

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**COURSE CODE: CRS838**

**COURSE TITLE: AFRICAN CHURCH LEADERS**

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**CREDIT UNIT: 3**

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# **COURSE GUIDE**

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## **Introduction**

CRS838 'African Church Leaders' is a one semester, two units' undergraduate course. Presently, it is a requirement for those who wish to obtain bachelors degree in Christian Theology. The course will consist of fourteen units, divided into three modules. Module one discusses on the *Introduction of the gospel to Africa and the biography of some selected pioneer leaders*. Module two discusses *the life and ministry of selected past leaders and the spread of the gospel in Africa*, while Module three discusses *Selected Christian Leaders presently influencing the stability and growth of the gospel in Africa*. The materials have been developed to suit a Nigerian studying at a distance.

This course guide tells you briefly what the course is about, what course materials you will be using and how you are to use them. It provides some general guidelines for the amount of time you might be spending in order to successfully complete each unit of the course. It also gives you some guidance on your tutor-marked assignments, details of which are to be found in a separate 'assignment file'. The course involves regular tutorials and you are advised to attend the sessions.

## **What You Will Learn In This Course**

This course does not presume that you have a pre-knowledge of African Church Leaders. As a result, you are going to be assisted to build up a repertoire of knowledge on the contributions of African Church Leaders. You will come to realise that the study of African Church Leaders is not just an academic discipline, but it is necessary for daily living and spiritual life. You will come to appreciate that even your little contributions as a Christian towards changing the life of others which is the responsibility of every Christian helps to spread the gospel of Jesus. The course will be ecumenical in its approach. With this method, it will not seek to adopt the history of any particular church or denomination. Neither will it use the official documents on African Church Leaders of any particular church or denomination. This course will seek to take a centrist approach to the discussion on African Church Leaders which will be of interest to the generality of Christians.

This course will first take you through the brief history of Christianity in Africa and the spread of Christianity in Africa. The course will further review the contributions of

Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Moses Ladejo Stone, William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola, Isaiah Shembe and Garrick Braide to the spread of Christianity in Africa.

The course will also explore the contributions of Orimolade Moses, Samuel Oschoffa, Joseph Babalola and Benson Idahosa to the spread and growth of Christianity in Africa. These African leaders were responsible for starting the African independent Churches, which took into consideration the culture and language of the African people. These African independent churches helped Christianity to take root and spread among the African people.

Furthermore, in this course, you will come to study the contributions of selected Christian leaders presently influencing the stability and growth of the gospel. Such leaders include Bishop Peter Akinola, Pastor Williams Folunrosho Kumuyi, Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye, Bishop David Oyedepo and Pastor Daniel Olukoya. These men have taken African Christianity to the global stage such that Africa is shaping the image of Christianity today.

In view of this, you have an exciting course, “African Church Leaders” ahead of you.

Harmonize what you will learn in this course with your personal reflections and take time to put what you study and reflect on into practice. A general bibliography of all the reference works used in preparing the course guide is given towards the end of this course guide. Hopefully, your use of these will enable you to deepen your knowledge in other areas of your interest, which the course content may barely treat. Again, you will notice that there are many biblical references and quotations given in this course. Please note that all the biblical quotations used in this course are taken from (1990) The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

### **Course Aims**

The aim of this course can be summarized as follows: The general aim of the course is to acquaint you with the contributions of African Church Leaders to the growth and stability of Christianity in Africa. This course specifically aims to help you appreciate their heroic sacrifice, presentations and the suffering they encountered on the basis of their faith.

## Course Objective

In order to achieve the aim listed above, the course sets overall objectives. In addition, each unit has its own specific objectives, which are always outlined at the beginning of that unit. You should read them before you start working through the unit. It is necessary to refer to them during your study of the unit, to check on your progress. Also, after completing a unit, you should glance through the unit objectives. This will enable you to be sure that you have done what was required of you by the unit.

Listed below are the wider objectives of the course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you will have achieved the aim of the course as a whole. On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain the history of Christianity in Africa
- Discuss the spread of Christianity in Africa
- Describe the Contributions of Pioneers like Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Moses Stone, William Wade, Agbebi Mojola, Isaiah Shembe and Braide Garrick to the growth of Christianity in Africa
- Explain the emergence of African independent Churches
- Enumerate the contributions of Moses Orimolade, Samuel Oschoffa, Joseph Babalola and Benson Idahosa to the spread of Christianity in Africa
- Discuss the mighty revivals experienced during the ministry of these selected African leaders
- Describe the contributions of Africa Christian leaders like Peter Akinola, William Kumuyi, Enoch Adeboye, David Oyedepo and Daniel Olukoya who have positively impacted on the stability and spread of Christianity both in Africa and in the world at large.
- Understand the Importance of a call to ministry

- Derive inspiration for your personal life from the life and ministry of the African leaders discussed in this course.

### **Working through this course**

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units, read the recommended books and read other materials provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), which will help you achieve the objectives of the course. Each unit contains some self-assessment exercises and at some points in the course, you are required to submit assignments for assessment purpose. At the end of this course there is a final examination. Stated below are the components of the course and what you have to do. The course should take about fourteen weeks to cover.

### **Course Materials**

Major components of the course are:

1. Course guide
2. Study units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment file
5. Presentation schedule

In addition, you must obtain the materials. Obtain your copy. You may contact your tutor if you have problems in obtaining the text materials.

### **STUDY UNITS**

There are fourteen study units in this course divided into 3 modules of 5 units, 4 units and 5 units respectively. They are as follows:

#### **Module 1: Pioneer African Leaders and the Introduction of Christianity to Africa**

Unit 1 Brief history of Christianity in Africa

Unit 2 The spread of Christianity in Africa



Unit 3 Crowther, Samuel Ajayi

Unit 4 Stone, Moses Ladejo

Unit 5 Brief Notes on William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola (David) Brown Vincent),  
Shembe Isaiah Midiwamafa

## **Module 2: A Selection of Past Christian Leaders and the Spread of the Gospel in Africa**

Unit 1 Moses Orimolade Tunolase

Unit 2 Oschoffa Samuel Bilewu

Unit 3 Babalola Joseph Ayodele

Unit 4 Idahosa Benson Andrew

## **Module 3: Selected Christian Leaders Presently Influencing the Stability and Growth of Christianity in Africa**

Unit 1 Peter Akinola

Unit 2 William Folunrosho Kumuyi

Unit 3 Enoch Adejare Adebayo

Unit 4 David Olaniyi Oyedepo

Unit 5 Daniel Kolawole Olukoya

Each unit includes a table of contents, introduction, specific objectives, recommended textbooks and summaries of key issues and ideas. At intervals in each unit, you will be provided with a number of exercises or self-assessment questions. These are to help you test yourself on the material you have just covered or to apply it in some way. The value of these self-tests is to help you gauge your progress and to reinforce your understanding of the material. At least one tutor-marked assignment will be provided at the end of each unit. The exercises and the tutor-marked assignments will help you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course.

### **Set Textbooks**

John Baur, (1994) *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, Paulines publications Africa,  
Nairobi Kenya

Hastings A. A. History of Africa Christianity 1950-1975. Cambridge: CUP 1979.  
(Tripartite: Church and state; the Historic Churches; Independent Churches.)

Barrett D.B. World Christian Encyclopedia, (WCE), A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000. Nairobi; OUP 1982.  
(History, statistics and bibliography for each country)

Agbedi, Kofi. West Africa Church History. Christian Missions and church foundations: 1482-1919. Leiden: E.J Brill 1986.

### **Assignment File**

In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the assignment file itself and later in this Course Guide in the section on assessment.

### **Presentation Schedule**

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

### **Assessment**

There are two aspects to the assessment of the course. First are the tutor-marked assignments; second, there is a written examination. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information and knowledge acquired during the course.

The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment File. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count 30% of your total course mark. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final three-hour examination. This will count for 70% of your total course mark.

## **Tutor-Marked Assignments**

There are fourteen tutor-marked assignments in this course. You need to submit all the assignments. The best four (i.e. the highest four of the fourteen assignments) will be counted. The total marks for the best four (4) assignments will be 30% of your total course mark. Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment File. You should be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set textbooks, reading and study units. However, you are advised to use other references to broaden your viewpoint and provide a deeper understanding of the subject.

When you have completed each assignment, send it, together with TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given in the Assignment File. If, however, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension.

## **Final Examination and Grading**

The final examination CRS838 will be of three hours' duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercise and tutor-marked problems you have come across. All areas of the course will be assessed. You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. You will find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

## **Course Marking Scheme**

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Assignment 1-4	Four assignments, best three marks of the four count at 30% of course marks

Final Examination	70% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course marks

**Table 1: Course Marking Scheme**

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take to complete them, and the assignments that follow them.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Title of work</b>	<b>Week's Activity</b>	<b>Assessment (end of units)</b>
Unit	Course Guide	1	
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Pioneer African Leaders and the Introduction of Christianity to Africa</b>		
1	Brief History of Christianity in Africa	1	Assignment 1
2	The Spread of Christianity in Africa	2	Assignment 2
3	Crowther, Samuel Ajayi	3	Assignment 3
4	Stone, Moses Ladejo	4	Assignment 4
5	Brief Notes on William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola (David Brown Vincent), Shembe Isaiah Midiwamafa, Braide Garrick Sokari	5	Assignment 5
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>A Selection of Past Christian Leaders and the Spread of the Gospel in Africa</b>		
Unit			
1	Moses Orimolade Tunolase	6	Assignment 6



2	Oschoffa Samuel Bilewu	7	Assignment 7
3	Babalola Joseph Ayodele	8	Assignment 8
4	Idahosa Benson Andrew	9	Assignment 9
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Present African Leaders Influencing the stability and Growth of Christianity in Africa and beyond</b>		
Unit			
1	Peter Akinola	11	Assignment 11
2	William Folunrosho Kumuyi	12	Assignment 12
3	Enoch Adejare Adeboye	13	Assignment 13
4	David Olaniyi Oyedepo	14	Assignment 14
5	Daniel Kolawole olukoya	15	Assignment 15
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**Table 2: Course Overview**

**How to Get the Most from this Course**

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning, you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer in the same way that a lecturer might set books or other material. Just as a lecturer might set you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read your set books or other material. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercises for you to do at appropriate points.

Each of the study units' follows a common format .The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you have finished the units you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from internet resources.

### **Reading section**

Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need help, don't hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

- 1) Read this course guide thoroughly
- 2) Organize a study schedule. Refer to the "course overview" for more details.  

Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates for working on each unit.
- 3) Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work, if you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
- 4) Turn to unit 1 and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
- 5) Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the overview at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.
- 6) Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow. As you work, through the unit you will be instructed to read sections from your set books or other articles. Use the unit to guide your reading.

- 7) Review the objectives for each study unit to conform that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
- 8) When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit.
- 9) When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also on what is written on the assignment. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.
- 10) After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objective (listed in the course guide).

### **Tutors and Tutorials**

There are eight hours of tutorial provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor- marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board if you need help. The following might be circumstances in which you will find help necessary. Contact your tutor if:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings
- you have difficulty with the self-tests or exercises



- You have a question or problem with an assignment with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only opportunity to have face to face contact with your tutor and to ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

### **Summary**

CRS838 intends to introduce you to the contributions of African Leaders to the growth and spread of Christianity. Upon completing this course, you will be able to answer some questions such as:

- How did Christianity spread to Africa
- What are the contributions of African Christian leaders to the spread of Christianity?
- What gave birth to African independent Churches?
- What is the importance of a call from God to ministry

The questions you will be able to answer are not limited to the above list. We wish you success in the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful in your day to day life.



# MAIN COURSE

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## **MODULE 1: PIONEER AFRICAN LEADERS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY TO AFRICA**

**UNIT 1:** Brief History of Christianity in Africa

**UNIT 2:** The Spread of Christianity in Africa

**UNIT 3:** Bishop Ajayi Crowther 1807 – 1891

**UNIT 4:** Stone, Moses Ladejo 1850 – 1913

**UNIT 5:** Brief Notes on William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola (David Brown Vincent), Shembe Isaiah Midliwamafa,

**UNIT 1: Brief History of Christianity in Africa**

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  - 3.2 The continuity of Christian presence in Africa
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- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Christianity in Africa is not a recent happening, nor is it a by-product of colonialism; its roots go back to the very time of the Apostles. The church had been flourishing on the northern shore of the African continent for six hundred years before Islam was born. In those days Egypt and North Africa with their great theologians, such as Athanasius and Augustine, were the pillars of the universal church. In this unit we will take a look at a brief history of Christianity in Africa

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Discuss the introduction of Christianity to Africa
- List the names of Africans who contributed to early Christian theology
- Explain reasons why Christianity did not grow from North Africa to the rest of Africa

## **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN NORTH AFRICA**

The history of Christianity in Africa probably began during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, two thousand years ago. The New Testament of the Bible mentions several events in which Africans were witnesses to the life of Christ and the ministry of the apostles. It is possible that the history of Christianity in Africa began when these Africans shared what they witnessed with other Africans. The Gospel of Luke records that a Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus, prior to Jesus' crucifixion. Cyrene was located in North Africa. The book of Acts records that, on the day of Pentecost, Egyptians and Cyrenians were among the crowd, and they heard the apostles proclaim the Gospel in their native languages. Acts also records the conversion of an influential Ethiopian eunuch to Christianity. Finally, the book of Acts records that following the apostles missionary journey to Cyprus, new converts from Cyprus and Cyrene preached the gospel to the Greeks of Antioch.

North Africans were the first to receive and embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The early church in North Africa went through severe persecutions A.D. 64 through 311. In response, the church established the Catechetical Schools of Alexandria, among other similar schools of Christian instruction. Many significant leaders of the faith emerged from the early African church.

Persecutions in Egypt resulted in the dispersion of Christians to the innermost regions of Egypt. Egyptian churches spread the Gospel in the Coptic (Egyptian) language and planted churches throughout the interior of Egypt. However, Christianity, in the region, was weakened by theological and doctrinal controversies.

At the start of the seventh century, the Coptic Church had established itself as the national church and had penetrated every region of the country. Although Christianity began in North Africa several centuries before its introduction in Egypt, the church in North Africa did not grow as quickly because the North African church used the Latin language in its services and literature, rather than the language of the people.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.1**

Discuss the reason (s) why Christianity did not spread from North Africa to the rest of Africa.

### **3.2 THE CONTINUITY OF CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA**

The Church had been flourishing on the northern shore of the African continent for six hundred years before Islam was born. Christianity took root in North Africa at a very early date. Many important personalities in the early church came from this region, including great theologians, such as the church fathers Clement and Origen of Alexandria in Egypt, St. Augustine of Hippo, a city in present-day Algeria and Athanasius, were the pillars of the universal Church during their time.

From A.D. 100s to 400s, Christianity spread throughout much of North Africa. Perhaps the most important force in this development was the monastic movement, which began in Egypt and only later made its way to Europe. Unfortunately, through Arab occupation, starting in AD 640, the expansion of Christianity received a heavy blow. It died out entirely in North Africa yet has survived as an oppressed, though significant, minority in Egypt until the present time. The subsequent history of Christian presence in Africa is for many centuries like a trickling stream through the desert. Yet God's providence never let it dry up and in our days it has become a great flood watering the whole continent.

When Carthage, the last Christian stronghold in northern Africa, fell to the Arab assault in AD 697, there arose in the same year King Mercurios in Nubia who built up a Christian kingdom that reached from Aswan to the Blue Nile. When that kingdom succumbed to Turkish-Islamic attacks in AD 1270, there was a rebirth of the nine-hundred-year old Ethiopian Church. The restoration of the Solomonic dynasty under Yikunno Amlak and the religious reform by Takla Haymont, the great father of monasticism, brought new life to this uniquely African Christian kingdom. There was a flourishing Christian culture on the mountains of Ethiopia, equaling that of medieval Europe, until much of it was destroyed by an Islamic jihad which began in AD 1527.

But by that date, there was already another monarch carrying on the torch of faith: Afonso, king of the Kongo, the first Christian ruler south of the Sahara. For twenty years he worked untiringly to establish a Christian kingdom and in AD 1526, together with his son, Bishop Henrique, he outlined a program of evangelization to be carried to all the provinces of his realm. For over three hundred years, his successors were eager to maintain links with Rome; they brought as many as four hundred and forty Capuchins into the country in the course of a century and a half.

The Kongolese kings were still desperately calling for new missionaries from Rome, when in AD 1792 the first permanent mission in South Africa was erected by the Moravians and in West Africa, the first church was established by emancipated slaves returning from America: Freetown in Sierra Leone, thus inaugurating the modern era of Christianity in Africa. Indeed, in so many places, it was repatriated or liberated slaves who laid the foundation stones of the present African church. Their settlements formed the bases from which concerted efforts were made to bring the good news of the salvation in Christ to the tribal communities and into the very heart of the continent.

The pre-colonial period, from about AD 1800 to the AD 1880s, was truly the heroic age of modern missions. As proof of this, it may suffice to mention the one hundred Austrian missionaries who from AD 1852 to AD 1862 penetrated along the Nile up to Gondokoro in Southern Sudan. There they all succumbed to attacks of deadly fever, except the famous Comboni. Then there were the White Fathers who repeatedly attempted to cross the Sahara in the hope of reaching Timbuktu, the mysterious city of "Negroland", but on the way were killed by their guides. Of lasting influence were the

numerous missionaries that followed the footsteps of the great pathfinder Livingstone whose activity opened the way for the subsequent missions to the Great Lakes and the Zaire Basin. While there were many set-backs during these early days and most missionary settlements were composed of free slaves, there also flourished some Christian communities composed of local people in such West African places as Cape Coast, Accra, Abeokuta, Lagos, the Niger Delta city states and Calabar. In East Africa, there was the nucleus of a Christian Bugunda kingdom at the court of the Kabaka.

The foundation of most of the African churches, however, took place during the colonial period: AD 1880- 1960. This age brought to Africa much of the modern infrastructure which greatly facilitated the work of evangelization. What the white man failed to understand at the time was how much the African had to suffer from this European invasion that placed a whole continent into a position of inferiority. Those who knew history approached the age of independence with serious doubts, would Christianity be swept together away with colonialism?

Today, after many years of Independence, two facts have emerged clearly. First, the African Christians were able to distinguish between the substance of Christianity and its European garb. Those who threw away both and either Islam or returned to the religion of their ancestors were an insignificant minority. The expulsion of missionaries was a transient phenomenon affecting a few countries only. The undisputable fact is that statistically by AD 1990 Christianity had become the majority religion in most countries south of the Sahara. West Africa is the notable exception. Yet even there, it has established itself beyond dispute and is a force to be reckoned with.

The second fact is that though Christianity is well established, it has its serious problems. One is the infiltration of secularism, especially evident in the burgeoning urban centres. A second problem is the disunity among the Christian denominations that has been inherited from the mother churches. More than in any other continent, this seemingly unending process of fragmentation continues and is fostered by a constant influx of new sects as well as by the African proclivity for grouping into smaller communities. This is most manifest in the indigenous Independent African Churches. The attraction which these groups begin to exercise on the educated population too hints to the third problem, that of inculturation. Though many Christians feel at home



in the European garb of their church, and understand it as “traditional” Christianity, a growing number perceive the need of a deeper incarnation of their faith in the African personality. Most church leaders understood the need for inculturation, not its urgency. Much fewer seek suitable solutions that go beyond the singing of local hymns. One thing, however, is sure: African Christianity has made the bible its own, and at least African Catholicism also highly esteems the Sacraments. There is a well- founded hope that Africa will soon be not just a developing Third World continent but a third spiritual power between the Christianities of the East and the West, or, as the African prophet Blyden put it, well over a hundred years ago, “the spiritual reservoir of the world”.

A turning point in the development of ancient Christianity in Africa was the advent of Islam. It almost dried up the whole flow of Christian life: in time, the Church disappeared entirely from North Africa and Nubia. It was also heavily oppressed and restricted in Egypt, isolated and often attacked in Ethiopia. Between ancient and modern Christianity in Africa, there can be traced another Christian movement which pioneered the faith of the Gospel in the lands south of the Sahara. It was Christianity brought under the patronage of Portugal, whose seafarers were the first to circumnavigate the African continent. Although, this Christian faith never took strong roots in the African soil, it was still a reality of life for thousands of Africans during several generations, and in a few places even for two or three hundred thousand years, as in the kingdoms of Kongo, Angola, Warri and Zimbabwe.

A crucial role in this movement was played by Ethiopia, whose existence in the memory of Europe had practically become a myth. In their endeavors to contact the legendary king, Prester John, the Portuguese explorers came across two other powerful kings, the Mani Kongo in the West and Mwene Mutapa in the East. It was supposed that the whole of inner Africa was divided between these three kings, so that when Prester John would be reunited to Western Christendom, and Mani Kongo and Mwene Mutapa converted to the true faith, practically the whole of Africa beyond the Islamic belt would become Christian. This seemed to have been achieved in AD 1630: the Ethiopian king had effected his reunion with Rome, the kings of the Kongo had been in friendly contact with Christianity for more than one hundred years and Mwene Mutapa, the king of Zimbabwe, had just accepted the faith. There was also a Christian king in

Warri and Mombasa, while there were mixed Portuguese- African churches on the islands of Cape Verde and Sao Tome, and in such places as Elmina, Luanda and Mozambique. Unfortunately, this promising situation was not to last for too long.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.2**

Describe the history of Christian presence in Africa

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The history of the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity in Africa is limited to the countries north of the Sahara and the African horn: North Africa, Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia. During the first six centuries, Egypt and North Africa formed one great communion with the other countries around the Mediterranean Sea: a commonwealth of nations bound together by the Roman Empire and still more deeply by the Christian faith. For a long time the two regions held a leading position in the universal church: Egypt in the Greek- speaking eastern part, North Africa in the Latin- speaking western part. Nubia and Ethiopia, deeper in the African heartlands, received missionaries through Egypt and were dependent on the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, whom they defended with the power of their arms in times of danger. Modern Egyptian Christians are proud to trace back the origin of the faith to the very origins of Christianity itself. In Cairo they venerate a church built over the place where the Holy Family supposedly dwelt during its sojourn in Egypt; persecuted in his own fatherland, Christ sought the hospitality of the Egyptians.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we considered the brief history of Christianity in North Africa and the continuity of Christian presence in Africa.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Briefly discuss the introduction of Christianity to Africa
- Enumerate the Africans who contributed to early Christian theology
- Explain why Christianity did not spread from North Africa to the rest of Africa

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## **UNIT 2: THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Hindrances to the Spread of Christianity in Africa
  - 3.2 The Spread of Christianity in Western Africa
  - 3.3 The Spread of Christianity in Southern Africa
  - 3.4 The Spread of Christianity in Eastern Africa
  - 3.5 Independent Religious Movements
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The spread of Christianity throughout Egypt and Northern Africa, during the first five centuries was rapid and intense, despite the prevalence of false teachings, persecutions and martyrdom. Some religious scholars believe that Christianity was introduced to Africans by way of the Egyptian city of Alexandria. Reportedly, the city boasted a very large Jewish community, which was located in close proximity to Jerusalem. It is believed that African Jews in Alexandria were converted from Judaism to Christianity following a Jewish revolt in A.D. 115 that all but extinguished Judaism from the region.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Give reasons why Africans initially rejected Christianity
- Discuss the spread of Christianity in Western, Eastern and southern Africa
- Explain the reasons for the rise of the Independent religious movements in Africa

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 HINDRANCES TO THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA**

Despite the early introduction of Christianity in Ethiopia and North Africa, the religion did not penetrate sub-Saharan Africa for several hundred years. Christianity reached those regions by way of Europe during the great age of exploration. The Portuguese arrived in the kingdom of Kongo in 1483. Eight years later the king of Kongo was baptized under the name of João I, in honor of the Portuguese king João II.

As Europeans established outposts on the coast of Africa in the 1400s and 1500s, they brought along missionaries, who settled among indigenous\* populations. At first, the introduction of Christianity was limited to Africans in coastal areas. With a few exceptions, missionaries did not carry Christianity into the interior of the continent until the 1800s. Europeans considered converting Africans to Christianity to be part of the process of colonization. As a result, their exploitation of Africa's wealth was accompanied by missionary activity. However, the primary interest of most of the conquerors and traders who journeyed to Africa was to enrich them. This goal often involved enslaving and even killing local populations. Although Christian missionaries had come to Africa to save souls, they were often associated with the greed of their fellow Europeans. For this reason, many Africans resisted the missionaries and their message.

