal that Matthew's Gospel is concerned with the understanding of a new identity for God's chosen people. She also seeks to justify the presence of these particular women by demonstrating that they anticipate the main themes of Mathew's gospel. Instead of being a problem for readers, they are examples of all that Matthew wants to say about Christian discipleship.

Clements begins her book (chapters 1-2) by showing the importance and purpose of genealogies in the bible and goes on to outline the customary views for the inclusion of women. These views range from their presence as role models as ancestral mothers to proving that, however, marginalized and sinful they may be no one is beyond the saving grace of God. Clements also challenges the stereotyping of women being just outsiders, objects to be owned, powerless, and child-bearers. She argues that the 'mothers on the margin' are much more than that, as indicated by the question in the book's title.

The body of the book (Chapters 3-7) narrates the individual stories of these women and shows that each one personifies certain virtues that are defining of Israel. Tamar is described as being 'righteous and put in the same boat as Noah and Abraham, which challenges the more commonly

accepted definitions of righteousness, which is a theme widely explored in the gospel of Matthew. Rahab's story shows the faith in the God of Israel. The author plays on another of Matthew's themes by emphasizing in Rahab's story the questions of Israel's identity and faith, and ultimately draws a parallel about who is included and excluded from the nation of Israel and the kingdom of God.

Ruth is shown to have attributes of loyalty and faithfulness, which are both characteristics of discipleship, another of Matthew's themes. "Her who had been the wife of Uriah", Bathsheba, throws serious questions on the all important royal name in the genealogy, someone whom the Jews held in high regard, King David. All these women show the important role they play, not only in the genealogy but also throughout the whole gospel of Matthew. Moreover, their example of righteousness, faith, and loyalty await Matthew's emphasis on these themes throughout his gospel.

In the second half of the book (chapters 8-10), Clements convincingly supports these claims by giving a detailed analysis of Matthew's gospel. According to Matthew, Clements argues that it is often by these marginalized, despised outsiders, who illustrate true faith and have a legitimate claim to be included in the kingdom of God.

By rejecting traditional and feminist views, Anne Clements assumes a close literary reading of the narratives to distinguish how each woman is characterized and presented. From this, Clements explores why Matthew may have named these women in his important genealogy and what implications their inclusion may have for the ongoing gospel narrative. Clements unpacks the immense significance of the inclusion these five women in Matthew's genealogy. They are all significant scriptural figures on the margins of Israelite society. She carefully explores their individual stories and the particular reasons why they are named. With careful scholarly insight brought to the text, Clements demonstrates that the inclusive nature of the gospel has a wide-ranging application to our understanding of the nature of the gospel and of the church today.

I personally found this book to be an intriguing, well-balanced, academic discourse. Clements arguments are convincing, remarkably researched, and written with boldness. I would recommend this book.

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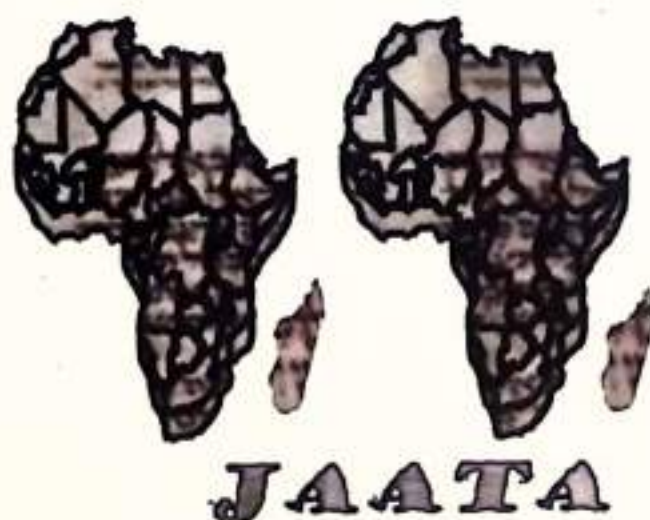
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