After a while, instead of trying to impose Christianity on the Africans, Europeans began to look for ways to use local institutions to gain converts. Missionaries attempted to win over rulers and then use their authority to spread Christianity among the people. The long-term success of efforts to convert Africans to Christianity often depended on local political developments. The Christian nature of African kingdoms could prove short-lived if the ruling group was overthrown or challenged by a group opposed to Christianity. Attempts to spread the faith by reaching out to ordinary Africans did not occur for many years.

The Protestant outcry against the slave trade in the late 1700s and early 1800s marked a turning point for African Christianity. Significantly, the first Protestant missionaries to arrive in West Africa were former slaves who had supported the British in the

American Revolutionary War. These black preachers and their successors transformed the face of African Christianity.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.1**

Discuss two reasons why Africans resisted Christian missionaries

### **3.2 THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN WESTERN AFRICA**

In 1787, four hundred eleven freed blacks left London to found a community called Freetown in what is now Sierra Leone. It became a haven for freed slaves and an outpost for the spread of the gospel. Like the Puritans who settled New England, these early settlers burned with religious zeal. Freetown became a Christian commonwealth that inspired similar Christian communities farther down the coast in the Nigerian towns of Abeokuta and Badagry. “Recaptives” (slaves liberated by the British Navy) added to the population of Freetown. Many converted to the Christian faith and found an opportunity for training at Freetown’s Fourah Bay College, established in 1827.

One of the most outstanding graduates was a young receptive named Samuel Ajayi Crowther. Crowther was ordained in 1843, and in 1864 became Africa’s first Anglican bishop. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) recognized in Crowther the leader they needed to further the spread of Christianity in Africa. Under Henry Venn, an aggressive program of Africanization was adopted that called for the urgent building of self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing local churches. Crowther was asked to implement this strategy in the Nigerian interior. Through the failure of some of the members of his team and through the hostility of white missionaries opposed to Venn’s policies, Crowther was forced to resign. This led to a number of African-initiated churches. In addition to Nigeria, work went on in Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon, Gabon, Senegal, and Zaire, which was the main arena for Catholic missions.

Although not formally authorized as Protestant ministers, some of these former slaves became enthusiastic leaders of the effort to convert indigenous Africans to Christianity. In preaching to Africans, they saw much common ground between the lessons found in the Bible and traditional African beliefs and values. This link between the Christian message and African culture was an important factor in the spread of Christianity across the continent in the 1800s and 1900s.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the role of Sierra Leon in the spread of Christianity in West Africa

### **3.3 THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

While West Africa was evangelized by Africans returning to their mother- land, South Africa from the very earliest days of Christianity was dominated by the white expatriate. Despite the common denominator of white domination, there was little unity in South African Christianity, which saw three distinct and mutually hostile expressions of Christianity emerge in the nineteenth century.

The first expression was that of Afrikaner Christianity and the Dutch Reformed Church. After England gained control of South Africa in 1815, conflicts between Boer families and English administrators multiplied, which led to mass migrations of Afrikaner families to north eastern regions of South Africa. [“Afrikaner” and “Boer” are names applied to the descendants of Dutch immigrants to South Africa.] One small party of “voortrekkers” encountered an army of Zulu warriors. Their surprising victory at the battle of Blood River in 1833 coupled with the tradition that trekkers had made a special covenant with God prior to the battle fueled the belief that Afrikaner Christians were an elect nation endowed by God with both a right to rule the land and a right to resist the non-elect. This religious tradition became a political and cultural force that found expression in the formation of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party.

The abolition of slavery by the British government in 1836 exacerbated deep resentments harbored by the Afrikaners. Outrage that indigenous people were “being placed on equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God, and the natural distinctions of race and colour, led many Afrikaners to migrate out of British-controlled territory in what they compared to the biblical exodus. This separatist mindset eventually resulted in the policies of racial segregation and white domination known as apartheid.

A second expression of South African church life in the nineteenth century was that of 'missionary Christianity, which made major inroads into the Xhosa community and produce believers such as hymn writer Ntsikana and the African Presbyterian leader Tiyo Soga. Such leaders encouraged the missionary- dominated churches to engage in programs of training, including Lovedale College and Fort Hare University. David Livingstone's fame exceeded that of all other nineteenth century missionaries despite his failure as an evangelist (he saw only one convert, who eventually fell away). His achievements as an explorer, anti-slavery crusader, and mission's promoter establish his place in history.

Though missionary Christianity tended to emphasize inward piety and broadly evangelical theology that stood in contrast with the more reformed Afrikaners by the late nineteenth century, attempts were made to bridge the gap. Most successful was Andrew Murray, Jr., moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church and champion of both evangelical piety and missions. His emphasis on "absolute surrender" and the formation of new agencies such as the South Africa General Mission (now African Evangelical Fellowship) acted as a corrective to the Afrikaner Christianity.

A third expression of South African Christianity was that of the social gospel championed by people like the Anglican bishop John Colenso and John Jabavu. The emphasis on this form of Christianity was upon economic and political justice. Colenso opposed the Afrikaner and English messianic nationalism which he saw as the root of injustice in South Africa. His clash with Bishop Robert Gray of Cape Town ended with the formation of an independent Anglican communion in South Africa. Like Colenso, John Jabavu regarded politics as an appropriate arena for Christian involvement. A tireless campaigner for African rights, he founded his own independent newspaper. This third expression would become a major force in the years following South Africa's Sharpsville Massacre of 1960.

Despite the fragmented witness to the kingdom of God provided by South African Christianity, this region entered the twentieth century as one of the most Christianized regions in all of Africa. Yet, white denomination of the churches would eventually spawn a vigorous movement of "Ethiopianism"—separatist churches that demanded respect from the Westerner and a greater share of church leadership.



### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.3**

Describe the various expressions of Christianity southern Africa

## **3.4 THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN EASTERN AFRICA**

By the 300s, Christianity had spread to Ethiopia and Eritrea, centred on the city of Aksum. Most of the region is still Christian today. Beginning in the 500s, Christian kingdoms also flourished on the upper Nile River in Nubia (in what is now Sudan). The nineteenth century witnessed the reintroduction of Christianity into the former Nubia (Sudan) and Mombasa (Kenya). Ethiopian Christianity was also revitalized. Additionally, the lands of Tanzania and Uganda saw the initial introduction of this ancient African faith among their own people.

### **3.4.1 ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN**

In 1830, the CMS arrived in Ethiopia. Originally working with the Coptic Church, Protestant missionaries such as J. Ludwig Krapf clashed with Coptic authorities, leading to expulsion in 1843. Under Emperor Menelik II, Ethiopian Christianity experienced a new surge of life and entered the twentieth century carefully guarding its dearly won political and religious independence. In Sudan, Catholic work under the leadership of the Verona Fathers was swept away by the Islamic Mahdist movement.

### **3.4.2 KENYA.**

KRAPF began work in Kenya in 1844 after his expulsion from Ethiopia. He and his colleague Johann Rebmann envisioned a chain of mission stations across the continent, linking up with Freetown in West Africa. Krapf's vision was to guide numerous mission agencies for the next century. Though he attempted to establish the eastern link of his chain at Rabai Mpyia, it was the later formation of Freetown (Kenya) in 1874 as a refuge for runaway slaves that gave Christianity its firmest foothold in British East Africa. Outstanding Christian leaders came from the community at Freetown, including David Koi, Kenya's first protestant martyr.

These missionary efforts on the coast were soon augmented by a new thrust inland. James Stewart, a Presbyterian missionary at Lovedale College, was recruited by Livingstone to establish an industrial mission in the Kenya interior in 1891. The CMS

began work among Kikuyu of Kenya's central highlands in 1901. Peter Cameron Scott and his newly founded Africa Inland Mission (AIM) began churches among the Kamba people in 1895. The Holy Ghost Fathers began work in Nairobi in 1899.

### **3.4.3 TANZANIA.**

The Catholic missionary efforts centered around the formation of a "Christian Village" at Begamoyo (1868), where three hundred freed slaves found a place of refuge. Protestant work was conducted by the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA), who were vigorous in their opposition to the Arab slave trade that was decimating the inland people of Africa's Great Lake region, where London Missionary Society (LMS) and CMS had established a presence. Through the intervention of Germany, the Arab slave trade was broken and a number of German mission agencies introduced Lutheranism.

### **3.4.4 UGANDA.**

The response to the gospel in Uganda was more dramatic than in any other part of East Africa. Christianity was introduced by the CMS in 1877 and flourished under the zealous leadership of Alexander Mackay. European priests introduced Catholicism in 1879. Despite the indifference of King Mutesa I and the violent hostility of his son Mwanga, Protestant and Catholic Christianity eventually produced a religious revolution in Uganda that spilled beyond the borders of the kingdom of Buganda into the smaller kingdoms that make up the modern day nation of Uganda.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.4**

Discuss the role of CMS in the spread of Christianity in East Africa

## **3.5 INDEPENDENT RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

The birth of the African initiated Church movement was one of the reactions to the missionary factor. The independent churches that were founded tended to fall into distinct groupings. Some were primarily concerned with African leadership and only secondarily concerned with changing missionary theology and worship, a second grouping emphasized healing and the supernatural. Armed with scripture in their own

languages, they struck out on their own. The preaching of Liberia's William Wade Harris in West Africa claimed over one hundred thousand adherent. Others like Simon Kimbangu of Zaire catalyzed separation from missionary churches into new denominations. In some cases, these "prophet churches" moved clearly outside the bounds of orthodoxy. Such was the case with Isaiah Shembe and his church of the Nazarites in South Africa. After his death in 1935, his followers claimed that he had risen from the dead and was in fact the true Christ for Africa. A third category covers movements of revival within established denominations; the passion of these was the discovery of a vital Christianity to replace a numbing nominalism in the church. The outstanding example is the East Africa Revival that swept much of East Africa from 1930 onward.

#### **SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the various groups among the Independent Religious movements in Africa.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Protestant evangelists who founded missionary movements in Africa around 1800 stressed the important contributions that indigenous Africans could make to missionary activity. In 1861 a missionary named Henry Venn took the bold step of transferring nine churches in Sierra Leone to local control. He later named Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a former slave who had come to Freetown in 1822, as the first African bishop. From this point on, black preachers played a leading role in spreading Christianity throughout the continent. They used their familiarity with the people and their culture to relate the Christian message in a uniquely African context, one that combined elements of European Christianity with African traditions.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we looked at the hindrances to the spread of Christianity in Africa and the spread of Christianity in Western and Southern Africa. In addition, we also considered the spread of Christianity in Eastern Africa, using Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania

and Uganda as case studies. Lastly in this unit we looked the rise of the Independent Religious Movements.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Highlight the major reason(s) why Christianity did not spread from North Africa to the rest of Africa
- Discuss the spread of Christianity in western, southern and eastern parts of Africa
- Discuss the various groups among the Independent Religious movements in Africa.

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## **UNIT 3 BISHOP AJAYI CROWTHER 1807 TO 1891**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life
  - 3.2 Ajayi Crowther's encounter with Christianity
  - 3.3 Ajayi Crowther's Contribution to Pioneering Christianity in Africa
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Samuel Ajayi Crowther was probably the most widely known African Christian of the nineteenth century. His life spanned the greater part of it; he was born in its first decade and died in the last. He lived through a transformation of relations between Africa and the rest of the world and a parallel transformation in the Christian situation in Africa. By the time of his death the bright confidence in an African church led by Africans, a reality that he seemed to embody in himself had dimmed. Today things look very different. It seems a good time to consider the legacy of Crowther.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Draw inspiration from his early life and missionary journey for your own life
- Explain Ajayi Crowther's role in pioneering Christianity in West Africa
- Highlight Bishop Crowther's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 EARLY LIFE**

The story begins with the birth of a boy called Ajayi in the town of Osogun in Yorubaland in what is now Western Nigeria, in or about the year 1807. In later years, the story was told that a diviner had indicated that Ajayi was not to enter any of the cults of the orisa, the divinities of the Yoruba pantheon, because he was to be a servant of Olorun, the God of heaven. He grew up in dangerous times when the breakup of the old Yoruba empire of Oyo and the effect of the great Islamic jihads, which were establishing a new Fulani empire to the north, meant chaos for the Yoruba states. Warfare and raiding became endemic. Besides all the trauma of divided families and transplantation that African slavery could bring, the raids fed a still worse evil: the European traders at the coast. These maintained a trade in slaves, illegal but still richly profitable, across the Atlantic.

When Crowther was about thirteen, Osogun was raided, apparently by a combination of Fulani and Oyo Muslims. Crowther twice recorded his memories of the event, vividly recalling the desolation of burning houses, the horror of capture and roping by the neck, the slaughter of those unfit to travel, the distress of being torn from relatives. Ajayi changed hands six times, before being sold to Portuguese traders for the transatlantic market.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3.1**

Describe one significant event in Samuel Ajayi Crowther's early life

#### **3.2 AJAYI CROWTHER'S ENCOUNTER WITH CHRISTIANITY**

The colony of Sierra Leone had been founded by a coalition of anti-slavery interests, mostly evangelical Christian in inspiration and belonging to the circle associated with William Wilberforce and the "Clapham Sect." It was intended from the beginning as a Christian settlement, free from slavery and the slave trade. The first permanent element in the population was a group of former slaves from the New World. Following the

abolition of the slave trade by the British Parliament in 1807 and the subsequent treaties with other nations to outlaw the traffic, Sierra Leone achieved a new importance. It was a base for the naval squadron that searched vessels to find if they were carrying slaves. It was also the place where slaves were brought if any were found aboard. The Portuguese ship on which Ajayi was taken as a slave was intercepted by the British naval squadron in April 1822, and he, like thousands of other uprooted, disorientated people from inland Africa, was put ashore in Sierra Leone.

By this time, Sierra Leone was becoming a Christian community. It was one of the few early successes of the missionary movement, though the Christian public at large was probably less conscious of the success than of the appalling mortality of missionaries in what became known as the White Man's Grave. To all appearances the whole way of life of Sierra Leone clothing, buildings, language, education, religion, even names closely followed Western models. These were people of diverse origins whose cohesion and original identity were now beyond recall. They accepted the combination of Christian faith and Western lifestyle that Sierra Leone offered, a combination already represented in the oldest inhabitants of the colony, the settled slaves from the New World.

Such was the setting in which young Ajayi now found himself. We know little of his early years there. Later he wrote that “about the third year of my liberation from the slavery of man, I was convinced of another worse state of slavery, namely, that of sin and Satan. It pleased the Lord to open my heart; I was admitted into the visible Church of Christ here on earth as a soldier to fight manfully under his banner against our spiritual enemies”. He was baptized by the Reverend John Raban, of the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society, taking the name Samuel Crowther, after a member of that society's home committee. Mr. Crowther was an eminent clergyman; his young namesake was to make the name far more celebrated.

Crowther had spent those early years in Sierra Leone at school, getting an English education, adding carpentry to his traditional weaving and agricultural skills. In 1827 the Church Missionary Society decided, for the sake of Sierra Leone's future Christian leadership, to provide education to a higher level than the colony's modest schools had given. The resultant "Christian Institution" developed as Fourah Bay College, which

eventually offered the first university education in tropical Africa. Crowther was one of its first students.

### **3.2.1 Preparation for Missionary work**

This period marked the beginning of the work that was to form one of the most abiding parts of Crowther's legacy. He continued to have contact with Raban, who had baptized him; and Raban was one of the few missionaries in Sierra Leone to take African languages seriously. To many of his colleagues the priority was to teach English, which would render the African languages unnecessary. Raban realized that such policy was a dead end; he also realized that Yoruba, Crowther's mother tongue, was a major language. (Yoruba had not been prominent in the early years of Sierra Leone, but the political circumstances that had led to young Ajayi's captivity were to bring many other Yoruba to the colony.) Crowther became an informant for Raban, who between 1828 and 1830 published three little books about Yoruba; and almost certainly he also assisted another pioneer African linguist, the Quaker educationist Hannah Kilham.

Crowther was appointed a schoolmaster of the mission, serving in the new villages created to receive "liberated Africans" from the slave ships. A schoolmaster was an evangelist; in Sierra Leone church and school were inseparable. He was a vigorous young man who at least at first was highly confrontational in his encounters with representatives of Islam and the old religions in Africa. In later life he valued the lessons of this apprenticeship - the futility of abuse, the need to build personal relationships, and the ability to listen patiently. Crowther began study of the Temne language, which suggests a missionary vision toward the hinterland of Sierra Leone. But he also worked systematically at his own language, as far as the equipment to hand allowed.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the major events that influenced Bishop Ajayi Crowther's missionary journey



### **3.3 AJAYI CROWTHER'S CONTRIBUTION TO PIONEERING CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA**

Two developments now opened a new chapter for Crowther and for Sierra Leone Christianity. One was a new link with Yorubaland. Enterprising liberated Africans, banding together and buying confiscated slave ships, began trading far afield from Freetown. Some of Yoruba origin found their way back to their homeland. They settled there, but kept the Sierra Leone connections and the ways of life of Christian Freetown.

The second development was the Niger Expedition of 1841, the brief flowering of the humanitarian vision for Africa of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton. This investigative mission, intended to prepare the way for an alliance of "Christianity, commerce and civilization" that would destroy the slave trade and bring peace and prosperity to the Niger, relied heavily on Sierra Leone for interpreters and other helpers. The missionary society representatives also came from Sierra Leone. One was J. F. Schön, a German missionary who had striven with languages of the Niger, learning from liberated Africans in Sierra Leone. The other was Crowther.

Crowther's services to the disaster-stricken expedition were invaluable. Schön cited them as evidence of his thesis that the key to the evangelization of inland Africa lay in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone had Christians such as Crowther to form the task force; it had among the liberated Africans brought there from the slave ships a vast language laboratory for the study of all the languages of West Africa, as well as a source of native speakers as missionaries; and in the institution at Fourah Bay it had a base for study and training.

The Niger Expedition had shown Crowther's qualities, and he was brought to England for study and ordination. The latter was of exceptional significance. Anglican ordination could be received only from a bishop, and there was no bishop nearer than London. Here then, in 1843, began Sierra Leone's indigenous ministry. Here, too, began Crowther's literary career, with the publication of Yoruba Vocabulary, including an account of grammatical structure, surely the first such work by a native speaker of an African language.

### 3.3.1 The Yoruba Mission

Meanwhile, the new connection between Sierra Leone and Yorubaland had convinced the CMS of the timeliness of a mission to the Yoruba. There had been no opportunity to train that African mission force foreseen by Schön and Crowther in their report on the Niger Expedition, but at least in Crowther there was one ordained Yoruba missionary available. Thus, after an initial reconnaissance by Henry Townsend, an English missionary from Sierra Leone, a mission party went to Abeokuta, the state of the Egba section of the Yoruba people. It was headed by Townsend, Crowther, and a German missionary, C. A. Gollmer, with a large group of Sierra Leoneans from the liberated Yoruba community. These included carpenters and builders who were also teachers and catechists. The mission intended to demonstrate a whole new way of life, of which the church and the school and the well-built house were all a part. They were establishing Sierra Leone in Yorubaland. The Sierra Leone trader-immigrants, the people who had first brought Abeokuta to the attention of the mission, became the nucleus of the new Christian community.

The CMS Yoruba mission is a story in itself. How the mission, working on Buxton's principles, introduced the growing and processing of cotton and arranged for its export, thereby keeping Abeokuta out of the slave economy; how the missionaries identified with Abeokuta under invasion and reaped their reward afterward; how the CMS mobilized Christian opinion to influence the British government on behalf of Abeokuta; and the toils into which the mission fell amid inter-Yoruba and colonial conflicts, have been well told elsewhere. Crowther came to London in 1851 to present the cause of Abeokuta. He saw government ministers; he had an interview with the Queen and Prince Albert; he spoke at meetings all over the country, invariably to great effect. This grave, eloquent, well-informed black clergyman was the most impressive tribute to the effect of the missionary movement that most British people had seen; and Henry Venn, the CMS secretary who organized the visit, believed that it was Crowther who finally moved the government to action.

But the missionaries' day-to-day activities lay in commending the Gospel and nourishing the infant church. There was a particularly moving incident for Crowther, when he was reunited with the mother and sister from whom he had been separated

when the raiders took them more than twenty years earlier. They were among the first in Abeokuta to be baptized.

In Sierra Leone the church had used English in its worship. The new mission worked in Yoruba, with the advantage of native speakers in Crowther and his family and in most of the auxiliaries, and with Crowther's book to assist the Europeans. Townsend, an excellent practical linguist, even edited a Yoruba newspaper. But the most demanding activity was Bible translation. The significance of the Yoruba version has not always been observed. It was not the first translation into an African language; but, insofar as Crowther was the leading influence in its production, it was the first by a native speaker. Early missionary translations naturally relied heavily on native speakers as informants and guides; but in no earlier case was a native speaker able to judge and act on an equal footing with the European.

Crowther insisted that the translation should indicate tone -- a new departure. In vocabulary and style he sought to get behind colloquial speech by listening to the elders, by noting significant words that emerged in his discussions with Muslims or specialists in the old religion. Over the years, wherever he was, he noted words, proverbs, forms of speech. One of his hardest blows was the loss of the notes of eleven years of such observations, and some manuscript translations, when his house burned down in 1862.

Written Yoruba was the product of missionary committee work, Crowther interacting with his European colleagues on matters of orthography. Henry Venn engaged the best linguistic expertise available in Europe - not only Schön and the society's regular linguistic adviser, Professor Samuel Lee of Cambridge, but the great German philologist Lepsius. The outcome may be seen in the durability of the Yoruba version of the Scriptures to which Crowther was the chief contributor and in the vigorous vernacular literature in Yoruba that has grown up.

One of these is the continued contribution to language study and translation. Crowther himself wrote the first book on Igbo. He begged Schön, now serving an English parish, to complete his Hausa dictionary. He sent one of his missionaries to study Hausa with Schön. Most of his Sierra Leone staff, unlike people of his own generation, were not

native speakers of the languages of the areas they served. The great Sierra Leone language laboratory was closing down; English and the common language, Krio, took over from the languages of the liberated. Add to this the limited education of many Niger missionaries, and their record of translation and publication is remarkable.

### **3.3.2 New Niger Expeditions and a Mission to the Niger**

In 1854 the merchant McGregor Laird sponsored a new Niger expedition, on principles similar to the first, but with a happier outcome. The CMS sent Crowther on this expedition. It revived the vision he had seen in 1841 -- a chain of missionary operations hundreds of miles along the Niger, into the heart of the continent. He urged a beginning at Onitsha, in Igboland. The opportunity was not long in coming. In 1857, he and J. C. Taylor, a Sierra Leonean clergyman of liberated Igbo parentage, joined Laird's next expedition to the Niger. Taylor opened the Igbo mission at Onitsha; Crowther went upriver. Shipwrecked, and stranded for months, he began to study the Nupe language and surveyed openings to the Nupe and Hausa peoples. The Niger Mission had begun.

Henry Venn soon made a formal structure for it. But it was a mission on a new principle. Crowther led a mission force consisting entirely of Africans. Sierra Leone, as he and Schön had foreseen so long ago, was now evangelizing inland Africa. For nearly half a century that tiny country sent a stream of missionaries, ordained and lay, to the Niger territories. The area was vast and diverse: Muslim emirates in the north, ocean-trading city-states in the Delta, the vast Igbo populations in between. It is cruel that the missionary contribution of Sierra Leone has been persistently overlooked, and even denied.

It is possible here to consider only three aspects of a remarkable story. Two have been somewhat neglected. The story of the later years of the Niger mission has often been told and variously interpreted. It still raises passions and causes bitterness. There is no need here to recount more than the essentials: that questions arose about the lives of some of the missionaries; that European missionaries were brought into the mission, and then took it over, brushing aside the old bishop (he was over eighty) and suspending or dismissing his staff.

There were some unexpected legacies even from the last sad days. One section of the Niger mission that in the Niger Delta, was financially self-supporting. Declining the European takeover, it long maintained a separate existence under Crowther's son, Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther, within the Anglican Communion but outside the CMS. It grew at a phenomenal rate, becoming so self-propagating that it ceased to be self-supporting.

### **3.3.3 The Engagement with Islam**

Crowther's Niger Mission also represents the first sustained missionary engagement with African Islam in modern times. In the Upper Niger areas in Crowther's time, Islam, largely accepted by the chiefs, was working slowly through the population in coexistence with the old religion. From his early experiences in Sierra Leone, Crowther understood how Islamic practice could merge with traditional views of power. He found a demand for Arabic Bibles, but was cautious about supplying them unless he could be sure they would not be used for charms. His insight was justified later, when the young European missionaries who succeeded him wrote out passages of Scripture on request, pleased at such a means of Scripture distribution. They stirred up the anger of Muslim clerics -- not because they were circulating Christian Scriptures, but because they were giving them free, thus undercutting the trade in quranic charms.

In discussion with Muslims, Crowther sought common ground and found it at the nexus of Qur'an and Bible: Christ as the great prophet, his miraculous birth, Gabriel as the messenger of God. He enjoyed courteous and friendly relations with Muslim rulers, and his writings trace various discussions with rulers, courts, and clerics, recording the questions raised by Muslims, and his own answers, the latter as far as possible in the words of Scripture: "After many years' experience, I have found that the Bible, the sword of the Spirit, must fight its own battle, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Christians should of course defend Trinitarian doctrine, but let them do so mindful of the horror-stricken cry of the Qur'an, "Is it possible that Thou dost teach that Thou and Thy Mother are two Gods?" In other words, Christians must show that the things that the Muslims fear as blasphemous are no part of Christian doctrine.

Crowther, though no great scholar or Arabist, developed an approach to Islam in its African setting that reflected the patience and the readiness to listen that marked his entire missionary method. Avoiding denunciation and allegations of false prophecy, it worked by acceptance of what the Qur'an says of Christ, and an effective knowledge of the Bible. Crowther looked to the future with hope; the average African Christian knew the Bible much better than the average African Muslim knew the Qur'an. And he pondered the fact that the Muslim rule of faith was expressed in Arabic, the Christian in Hausa, or Nupe or Yoruba. The result was different understandings of how the faith was to be applied in life.

### **3.3.4 The Indigenization of the Episcopate**

The best-known aspect of Crowther's later career is also the most controversial: his representation of the indigenous church principle. We have seen that he was the first ordained minister of his church in his place. It was the policy of Henry Venn, then newly at the helm of the CMS, to strengthen the indigenous ministry. More and more Africans were ordained, some for the Yoruba mission. And Venn wanted well-educated, well-trained African clergy; such people as Crowther's son Dandeson (who became archdeacon) and his son-in-law T. B. Macaulay (who became principal of Lagos Grammar School) were better educated than many of the homespun English missionaries.

Venn sought self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches with a fully indigenous pastorate. In Anglican terms, this meant indigenous bishops. The missionary role was a temporary one; once a church was established, the missionary should move on. The birth of the church brought the euthanasia of the mission. With the growth of the Yoruba church, Venn sought to get these principles applied in Yorubaland. Even the best European missionaries thought this impractical, the hobbyhorse of a doctrinaire home-based administrator.

As we have seen, Venn made a new sphere of leadership for Crowther, the outstanding indigenous minister in West Africa. But he went further, and in 1864 secured the consecration of Crowther as bishop of "the countries of Western Africa beyond the limits of the Queen's dominions," a title reflecting some constraints imposed by

Crowther's European colleagues and the peculiarities of the relationship of the Church of England to the Crown. Crowther, a genuinely humble man, resisted; Venn would take no refusal.

In one sense, the new diocese represented the triumph of the three-self principle and the indigenization of the episcopate. But it reflected a compromise, rather than the full expression of those principles. It was, after all, essentially a mission, drawing most of its clergy not from natives of the soil but from Sierra Leone. Its ministry was "native" only in the sense of not being European. Three-self principles required it to be self-supporting; this meant meagre resources, missionaries who got no home leave, and the need to present education as a saleable product.

European thought about Africa had changed since the time of Buxton; the Western powers were now in Africa to govern. Missionary thought about Africa had changed since the days of Henry Venn; there were plenty of keen, young Englishmen to extend the mission and order the church; a self-governing church now seemed to matter much less. And evangelical religion had changed since Crowther's conversion; it had become more individualistic and more otherworldly. A young English missionary was distressed that the old bishop who preached so splendidly on the blood of Christ could urge on a chief the advantages of having a school and make no reference to the future life. This story illustrates in brief the two evangelical itineraries: the short route via Keswick, and the long one via the White Man's Grave, the Niger Expedition and the courts of Muslim rulers of the north.

Other voices called for direct schism; the refusal to appoint an African successor to Crowther, despite the manifest availability of outstanding African clergy, marks an important point in the history of African Independent churches. The treatment of Crowther, and still more the question of his successor, gave a focus for the incipient nationalist movement of which E. W. Blyden was the most eloquent spokesman. Crowther thus has his own modern place in the martyrology of African nationalism.

But the majority of Christians, including those natural successors of Crowther who were passed over or, worse, suffered denigration or abuse, took no such course. They simply waited. Crowther was the outstanding representative of a whole body of West

African church leaders who came to the fore in the pre-Imperial age and were superseded in the Imperial. But the Imperial age it was to be only an episode. The legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther, the humble, devout exponent of a Christian faith that was essentially African and essentially missionary, has passed to the whole vast church of Africa and thus to the whole vast church of Christ.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss Ajayi Crowther's contribution to pioneering Christianity in Africa

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In 1891 Crowther, a desolate, broken man suffered a stroke; on the last day of the year, he died. A European bishop was appointed to succeed him. The self-governing church and the indigenization of the episcopate were abandoned. Contemporary mission accounts all praise Crowther's personal integrity, graciousness, and godliness. In the Yoruba mission, blessed with many strong, not to say prickly, personalities, his influence had been irenic. In Britain he was recognized as a cooperative and effective platform speaker. (A CMS official remembered Crowther's being called on to give a conference address on "Mission and Women" and holding his audience spellbound.) Yet the same sources not only declared Crowther "a weak bishop" but drew the moral that "the African race" lacked the capacity to rule.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we considered the early life and missionary journey of Bishop Ajayi Crowther and also his contribution to pioneering Christianity in Africa especially the Yoruba mission, the new Niger expedition, his encounter with Islam and the indigenization of the Episcopate

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- What personal lesson(s) have you learnt from the ministry and life of Bishop Ajayi Crowther



- Describe Bishop Ajayi Crowther's Contribution to the pioneering work of Christianity in Africa
- Discuss some of the challenges faced by Bishop Ajayi Crowther

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## **UNIT 4: STONE, MOSES LADEJO 1850 TO 1913**

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Baptist Mission first came to Nigeria in 1850 when Rev. Thomas J. Bowen, the pioneer American Baptist missionary (First Baptist Church, Lagos was originally known as American Baptist Church) arrived in Nigeria. The efforts of this singular man opened up Nigeria for other American Baptists who came after him. From 1855 when Bowen made his first convert (according to entries in his diary) he began to nurse the hope of starting a native African pastorate to minister to Africans. Not long afterwards God provided a man who would become the first Nigerian to be ordained as a Baptist minister: Moses Ladejo Stone.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Highlight the importance of discipleship using the life of Stone Moses Ladejo
- Discuss Stone Ladejo's contribution to pioneering Christianity in Africa

- Enumerate the sufferings and heroic sacrifice of Stone Moses Ladejo

### **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.2 EARLY LIFE**

Moses Ladejo was born around 1850 at Ogbomoso. In 1855 Rev. T. J. Howell was said to have converted a woman called Ofiki who was barren. Ofiki had adopted her brother-in-law's son, Ladejo. The woman became a firm believer in the Scriptures and followed the missionaries' teaching despite her husband's constant beatings. Though persecuted, she remained true to her new faith and providentially helped to preserve Ladejo's life. In March 1860, longstanding hostility led to war between Ibadan and Ijaye. The Alaafin of Oyo declared his support for Ibadan. The Alake of Abeokuta, fresh from a military success over his archenemies, the Dahomeans, supported Ijaye while the Ijebus followed the Egbas. Henry Townsend, a C.M.S. missionary in Abeokuta anxious to appear as the champion of the Egbas, threw his weight behind the Egbas.

The British officials were at first inclined to take Townsend's line of action, but when they realized that the war involved practically all Yorubaland and was likely to prove costly and protracted, they avoided any direct involvement. This left Ijaye open to a full Ibadan offensive which in March 1862 led to the subjugation of Ijaye and the departure of the missionaries for Abeokuta. During the Ibadan-Ijaye war, young Ladejo was taken for protection to the American Baptist mission house at Ogbomoso and handed over to Rev. W. H. Clarke. Later, he was taken to Ijaye where he stayed with Rev. Bowen for some time and when Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Stone arrived at Ijaye, Ladejo was taken into their custody and became a mission boy.

These missionaries stayed at Ijaye until the 1862 sack by Ibadan. As noted earlier the missionaries R. H. Stone, Vaughan and Russell (two Liberian carpenters who arrived with Sierra Leone immigrants) left Ijaye for Abeokuta and camped at the place later known as Ago Ijaye (Ijaye quarters). Some refugees and over a dozen children, among them Ladejo, followed the missionaries. These children were either orphans or had been given to the missionaries for safety reasons.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What lessons can be learnt from Stone's humble background

### **3.2 Schooling and Ministry Apprenticeship**

At Abeokuta a small school was started for the children and Ladejo was one of the first pupils enrolled. He was further apprenticed to Vaughan to learn carpentry, a skill in which he excelled. Rev. R. H. Stone said of him: He was one of the school children at Abeokuta when our station was destroyed there in 1867. When I began a station and school at Lagos in the year 1868, I found it convenient to take him into my household together with several other boys. In a few months he gave such evidence of genuine devotion that I baptized him. (...) I believe that he will become as great a blessing to Yoruba as Bishop Crowther, if he receives anything like the aid and encouragement that Crowther received.

In 1867, mission properties at Abeokuta were confiscated by the Egbas who had become hostile to the missionaries. The Baptist missionaries then left for Lagos. In 1868 another school was established. In 1869, before R. H. Stone left for America he baptized Ladejo. Doubtless, as a token of gratitude, this young African took the name of his missionary parent and became known as Moses Ladejo Stone. With the departure of R. H. Stone there were no American Baptist missionaries left in Nigeria. But M. L. Stone and Sarah Harden, wife of a Negro missionary and a liberated slave, R. M. Harden, carried on the school and church work until the arrival of Rev. W. J. David in 1875.

When W. J. David started his work, M. L. Stone was called from his job to serve as an interpreter and assistant to David, and because of his exceptional abilities, David began to give him lectures in theology. In 1876, David went to Ogbomoso and organized the church there. Two years later, when David went on furlough to America, he sent M. L. Stone, who had become indispensable to him, to pastor the church at Ogbomoso. Before Stone left for Ogbomoso David said of him, "I have lost my right arm." M. L. Stone arrived in Ogbomoso in the last two weeks of 1878.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the importance of Education in the life of Stone Ladejo

### **3.3 His Ministry, Formative Experience**

Despite his being a "son of the soil," Moses did not escape severe persecution in those early days of missionary work in Nigeria. Writing from Ogbomoso in February 1879 to W. J. David he said: Since my arrival I have written four letters to you telling you how great were my troubles, pains and fears on my journey to this place. (...) I suffered twenty-one days of virtual imprisonment, and almost starvation in Oyo, I met with trouble from town to town. I was severely beaten and had wounds made in my flesh with the point of their knives, but I cannot tell of our troubles, pains and fear with pen and ink.

Stone's ministry was very successful and the church witnessed a spiritual and numerical growth. He later wrote to Rev. W. W. Colley asking if he could baptize converts since there were no ordained ministers around. The following year, 1879, David returned from America with about \$2,500 and building materials with which the First Baptist Church in Lagos was built. It was completed and finally consecrated in 1887.

#### **3.3.1 His Call and Ordination into the Ministry**

In February 1880, Stone left Ogbomoso to go to Lagos for his ordination. The trip to Lagos was made through Ondo and Ilesa to escape the threat of robbers. He was accompanied by a small girl, Phoebe Adeniyi, who would later become the first president of the women's organization in Ogbomoso. It was most likely that the question of Stone's ordination had been discussed between the missionaries Colley and David and possibly with the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, because by the time Stone left Ogbomoso for Lagos arrangements for his ordination had been concluded.

#### **3.3.2 Reasons for His Early Ordination**

There are two possible reasons for the ordination of Stone in 1880 as the first Nigerian Baptist minister. First, M. L. Stone was in Ogbomoso and the missionaries were at

Lagos. It has been acknowledged that Stone won many converts and so there was a need to baptize and confirm them as Baptist church members. The converts could not be brought to Lagos for this and the missionaries could not go to Ogbomoso for various reasons so it became expedient to ordain Stone. Second, denominational rivalry might have made his ordination urgent. Among the Anglicans, there had been ordained African priests and a bishop. Thus to bring the Baptist Mission up to the same level of honor with other missions, it became necessary to ordain the leading native pastor. It will be recalled that Rev. R. H. Stone had once prayed that he would become as great a blessing to Yoruba as Bishop Crowther.

On the 22nd of February 1880, Moses Ladejo Stone was ordained into full Gospel ministry in the First Baptist Church, Lagos (originally known as American Baptist Church) by Reverends W. J. David and W. W. Colley. The next day he baptized two converts who had accompanied him from the interior.

### **3.3.3 His Initial Reluctance to Serve as a Full-time Minister**

L. M. Duval in his book *Baptist Missions in Nigeria* wrote that after his ordination Stone reluctantly returned to Ogbomoso though it was his wish to remain near the coast with the missionaries so as to get the opportunity to further pursue his studies. If this account is true, Stone probably did not seriously consider the implications of his ordination especially if he placed greater premium on his studies than on his pastoral responsibilities. By 1881, Stone had baptized twenty more converts.

Stone was called to Lagos in 1884 to become a teacher at the Elementary School of Baptist Academy and an assistant pastor at First Baptist Church, Lagos. He was succeeded in Ogbomoso by Rev. L. O. Fadipe. In 1888, when Stone was still assistant pastor of First Baptist Church, Lagos, an incident occurred which was to have tremendous impact on the work of missionaries in Nigeria.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Describe challenges and misunderstandings faced by Stone Moses Ladejo

### **3.4 The Nationalist Revolution**

The spirit of nationalism was being awakened throughout Africa and educated Africans were beginning to express the desire for self-determination. Those of them who had taken their white masters' names changed them. There was a drive to return to African names. Thus, David Brown Vincent became Mojola Agbebi, Lewis Stone became Lewis Fadipe and Lajide Mills became Lajide Tubi. These Africans felt that authentic African names must reappear from beneath that cultural imperialism of the west with which Christianity has undoubtedly been most closely linked. At this time, a misunderstanding between Stone and David provided an opportunity for a manifestation of this inner desire.

#### **3.4.1 Stone Humiliated**

The misunderstanding arose over M. L. Stone's salary. He was receiving twenty-five shillings which was being paid jointly by the Foreign Mission Board and the church in Lagos. Having lived in hardship for a long time and not being able to bear it any longer, Stone asked for a salary increase of five shillings which David flatly turned down. Consequently, Stone, with the help of his houseboy, took to chopping firewood from Mekume and Iru on the road to Victoria Beach. One account states that it was David himself who suggested it to Stone, but there is no evidence to support this claim. It certainly could not be true since his dismissal by David was on account of his alleged engagement in trading. Before this problem however, it has been said that David envied Stone's eloquence in preaching.

Stone's only problem was his poor knowledge of the English language. His desire to go to America to further his education was frustrated by David who refused to grant him the required permission to go. Thus, there was already tension in their relationship before Stone started his firewood business. Then, one Sunday at church, the congregation discovered that their native pastor had been dismissed. A delegation led by J. C. Vaughan met David to ask for an explanation, but David rebuffed them claiming that he had the authority to dismiss Stone. At the church business meeting the matter was retabled but David was adamant. One elder was said to have threatened to pull out of the church, if David would not cooperate.

### **3.4.2 First Baptist Church Divided**

By the Sunday after the incident, Stone's sympathizers had indeed pulled out of the church without referring the matter to the home mission in America. The breakaway group held its first service under a temporary shed in Rev. Ladejo Stone's yard at Wesley Street, Lagos. Before the end of the week, J. C. Vaughan had put up a bamboo shed in Rev. Stone's yard and it became their place of worship for many years before another site was acquired. It is significant to note that the rift occurred shortly after the dedication of the First Baptist Church building, the construction towards which both Stone and David had worked very hard. One would have thought that it was a time to forget all differences and worship together. About two hundred members pulled out, leaving only twenty-four or twenty-five worshippers in the First Baptist Church, Lagos.

It was strongly believed that the group was going to establish another denomination. But this move was stopped by J. C. Vaughan who strongly advised the congregation not to leave the Baptist fold. This group later formed the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Dr. Mojola Agbebi played a key role in preventing the Ebenezer Baptist Church from becoming a syncretistic sect. S. M. Harden, a witness and party to the schism said: Dark days were in store for us, of which we had no foreboding. They came in the shape of differences between Rev. W. J. David and our native pastor, the Rev. M. L. Stone. Some of us,--by far the greatest majority of us,--sided with Mr. Stone, whom we felt had been unfairly treated.

The result was a division in the church: Mr. Stone was dismissed, Dr. Agbebi (then Mr. David Vincent, a teacher in the elementary school) and the rest of us resigned our respective posts, and severed our connection with the church, and with a large number of adherents, proceeded to form what is now known as Ebenezer Baptist Church. Another eyewitness remarked: David actually had no authority as he arrogantly claimed either to dismiss or accept the resignation of Stone without any reference to the congregation. But American missionaries were a long way from Nigeria. Like Rev. J. B. Wood and some other Anglican missionaries who humiliated Bishop Ajayi Crowther about that same time, they were used to taking the law into their own hands. David had spent thirteen years in Lagos and was an inspiring and enthusiastic leader.



It was therefore easy for him to assume that his word was law. He had secured large sums of money for the mission from the United States of America by displaying a young Yoruba man in Egungun and Oro Costumes. He must have felt that he who pays the piper must invariably dictate the tune. This schism gradually spread to other denominations. The Baptist secessionists continued to be loyal to their doctrines and were eventually reunited with the Baptist convention organized some years later.

The movement for self-determination eventually spread to Ogbomoso, and so the Baptist Mission decided to locate the Smiths there, ostensibly to minimize the effects of the Lagos schism. G. W. Sadler later wrote: "Our work in Ogbomoso was so disrupted by the spirit of self-determination that the mission deemed it advisable for Mr. and Mrs. Smith to establish them in that inferior city." The posting of the Smiths to Ogbomoso caused another revolt in the church there. Rev. (then Mr.) Lewis Fadipe pastor of the church took the equivalent of \$7.00 from the church's coffer to pay the carriers who helped the Smiths, but some church members led by Daddy Barika demanded to know the right the pastor had to do so. They consequently withdrew from the church to form another one. They however returned much later to fellowship with the mother church.

When the two hundred members withdrew from the First Baptist Church, Lagos, David and the missionaries made very frantic but futile efforts to get Stone isolated. They called on the congregation to exclude him from the pulpit and accused him of persistent untruthfulness. Stone behaved with dignity. He questioned the missionaries' right to withdraw fellowship. He pointed out that the charge of untruthfulness had never been mentioned and reiterated the right, according to Baptist principles, to set up an independent church. Stone officially became the pastor of the seceding members.

### **3.4.3 The Effect of the Division and the Return to the Mother Church**

The effects of the schism in Lagos were numerous. First, it caused a rapid expansion of Baptist Mission work in Nigeria. The Baptists broke from their restrictions in the American Baptist Church (First Baptist Church, Lagos) to found other churches of the Ebenezer group in Lagos and other towns. S. M. Harden wrote: "Looking back now after the lapse of years, we can trace God's purpose, for out of seeming evil, good has

come. (...) Instead of there being three Baptist Churches in Lagos, there might have been only one."

M. L. Duval who arrived Nigeria in 1901 and got the news of the schism from an eye witness said: "But that which in the eyes of man is a calamity is often used of God for the expansion of His Kingdom, and thus it proved in this case." The schism was a test of the Baptist faith brought to Nigeria by America missionaries and nurtured by God to grow in the hearts of men, to see whether the doctrines of this democratic church could really withstand the test of time and faith. Secondly, the schism was also an opportunity for the Africans to demonstrate their leadership and organizational abilities. The breakaway party first chose Rev. M. L. Stone as their pastor and immediately formed a new church which later superseded the old church in numerical strength.

Rev. M. L. Stone was able to fully use his ministerial talents following the schism. After he was reconciled to the missionaries and called back to the First Baptist Church, Lagos, his gift for preaching sound and inspiring sermons and his inexhaustible store of humor helped the church to grow. Louis M. Duval saw a demonstration of this on the day he arrived. It was a Sunday evening, and he and Mr. Lumbley who had come from Abeokuta to meet him saw a great congregation listening to Stone's sermon in the First Baptist Church. The Lagos Standard newspaper of February 17, 1901 reported:

The popularity of Rev. M. L. Stone is well-known, (and) so great as to attract a large congregation to his ministrations, so that the First Baptist Church, Broad Street, notwithstanding that its location is not in the center of the population, is invariably the most crowded place of worship in town every Sunday evening. Rev. W. J. David's Frustration Rev. W. J. David did not stay long in Nigeria after the schism though he was given a vote of confidence by the Foreign Mission Board. It was likely that he was not happy at the turn of events. He went on furlough that same year, 1888, and did not come back, though he lived till 1894. His successor was C. C. Newton who arrived Nigeria in 1889. Did the Foreign Mission Board diplomatically recall David? Did he leave out of frustration? We cannot really say. All we know is that when he left, he was immediately replaced,--a move which aroused some suspicion.

C. C. Newton obviously made great efforts to reconcile the breakaway group (The Ebenezer Baptist Church) with the mother church.

#### **3.4.4 Reunification with the Mother Church**

The Ebenezer Church had insisted that its members would only accept reconciliation on certain conditions:

- (a) That all the members would be received back as a body.
- (b) That Stone, Harden and Vincent would be reinstated.
- (c) That the church building would be regarded as the property of the church.
- (d) That the church would be properly constituted as independent of the mission.

Newton, while he was not opposed to these conditions tried to insist on a confession of guilt by the schismatics but this was not acceptable to the Ebenezer Church. However, six years later, in 1894 the breach between Stone and the Baptist mission was healed and Stone was restored to full fellowship. He was asked to pastor his old church, First Baptist Church, Lagos. From 1888 when the secession took place, Moses Ladejo Stone served for a few years at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Lagos before moving to Abeokuta at the request of W. T. Lumbley to take charge of the church there. It was not unlikely that Stone in his last days with Ebenezer Church did not take the church into confidence with regard to his restoration because there is nothing on record to the effect that Stone informed the church that he was going back to the mission when he did.

Before the crisis was finally resolved, Stone took a leave of three months and went to Ogbomoso and Mr. J. B. Clay took over the pastoral care of Ebenezer Baptist Church in his absence. The leave was later extended to six months, the last three months without salary. (Could it be that Stone had been placed on the payroll of the mission by that time?) He never returned to Ebenezer Baptist Church after that because he was completely reconciled with the missionaries, and in 1894 he accepted the call to minister at First Baptist Church, Lagos. It can therefore be said that Newton's effort yielded results. But if Stone had been reconciled with the missionaries what about the people who left with him? They refused to follow Stone back to the mission insisting

that they did not leave First Baptist Church because of Stone. However, it was not long before the people were brought back to the mission. In 1914, Dr. Agbebi was elected first president of the Yoruba Baptist Association, and the healing of the division became a spiritual reality, although the administrative differences lingered on for many years.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the reasons for the Nationalist Revolution

### **3.5 Stone's Outstanding Achievements**

Stone's return to First Baptist Church, Lagos, in 1894 was a most outstanding achievement. His subsequent nineteen years of pastoral activities at First Baptist Church (1894 - 1913) became a God-inspired manifestation of his many talents in ministry, preaching and human relations. Under Moses Ladejo Stone's influence and with God's blessings (I Cor. 3:6), First Baptist Church witnessed tremendous and phenomenal growth from 1894 onwards.

His preaching gift helped to draw a large congregation to First Baptist Church every Sunday. During Stone's pastoral work at First Baptist Church, I. O. Gilbert became a Baptist and later contributed immensely to Baptist work in Nigeria. Another notable man in his congregation was Thomas Falope who went back home to establish Otun Gbede Baptist Church in 1906. Rev. Ladejo Stone was present at the first Native Workers' conference held at Oyo in 1897 under the chairmanship of L. M. Duval and this was the nucleus of the Yoruba Baptist Association formed in 1914.

On March 28, 1906, M. L. Stone left Lagos for a visit to Ijebuland. There were three Baptist Churches in Ijebuland at that time located at Ogbogbo, Idesse, and Ilishan which was the most recent. He visited twenty-six villages, preached and baptized sixty-six converts. Among his achievements at First Baptist Church, Lagos is the production of the first Hymn Book in 1907, the addition of a sacristy to the church building, and the installation of electric lights in the church.

He continued his pastoral work at First Baptist Church, Lagos until late 1912 when due to ill health; he left Lagos for Ogbomosho where he died on April 30, 1913. He was a man who remained true to the Baptist Faith and whose singular achievements placed African ministers on the same level with the white missionaries in Africa.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate Stone Ladejo's contribution to pioneering Christianity in Africa

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

While serving as the pastor of First Baptist Church, Stone led the congregation to raise funds with which the church building was purchased from the mission. By 1900 the congregation could announce that it was self-supporting. At the time of his death in 1913 the membership of First Baptist Church had increased from fifty-two to two hundred and twenty-five, while contributions went from close to nothing to \$1,200 and the sum of \$1,300 was spent on the purchase of a pipe organ.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we studied the early life, schooling and ministry apprenticeship of Stone Moses Ladejo. We also considered his ministry formative experience, his Nationalist revolution and his outstanding achievement.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Discuss the importance of apprenticeship to the spread of the gospel in Africa
- Highlight the heroic sacrifice and sufferings encountered by Stone Moses Ladejo on the basis of his faith
- Describe the impact of the Nationalist revolution on the spread of Christianity in Africa

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## **UNIT 5: WILLIAM WADE HARRIS, AGBEBI, MOJOLA (DAVID BROWN VINCENT), SHEMBE, ISAIAH MDLIWAMAFA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 William Wade Harris
  - 3.2 Agbebi Mojola (David Brown Vincent)
  - 3.3 Shembe, Isaiah Midliwamafa
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit we will be looking at the brief heroic sacrifice and suffering encountered by William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola (David Brown Vincent) and Shembe Isaiah Midliwamafa. These Africa leaders all believed in Christianity the African way, which made many western authors write negatively about them.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to”

- Discuss the contribution of William Wade Harris to the pioneering of Christianity in Africa
- Discuss the contribution of Agbebi Mojola to pioneering of Christianity in Africa

- Discuss the contribution of Shembe Isaiah Midliwamafa to pioneering of Christianity in Africa

### **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.2 William Wade Harris**

William Wade Harris was a Liberian Grebo who had been brought up Methodist, but later worked for the Protestant Episcopal Church as a teacher. He fought Americo-Liberian rule and was imprisoned when implicated in a rebellion which would have invited the rather more enlightened British rule into Liberia as a liberation from Americo-Liberian oppression. When in prison he received a vision from the Archangel Gabriel who proclaimed him a prophet sent to prepare the way of Jesus Christ. The Archangel, however, commanded him to abandon the European clothes he took pride in, and particularly the shoes he had just ordered from America. Rejecting European clothes would be the sign of his conversion and the symbol of the simplicity and humility of the gospel message.

Towards the end of 1913 Harris began his preaching journey from Liberia through the Ivory Coast and on into the Gold Coast (modern Ghana). He walked barefoot, wearing a long white robe with black bands across the chest, carrying a tall cross made of cane, a calabash to fill with water for baptism, a gourd rattle, and a Bible. He was accompanied by two or three women (who may have been his wives). These women would sing, dance and play the rattle to accompany his preaching. The response to his preaching was quite extraordinary and the trip, which lasted until early 1915 was the most effective evangelistic crusade in modern African history.

Harris' preaching itself was anything but extraordinary. At its core lay the claim that God and Christ had come to vanquish and replace the spirits of tradition. He taught that Christ's return was imminent and that the people were to prepare for his return by a radical conversion of life. Conversion entailed obeying the Ten Commandments, keeping the Sunday, accepting the authority of the Bible, and burning the fetishes of traditional religion which were thought to keep evil away. In many ways Harris set up a fundamental conflict and contest between Christ and the fetishes. Christ was coming



soon and would punish those who rejected his prophet, ignored the Sabbath, kept fetishes or despised his commandments. Harris did not condemn polygamy and may have had several wives himself.

Those who believed the message were immediately baptised, and then told to enter whatever Christian church the missionaries provided for them in their village or town. Where there were no mission churches to send his converts to, Harris, after burning the fetishes, baptising the converts, and giving them some elementary instruction in the Christian faith, appointed twelve apostles in each place to provide leadership. Many of apostles carried out their task with great perseverance, building solid Harrist churches characterized by faithful obedience to the Ten Commandments, observance of Sunday in particular and fidelity to a fairly simple, straightforward gospel of God, Jesus and love. They continued to spread, baptising converts and instructing them in the rudiments of the faith. They also continued to accept polygamy.

One such church, among the Dida in the Ivory Coast, flourished due to the work of the Apostle Latta Gnanjoui who was appointed apostle by Harris in January of 1915 and remained leader of the congregation until his death in 1931. Harris gave him a copy of an English bible, which he could hardly read, but his young literate nephew had learned English and accompanied his uncle on his preaching and baptising tours. They built chapels, women among them composed hymns and they developed a strong and healthy church. When the missionaries finally came into their region, these Harrist Christians greeted them with great rejoicing, since they had not forgotten Harris' instructions to join the churches that missionaries provided. The Methodist missionaries, however, found that their intransigence over the issue of polygamy meant that not nearly all of the Harrists became Methodists.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate William Wade Harris's contribution to Christianity in Africa

### **3.2 Agbebi, Mojola (David Brown Vincent) 1860 to 1917**

Early leader of the independent church movement in Africa.

The son of a Nigerian (Yoruba) Anglican catechist, Agbebi was given the name David Brown Vincent at baptism. Educated by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and appointed a teacher in 1878, he left the CMS in 1880 following a disciplinary measure. Converted about 1883 at a Baptist revival service, he and his wife, Adeline Adeotan, then became Baptists. Agbebi played a prominent role in the March 1888 establishment of the Native Baptist Church in Lagos, the first indigenous church in West Africa. Understanding the importance of indigenous African leadership for an African church, he affirmed the richness of African culture and in 1894 discontinued using David Brown Vincent as his name. An exemplary preacher and pastor, he initiated evangelistic work in Yorubaland and in the Niger Delta.

While maintaining his Baptist ambitions, Agbebi was an apostle of ecumenism and an ambassador for Africa at large. His contact in 1895 with a Welsh Baptist, William Hughes, resulted in training for some Africans at the African Training Institute in Wales. In 1903 he visited the United States and Britain to raise some money to support his evangelistic work in West Africa. In 1898 he founded the African Baptist Union of West Africa. He was the first president of the Yoruba Baptist Association, formed in 1914, and he supported his wife's efforts in establishing the nationwide Baptist Women's League in 1919. A visionary, he dedicated his life to evangelism, education and the advancement of African leadership.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight Agbebi, Mojola contribution to Christianity in Africa

#### **3.3 Shembe, Isaiah Mdlwamafa 1869 to 1935**

Zulu religious leader and founder of the Nazareth Baptist Church. According to Shembe biographer Irving Hexham, not much is known about Shembe's youth, except that Shembe was born at Ntabamhlophe near Estcourt, Natal, South Africa, of Zulu parentage. After involvement with Wesleyans, he associated with Baptists and was baptized in July 1906. He seems to have acted as an itinerant evangelist prior to coming into contact with Nkabinde, a former Lutheran who was regarded as a prophet. Nkabinde led him to develop a healing ministry in 1910. A year later, he founded the

iBandla lamaNazaretha (Nazareth Baptist Church), a controversial religious movement rooted in Zulu tradition. Shortly afterward he acquired a farm that became his holy city of Ekuphakameni and established an annual pilgrimage to the sacred mountain of Nhlankakazi. Shembe was noted for his vivid parables, dramatic healings, and uncanny insights into people's thoughts. He wrote many moving hymns, composed music, and provided his followers with a rich liturgical tradition based on modified forms of traditional Zulu dancing. Critics of the movement claim that his followers regarded Shembe as an incarnation of God. Others, led by Lutheran scholar Bengt Sundkler, argued that Shembe's theology was an Africanized form of Christianity.

After Shembe's death a succession conflict occurred before leadership passed to his third wife's son Johannes Galilee Shembe. More serious trouble erupted following J. G. Shembe's death in 1975, when the movement split between his brother, Amos Shembe, and son Londa Shembe. Amos Shembe took the title "bishop" and seems to have led his followers toward orthodox Christianity. Londa Shembe openly admitted that he was unsure whether his movement was Christian, a form of Judaism, or perhaps more closely related to some other religious tradition such as Hinduism. Today there are about one million amaNazaretha in Southern Africa.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss Shembe, Isaiah Mdlwamafa contribution to the introduction of Christianity in Africa.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Harris continued to preach in Liberia and **Sierra Leone** but without the success of his Ivory Coast period. He continued to wear his characteristic dress and be amazed at God's work. He died in 1929 in his daughter's house in extreme poverty. One of his favorite hymns was "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." Agbebi was one of the first Africans to hold a degree in civil engineering from a British university but he was primarily known for his missionary work in southern Nigeria and the Cameroons between 1890 and 1910. His belief in Ethiopianism is outlined in the 1902 "Inaugural Sermon" which he gave in Lagos

Shembe was noted for his vivid parables, dramatic healings, and uncanny insights into people's thoughts. He wrote many moving hymns, composed music, and provided his followers with a rich liturgical tradition based on modified forms of traditional Zulu dancing

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we studied the contributions of William Wade Harris, Agbebi Mojola (David Brown Vincent) and Shembe, Isaiah Midliwamafa to the establishment of Christianity in Africa.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Discuss the contributions of William Harris, Agbebi Mojola and Shembe Isaiah to the spread of Christianity in Africa
- Highlight three (3) Challenges encountered by William, Agbebi and Shembe

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## **UNIT 6: The Brief History of NKST in North Central (Universal Reformed Christian Church)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 3.1 Main Content
- 3.1 Brief history of NKST
- 4.1 Conclusion
- 5.1 Summary
- 6.1 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.1 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 Introduction**

This segment is meant to give a brief history of NKST. NKST is an abbreviation which stands for Nongou u Kristu u I Ser u Sha Tar translated as Universal Reformed Christian Church. Initially it was the Church of Christ among the Tiv (translated as Nongu u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv-NKST). This church is located in the North Central or Middle-Belt part of Nigeria. The church came into existence due to the missionary activities of Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) South Africa and Christian Reformed Church of America. In 1957

NKST was established. The main objective for founding the NKST was a progression of indigenization of the Church. The missionary work and the institutions built by the DRCM, afterward SUM/CRC handed over to NKST.

## 2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Narrate the brief history of NKST
- Appreciate the vigorous missionary work of SUM/DRCM
- Pinpoint the vessels that were used by God to convey His message to Tivland
- Describe the dividends of the gospel of Christ to Tiv people and Nigeria

## 3.0 THE BRIEF HISTORY OF NKST CHURCH

In 1517 Martin Luther protested because of what he professed as injustice in the church and a lack of faithfulness to the Biblical teachings. The main denominations that materialized from Luther's remonstrations were the Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists and Baptists. One of the thoughtful Lutherans was John Calvin. From his thesis, "The Institutes," **Reformation** was born out of the protestant faith. From John Calvin's ideas, the following denominations were born:

1. The Presbyterian Church with centers in England, Ireland and Scotland.
2. The Reformed Churches established in Holland and South Africa. *The Nongu u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv now translated to mean "Nongo U Kristu U I Ser U Sha Tar"* which its English meaning is: Universal Reformed Christian Church (NKST). It is one of the Reformed Churches founded in Nigeria (Aboho 2).

On the formation of SUM, according to Dzurgba Sudan United Mission was founded in Europe. It was founded by Karl W. Kumm. Karl Kumm was born on October 19, 1874 in the town of Osterode in Hanover Province, Germany. His parents were members of the Lutheran

Church. He attended University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, University of Gena, Gena and University of Freiburg, Freiburg. He received his Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree from the last University. He studied Geography, geology, meteorology, political economy, astronomy, Semitic languages and a minimum of medicine. Under the Northern African Mission (NAM), Kumm came to Alexandria, Egypt, and learned Arabic language. At that time, Grattan Guinness was an Evangelical Leader in Britain. His daughter, Lucy, was in Egypt. He fell in love with Lucy and married her in Cairo. Therefore, Karl Kumm came in a close affiliation with Grattan Guinness. Grattan Guinness had wanted to see that the gospel was preached to the people of an African region which stretched from West Africa. It was called the Sudan. Grattan Guinness was publishing a periodical which was called The Sudan and the Regions Beyond. The reason for that periodical was to stir up European Christians' curiosity in the evangelization of the Sudan (65).

After the marriage rite, Karl Kumm and his wife, Lucy, travelled to Germany. In Germany, Karl Kumm launched a Sudan Pioneer Mission with its head office in Eisenach. But SPM had no concern to take on any mission work in Sudan. Because of that, Karl Kumm left Germany and went to Britain. He joined his father-in-law, Grattan Guinness. On November 13, 1902, Karl Kumm launched the Sudan Pioneer Mission. In 1904, Dr. Alexander Whyte recommended that 'Pioneer' should be removed from the name of the mission. He clarified that other missions had already been formed like Church Missionary Society (CMS), among others, had already begun work in the Sudan. So, 'Pioneer' was changed to 'United' and the name of the mission became Sudan United Mission (SUM) (Dzurgba 65-66).

The Committee of Sudan United Mission held its first conference in London. SUM committee sent missionaries to Nigeria and they were Dr. Karl W. Kumm, Dr. Batema, J. G. Burt and J. Lowry Maywell. Dr. Karl Kumm was the leader of that mission tour. The four men started their trip on July 23.

Dr Karl Kumm, Dr Batema, J. G. Burt and J. L. Maxwell arrived on the coast Nigeria on August 10, 1904. They travelled up the River Niger to Lokoja. At Zungeru, Karl Kumm went to the British High Commissioner, Sir Frederick Lugard to obtain permission to institute a mission station in Northern Nigeria. Karl Zimmermann travelled from Zungeru to Lokoja, there they moved to River Benue and came to Abinsi, a town in Tivland. From Abinsi they made a trip to Ibi and got there on September 3, 1904. Zimmermann travelled from Wukari in Jukunland on horseback to Chief Saai Utu's Village. He landed on April 17, 1911 (Dzurgba 67, 68).

After opening three stations in the eastern side of River Katsina-Ala, the missionaries knew that that the larger part of Tivland was in the Western side of the river. Hence, they continued looking for a central place to establish a station that would be easily reached to majority of the Tivs. Mkar station was founded in 1923. From Mkar they could simply move further West, South and North of Tivland. Adikpo and Kunav (Mbaakon) stations were also established in the same year with Mkar. Turan (Jato-Aka) station in the South west was formed in 1926, and Makurdi in the North West in 1931. From Makurdi they moved southwards and formed two stations in Apir and Shangev-Tiev (Mbaakpur) in 1936. Iber station was founded in 1946 and Uavande, the last station by the DRCM was established in 1957. The SUM-CRC founded stations in Asukunya, Isherev, Ityoshin (Atukpu) and Harga).

The institution of Mission stations was followed by the search for converts who would submit their lives to Christ. Though, the few years after the opening of the gospel did not generate many converts among the Tiv. Only four people were baptized at Sai after six years after sowing the seeds many fell on rocky ground and failed to sprout. About 100 converts were baptized between 1917 and 1938 at Sai, Zaki-Biam, Mkar, Sev-av and Turan (Jato-Aka) with most of them from the centrally sited Mkar Station (Avav 4).

The mission stations formed the nuclei of the present consistories or congregations of the NKST Church. The proliferation of consistories within and outside Tivland has made the NKST one the most widespread churches in Nigeria (Avav 4,5).



The efforts of the *Nongo u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv* (NKST) translated as the Church of Christ from Sudan among the Tiv came primarily as a result of the missionary activities of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) from South Africa. The NKST Church was the formation of the DRCM which was built in Tivland in 1911. The DRCM was the first Christian organisation to be assembled in Tivland. Prior to 1911, the Tiv people simply knew and practiced their traditional religion (Aboho 2).

The Dutch Reformed Church had earlier read about the necessity for mission-work in the geographical region south of the Sahara from a tract written by Dr Herman Karl Welbelm Kumm whose vigorous activities had given birth in England to the Sudan United Mission on June 15, 1904. An urgent response to this tract was the request to Dr Kumm to visit and address the Churches in South Africa. Throughout his visit in June, 1907, he laid emphasis on the unconditional need of bringing the Gospel to Northern Nigeria. In a reaction to a question, Dr Kumm designated that the South African branch of the Sudan United Mission would work with the Munshi (the then nickname of the Tiv) chiefly at Udei.

Sudan United Mission (SUM) sent four missionaries to visit Nigeria to survey areas for missionary work. Dr Kumm was one of those missionaries. These four persons sailed along River Benue. They arrived at Abinsi (Abetse) where they had a rest. It was at Abinsi that Dr Kumm began to learn Tiv language. In 1908, Rev Botha and Rev Hosking left South Africa for England. In England, these men studied on malaria fever and learnt how to treat this disease. The malaria fever had wiped out many of these white men in Africa. At the end of 1908, Botha and Hosking took to their heels from England to Nigeria. In 1908, Rev Carl Zimmermann joined Botha and Hosking at Mbula in close proximity to Yola in the present Adamawa State. In their summit, they determined to vigorously embark on evangelical work amongst the assorted ethnic groups they found (Aboho 7: Utor 2, 3).

The missionaries began the missionary work among the Mbula people who were 8,000 in population. This figure was seen as insignificant and for that reason there was a need to hunt for missionary work amongst more populated ethnic groups. In 1911, other

missionaries of the SUM started working among the Jukun in Waka and Donga Gaba. In the convention of these missionaries it was resolved that the DRCM missionaries at Mbula close to Yola should be informed to bring the Good News to Tiv people. When Revs Botha, Hosking and Zimmermann got the missive from the SUM, they prayed to God for more illumination. They all realised that God appointed them for the missionary work in Tiv land. The first to respond was Rev Botha, who came to hang around for the rest at Waka. Hosking and Zimmermann sailed through River Benue and came ashore at Ibi and then continued to Waka to meet Rev Botha. At Waka, the SUM missionary, Rev Guinter received the DRCM people. By the time Hosking and Zimmermann came to Waka, Rev Botha had already left Waka for Sai in Tivland (Aboho 8).

Rev Hosking and Rev Botha met Rev Doom of SUM at Waka, who left England to visit SUM stations in the Sudan. Subsequent to the survey of Sai, Rev Botha revisited Ibi from where he wrote Rev Zimmermann to take over the new station at Sai. Rev Zimmermann was happy to get this letter. On the 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1911, Rev Zimmermann left Waka for Sai, along with three Mbula people who accompanied him, namely: Dantshoho and his wife Fantha along with Jaddih. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1911, Rev Zimmermann and his group came to Sai at about 10 a.m. Rev Zimmermann was also in company of his two dogs, one monkey and other personal effects. A few days shortly, Zimmermann started building of residential housing (huts). On the finishing of the living housing, Zimmermann left Sai with three healthy men to carry his properties from Ibi. When he came back and settled down, Sai allowed his son, Akiga to be the houseboy of Zimmermann. He was nicknamed Kuregba because of his type of hair.

Zimmermann started missionary work along with medical care. He treated eye problems, dressed wounds and gave medicine for the cure of headache and stomach ache. This was the commencement of the message of Good News in Tivland. More so, Rev Zimmermann started to teach children how to read and write. Akiga Sai was said to be a devoted boy and he was said to be intelligent. In 1914, Akiga started to write in Tiv language.

After Akiga had written a letter, he was baptized and took the English name of Benjamin. He thus became the first Tivman to be baptized. He also took to evangelical work. Strongly following Akiga as regards baptism were Alam Malu and his brother Teiyor Malu (Aboho 9, 10 Shii 66).

By the end of 1912, Rev Hosking and Rev Zimmermann had to go for break in England. Rev Judd who joined Zimmermann had to look after Sai station. Afterward, Rev Botha arrived from leave to join Rev Judd. Judd was the first missionary to write in Tiv language. In the later part of 1912, Rev J. Brink met the rest at Sai. Rev Brunk was very powerful and was nicknamed Ortese Agee (Rev Powerful) after he had fought a cow and had thrown it to the ground at Sai. In 1916, Rev Strydom (Ortese Dogo) started to translate the Bible into Tiv language. He began with the Gospel of St. Mark. The whole Bible was translated into Tiv language and the Tiv Bible was dedicated on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November, 1964 (Aboho 10 Ahenekaa and Achineku 30).

Avav asserted that Christianity is 100 years old. It was Carl Zimmerman of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) of South Africa who first arrived at Sai on April 17, 1911 at 10 am. There is an eye-witness account given by Akiga Sai and JEI Sai, who were among the people when the missionary came. According to them the missionary had four boxes:

1. One containing the Bible- the word of God
2. One containing medicine- medical or health work
3. One containing books- education
4. One containing seeds of various plants- agriculture (1).

The first mission station in Tivland was launched at Sai by Carl Zimmermann in 1911. Nevertheless, the British Colonial Government restricted the movement of the missionaries in Tivland, because the Tiv people were seen as warriors and they had not been brought under

the control of the colonial Administration. The missionaries were then, permitted to preach only in the villages along the road from Wukari to Takum (Avav 2).

The missionaries of the DRCM had continued with painstaking evangelism in Tivland. But about the year 1954, the racial policy of South Africa had started having its effect in Nigeria. Most people were not at ease with the DRCM. The issuance of Visa to the Dutch workers became difficult because there was no diplomatic linkage between Nigeria and South Africa, soon after independence in 1960. The DRCM thus sought the mutual aid of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) of the Sudan United Mission (SUM) which was in other tribes of the Sudan (Jukun and others) to take over the mission work in Tiv land. In 1961, the DRCM formally handed over to the SUM/CRC (Aboho 10-11).

In 1957, the Church of Christ among the Tiv (translated as Nongu u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv-NKST) was established. The main objective of founding the NKST was a progression of indigenization of the Church. The missionary work and the institutions built by the DRCM, afterward SUM/CRC were to be steadily handed over to NKST. The indigenization work which began in the 1970s was done in 1985 with handing and taking over of the Benue Leprosy Settlement and Rehabilitation Hospital, Mkar. Rev Nevkar Anum became the first home-grown pastor to hold the post of Chairman NKST Synod. The ultimate objective of the NKST is to worship God, to evangelise for Christ and to abide by all the sacraments linked with the worship of the Lord; and by providing ideas for the spiritual growth of the members by self constraints and compliance to God's commandments (Aboho 11).

The Independence Day, on January 9, 1957, "the Church of Christ Among the Tiv" locally called "Nongu u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv" (NKST) was formally structured with 1,500 baptized members. In this year, the first four Tiv pastors were ordained. These were JEI Sai, Shinyi Ugo, Nevkar Anum and Valem Ayaka. Out of the four Valem Ayaka was the last to die. The Christian Reformed Church Mission began to take over more and more of the work from DRCM, after the founding of the NKST Church in 1957. In 1961 the DRCM

handed over the remnants of their assets to the Christian Reformed Church. These assets were Mkar Teacher's College (now NKST College, Mkar), all mission Primary schools, Mkar Christian Hospital, all mission dispensaries and the mission treasury at Mkar. Some South African missionaries, still, remained as members of the Sudan United Mission (SUM) to complete their tasks in translation work or the training of vernacular pastors (Ahenekaa and Achineku 30).

Prior to 1957, it was not until January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1957 that the NKST constitution was authoritatively endorsed and complete autonomy legitimately granted to the NKST Church. On that day the church Council was dissolved and the synod of the NKST, just began, became the young Church's highest ruling body. Its first executive encompassed:

1. Nevkar Anum-Chairman. He was the pastor of the Mkar Central Church (now NKST Mkar Central). Rev Nevkar Anum was the first chairman of the NKST Synod
2. Rev W. D. Gerrts, the Field Secretary of the DRCM and an assessor
3. The Secretary was Asongo Ajir, from Turan, he was a teacher and
4. Rev Du Toit Van der Merwe (Ortese Iyua) was an assistant Secretary (Gyangyan ed., History of the NKST Church; 1911-2000 166).

On the certified day of independence, over 900 Tiv Christians and many missionaries were there to see this grand event. Among the bigwigs who graced this occasion were, Rev W. Maltherbe, who came from South Africa to stand for the General Mission Board of the DRCM, and Rev H. Evenhouse who stood for the CRC in North America. It is essential to point out here that while the first four pastors were ordained in 1957, a second pastors' class with three students, was also in progress in February of the same year. The names of these students were Yakobu Amacigh, Kenti Anongo (who is the first NKST pastor to die in 1961), and Hanmo Shawon. Rev Peter Ipema of the CRC was their teacher (Casaleggio 102).

Generally, the spread of the gospel into Tivland under the mission leadership was very sluggish. Things did not move as fast as when the NKST lastly had her independence in 1957. For instance, in 1938, a blind school was started at Kunav, but had no much progress.

It was at last phased out in 1947. In 1940 an orphanage service was opened at Sevav. This too did not have much advancement, and in the end it was phased out. The Boys Life Brigade was started at Turan in 1940, in Shangev Tiev in 1942, and at Mkar in 1946. This work did not go on much, but it was not phased out. At present there are thousands of Boys and Girls Brigade members in Tivland. However, we must all be grateful for the hard work done by the missionaries in bringing the Gospel to us (Ahenekaa and Achineku 32).

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is obvious that the work of Carl Zimmerman of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) of South Africa who came to Sai on April 17, 1911 yielded great fruits. In their subsequent efforts NKST Church emerged. There were eye-witnesses account given by Akiga Sai and JEI Sai, who were among the people when the missionary came. The missionary had four boxes: one containing the Bible- the word of God, one containing medicine- medical or health work, one containing books- education and another containing seeds of various plants- agriculture. The DRCM consequently sought after the mutual aid of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) of the Sudan United Mission (SUM) which was in other tribes of the Sudan (Jukun and others) to take over the mission work in Tiv land. In 1961, the DRCM formally handed over to the SUM/CRC. The mustard seed having sown has now grown to a fully fledged tree.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Sudan United Mission was an interdenominational and worldwide institute. On November 27, the Committee of Sudan United Mission held its first conference in London. SUM committee determined to send missionaries to Nigeria for searching of the land and its people. Four men were chosen and commissioned. They were Dr. Karl W. Kumm, Dr. Batema, J. G. Burt and J. Lowry Maywell. Dr. Karl Kumm was the leader of that mission tour. The four men started their trip on July 23, 1904.

Dr Karl Kumm, Dr Batema, J. G. Burt and J. L. Maxwell arrived on the coast Nigeria on August 10, 1904. Karl Zimmermann travelled from Zungeru to Lokoja, there they moved to River Benue and came to Abinsi, a town in Tivland. From Abinsi they made a trip to Ibi and got there on September 3, 1904. Zimmermann travelled from Wukari in Jukunland on horseback to Chief Saai Utu's Village. He landed on April 17, 1911. This is the mark of God's divine grace to bring the gospel to Tiv people for their salvation.

However, the few years after the opening of the gospel did not generate many converts among the Tiv. Only four people were baptized at Sai after six years after sowing the seeds many fell on rocky ground and failed to sprout. About 100 converts were baptized between 1917 and 1938 at Sai, Zaki-Biam, Mkar, Sev-av and Turan (Jato-Aka) with most of them from the centrally sited Mkar Station.

The efforts of the *Nongo u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv* (NKST) translated as the Church of Christ from Sudan amongst the Tiv came fundamentally as a result of the missionary activities of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) from South Africa. The NKST Church was the formation of the DRCM which was built in Tivland in 1911.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- ✚ Explain briefly the formation of NKST Church
- ✚ Highlight on the boxes that were brought by the missionaries
- ✚ What caused the impact of the gospel to Tivland

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## **UNIT 7: PIONEER LEADER OF NKST: REV J.E.I. SAI AND THE MISSIONARIES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Rev JEI Sai
  - 3.2 The Objectives of NKST
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 Introduction**



This unit is actually describing and expressing the facts concerning one of the pioneering leaders of the NKST, Rev J.E.I. Sai who was the first chairman of NKST Synod and had served in that capacity for several years.

## **2.0 Objectives**

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Describe the qualities and exploits of Rev Isholibo Sai
- Appreciate the influence of the gospel and missionaries on Isholibo Sai
- State the objectives of NKST

## **3.0 Main Content**

### **3.1 Pioneer Leader of NKST: REV J.E.I. Sai and the Missionaries**

Before the mission work began at Sai village in April 1911, a son had been born to Saaiutu Deekpe, named Isholibo earlier in January. He later became one of the first Tiv pastors in 1957. God vested upon him leadership qualities that were unique. He was eloquent, intelligent and vocal. He was able to build a solid foundation of the gospel whereby the vision and the mission of the missionaries were practically fulfilled.

Miss Esther Pienaar came from South Africa in 1920 and was positioned at Sai station to teach in the school there. One of the pupils in Miss Pienaar's class was 20 years old Isholibo Sai, who was afterward to play a significant role in the development of the Tiv church of Christ. As converted Christian, he was baptized in 1937 as Joseph Elisha Isholibo Saaiutu. He enrolled into the evangelists' class and graduated in 1943. In 1944, Evangelist Ishoblibo became a teacher of evangelist class at Zaki-Biam where he assisted Rev. Gerryts. In 1953, he started the pastoral course and finished on October 27, 1956, and was called by the Apir-Makurdi congregation and ordained at Apir on the 17th of January 1957. He became the pastor of Harga on January 12, 1965, subsequently he became the pastor of Harga on January 12, 1965, after serving at Apir for eight years, he became chairman of NKST synod for

twelve years and a member of Reformed Ecumenical Synod for years. He also served as the chairman of RTCN Mkar Board for eight years. Rev. J.E.I. Sai was the Trustee Chairman of NKST and Trustee member of TEKAN until his death on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1987. He served NKST and the government in capacities and received the highest national award. Rev Sai received an award from the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Member of Order of Niger (MON).

### **3.2 THE OBJECTIVES OF NKST**

The NKST vision and mission is to turn the body and soul of all people irrespective of their race, color, tribe and group to Jesus Christ and provide greater wide-ranging services to humanity. In order accomplish this onerous task, Universal Reformed Christian Church has set for herself the following objectives.

1. To ensure that all people irrespective of their tribe, race, color and nationality are brought to the true knowledge of Christ as the only way and means of salvation.
2. To dismantle all social-cultural (even political or religious) barriers that threatens the effective propagation of the gospel of Christ.
3. To promote unity and foster a better understanding among Christian church and organizations.
4. To promote and improve the economic standard of living and well being of the people.
5. To provide voluntary health services, agricultural and educational services to the general public to better their lot and compliment the efforts of the public sector.
6. To undertake any appropriate action capable of serving God and humanity.
7. To preach justice, peace and unity to the world.

8. To collaborate, cooperate and liaise with the government, non-governmental organizations and international bodies in pursuance of NKST Mission and vision.

The NKST has tried to accomplish these tasks through education, health, agriculture and evangelism. Through the preaching of the good news of Salvation in schools and health centers and hospitals, many have come to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. NKST has trained many people in and around Nigeria.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Rev Isholibo Sai was the first indigenous pastor trained by the DRCM to lead NKST church to be where it is today. Since the foundation was laid on a solid rock NKST has grown tremendously. As a Reformed church, NKST is well organized and her teaching is absolutely based on the Holy Bible.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Joseph Elisha Isholibo Sai became a Christian and was baptized in 1937. He was trained by the missionaries as the evangelist and subsequently he became a pastor. God placed upon his shoulders the mantle of leadership which he did very well. The NKST vision and mission is to turn the body and soul of all people irrespective of their race, color, tribe and group to Jesus Christ and provide greater all-embracing services to humanity.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- ❖ Who is Rev Isholibo Sai?
- ❖ What are objectives of NKST?

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **MODULE 2: A SELECTION OF PAST CHRISTIAN LEADERS AND THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL IN AFRICA**

**UNIT 1:** MOSES ORIMOLADE TUNOLASE

**UNIT 2:** OSCHOFFA SAMUEL BILEWU

**UNIT 3:** BABALOLA JOSEPH AYODELE

**UNIT 4:** IDAHOSA BENSON ANDREW

### **UNIT 1: MOSES ORIMOLADE TUNOLASE**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Family Background
  - 3.2 Encounter Between Orimolade followers and masquerades
  - 3.3 The Missionary Journey
  - 3.4 Formation of the Eternal Sacred order of the Cherubim and Seraphim (ESOC and S)
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the year that Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther died, a 12-year old boy crippled from birth, prayed in an Anglican church in his village for the use of his legs. In response to his prayer at 12 years of age, Orimolade had a dream in which he was presented with a

rod, a Royal Insignia and a crown representing victory, power of speech and honor respectively. He woke up from this dream with a personal conversion to the Christian faith and a conviction of his calling to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ but his evangelistic mission did not begin until after a period of seven years in confinement. The nature of this confinement has been a matter of speculation. Some of his close associates at the time attributed this confinement to a protracted illness while others regarded it as a period spent in training and preparation for his missionary work. What is known is that Orimolade emerged from this confinement with a partial recovery of the use of his legs and a remarkable ability to pray and preach the King James Version of the Bible that had been translated into his own native Yoruba language earlier by his tribesman, Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Draw personal inspiration to spread Christianity from the life of Moses Orimolade Tunolase
- Discuss Moses Orimolade Tunolase's heroic sacrifice and sufferings
- Enumerate Moses Orimolade Tunolase's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa.

## **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.2 Family Background**

He was born to a family of herbalist and his father was a powerful oracle consultant.

His father's name was Tunolase and his mother's name was Abigail Odijoroto, he was the third in a family of six children with three brothers and two sisters.

#### **3.1.1 Encounter between Orimolade Followers and Masquerades**

The converts of Orimolade from paganism to Christianity soon increased in Ikare while idol worshippers and masquerades started to decrease. The idol worshippers felt

threatened and mounted a serious fight with cutlasses and charms against Orimolade and his followers. With Orimolade in front and his followers threading carefully behind him, the idol worshippers were captivated by their own charms, turned against each other and cut them.

The police were drafted in and could not believe that people in the same group would fight and injure each other to that extent. Consequently, the followers of Orimolade that were unarmed physically were accused of being responsible for those that were injured. The followers of Orimolade were arrested and taken to Kabba – the provincial headquarter at that time. Moses orimolade went to kabba and preached that God said that all the innocent people in detention should be released. It was at Kabba that the popular C&S song descended: - “E funpe na kikan “which means: “sound the call profoundly “– i.e. for the release of captives. All Orimolade’s followers were released and they came back to Ikare together.

This victory meant that all opponents of Orimolade had to bow down and find a way to compromise and win him to their side. They then decided to bestow upon him one of the highest priestly titles in the town – but being led by the Holy Spirit, he told them that was not his mission on earth.

### **3.1.2 Other important notable events at Ikare**

1. Orimolade would go to farm with his brother Peter Omojola but would not sleep at night; he would sing spiritual songs from night till morning.
2. He was a very good hunter that would go to the bush alone without a cutlass or a gun, yet would come back home with slaughtered animals.
3. He once tried to do business by buying and selling of palm oil and kola nuts. He travelled to a town called Oshokoshoko in Northern Nigeria with his friend. On his way, an angel of God appeared to him and warned him not to jeopardise his mission as a prophet of God with business. He refused to take the warning and as soon as he got to Oshokoshoko, he fell seriously sick, people thought that he would die. His friend returned to Ikare to inform them. His brother Egunjobi

was sent to bring him back home, however before Egunjobi got to Oshokoshoko, Orimolade had got back to Ikare, by what means – nobody knew.

4. One day, Orimolade paid his close friend Garuba a visit. As it was getting dark, Orimolade bid his friend goodbye and began to walk home (bearing in mind that he was crippled and could only walk with the aid of a stick). His friend Garuba decided to discover the mystery as to how Orimolade walks about. So Garuba mounted his bicycle and started to follow or chase Orimolade but he never saw or overtook Orimolade along the way. On getting to Orimolade's house, Garuba met him at home – Surprise! Surprise! Orimolade asked Garuba what he was trying to investigate.
5. Orimolade fasted for three months after which he called his mother to fetch water and bath for him. Afterwards he told his mother that he wanted to prepare a feast for the town and asked his mother to assemble the pots and be ready for feast preparation. To everybody's amazement including his mother, people started to walk in with loads of foodstuff as gifts – which exceeded what they needed.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What personal lesson can you derive from Orimolade's divine encounters?

### **3.2 The missionary journey**

Orimolade started his missionary work as an itinerant preacher in Ikare (his Yoruba town of birth) with no formal education. He preached the Bible with an astonishing degree of clarity and prayed for people with instant and awesome results. He openly confronted witches and wizards in **Irun** (another Yoruba town) and pulled down the image of Osijora, one of the idols worshipped in the village. He condemned the prevalent practice of human sacrifice in Benin City. He consecrated a pool in Kaba town and rid it of the evil spirit the villagers had worshipped from time immemorial. Orimolade converted many people to the Christian faith in many places. Traditional worshippers on several occasions willingly gave up their charms and images for burning in response to his preaching and prayer. He directed his converts to the existing



churches irrespective of denominations and where no church existed he helped establish one. Some of the churches established by Orimolade were actually established for the Church Missionary Society.

The African people converted to the Christian faith heretofore by the members of the Church Missionary Society for the Anglican Church and were introduced to the Bible with Christianized western world views and European moral values, that contradicted and contravened the nature and culture of the African people. The missionaries were more scientific and less spiritual than their African Christian converts. They made no holy inquiries for members of the church on matters affecting their lives. The concept of health and disease practiced and preached by the missionaries were rational and scientific with no recognition for the spiritual basis of health and disease. The quest of the people for the spiritual causes of diseases and their prayerful pursuit of cures were often shunned and scorned by the missionaries. The manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit among the African Christian converts were misunderstood and mistaken by the missionaries for diabolical African voodoo. The imperial imposition of western moral values culminated in the dissolution of polygamous marriages, the disruption of polygamous families and the bastardization of the children from these African traditional marriages as the missionaries subverted and supplanted the Great Commission with imperial motives and missions.

The African people read several passages of the Bible literarily and were more comfortable with the Biblical concepts of exorcism, faith healing, rain-making and rain-stopping than the missionaries. The disregard of the missionaries for the Biblical liberty apparent on the pages of the scriptures degenerated into clashes and conflicts between the missionaries and the African leadership in the Anglican Church. The people started to see the missionaries as political agents of their respective governments with a preference for the promotion and propagation of European morals and values on the platform of Christianity. The blind insistence of the missionaries on the superiority of the European concept of Christianity provided the moral impetus for the denial of the African leadership the right to succeed Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther and left the African people in the Anglican Church disconnected and discontented with an overwhelming sense of indifference.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the differences in spirituality between the African converts and the Missionaries

### **3.3 Formation of the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim (ESOC&S)**

In direct response to the discrepancies between the Biblical precepts and mission practice the people started gathering into prayer groups called *Egbe Aladura*. The Aladuras promoted and popularized the power of prayer to heal. When the 1918 influenza pandemic spread to West Africa the people sought and found healing amongst the Aladuras. The 1918 influenza pandemic (Spanish flu) lasted from March 1918 to June 1920, spreading to the arctic and the remote pacific islands with an estimated loss of over 50 million lives worldwide. The healing and survival of so many Nigerians among the Aladuras during the Spanish flu spurred the growth and spread of these prayer groups in the early 1920s. Moses Orimolade arrived in Lagos on July 12, 1924 and lodged at Holy Trinity (Anglican) Church with the Sexton of the Church, Emmanuel Olumodeji from his hometown.

He started preaching and praying for people all over Lagos in Nigeria. Many people in and around Holy Trinity sought after Orimolade for spiritual inquiry and counseling. He developed a reputation for seasoned preaching and fervent prayer and became known among the people as the “Baba Aladura” (Father that prays). The prosperity and popularity of Moses Orimolade provoked envy and anger among the Anglican leadership and led ultimately to the ejection of the Baba Aladura from the premises of Holy Trinity on the 11th day of September, 1924. The ejection of Moses Orimolade from Holy Trinity aroused the sympathy and support of many people in and around the Church. They followed Orimolade out of Holy Trinity and thereafter to his places of residence. Orimolade called this group of supporters and sympathizers the “Aladura Band” and continued his preaching and prayer with them.

On the 18th day of June 1925 the Aladura Band was called to the rescue of an unconscious Methodist teenage girl, Abiodun Akinsowon, who had fallen into a trance

when she tried to look into the chalice carried by the Catholic Archbishop on Corpus Christi public procession. Abiodun remained in trance for 21 days in care and custody of the Aladura Band under the leadership of Moses Orimolade. She regained consciousness after 21 days to the awe of many in Lagos and joined the Aladura Band. She became the first visioner in the Aladura band. The name of the band was changed to the Seraph Band on the 9th of September 1925 by Moses Orimolade. The addition of Cherubim to the name of the band was advised by spiritual injunction on the 26th day of March 1926 to reflect the heavenly representation of the Cherubim and Seraphim. The band was fully formed and functional by the end of 1925. Moses Orimolade reigned as the Sole Founder and Spiritual head of the band from 1925 to 1933.

Abiodun Akinsowon led the evangelistic tours of the band from Lagos westward. She established most of the early branches of the band in the west of Nigeria. The reputation of Abiodun Akinsowon for effective leadership earned her the appellation “Captain Abiodun” in the band. She was adored by Moses Orimolade and admired by many members of the band. Abiodun Akinsowon rode with Moses Orimolade in the hammock chair to the envy of many men and women in the band. However, she pulled out of the band in 1929 to form the Cherubim and Seraphim Society after she failed to convince Moses Orimolade to refuse the volunteer housekeeping services of a widow (Iya Ijesha) that had been healed in the band. The elders of the western branches of the band declared independence and formed the Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim following their futile effort to reunite Abiodun Akinsowon and Moses Orimolade.

In 1930 a committee of elders was chosen to draft the Article of Association in preparation for the incorporation of the band. The first draft of the Article of Association was rejected by Moses Orimolade to the fury of some of the authors because of an unauthorized clause that transferred the executive power and control of the band to the membership of the band. The infuriated authors of the rejected draft of the Article of Association pulled out of the band in 1930 to form the Praying Band of the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim under the leadership of Ezekiel Davies. The northern branches of the band simply moved on as the Holy Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement. The mother band was renamed and registered in

1930 as the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim (ESOC&S) with Moses Orimolade as the Sole Founder and Supreme Head “Baba Aladura”.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the reasons for the formation and impact of ESOC AND S to the spread of Christianity in Africa

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The availability of the translations of the scriptures in African vernaculars brought the Bible to life among the African people and changed their views of the missionaries and the missions. The people found in the Bible the true expression and essence of Christian spirituality that strengthened and supported their innate aspirations for miracles and mastery of life. The Biblical mode of worship with drumming, clapping and dancing resonated so well with the African people and created enormous challenges for the missionaries and their European concept of worship.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we considered the family background of Moses Orimolade Tunolase and the encounter between his followers and masquerades. We looked at other notable events at Ikare, his missionary journey and the formation of the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Saraphim (ESOC and S)

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Enumerate four (4) lessons you learnt from the life of Moses Orimolade Tunolase that will enable you spread Christianity today
- Highlight the major challenges, obstacles and heroic sacrifice encountered by moses Orimolade Tunolase
- Discuss the contributions of Moses orimolade Tunolase to the spread of Christianity in Africa

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## **UNIT 2: OSCHOFFA, SAMUEL BILEWU (1909 – 1985)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life
  - 3.2 Divine Visitation on Osochoffa
  - 3.3 Oschoffa Trance
  - 3.4 The Formation of the “Celestial Church of Christ”
  - 3.5 Miracles and Reactions
  - 3.6 Oschoffa’s Contribution to Church Growth
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Daddy Osofa was one of the early converts to Christianity in Porto Novo and in the light of his domestic problems he prayed ceaselessly to God to give him a baby boy who would live to inherit his wealth and immortalize his name after his death. It was therefore not very surprising that in 1909 in answer to Daddy Osofa's prayers Mama Alake Iyafu safely delivered a male child. The joy with which Daddy Osofa received the news of the birth of his first son cannot be described. In accordance with Methodist practice, the child was blessed in the church and later christened as Samuel Bilewu, a Christian name with the biblical meaning "gift of God" and an indigenous name derived from a proverb in the Yoruba language *Bi 'le aiye wu ko gbe, sugbon mo mo wipe mo ti toro re lodo Olorun* which means: "If the world pleases the child let him stay, but I know I've asked God for you."

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Draw personal Inspiration to spread Christianity from the life of Oschoffa Samuel Bilewu
- Describe the formation of the Celestial Church of Christ
- Discuss Oschoffa's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

## **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.2 EARLY LIFE**

In appreciation and fulfilment of his vows to God, Daddy Osofa sent Samuel Bilewu Osofa to an evangelist called Pastor Nathaniel Yansunu of the Methodist mission in Porto Novo when the boy was seven years old, for spiritual training and to learn Christian principles. Osofa did this because he feared for the survival of his only son, should the child reside at his house, especially as he had lost all of his other children between birth and puberty. However, at the early age of seven, S. B. J. Osofa was too young to be sent away from his parents and so he could not cope with the domestic challenges of the mission house and he chose to return home.

By 1922, at the age of thirteen, S. B. J. Oschoffa was still at home as he did not have access to western education for reasons beyond his control. Daddy Osofa sent him once again to the mission house to receive basic Christian training. He was there with many other boys of his age group. It must have been at the mission house that S. B. J. Oschoffa adopted the name Joseph and also anglicized the spelling of Oschoffa. He was thereafter called S. B. J. Oschoffa. At the mission house, Oschoffa could not cope with the strict disciplinary measures which a white missionary called Rev. Gamer initiated basically because of his stubbornness. At one time, when the pastor ordered the boys to assist in the construction of a seminary, Oschoffa defied the orders and refused to participate in the construction of the building. As a result Oschoffa and others were

expelled from the mission house. In December 1946, almost seven years after his father's death; Oschoffa abandoned carpentry to take up trading in timber.

He began supplying timber logs to carpenters in and around Porto Novo. He seemed to have enjoyed his monopoly in this business which, according to him, fetched him about ten times the amount of money he had initially invested. Even though Oschoffa had not received any formal education, in his short stay at the mission house he had learned to read the Holy Bible. Everywhere he went Oschoffa carried his Bible along. It must be remembered that right from his birth, his father had encouraged him to be a good Christian. His enthusiasm in church duties and his role in the choir made him one of the respected Methodists in Porto Novo.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight some practical lessons for Christian parents from the early life of Oschoffa

#### **3.2 Divine visitation on Osochoffa**

On May 23, 1947, Oschoffa left home for Toffin, a village in the Ganvie area to carry out his usual business. He had already purchased a canoe for himself but since he did not know how to paddle, he engaged the services of a paid paddler. He set off in the morning for the forest specifically to look for mahogany and ebony trees. Oschoffa, as usual, equipped himself with food, drinking water and other personal effects for the trip. At the shore, Oschoffa instructed the paddler to keep an eye on the canoe and the items inside it while he entered the forest. Oschoffa combed the forest searching for the correct species of mahogany and ebony. Oschoffa himself said he noticed a sudden change in the weather when the sky darkened.

This spectacle terrified him and, as a result, he opened his Bible, which he always carried with him, and read some Psalms to strengthen his faith. It soon dawned on him that the abnormality in the weather was an eclipse of the sun. The eclipse, though short, was noticeable in many villages around Porto Novo. The phenomenon of an eclipse is usually given various interpretations in Africa. It could be interpreted as indicating the imminent death of a great man. It could also foretell the occurrence of a disaster or



another great event. At any rate, the disappearance of the light of the sun caused Oschoffa much anxiety. While he knelt down to pray for God's guidance, Oschoffa claimed to have heard a strange voice shouting, "Luli, Luli, Luli." He looked up and to his great surprise he saw a white monkey with wings, its mouth wide open, sitting on the branch of a tree. Next to the strange monkey was a multi-coloured bird which resembled a peacock. It must be mentioned that these two creatures are abnormal because in Africa, there are no white monkeys and no monkey has wings. Furthermore, the multi-coloured bird had features which shone with light.

While Oschoffa was still contemplating the meaning of all this and the power behind such an event his attention was drawn to a noise from the ground. He looked down and saw a short snake, about thirty centimetres long. The wonderful scene compelled Oschoffa to retreat to the shore. On his return, he found the paddler writhing in pain. He immediately prayed to God for quick healing and laid his hands on the paddler. The paddler was immediately healed and later confessed to stealing some of Oschoffa's food kept in his custody. Oschoffa rebuked him for being greedy because he had been adequately cared for and he had just stolen out of greed. Oschoffa decided to relax under a nearby tree to reflect on the events he had experienced that day. When he woke up, he found that the paddler had disappeared, leaving the canoe behind.

Oschoffa was left alone and was stranded as he could not paddle on his own. In his attempt to find a way back home, Oschoffa said he lost his way in the forest. He was believed to have stayed in the bush for three months during which he claimed to have eaten only honey. He continued roaming about in the forest in his attempt to find a way back home. During those three months, he was believed to have seen many revelations about the Kingdom of God. It was during these months that Oschoffa observed changes in his body and received spiritual gifts. He ascribed his power to heal the sick to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in his life in the forest. There is no doubt that Oschoffa's faith in God was greatly affirmed at this time.

After three months in the forest, he came to an *inselberg* which the local people called Fagbe located near the village of Zinvie. At this place he met a man called Michell. Incidentally, this man reportedly became a prominent member of the church later

founded by Oschoffa. Michell, being very familiar with the terrain, led Oschoffa to the nearest village called Hungon. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Oschoffa prayed for the inhabitants of the village. He also got a new paddler who volunteered to help him paddle his canoe back to Porto Novo. After a long search, they found the abandoned canoe at Agange, a few kilometres from Toffin. They had hardly settled down in the canoe when Oschoffa heard some mourners crying at Agange. Oschoffa immediately ordered the paddler to head for the village, wanting to establish the cause of the wailing among the people.

He was told that a young man called Kudiho who was a staunch member of the local Methodist Church was in a coma. Kudiho had been ill for a long time and all efforts to cure him had proved futile. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Oschoffa asked all the people to leave the house of the sick man. He then placed his hands on the sick man and prayed in the name of Jesus Christ for healing and immediately Kudiho was said to have been healed. It must be noted that this was Oschoffa's second healing of the sick after the vision in the wilderness. The news of Kudiho's miraculous healing spread like wild fire and Oschoffa's name soon became a household word. At Agange, Yusuf, a Muslim, offered to be Oschoffa's host after the miracle. It was this man who told the people in the vicinity about Oschoffa's newfound powers.

At home, Oschoffa's family had concluded that he was dead and so the news of his being alive was received with astonishment and great relief. Yusuf was believed to have described Oschoffa as a wonder-working man who healed the sick in the name of Jesus Christ just by touching them. Oschoffa was however described as being somewhat unkempt and wearing wretched clothes. This portrait of Oschoffa was the result of his having being lost for months in the forest. People could not believe the story about Oschoffa and those who knew him were anxious to follow Yusuf to Agange to find out the truth. Meanwhile, Oschoffa had left Agange for Dasatre, his hometown, after hiring a new paddler called Zinsou. Barely three days after his return to Dasatre, the news reached him that a nephew of his called Guton was dead. Oschoffa was inspired to go to the house of the deceased. When he arrived, he first dismissed the native doctors, fetish priests, herbalists and others who had been making abortive efforts to revive

Guton and then opened his Bible and read some Psalms. Oschoffa was quoted as saying: "Really, God is unveiling his powers." He prayed to God to prove his power over death. In the name of Jesus he commanded the dead body to wake up and praise God. Immediately, Guton arose and the Holy Spirit descended on him and he started prophesying.

This miracle was a clear testimony of God's power in Oschoffa. The news of this miraculous raising of a dead man spread in and around Porto Novo. People were very surprised and could not understand the source of Oschoffa's power. They knew him as a carpenter and nothing more. Others ascribed Oschoffa's powers to Satan and called him the devil's disciple. Muslims, Christians and especially western missionaries were very sceptical. Some of them said Oschoffa's miraculous healings were unorthodox and not inspired by God. The Cherubim and Seraphim Movement (C&S) which had been established around 1925 at Porto Novo was also cold in its reception of Oschoffa and his new powers, despite the fact that they practiced faith and spiritual healings too.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate the various miracles in the life of Oschoffa

### **3.3 Oschoffa's Trance**

On September 29, 1947, while meditating with some well-wishers in his house, Oschoffa claimed to have witnessed a mysterious and divine appearance, where a winged angel bathed in an intense light stood before him. The angel of the Lord allegedly delivered the following message to S. B. J. Oschoffa in the Egun language which reads in English: Peace be with you. It is the wish of God to send you on an errand of preaching to the world. Many nominal Christians when confronted by difficulties and problems of this world run after fetish priests and other powers of darkness for all kinds of assistance. Consequently, at their death they cannot see Christ because, by their action, Satan has left his spiritual mark on them. To assist you in your work so that men may listen to and follow your miraculous works of healing: divine

healing will be carried out by you in the name of Jesus Christ. These works of divine healing and God's spiritual mark on you will testify to the fact that God sent you.

This was Oschoffa's great commission. The appearance of the angel of the Lord was later confirmed by a woman called Marie Zevenu who claimed to have seen a vision of Jesus Christ visiting Oschoffa. In her vision, she said she saw Oschoffa's body illuminated and sparkling like a twinkling star. Marie Zevenu later visited Oschoffa to see whether his body was actually transformed. Oschoffa admitted having been visited by an angel of the Lord. Marie, accompanied by her husband, Fredrick Zevenu, a catholic, left for home full of joy and inspiration. The news of the visitation of the angel of the Lord to Oschoffa in no time spread throughout the ancient city of Porto Novo and its surroundings. As usual, adversaries, reactionaries and many doubting Thomases made unfavourable comments. Oschoffa's name and many of his miraculous healings were associated with magic, but it is interesting to note that the western missionary churches while condemning the wonders being performed by Oschoffa, did not succeed in stopping their members from seeking prayers and healings from him.

### **3.3.1 Oschoffa in Public**

As expected, Oschoffa's residence soon became a centre of attraction as more and more people visited him daily. There was virtually nothing he could do to minimize or regulate the frequency of visits. An attempt made for police control did not materialize. However, a suggestion by the police officer at Porto Novo that a convention should be arranged with the people in an open place seemed to have solved the problem. Consequently, an open air convention was arranged and people in the thousands thronged to Porto Novo. It undoubtedly offered an opportunity for those sceptical about the authenticity of Oschoffa's power and credibility to see things for themselves.

Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, traditionalists and other interested groups were largely represented at the open air convention. It was a remarkable day because it was the first time Oschoffa was holding such an event. As earlier stated, at about this time the Cherubim and Seraphim Society, another independent African Church under the

leadership of Prophet Moses Orimolade had established a branch of that church in Porto Novo. Oral tradition has it that Oschoffa was one of the staunch members of the Cherubim and Seraphim Society at Porto Novo but later withdrew his membership because of a misunderstanding between him and some members who claimed control over the local church. However, at Porto Novo, it was alleged that Oschoffa withdrew his membership from the Cherubim and Seraphim Society because of a charge of adultery voiced against him. The prophet denied this and claimed that he was never a member of the Cherubim and Seraphim Society though he was friendly with the society.

The inference one could draw from this is that the emergence of Oschoffa as a new spiritual leader of a religious group was not in the interest of the existing churches in Porto Novo, especially the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and the Methodist Church, both of which Oschoffa was said to have belonged to at one time or the other. It was therefore not surprising that the first question at the open convention came from a certain Alexander Aganyimi, a leading member of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, who supposedly asked: "We understand that Moses Orimolade was sent by God and it is true that he works wonders in God's name. Now, you Oschoffa, also claim to have been sent by God. Which of you do we have to follow?" Oschoffa replied that John the Baptist came before Christ and people thought that he was the Messiah. Similarly, Cherubim and Seraphim are both attendant angels of the Lord and so the church by that name is a forerunner of the Church of Christ, come to prepare the way.

Another man, a member of the Catholic Church, asked whether Oschoffa who claimed that his power was from Christ would go to Rome (the Vatican), in the same way St. Peter and St. Paul took the Catholic Church to Rome. Oschoffa was quoted to have replied philosophically saying: Young man, we gave you one kobo to hold and you held on to it; now we are telling you to reject the one kobo and accept two kobo because the glory of two kobo is more than that of one kobo. But if you refuse to relinquish one kobo, at a future time when you come to see the glory of the two kobo, you will want to retrace your steps and embrace them, but it will be too late as others will have taken your place.

His intelligent answers moved most people who had thought that Oschoffa would not live up to their expectations. It is even said that many sick people were healed at the convention. Most people left there fully convinced of the manifestation of God's power in Oschoffa's ministry. The convention seemed to have achieved tremendous success and the misconception about Oschoffa's religious movement appeared to have been corrected.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Describe the commissioning of Oschoffa and the great wisdom he manifested

### **3.4 The Formation of the "Celestial Church of Christ"**

It was now necessary to bring together the large concourse of followers into a fold, a congregation or a church. All Oschoffa noticed was that things were unfolding by divine intervention. No meeting was held to discuss the name of the new church. The name of the church was believed to have come down from heaven by divine revelation through a certain Alexander Yanga who was one of the early followers of Prophet Oschoffa healed by him through the power of the Holy Spirit. Yanga was believed to have been in a trance for seven consecutive days. At the end of the seventh day, he reportedly saw the name of the church boldly written on the rainbow. He accordingly asked for a piece of chalk and, looking at the rainbow, wrote the name of the church as shown to him, *Eglise du Christianisme Céleste*, which means "Celestial Church of Christ." After this divine revelation proclaimed the name of Oschoffa's religious movement, his followers soon began to identify themselves as Celestians. He explained that the Celestial Church worship is a carbon copy of the worship of God by the angels in heaven,--an argument the hymn *Tani mo bi* attempts to justify.

What was unique in the origin of the Celestial Church of Christ that wasn't in other Aladura Churches before it? Members of the sect always point to the mode of worship and the name allegedly sent from heaven as unique. Undoubtedly, S. B. J. Oschoffa like most founders of new churches, intended to give the church credibility by associating it with heavenly origins. Orimolade, Captain Abiodun, Emmanuel and Ositelu all did the

same. It is hard to find any church founders who did not trace the founding of their sect or church to celestial authority or divine revelation.

Oschoffa's name became synonymous with miraculous healings and people in Porto Novo and beyond anxiously waited the day he would visit them. The Celestial Church of Christ grew by leaps and bounds after the formal proclamation of the Holy Spirit's orders through Alexander Yanga. Oschoffa was soon proclaimed a prophet by the ever increasing followers. Apart from being called a prophet of God, Oschoffa was also allowed to use the title of "pastor" even though he had not attended any seminary nor been ordained as such. Through divine orders, the use of the name *Epastoral*, which was believed to have been uttered by an angel, was conferred on him. The term was allegedly translated to him as pastor. Thus, the founder of the Celestial Church of Christ became known as Pastor, Founder, and Prophet S. B. J. Oschoffa.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Describe the formation of the celestial church of Christ

#### **3.5 Miracles and Reactions**

A lady called Tinavie of Zevu was said to have died in a hospital at Porto Novo. Her younger sister Mawulowoe--a name which means "God will oblige"--was with Prophet Oschoffa seeking spiritual help. Upon hearing the news of her sister's death, the Holy Spirit was said to have descended upon Mawulowoe. Then and there she prophesied that Tinavie's body would be raised by Oschoffa in the name of the Lord, provided the corpse was brought to him. Prophet Oschoffa accordingly requested that Tinavie's body be brought to his house. When the corpse was brought in, he told the bereaved family to put it on the floor. Prior to this, Tinavie was said to have been certified clinically dead by one Dr. Alexander. The other residents of Prophet Oschoffa's house were predominantly Muslims who abhorred any delay in burying dead bodies. In fact, the presence of Tinavie's dead body was becoming an abominable sight to the residents of the house.

Oschoffa was looked upon as the devil's disciple who was displaying black power. On the spot the Holy Spirit was said to have descended upon him, and under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, he commanded the dead lady to stand up in the name of Jesus Christ. Eyewitness accounts confirmed that Tinavie was immediately revived and she got up. Immediately after her healing the Holy Spirit was said to have descended on her too. She prophesied about Oschoffa as a prophet of God. It was also said that after she had regained normalcy, Prophet Oschoffa asked Mawulowoe to lead Tinavie (the revived woman) to the hospital where the latter had earlier been declared clinically dead. A story is told of how Dr. Alexander panicked and almost lost consciousness upon seeing and recognizing Tinavie. According to Prophet Oschoffa, after the miracle, both Tinavie and Mawulowoe remained faithful members of the Celestial Church of Christ.

The news of this miracle had hardly died down when another miracle was performed by Oschoffa. A close friend of Prophet Oschoffa named Moishe Suru Afoyan who hailed from Zevu died unexpectedly and his relatives accordingly sent a message to Oschoffa to mourn with the bereaved family. Oschoffa received the news with shock and was extremely sorrowful. Prophet Oschoffa accompanied by some sympathizers left for Zevu. The Holy Spirit was said to have descended upon Prophet Oschoffa who ordered the bereaved family and the sympathizers present to leave the room where the dead body was laid. He covered the corpse with one of his clothes and prayed to God to manifest His powers. By twelve midnight, Moishe Suru Afoyan was revived. He accordingly joined the Celestial Church and remained a devoted member until his death. This miracle was still on the lips of many when we called to verify this at Zevu.

Oschoffa had now become a controversial figure in the French Colony of Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) and a major topic of discussion. Some people however were still sceptical about the new religious movement in spite of the series of wonders he had performed. Many people, on the other hand, believed he was sent by God while some attributed his powers to some strange esoteric force. In the course of these discussions about his powers, another miracle followed which really put Oschoffa in the limelight throughout the colony. This time it was a call from Grand-Popo, and historical town



located near the border between the Republic of Benin and Togo. Grand-Popo's land was being eroded by the sea and many houses along the shore were gradually being washed away. This was a great threat to the inhabitants of the town. More importantly, all attempts made by fetish priests, traditionalists and Muslims to control the erosion had failed.

In 1949, during their annual Christmas meeting, the people of Grand-Popo resolved to solicit Prophet Oschoffa's help as they had heard about his power to work miracles. A delegation was sent to Prophet Oschoffa in early 1950 by the chief of Grand-Popo begging the prophet to come to their aid in the name of God whom, they believed, had sent him. Acting under divine inspiration, Prophet Oschoffa took about six of his followers with him and left his base in Porto Novo for Grand-Popo. Among the elders of the church who accompanied him were Wolider Afore, Yanga and his wife Madam Silvestina Yanga and Mathias. At Grand-Popo, Prophet Oschoffa and his team were warmly received by the chief, the elders and the people of the town who had by then assembled at the sea shore. Among the gathering was a white Roman Catholic priest (whose name Prophet Oschoffa could not remember).

The Divine Order allegedly instructed Prophet Oschoffa to call for an egg which can be interpreted as representing the earth. Furthermore, the Divine Order told him to call for a needle which likewise represented the sea. Prophet Oschoffa then pierced the egg with the needle and threw both into the sea after some short extempore prayers. Immediately the sea receded and miraculously stopped at the exact place where the egg had fallen. This story was confirmed by two elderly Roman Catholics from Grand-Popo who confessed that they were present at the time of the historical event and that they were then about thirty-five and forty years old respectively. These two men who said they were members of the Olympio family gave their names as Jean Olympio and François Olympio respectively. The local Methodist presbyter just a stone's throw from the site of the incident also confirmed the veracity of the Grand-Popo miracle. The confirmation of the two Olympio brothers who are Catholics as well as the testimony of the local Methodist presbyter no doubt lent some credibility to this story.

The news of Prophet Oschoffa's miracle at Grand-Popo further added to the misgivings of the existing churches, especially the Catholic, Methodist, and the Cherubim and Seraphim Organizations, who argued that Oschoffa was using black or evil powers. But not so with the local people who said the miracles were the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in Oschoffa. As a result, the Celestial Church of Christ was besieged by many new adherents who joined daily. The rate at which many Christians defected from their parent churches to join the new church was alarming. In an interview Pastor Simon Dossou confirmed that about half of the members of the mission churches--the Roman Catholic Church and the Methodist Church--were believed to have been lost to the Celestial Church of Christ.

Scientifically, the Grand-Popo miracle defies all credible explanations. However, we are principally concerned with faith. McPherson once stated that the choice between the miraculous and the non-miraculous explanation is sometimes seen as something to be decided on the basis of evidence. He concisely defined a miracle as an event which both is and is not capable of being explained in natural terms. Initially, Oschoffa's followers seemed to have been people who were members of some big western Christian churches and they continued to go to their churches while receiving prayers from Prophet Oschoffa. Prayer meetings were therefore arranged so as to avoid clashes with the normal service of other churches. This was worked out after some meetings between representatives of the existing churches and Prophet Oschoffa. Thus Wednesdays and Fridays were selected as days for open air services and meditations.

### **3.5.1 Oschoffa's Tribulations**

The number of adherents kept on increasing as the days passed and soon most of them stopped attending services at their old churches. Soon Prophet Oschoffa was antagonized by the French colonial administration. Perhaps at the instigation of the authorities of the orthodox churches he was accused of inciting government workers to neglect their official duties especially on Wednesdays and Fridays. It must be noted that civil and public servants who joined the Celestial Church of Christ left their official duties earlier than the stipulated time of closing for Celestial Church worship during the

week. It was therefore not surprising that the French colonial administration in Dahomey expressed concern about the activities of Oschoffa and his followers. He was labelled an economic saboteur.

Another accusation levelled against Prophet Oschoffa and his followers was that they were partly responsible for the moral decadence in Dahomey because there were growing cases of divorce, fornication and adultery. An historian by the name of Claude Prince, of Porto Novo, explained that since the majority of Prophet Oschoffa's followers were young and were predominantly women, aggrieved husbands as well as those opposed to the establishment and activities of the Celestial Church for one reason or the other may have been the source of these unsubstantiated accusations and trumped up charges.

When the colonial administration and the mission churches found out that the Celestial Church was really difficult to stop, moves were initiated to restrain and control the prophet and the activities of the Celestial Church. The prophet was told that if he wanted recognition, he should register with the Council of Protestant Churches in Dahomey (Republic of Benin). Tied to this condition was a clause which ordered the compulsory return of the members to their parent churches. Naturally the followers of Prophet Oschoffa did not accept this infringement on their fundamental right to freedom of worship. Oschoffa's refusal to abide by the order and regulations of registration was a result of the fear that the Council of Protestant Churches would in the long run be a stumbling block to the growth of his church. Under normal conditions in Benin, clubs, associations, fraternities, churches and organizations are required to be legally registered within their affiliated groups.

There was a deadlock over the registration order and the subsequent antagonism against Prophet Oschoffa and the Celestial Church went on unabated. During this period of tension, there were many invitations from numerous parishes around Porto Novo asking Prophet Oschoffa to visit them. Prophet Oschoffa decided to leave Porto Novo for Agange in the Toffin district perhaps to diffuse the tension and withdraw from public

view. While he was away, detractors and blackmailers of his church thought that they had succeeded in curtailing his activities and those of the Celestial Church of Christ.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Why were there so many oppositions to Oshoffa's movement and what lessons did you learn from his tribulation?

### **3.6 Oschoffa's contribution to church growth.**

By 1950, the Celestial Church (C.C.C.) had spread from Agange across the entire Toffin district to Gbaji from where it entered into Nigeria through some fishermen who were Celestials. Makoko parish which now functions as the diocesan headquarters is ostensibly the first branch of the Celestial Church in Nigeria. The Celestial Church of Christ reached Makoko at the same time it reached Toffin district through the legendary seven disciples of Oschoffa.

Oschoffa himself finally gave in to both internal and external pressures and left Porto Novo for Makoko escorted by Moses Ajovi on March 3, 1951. According to the C.C.C. traditions the Makoko parish was jointly established by Superior Senior Leader François, Senior Leader Layon and five others now deceased. The arrival of the pastor-founder in 1951 opened a new chapter in the growth of the church. For almost a decade the C.C.C. was hardly known outside the metropolis of Lagos and its surrounding area. In fact, the main activities of the new church were centred around Makoko.

The Celestial Church of Christ had a relatively small representation in the sixties in Nigeria. Very little attention was paid to the sect. This was probably because of the might of the big mission churches which completely eclipsed the feeble efforts to introduce the C.C.C. into Nigeria. However, the decade 1970-80 witnessed a phenomenal growth in the Celestial Church in Nigeria. Within ten years, the new sect had reached virtually every local government area of the Yoruba-speaking regions of Nigeria from its main base at Makoko. By 1982, almost every town and village had a

parish of the Celestial Church through the individual efforts of persons who had come into contact with the new sect in Lagos. There is no doubt that the famous Iyabo Olorunkoya--Indian hemp--case in London in 1970 drew the attention of Nigerians to the Celestial Church of Christ for the first time. Iyabo Olorunkoya, a Lagos socialite, allegedly defied the advice of a Celestial Church *woli* ("leader" or *wolider*) and travelled to London. The arrest and subsequent trial attracted national attention to the sect. People now wanted to know more about the C.C.C. and benefit from the prophecies, trances and visions of the church prophets.

Another factor that helped the spread of the Celestial Church was the Nigerian oil boom of the seventies. People had enough oil and more to spare. As a result, very many rich individuals sponsored the establishment of parishes into which shepherds and workers were recruited. Individual owners were encouraged to establish parishes and this practice helped in no small measure in the spread of the Celestial Church. The use of the Yoruba language in worship and other liturgical practices of the sect offered tremendous attraction. The situation was further enhanced by the striking similarity between the Yoruba traditional religious practices and the C.C.C. worship and liturgical practices. Despite the absence of any organized conversion into the sect, it experienced phenomenal growth and spread to Badagry, Ibadan, Epe, Zaria, Kaduna, Kano, Onitsha, Aba, Owerri, London, New York and other world capitals wherever you found black people between 1970 and 1980. Thus did Samuel Bilewu Oschoffa give the Celestial Church of Christ to the world and thousands hearkened to his voice.

### **3.6.1 Oshoffa's Death**

The sudden home call of the enigmatic pastor-founder was unexpected. Nobody knew that death would strike the day it did. Many had taken Oschoffa for a god. Do gods die? The journey into the world beyond began for Oschoffa on September 1, 1985. He was on his way to Ibadan Army Barracks C.C.C. parish harvest. His car, driven by Espedit, an experienced driver, was only about seventeen kilometres from Ibadan. It was speeding along when suddenly one of the tires exploded. The car skidded and somersaulted about four times before landing in the bush. Oschoffa escaped death but

was half conscious and dazed. The unconscious pastor and his bleeding driver were driven back to Lagos for quick treatment at Labi's Hospital, Ilupeju. Everybody sighed in relief, happy that the worst was over for the pastor-founder after his miraculous escape.

His great escape from this fatal accident in which two of his dear aides died on the spot helped to boost the myth of immortality surrounding him especially among his followers and most Nigerians. As *Newswatch* put it, in the early hours of September 10, 1985, in an ironic twist of fate, death struck. The pastor-founder, one of the greatest Nigerians of our age, quietly breathed his last on a chair at First Shadrach Hospital, Ilupeju, having been certified fit by doctors who were putting finishing touches to his release. The remains of the pastor-founder, Pa S. B. J. Oschoffa were finally laid to rest on Saturday, October 10, 1985, in his mother's hometown, Imeko, the Celestial City, amidst pomp and pageantry, mourning and thanksgiving.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate Oschoffa's Contribution to Church Growth

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

As a result of the rapid growth of the Celestial Church and the popularity of Oschoffa, reactionaries and detractors began to undermine the new religious movement and its leadership. In the first place, miraculous healings and miracles were both condemned as anachronistic and were described as devilish. The Catholic Church was bitterly opposed to the Celestial Church and its practices. However, the Cherubim and Seraphim Church seemed to have been somewhat moderate in their attack against Oschoffa and his movement because they also practiced spiritual healing. Oschoffa was blessed both in life and in death. He lived like a god, revered and worshipped. He also died like a god, leaving mysteriously as he had come, thus keeping the Oschoffa myth intact. Like a god, his death shook the entire Celestial world and beyond. *News watch* described his burial in the following terms: The Earth quake in exclamation, the stars blinked to

refocus, the sea water rose in disbelief, the birds sang a dirge in sympathy, while the seismic vibrations of these rumblings ricocheted against the wailing walls of the Celestial world.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we studied the early life of Oschoffa Samuel Bilewu, his divine visitation, Trance and public ministry. We also considered the formation of the Celestial Church of Christ and Oschoffa's contribution to church growth which included miracles.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Enumerate Oschoffa's heroic sacrifice and suffering encountered because of his faith.
- Describe the formation of the Celestial Church Of Christ
- Discuss Oschoffa's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

## **7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 3: BABALOLA, JOSEPH AYODELE (1904 – 1959)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 His Background
  - 3.2 Babalola's Call to Ministry
  - 3.3 Mighty Revivals
  - 3.4 The Birth of the C.A.C in Nigeria
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Pastor Medayese wrote in his book *Itan Igbe dide Woli Ayo Babalola* that mysterious circumstances surrounded the birth of Babalola. On that day, it was believed that a strange and mighty object exploded and shook the clouds. Just like the Old Testament prophets, Babalola was called by God into the prophetic office to stand before men. His was a specific and personal call.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Draw practical Inspiration from the Life and Ministry of Babalola Joseph Ayodele which will enable you spread Christianity today
- Describe the formation of C.A.C in Nigeria
- Enumerate Babalola's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Background of Joseph Ayodele Babalola**

Joseph Ayodele Babalola was born on April 25, 1904 to David Rotimi and Madam Marta Talabi who belonged to the Anglican Church. The family lived at Odo-Owa in Ilofa, a small town about ninety kilometres from Ilorin in Kwara State, Nigeria. His father was the *Baba Ijo* ("church father") of the C.M.S. Church at Odo-Owa. On January 18, 1914, young Babalola was taken by his brother M. O. Rotimi, Sunday school teacher in the C.M.S. Church at Ilofa to Osogbo. Babalola started school at Ilofa and got as far as standard five at All Saints' School, Osogbo. However, he quit school when he decided to learn a trade and became a motor mechanic apprentice. Again, he did not continue long in this vocation before joining the Public Works Department (PWD). He was among the road workers who constructed the road from Igbara-Oke to Ilesa, working as a steam roller driver.

##### **3.1.1 Babalola's Call to Ministry**

Babalola's strange experience started on the night of September 25th, 1928 when he suddenly became restless and could not sleep. This went on for a week and he had no inkling of the causes of such a strange experience. The climax came one day when he was, as usual, working on the Ilesa-Igbara-Oke road. Suddenly the steam roller's engine stopped to his utter amazement. There was no visible mechanical problem, and Joseph became confused and perplexed. He was in this state of confusion when a great voice "like the sound of many waters" called him three times. The voice was loud and clear and it told him that he would die if he refused to heed the divine call to go into the world and preach. Babalola did not want to listen to this voice and he responded like many of the Biblical prophets, who, when they were called out by Yahweh as prophets, did not normally yield to the first call. Men like Moses and Jeremiah submitted to God only when it became inevitable. So, Babalola gave in only after he had received the assurance of divine guidance. To go on the mission, he had to resign his appointment with the Public Works Department. Mr. Fergusson, the head of his unit, tried to

dissuade him from resigning but the young man was bent on going on the Lord's mission.

The same voice came to Joseph a second time asking him to fast for seven days. He obeyed and at the end of the period he saw a great figure of a man who, according to Pastor Alokun, resembled Jesus. The man in a dazzling robe spoke at length about the mission he was to embark upon. The man also told him of the persecutions he would face and at the same time assured him of God's protection and victory. A hand prayer bell was given to Babalola as a symbol. He was told that the sound of the bell would always drive away evil spirits. He was also given a bottle of "life-giving water" to heal all manners of sickness. Consequently, wherever and whenever he prayed into water for therapeutic purposes, effective healing was procured for those who drank the water. Thus, Babalola became a prophet and a man with extraordinary powers. Enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit he could spend several weeks in prayer. Elder Abraham Owoyemi of Odo-Owa, said that the prophet regularly saw angels who delivered divine messages to him. An angel appeared in one of his prayers and forbade him to wear caps.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List three (3) practical lessons you have learnt from Babalola's call to ministry.

#### **3.2. The Itinerary of Prophet Babalola**

During one of his prayer sessions an angel appeared to him and gave him a big yam which he ordered him to eat. The angel told him that the yam was the tuber with which God fed the whole world. He further revealed that God had granted unto him the power to deliver those who were possessed of evil spirits in the world. He was directed to go first to Odo-Owa and start preaching. He was to arrive in the town on a market day, cover his body with palm fronds and disfigure himself with charcoal paints. In October 1928, he entered the town in the manner described and was taken for a mad man. Babalola immediately started preaching and prophesying. He told the inhabitants of

Odo-Owa about an impending danger if they did not repent. He was arrested and taken to the district officer at Ilorin for allegedly disturbing the peace. The district officer later released him when the allegations could not be proven. However, it was said that a few days later, there was an outbreak of smallpox in the town. The man whose prophecies and messages were once rejected was quickly sought for. He went around praying for the victims and they were all healed.

Pa David Rotimi, Babalola's father, had been instrumental in the establishment of a C.M.S. Church in Odo-Owa. Babalola organized regular prayer meetings in this church which many people attended because of the miracles God performed through him. Among the regulars was Isaiah Oluyemi who later saw the wrath of Bishop Smith of Ilorin diocese. Information had reached the bishop that almost all members of the C.M.S. Church in Ilofa were seeing visions, speaking in tongues and praying vigorously. Babalola and the visionaries were allegedly ordered by Bishop Smith to leave the church. But Babalola did not leave the town until June 1930. On an invitation from Daniel Ajibola, Babalola went to Lagos. Elder Daniel Ajibola at that time was working in Ibadan where he was a member of the Faith Tabernacle Congregation. He introduced Prophet Babalola to Pastor D. O. Odubanjo, one of the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle in Lagos. Senior Pastor Esinsinade who was then the president of the Faith Tabernacle was invited to see Babalola. After listening to the details of his call and his ministry, the Faith Tabernacle leaders warmly received the young prophet into their midst.

Babalola had not yet been baptized by immersion and Senior Pastor Esinsinade emphasized that he needed to go through that rite. Pastor Esinsinade then baptized him in the lagoon at the back of the Faith Tabernacle Church building at 51, Moloney Bridge Street, Lagos. Babalola returned to Odo-Owa a few days after that and Elder (later Pastor) J. A. Medayese, paid him a visit. The news of the conversion of the new prophet reached Pastor K. P. Titus at Araromi in Yagba, present Kwara State. Pastor Titus was a teacher and preacher at the Sudan Interior Mission which was then thriving at Yagba. He invited Prophet Babalola for a revival service. Joseph Ayodele Babalola while in Yagba, performed mighty works of healing. Many Muslims and Christians

from other denominations and some traditional religionists were converted to the new faith during the revival.

The fact that Babalola did not use the opportunity to establish a separate Christian organization despite his marvelous evangelical success, must be puzzling to historians, but his intention was not to start a new church. He declared to his followers that he had registered his membership with the Faith Tabernacle, the society which had him baptized in Lagos. He thus persuaded them to become members of the Faith Tabernacle. To facilitate this, he went to Lagos to confer with the leaders, especially as he was not yet well acquainted with the doctrines, tenets, and administration of the church.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Describe Babalola's call to ministry and the practical lessons you have learnt from his humbly beginning

### **3.3 Mighty Revivals**

There was a controversy among the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria over some doctrines. In the midst of it were, in particular, the Ilesa and Oyan branches of the tabernacle. The Oyan branch was under the supervision of Pastor J. A. Babatope, a notable Anglican teacher, before his conversion and later, one of the outstanding leaders of the Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria. Issues like the use of western and traditional drugs versus divine healing, polygamy and whether polygamous husbands should be allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper were among those doctrines that needed to be agreed on. These issues had caused dissension at the Ilesa Tabernacle and in order to avoid a split, a delegation of peacemakers made up of all leading Faith Tabernacle pastors, was sent to Ilesa. It was headed by Pastor J. B. Esinsinade of Ijebu-Ode, president of the General Headquarters of the movement and D. O. Odubanjo of the Lagos Missionary Headquarters. The Ilesa meeting was scheduled for the 9th and 10th of July, 1930. The Apostolic Council of Jerusalem in A.D. 48, and other important

church councils, is precedents in seeking ecclesiastical direction on matters affecting the life and peace of the church.

Before the delegation left Lagos for Ilesa, Babalola had been invited to meet the leaders at Pastor I. B. Akinyele's residence at Ibadan. From there I. B. Akinyele and Babalola joined the delegation to Ilesa. At Ilesa, he was introduced to the whole conference and was lodged in a separate room because of his prophetic mission. The representatives began their meeting and on the agenda were twenty-four items. The first was the validity of baptism administered to a man with many wives. The second was the issue of divine healing because some of the members believed in the use of drugs like quinine to cure malaria fever. They were only able to discuss the first item when there was a sudden interruption which Pastor Adegboyega described thus: "The conciliatory talks at Ilesa were going on, when suddenly a mighty sweeping revival broke out at Faith Tabernacle Congregation Church at Oke-Oye, Ilesa".

The revival began with the raising by Babalola of a dead child. The mother of the dead child who was restored to life went about spreading the news around the town of Ilesa proclaiming that a miracle working prophet had come to the town of Oke-Oye. This attracted a large number of people to Oke-Oye to see the prophet. According to Pastor Medayese, many of those afflicted with various diseases that came to Oke-Oye were healed. Many mighty works were performed through the use of the prayer bell and the drinking of consecrated water from a stream called *Omi Ayo* ("Stream of Joy"). The result was that thousands of people including traditional religionists, Muslims and Christians from various other denominations were converted to the Faith Tabernacle. As there was no space in the church hall, revival meetings were shifted to an open field where men and women from all walks of life, from every part of the country and from neighbouring countries assembled daily for healing, deliverances and blessings. Odubanjo testified that within three weeks Babalola had cured about one hundred lepers, sixty blind people and fifty lame persons.

He further claimed that both the Anglican and Wesleyan Churches in Ilesa were left desolate because their members transferred their allegiance to the revivalist and that all

the patients in Wesley Hospital, Ilesa, abandoned their beds to seek healing from Babalola. Also: Many of the schools belonging to the Wesleyan and Anglican Churches, as well as to the Baptists and the Roman Catholics closed down altogether, and there has not been sufficient money again to pay their teachers due to the fact that the majority of their members left to join us".

The assistant district officer in Ilesa in 1930 wrote that he visited the scene of the revival incognito and found a crowd of hundreds of people including a large contingent of the lame and blind and concluded that the whole affair was orderly. Members of the church made fantastic claims such as: "Hopeless barren women were made fruitful; women who had been carrying their pregnancies for long years were wonderfully delivered. The dumb spoke and lunatics were cured. In fact, it was another day of Pentecost. Witches confessed and some demon possessed people were exorcized. But the general superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society of Nigeria at the time has described the reports as "grotesquely inaccurate accounts of the operations of Babalola." This of course could be the biased view of a man whose church was said to be the greatest victim of the Ilesa revival.

A revelation was later given to Ayo Babalola to burn down a big tree in front of the Owa's Palace. The big tree was traditionally believed to be the rendez-vous of witches and wizards. The juju tree was therefore greatly feared and sacrifices were usually made to the spirits believed to reside in it. There was apprehension that this bold act would result in the instantaneous death of Babalola since it was expected to arouse the anger of the gods. But to the great amazement of the people, the prophet did not die but rather continued to wax stronger in the Lord's work. That single event was said to have made even the Owa of Ilesa and important people in the town to fear and respect the prophet. The tidal wave of Babalola's revival spread from Ilesa to Ibadan, Ijebu, Lagos, Efon-Alaaye, Aramoko Ekiti and Abeokuta. No greater revival preceded that of Babalola. It was popularly held in Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C.) circles that at one revival meeting, attendance rose to about forty thousand. \

Among the men of faith who came as disciples to Babalola were Daniel Orekoya, Peter Olatunji who came from Okeho, and Omotunde, popularly known as Aladura Omotunde, from Aramoko Ekiti. These men drew great inspiration from Babalola. Orekoya went on to reside in Ibadan where a great revival also broke out at Oke-Bola through him. It was during his Oke-Bola revival that Orekoya reportedly raised a dead pregnant woman

### **3.3.1 Babalola's Other Missionary Journeys**

After the great revival of Oke-Oye, the prophet was directed by the Holy Spirit to go out on further missionary journeys, but even before this, people from other parts of the country had been spreading the glad tidings of Oke-Oye, Ilesa's great revival, to other parts of the country. Accompanied by some followers, Joseph Babalola went to Offa, in present Kwara State. Characteristically, people turned out to hear his preaching and see miracles. The Muslims in Offa became jealous and for that reason incited the members of the community against him. To avoid bloodshed he was compelled to leave. He next stopped in Usi in Ekitiland for his evangelical mission and he performed many works of healing. From Usi he and his men moved to Efon-Alaaye, also in Ekitiland, where they received a warm reception from the Oba Alaaye of Efon. An entire building was provided for their comfort.

Babalola requested an open space for prayer from the Oba who willingly and cheerfully gave him the privilege to choose a site. Consequently, the prophet and his men chose a large area at the outskirts of town. Traditionally the place was a forbidden forest because of the evil spirits that were believed to inhabit it. The Oba tried to dissuade Babalola and his men from entering the forbidden forest, but Babalola insisted on establishing his prayer ground there. The missionaries entered the bush, cleared it and consecrated it as a prayer ground. When no harm came upon them, the inhabitants of Efon were inspired to accept the new faith in large numbers. Babalola's evangelistic success in Efon-Alaaye was a remarkable one. Archdeacon H. Dallimore from Ado-Ekiti and some white pastors from Ogbomosho Baptist Seminary were believed to have come to see for themselves the "wonder-working prophet" at Efon. Both Dallimore and



the Baptist pastors reportedly asked some men from St. Andrew's College, Oyo and Baptist Seminary, Ogbomosho to assist in the work.

The success of the revival was accelerated by the conversion of both the Oba of Efon and the Oba of Aramoko. They were both baptized with the names, Solomon Aladejare Agunsoye and Hezekiah Adeoye respectively. After this event, news of the revival at Efon spread to other parts of Ekitiland. The missionaries also visited other towns in the present Ondo State. Among them were Owo, Ikare and Oka. Babalola retreated to his home town in Odo-Owa to fortify himself spiritually. While he was at Odo-Owa, a warrant for his arrest was issued from Ilorin. He was arrested for preaching against witches, a practice which had caused some trouble in Otuo in present Bendel State. He was sentenced to jail for six months in Benin City in March 1932. After serving the jail term, he went back to Efon Alaaye.

One Mr. Cyprian E. Ufon came from Creek Town in Calabar to entreat Babalola to "come over to Macedonia and help." Ufon had heard about Babalola and his works and wanted him to preach in Creek Town. After seeking God's direction, the prophet followed Ufon to Creek Town. His campaign there was very successful. From Creek Town, Babalola visited Duke town and a plantation where a national church existed at the time. Certain members of this church received the gift of the Holy Spirit as Babalola was preaching to them and were baptized. When the prophet returned from the Calabar area, he settled down for a while. In 1935 he married Dorcas. The following year Babalola, accompanied by Evangelist Timothy Bababusuyi, went to the Gold Coast. On arrival at Accra, he was recognized by some people who had seen him at the Great Revival in Ilesa. After a successful campaign in the Gold Coast he returned to Nigeria.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the Revival at Oke- Oye

### **3.4 The Birth of the C.A.C. in Nigeria**

The spectacular evangelism by Prophet Joseph Ayo Babalola brought with it a wave of persecution to all who rushed into the new faith. The mission churches allegedly became jealous and hostile especially as their members constituted the main converts of the Faith Tabernacle. It was widely rumoured that the revival movement was a lawless and unruly organization. The Nigerian government was put on the alert about the activities of the movement. At this time, the leading members of the movement were advised to invite the American Faith Tabernacle leaders to come to their rescue. The leaders from America, however, refused to come as such a venture was said to be against their principles. As a matter of fact, the association between the Philadelphia group and the Faith Tabernacle of Nigeria was terminated following the marital problems of the leader of the American group, Pastor Clark. The Nigerian group then went into fellowship with the Faith and Truth Temple of Toronto which sent a party of seven missionaries to West Africa. Again, the fellowship was stopped when Mr. C. R. Myers, the only surviving missionary, sent his wife to the hospital where she died in childbirth.

Despite these disappointing relationships with foreign groups, the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle still considered it prestigious to seek affiliation with a foreign body. The rationale for this can be found in D. O Odubanjo's letter to Pastor D. P Williams of the Apostolic Church of Great Britain of March 1931. In the letter Odubanjo claimed: "The officers of the government here fear the European missionaries, and dare not trouble their native converts, but often, we brethren here have been ill-treated by government officers". This was followed by a formal request for missionaries to be sent to strengthen the position of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle. Missionaries did come and, on their advice, the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle was ceded to the British Apostolic Church. Consequently, the name changed from Faith Tabernacle to the Apostolic Church. Doctrinal differences between the two groups soon began to appear in forms similar to the ones that caused the termination of the association with the American groups. The subject of divine healing was one of the most important issues.

Some of the invited white missionaries from Britain were found using quinine and other tablets and this caused a serious controversy among the leading members. It was unfortunate that the controversy could not be resolved and the movement subsequently split. One faction of the church made Oke-Oye its base and retained the name the Apostolic Church. The other larger faction and in which Prophet Joseph Babalola was a leader eventually became the Christ Apostolic Church. This church had to go through many names before May 1943 when its title was finally registered with number 147 under the Nigerian Company Law of 1924. Today, the church controls over five thousand assemblies, and reputedly is one of the most popular Christian organisations in Nigeria and the only indigenous organization with strong faith in divine healing.

Professor John Peel recorded that the membership of the C.A.C. in 1968 was well over one hundred thousand. That figure must have doubled by now. The church opened up several primary and grammar schools, a teachers' training college, a seminary, maternity homes and a training school for prophets. The years between 1970 and 1980 saw further expansion of the church to England, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Liberia. At present the church has its Missionary and General Headquarters in Lagos and Ibadan respectively

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the Birth of Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Babalola was a spiritually gifted individual who was genuinely dissatisfied with the increasing materialistic and sinful existence into which he believed, the Yoruba in particular and Nigeria in general were being plunged as western civilization influence on society grew. The C.A.C. believes that the spiritual power bestowed on Babalola placed him on an equal level with Biblical apostles like Peter, Paul and others who were sent out with the authority and in the name of Jesus. Joseph Ayo Babalola slept in the Lord in 1959.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we studied Joseph Ayodele Babalola's background, call to ministry and itinerary. We also looked at the mighty revivals in the ministry of Joseph Babalola and the birth of C.A.C in Nigeria

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

- Highlight three (3) practical lessons you learnt from the life of Joseph Babalola
- Discuss the birth of C.A.C in Nigeria
- Enumerate Babalola's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 4: IDAHOSA, BENSON ANDREW (1938 – 1998)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 His Early life
  - 3.2 Expansion of his Ministry
  - 3.3 What leading Gospel Minister's said about Benson Idahosa
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

As a young Christian, I once heard my pastor say during a morning service that Christians could raise the dead in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I believed it with all my heart. And flying around on my bicycle in those days, I went through the city of Benin in search of a dead person to raise to life. After about five hours of hard searching I found a compound where a little girl had died a few hours before. The corpse had been cleaned and prepared for burial. I walked boldly up to the father of the dead child. "The God whom I serve can bring your baby back to life," I told him. "Will you permit me to pray for the child and bring her back to life?" The man was startled, but he agreed. With great enthusiasm, I walked into the room and up to the bed. The child was cold and dead. With strong faith in the Lord, I called on the Lord to restore the child back to life. I turned to the corpse and called it by name, "Arise in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Oh Glory to God! The corpse sneezed, heavily, alas. The child had come back to life! This is the story of *Benson Idahosa*

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Derive inspiration from the life and conversion of Bishop Benson Idahosa
- Explain the various view points about Bishop Benson Idahosa
- Highlight Bishop Benson Idahosa's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

## **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.2 His Early LIFE**

Benson Andrew Idahosa was born of poor pagan parents in Benin City on September 11, 1938 in a village called Ewasso Edo, in Edo state, Nigeria. He was a sickly infant who was always fainting. As a result of his constant illness his father ordered the mother to throw him in the dust bin. When he was eighteen months old he was left on a rubbish heap to die. He was rejected by his father, sent to work on a farm as a servant and was denied education until he was fourteen years old. His education was irregular due to the poor financial status of his parents. He later took correspondence courses from Britain and the United States while working in Bata Shoe Company.

#### **3.1.1 His Conversion and Call to the Ministry**

His conversion was dramatic and his calling supernatural. He was converted by Pastor Okpo on a football field one Sunday afternoon while playing soccer with his teammates. Thus, young Benson became the first indigenous member of Pastor Okpo's small congregation. As a young convert he became very zealous in winning souls and in conducting outreaches in villages around Benin City. He was called to the ministry in a night vision from the Lord. "I have called you that you might take the gospel around

the world in my name, preach the gospel, and I will confirm my word with signs following," said the voice from heaven.

The room was filled with the presence of God as Benson fell to his knees beside the bed: "Lord, wherever you want me to go, I will go." He preyed on through the night, renewing his vows to God and interceding for his people who were yet to hear the message of salvation. After his call, Benson launched into ministry work preaching from village to village the gospel of Jesus Christ with great power and anointing. More people confessed Christ as their Saviour, and more healings occurred as he prayed for the sick.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight some practical lessons you have learnt from the call of God on the life of Benson Idahosa

#### **3.2 Expansion of His Ministry**

Soul winning was Idahosa's primary concern. With a motto "Evangelism our Supreme Task," he worked towards this goal of reaching the unreached in Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a black African, he found the doors of African countries were wide open and he ministered in over 123 countries all over the world. Crusades played a major role in his ministry. He was involved in at least one crusade per month. A record crowd of nearly one million people a night attended his Lagos Crusade in April 1985. He established the Redemption Television Ministry with a potential viewing audience of 50 million people. Idahosa operated in faith and he had a robust faith. He believed and trusted God with a childlike faith. He once said that living a daily life of absolute faith in God is the only secret to great success. He believed God for everything.

All things are possible to him that believes. He spent quality time in prayer and in the study of God's Word. He said that if someone spends time studying the Bible and acting on it, people will come looking for that person for life solutions. Idahosa also spent time studying the works and lives of other successful people both in the gospel ministry

and other fields of human endeavors and he applied the principles he learned about these successful people to his life and ministry. He was very energetic and hardworking. One of the ministers who served under him said that he had never seen a person who worked as hard as Archbishop Benson Idahosa. He was committed and consistent and he had confidence in himself. He was very humble and full of godly wisdom.

Benson Idahosa, the archbishop and founder of Church of God Mission International Incorporated with its headquarters in Benin City, Nigeria established over 6,000 churches throughout Nigeria and Ghana before 1971. Many of the ministers he supervised pastured churches of 1,000 to 4,000 people. His desire to meet the needs of the total man led him to establish several other arms of the ministry apart from the church. They include the Faith Mediplex, All Nations for Christ Bible Institute, Word of Faith Group of Schools and Benson Idahosa University which is currently under the leadership of his son, Rev. F.E.B. Idahosa. His wife, Margaret Idahosa is the current presiding bishop of the church.

The headquarters of his ministry, Faith Miracle Center, is a cathedral that seats up to 10,000 people. Church of God Mission has branches the world over, from the United Kingdom to South Africa to Japan to America. With his main task being evangelism, he launched Idahosa World Outreach television ministry (IWO TV), which was a broadcast reaching a potential viewing audience of 50 million people <sup>(3)</sup>.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the secrets of Idahosa's growth in ministry which are required for anyone called into God's service today

### **3.3 What Leading Gospel Ministers Said about Benson Idahosa**

According to Mrs. Gordon Freda Lindsay, president of Christ for the Nations Inc., Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.:

I know of no young black person in all of Africa who is reaching millions as Benson is,--in crusades with hundreds of thousands in attendance, in his weekly nationwide



telecast, in his Bible School, training eager students from several nations. He also conducts campaigns in Sweden, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Australia and the United States, where he often appeared on national religious telecasts. His burden for souls, his ministry of healing and miracles, even to the raising of several dead, demonstrates he is especially called of the Lord in these end times.

Benson Idahosa is sought after by everyone in his state, from government officials to beggars. When they posed questions and explained their problems to this man they received instantaneous miracle solutions, just as people did in Bible days with God's prophets. And the people get miraculous answers from this mighty leader of God's people. Benin City respects and salutes this great man of God, even at death. I have been with him on visits to many officials, to the governor, to the powerful Benin tribal kings. He moved with God and his people know it. His great miracle cathedral (his headquarters) seats over 10,000 (1981). His Bible School attracts upper class people from different African nations. And they also come from Maurice, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, the Middle East, Europe and other nations of the world--a truly International Bible Training Centre of dynamic faith.

People know that Bishop Idahosa preached what he practiced. Dr. Idahosa's evangelistic ministry has reached nations around the world. He was the first black African evangelist to shake Australia in a massive crusade that got national attention. His seminars have affected Christians and church leaders in many countries. I sincerely salute this man because he practiced among his own people what he preached to the world. Benson Idahosa was a man who believed God's promises and that God's miracle provision applies to Africans as well as to Americans. He believed that Africa has a part in God's work, and Africa will reap God's blessings. Evangelist T. L. Osborn, from

Many who follow Idahosa's teaching have been saved from poverty and have learned to plant out of their desperate need and to look to God as their divine source thereby becoming prosperous Christians in their own land. Idahosa rose from the rank of an ordinary man to world leadership as a pastor, builder, counsellor, prophet, teacher, apostle, evangelist,--a man of godly wisdom and of Christ-like compassion, whose ministry has blessed millions the world over. Idahosa was the greatest African

ambassador of the apostolic Christian faith to the world. He had strong links with international gospel ministers like Billy Graham, T.L. Osborn, Kenneth Hagin, Benny Hinn, Reinhard Bonnke, Morris Cerullo, Oral Roberts, amongst others; and took the gospel to 143 nations in his lifetime <sup>(1)</sup>. At the time of his death in 1998, he was reputed as having preached to more whites than any black man, and to more blacks than any white man.

### **3.3.1 Achievements**

- In 1971, he earned a diploma in Divinity from Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas.
- In 1981, he earned a Doctorate of Divinity from the Word of Faith College in New Orleans.
- In 1984, he earned a Doctorate in Law at the Oral Roberts University.
- He was the founding president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)
- He was a member of the College of Bishops of the International Communion of Christian Churches.
- He was once the President of All Nations for Christ Bible Institute.
- In addition to filling the position of archbishop of Church of God Mission, he was also president of All Nations for Christ Bible Institute, president of Idahosa World Outreach and president of Faith Medical Centre. He held positions in numerous organizations including the college of bishops of the international communion of Christian churches and the Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma.

He also received other degrees from the International University in Brussels, Belgium.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss Bishop Benson Idahosa's contribution to the spread of Christianity

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Archbishop Benson Idahosa and his wife Margaret Idahosa were blessed with four children. Archbishop Benson Idahosa was said to be the leader of over seven million Jesus people worldwide before he went to be with the Lord in February 1998. Known for his boldness, power and prosperity-based preaching, as well as an enormous faith in the supernatural, he was instrumental to the strong wave of revival in Christianity and marked conversions from animism that occurred between the 1970s and 1990s in Nigeria. He is reported to have performed so many miracles, including healing the blind, and raising up to twenty-eight people from the dead at different times in his ministry.

He was known for many notable quotes including "my God is not a poor God", "your attitude determines your altitude", "it is more risky, not to take a risk", "I am a possibilitarian", "If your faith says yes, God cannot say no", amongst others. Many of his messages on faith, miracles and prosperity remain a classic among Pentecostals. He is regarded by Christian's foes as the father of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, and was the founding President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). Many prominent Nigerian pastors like Ayo Oritsejafor (Current PFN President), David Oyedepo, Felix Omobude, Fred Addo and Chris Oyakhilome were his proteges.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we studied the early life and ministry of Bishop Benson Andrew Idahosa. We also considered the expansion of his ministry, his achievements and what leading gospel ministers said about Bishop Benson Idahosa

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- Enumerate some practical lessons you have learnt from the life of Archbishop Benson Idahosa which you will apply in your own life

- Discuss Bishop Benson Idahosa's contribution to the spread of Christianity in Africa

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## **UNIT 6: REV JOSHUA KANYI MANYAM AND CHURCH DOCTRINE**

### **CONTENTS**



- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Rev Kanyi Manyam
  - 3.2 The Teachings of NKST
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 Introduction**

Rev Joshua Kanyi Manyam was another strong leader who worked tirelessly for the progress of NKST. He took the mantle of leadership from Rev J.E.I. Sai and had performed his duties excellently well. NKST has grown beyond expectation and today she has a Christian university, University of Mkar, Mkar.

### **2.0 Objectives**

By the end of this study you should be able to:

-  Describe the brief profile of Rev Kanyi Manyam
-  Explain the doctrine of NKST

### **3.0 Main Content**

### **3.1 REV JOSHUA KANYI MANYAM**

Joshua kanyi Manyam was born 10<sup>th</sup> June 1926 at Ishorov. He started his education at Christian Religious Instructions (CRI) Akaa Kusuv in 1935 and in 1938 he moved to CRI Garagboughol. After several years of CRI education, he proceeded to Mkar DRCM School in 1942 and completed senior Primary School in 1947. He became a Christian and was baptized in 1942. In 1948, he entered Mkar Teachers' Training College and graduated in 1951 with Grade Three Certificate.

In 1959, Manyam was admitted at Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) Bukuru and completed in in 1962 and was ordained at Mkar in 1963 as the chaplain of Mkar Hospital from 1963 to 1965. He married in 1952 and was blessed with 10 children. After his grade three, he taught in DRCM Primary School Mbaakpur from 1952 to 1958. In July 28, 1965 he received a call from Gboko congregation where he served as the minister of Gboko congregation until his death. He was the chairman of NKST synod for 15 years from 1970 to 1978, and 1980 to 1987. He was a trustee member since 1977 and assistant secretary of TEKAN for many years. Rev Manyam also served not only the NKST but also the government in many ways. He was a chairman of Land Allocation Committee Benue State, a member of Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board Benue State and a member of Benue State Prerogative of Mercy Committee.

J.K. Manyam was the Reformed Fighter of Africa. Rev Manyam retired as the pastor of Gboko congregation in 1977, died on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1977 and was buried at his country home in Shorov in Buruku Local Government.

### **3.2 THE TEACHINGS OF NKST**

NKST is one of the Reformed Churches that admits and practices wholly what the Bible teaches in the Old and New Testaments. The Church acknowledges and has faith in Jesus Christ, as the only mediator between God and man (Acts 4.12; 1 Tim 2.5). Moreover, NKST

adopts the Apostles' Creed and its details in the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism (Aboho 12).

The Church has as its highest policy and decision making body known as the Synod. The Synod meets twice a year. There is the emergency Synod which meets only for one week to scrutinize graduates of approved seminaries for ordination and to reflect on budgets for departments. Four delegates made up of two pastors and two elders stand for each Classis comprising of at least four consistories. Other participants include all members of the Executive Committee and the seven members of the Board of Trustees. Besides, all pastors are eligible to attend as supporters. The major Synod meets for two weeks and begins on Tuesday of the second week of November. The November Synod discusses agenda brought from various classes, reports from Ministries or Departments and matters referred to the Synod by the Executive Committee which meets about monthly. Though the synod is the final ecclesiastical court of the NKST, all disciplinary cases are referred to the local Churches for punitive action (Aboho 13).

The technical steps for the discipline of pastors, elders and deacons are as follows: the case should be reported to the elders or consistory and preliminary inquiry is made by the consistory. If the case is confirmed, a neighbouring consistory is invited. If a case is confidently verified, the neighbouring Church and the host Church mutually decide the magnitude of a proper disciplinary action but send the case back to the local Church which alone has the ecclesiastical authority to discipline members. Disciplinary actions against ordained minister must go to the neighbouring Church, the Classis and Executive Committee, then the General Synod. To ease the work of the Synod, there is a Synod Executive Committee, comprised of seven members. This body meets frequently to settle emergency cases referred to it. The executive body takes final decisions on minor issues, and only refers those major cases to the Synod.

NKST as a Reformed Church subscribes to (A) the three forms of unity and (B) Ecumenical Creeds:

- A. Three forms of unity are;
  - i. The Heidelberg Catechism
  - ii. The Canons of Dort
  - iii. The Belgic Confession
- B. Ecumenical Creeds are;
  - i. Apostles Creed
  - ii. Nicene Creed
  - iii. Athanasian Creed (The NKST Policy 2).

Universal Reformed Christian Church has many departments and ministries which promote the offer of holistic services to the people. These are:

1. The NKST Mission Department (30 Mission Stations, 21 are beyond Tiv area)
2. NKST Health Services
3. NKST Finance Department
4. NKST Orphanage
5. The Women Fellowship
6. NKST Literature Department
7. NKST Media Services
8. Diaconal Services
9. NKST Tiv Bible Revision Project
10. Youth Ministry
11. Sunday School Ministry (MIM)
12. Choir Department
13. NKST Internal Audit Department
14. NKST Christian Agricultural Company (under University of Mkar, Mkar)



#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

NKST stands purely on the teachings of the Bible by not adding and subtracting anything from it.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Rev Kanyi Manyam as talented leader began his studies in a Christian setting by attending CRI Akaa in 1935 and later went to Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN), Bukuru, Jos. Having ordained as a pastor he worked as a chaplain at NKST Mkar Hospital established by the missionaries at the secretariat. He worked as Pastor in charge of NKST Gboko-Central and was the chairman of Synod for many years.

NKST church doctrine is absolutely built on the Holy Bible. NKST is one of the Reformed Churches established by the SUM/CRC and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission. The Church acknowledges and has faith in Jesus Christ, as the only mediator between God and man, and adopts the Apostles' Creed and its details in the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

✚ Who is Rev Joshua Kanyi Manyam?

✚ Explain the doctrine of NKST

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/ FUTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 7: THE GROWTH OF EVANGELISM IN NKST-(UNIVERSAL REFORMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Spread of Evangelism
  - 3.2 The Growth of NKST
  - 3.3 NKST Medium of Spreading the Gospel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 Introduction**

This unit gives a synopsis of how what started like “a Mustard seed” soon grew and spread across Tivland and beyond. In order to appreciate the contribution of the NKST, the growth of evangelism is discussed in two sections: section I, 1911-1957 and section II, 1957-2011.

## **2.0 Objectives**

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- ❖ Explain the growth of evangelism by SUM/CRC in Tivland and Nigeria
- ❖ Enumerate the achievements NKST has made so far
- ❖ What is the significance of NKST medium for the spread of the gospel

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 THE SPREAD OF EVANGELISM (1911-1957)**

The first mission station in Tivland was established at Sai by Mr. Carl Zimmermann in 1911. However, the British Colonial Government restricted the movement of the Missionaries in Tivland, because the Tiv people were regarded as warriors and they had not been brought under the control of the Colonial Administration. The missionaries were therefore, allowed to preach only in the villages along the road from Wukari to Takum.

Initially, it was difficult for the missionaries to woo the people to them. they, therefore, used medical care and gifts to attract the people. Thus through kindness and healing, Mr. Carl Zimmerman won a reasonable size of Tiv converts. The missionaries later found out that the station at Sai was not conducive for the work of evangelization of Tiv people due to its extremity in the eastern side of Tivland. Therefore, in 1914, they moved further west and established a station at Zaki-Biam. Still the missionaries were not satisfied so they moved further west and established a station at Sev-av in 1920. Sev-av is at the bank of River Katsina-Ala but the station was still on the eastern side of the River. After establishing three stations in the eastern side of River Katsina-Ala, the missionaries realized that the greater part of Tivland was in the Western side of the river. Therefore, they continued looking for a

central place to establish a station that would be easily accessible to majority of Tiv people. Mkar station was established in 1923. From Mkar, they could easily move further west, south and north of Tivland. Adikpo and Kunav (Mbaakon) stations were also established in the same year with Mkar. Turan (Jato-Aka) station in the South west was established in 1926, and Makurdi in the North West in 1931. From Makurdi they moved southwards and established two stations in Apir and Shangev-Tiev (Mbaakpur) in 1936. Iber station was established in 1946 and Uavande, the last station by the DRCM was established in 1957.

The SUM-CRC established stations in Asukunya, Isherev, Ityôshin (Atukpu) and Harga. The 15 stations established by the early missionaries are presented are:

<b>DRCM Station</b>		<b>Year</b>
Sai	-	1911
Zaki-Biam	-	1914
Sevav	-	1920
Mkar	-	1923
Adikpo	-	1923
Kunav (Mbaakon)	-	1923
Turan (Jato-Aka)	-	1926
Makurdi	-	1931
Apir	-	1936
Shangev-Tiev (Mbaakpur)	-	1936
Iber (Gaav)	-	1946
Uavande	-	1957

The founding of mission stations was followed by the drive for converts who would surrender their lives to Christ. However, the few years after the introduction of the gospel did

not produce many converts among the Tiv. Only four people were baptized at Sai after six years with additional two, four years later. In fact, many years after sowing the seeds many fell on rocky ground and failed to germinate. About 100 converts were baptized between 1917 and 1938 at Sai, Zaki-Biam, Mkar, Sev-av and Turan (Jato-Aka) with most of them the centrally located Mkar station.

The first four converts who were baptized in Tivland from Sai in 1917 were Benjamin Akiga Sai, Yohane Alam Malu, Yosev Teiyol Malu and Rosita Kime Alam. The mission stations formed the nuclei of the present consistories or congregation of the NKST Church. The rise of consistories within and outside Tivland has made the NKST one of the most widespread churches in Nigeria.

### **The Tiv Bible**

One of the greatest legacies bequeathed to the Tiv by the missionaries is the Tiv Bible. The translation of the Bible into Tiv language was done by the following missionaries.

1. The gospel of St. Mark (1914-1916) Rev. A.S. Judd.
2. The book of Matthew (1916-1918), Rev. J.G. Strydom.
3. The gospel of St. John (1922), Rev. W.A. Malherbe.
4. Genesis-Judges (1917-1922), Rev. and Mrs. Brink.
5. The Acts of Apostle (1925-1930), Rev. E. Bam
6. St. Luke and Titus (completed in 1928), Rev. W.A. Malherbe.
7. Complete translation of the rest of the books of the New Testament and Psalms (1934), Rev. W.A. Malherbe.
8. Translation of the rest of the Old Testament (1938-1951), Rev. J. Orffer assisted by Benjamin Akiga Sai, Buter Agba, Shawon Ndur and Mbaahii Maza.
9. Mr. Gideon Ityovenda Aba typed the 2,800 page revised manuscript.

The British Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) Printed the Tiv Bible, which was dedicated on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1964 at Mkar. The dedication service was conducted by Rev. A. J. Brink. In attendance were Rev. W. D. Gerryts, Chairman of former DRCM who became Secretary of SUM-CRC at the time; Mr. A. Huibregtse, the Home Representative of the United Bible Societies, Dr. W. Reyburn. Dr. Reyburn presented the Tiv Bible (Bibilo) to the Chairman of NKST Synod, Rev. J. E.I. Sai in the presence of Rev. J.Y. Amachigh and Rev. Tar Shande.

The Tiv is the seventh Nigerian language out of 250 in which the entire Bible has been published. The NKST Church commemorates the coming of the Tiv Bible on 4<sup>th</sup> November annually. All churches that preach in Tiv language use the Tiv Bible. The gift of the Tiv Bible has remained the symbol and strength of the NKST Church and the Tiv Nation at large.

### **3.2 THE GROWTH OF NKST (1957-2015)**

The Lord Jesus Christ likened the Kingdom of heaven to “a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, and this is smaller than all other seeds, but when it is fully grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so the birds of the air come and rest in its branches.” One missionary once said, ‘the land shall yield its fruits’. The story of the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv is not far from what Bible says, as quoted above.

Dr. Karl Kumm once said, “The desire took hold of me to come to the people desert and preach to them the gospel and here today the gospel has come to the people of Saharan desert”. Thousands of people have heard the gospel through the work of Dr. Karl Kumm, and the then first three missionaries that touched their feet on Tiv soil. They were: Mr. Hosking, Rev. George Botha and Mr. C. Zimmerman, the people that NKST will never forget in history.

Like a mustard seed, God has made this small village Church to continue to grow and have big branches for the people of the Sudan region to receive the gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus

Christ. Since January 9<sup>th</sup> 1957, the NKST Church has continued to grow spiritually, physically, numerically, mentally and socially.

### **Classis and Consistories**

Ever since 1957 the NKST as a grassroots church has continued to grow from strength to strength across Nigeria. The Church had 11 consistories dedicated in 1957, which were made up mainly of the early mission stations, namely Zaki-Biam, Sev-av, Mkar, Turan (Jato-Aka), Kunav (Mbaakon), Shangev-Tiev (Mbaakpur), Apir, Adikpo, Ikyaaave and Harga. Today, NKST is organized in 51 classis comprising 316 consistories. Seven of the classes are located outside Benue State. Shagu, Ayu, Nachigh Bali, Aben and Awange have consistories that are exclusively in Taraba State; Jos consists of consistories in Jos Township, Bauchi, Nyanya and Abuja; Kaduna has consistories in Kaduna; Zaria and Kano. Some consistories in Sai, Pevikyaa, Anyiin and Amadu Classis are in Taraba State, while Makurdi and Tavaku have a consistory each in Nasarawa (Kadarko) and Lagos, respectively.

Below is the list of NKST Classis nationwide:

### **List of NKST Classis and Dates of Dedication**

1. Zaki-Biam (1957)
2. Mkar (1957)
3. Jato-Aka (1957)
4. Apir (1957)
5. Sai (1965)
6. Mbaakon (1965)
7. Abwa (1966)
8. Sev-av (1973)
9. Harga (1977)
10. Mbaakpur (1978)

11. Anyiin (1979)
12. Adikpo (1981)
13. Pevikyaa (1982)
14. Gboko (1983)
15. Ikpa (1984)
16. Gyenku (1985)
17. Shagu (1987)
18. Jos (1987)
19. Garagboughol (1987)
20. Ikyaaave (1988)
21. Aku (1988)
22. Biliji (1989)
23. Ayu (1990)
24. Alam (1993)
25. Faajir (1993)
26. Kuhe (1993)
27. Nachigh Bali (1993)
28. Makurdi (1994)
29. Abaji (1994)
30. Ishan (1994)
31. Ahobee (1994)
32. Aben (1998)
33. Tavaku (1998)
34. Gbagir (2000)
35. Kyado (2000)
36. Naan (2001)
37. Ekan (2003)



38. Mayange (2003)
39. High Level (2003)
40. Anber (2003)
41. Gboko-South (2004)
42. Jaki (2004)
43. Igyenwase (2005)
44. Bosua (2005)
45. Ambighir (2005)
46. Abeda (2005)
47. Awange (2006)
48. Kaduna (2006)
49. Anger (2006)
50. Amadu (2008)
51. Iber (2009)
52. Low Level
53. Wannyam
54. Jootar
55. Tondo
56. Isherev

### **3.3 NKST MEDIUM OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL**

#### **NKST Mission Station**

Apart from the regular Classis and consistories the NKST has Mission Stations spread across Nigeria and Chad Republic. This is the another arm that the Lord is so mightily using in building His Church and making NKST fulfill her obligation/mandate of carrying the gospel of Christ to the Sahara area- the Sudan Geographic area. This would be done through sending out missionaries akin to what the DRCM and SUM-CRC did earlier. For this reason NKST

set a mission board in 1957 to supervise the activities of the mission and also to post missionaries to the field and check their welfare, in the bid to teach, preach and baptize those who give their lives to Christ (Matt. 20:19,20). The NKST is still doing this in partnership with SUM/CRC.

The vision of the NKST Mission is 'to be an evangelistic community of committed Christians, drawn from all nations, cultures and tribes of the world, united in doctrine and purpose so as to offer holistic service to reach the un-reached with the gospel of the Kingdom of God'. The mission is to glorify God through worship and proclamation of the good news of Salvation and responsibly care for humanity.

The NKST as a growing Church has 27 mission stations within and outside Benue State. The mission Department works with the Fulanis of Northern Nigeria, Chad and Sudan. This is to reach all if possible with the gospel of Salvation of Jesus Christ. There are 29 Staff in the Mission department, 22 are field staff.

Presently, the NKST has started a new station with the Yoruba at Rogun-Shabowale on the outskirts of Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The mustard seed is growing to its fullest to cover the whole of Nigeria and beyond. This work has been blessed over the years, congregations have come out of mission stations and centers in various parts of Nigeria, namely: Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Sokoto, Kebbi, and Katsina-North.

### **Followership and Membership**

The number of converts baptised under the DRCM in 25 years (1911-1936) was four (4). The DRCM handed over evangelization work to SUM-CRC in 1961. At the official inauguration of NKST in January, 1957 there were 1500 baptized members who professed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Today, NKST has over 400,000 baptized members or communicants; those under the catechism training are 20,000. This shows the rapid numerical growth of the Church. If one compares the number of converts baptized by the NKST took over the mantle of evangelism in Tivland one can glorify God for this growth, numerically. The figure above does not include the non baptized members, that is, those in church-goers. This shows that God Himself is adding unto the Church those who believe and are saved every day in their hundreds (Acts. 2:47).

### **The Role of Education**

Education in the NKST Church is another big vessel the Lord uses for the fast growth and means of evangelism. What encouraged the speedy growth of evangelism in the NKST is education. Thousands of people are reached with the gospel of salvation of Jesus Christ through this means. After 25 years of Missionary work village schools, called classes for Religious Institution (CRI) were established in 1936. It will be recalled that one of the boxes brought by the Missionaries at Sai contained the Bible, books and educational materials. The school approach was a significant means by which the Missionaries used to establish the indigenous grassroots church in Tivland.

Today, education is still one of the most important and effective tools for evangelism in NKST. Teachers were trained in the village schools, to teach and preach to men and women, boys and girls, many of whom became baptized members of the Church. They in turn trained others, taught them about Christ in the name of education. When you enrolled as student you were taught catechism, Sunday school and you must attend Sunday services. In this way, many became Christians.

NKST has over 500 primary/elementary schools, 53 secondary schools, and seven (7) tertiary institutions namely: The Reformed Theological Seminary Mkar, the University of Mkar, Mkar, the Reformed Bible College Harga, College of Health Technology Sciences and

School of Midwifery Mkar. All these schools and colleges help a lot in the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ in and around Nigeria. NKST has sent pastors and Evangelists in all these schools preaching and counseling both students and staff.

### **The NKST Choir**

The NKST Choir is one of the major contributions to the spread of the Gospel among the Tiv in general and the NKST faithful in particular. The spiritual power of Christian songs was used to attract the Tiv people who gathered to welcome Rev. Carl Zimmermann and his labourers on arrival at Sai on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1911. The visitors commenced ministration with the Hymn in Hausa, which was later translated as No. 136 in the Tiv Hymn Book: Se doo Yesu shima je. Few years later, a pupil Evangelist, Akaaer Gar from Zaki-Biam made the first attempt to compose a traditional Christian worship song in Tiv. The wordings of the song though unclear, conveyed both spiritual and canal meanings.

The composition of clear-cut spiritual worship songs commenced in 1926. The pioneer composers of NKST songs were: Jeremiah K. Lyemen from Mbaakon Church, Akaaer Gar from Zaki-Biam, Gbehe Yaku from Jato-Aka (Turan), Torkighir Adôôr from Zaki-Biam and S. Kakwagh from Mkar. Evangelist J. K. Lyemen composed the first song to be accepted for use in the NKST.

Today, as many as 579 men and women are composing spiritual songs, which are used by the NKST Church and other interested churches. There are about 2, 200 songs accepted by the leadership of the NKST Choir for the worship of God using traditional musical instruments.

The choir that began in 1959 and was formally approved by the NKST Synod in 1960 has since then been evangelizing the Tiv nation and Nigeria. Choir members are those baptized or those in catechism classes. Many people have become Christians because of the ministration in songs. There are many who have become members of the NKST Church through the activities of the Choir. The present membership of Tiv Choir is over, 66,000. It holds biennial

choir Conferences hosted by classis on rotational basis for practicing of old songs to ensure that all members comply with the original tones, or approval of newly composed songs.

The English Choir has also grown rapidly following the introduction of English Service in Churches, especially in the urban area. The NKST Choir was initially headed by members of the laity including evangelists who were called chairman. However, when the NKST Choir became a department it is now headed by directors, who are pastors.

### **The Sunday School**

The Sunday School (Makeranta u Iyange i Memen: MIM) is another powerful and great tool God is using in NKST for the salvation of His people. The DRCM created Classes for Religious Institutions (CRIs) which indeed, operated as Bible Schools. Sunday school class attendance was compulsory after church services during which Bible verses were memorized. The practice stopped in 1967, when most of the CRIs became primary schools of the government.

The tireless efforts of Mr. S. Gosough Ikpa reawakened Sunday School activities. His efforts paid off when the NKST Synod appointed Rev. J.M. Ajoko to supervise Sunday School activities. MIM has a uniform which they used. MIM activities include: Recitation of Bible verses emanating from Bible study lessons, Drama or plays on Biblical stories or events, composition of songs, Marching in tune with the songs composed from Biblical stories, Bible study and quiz.

The NKST has a large number of worshippers, especially the youth who are members of MIM. This group is helping a lot in evangelizing the youth in Tivland and beyond. Members are encouraged to recite bible verse in Tiv, English and Hausa languages. MIM also holds annual Conferences, which are rotated among the NKST classes to practice old songs and

endorse new ones. MIM was initially headed by a supervisor. Later Directors were appointed to head the department.

### **Health Services**

One of the boxes brought to Tivland by the DRCM in 1911 contained drugs symbolizing medical or health services. As a result, health facilities were provided alongside churches in every station established by the missionaries. When the DRCM settled at Mkar in 1923 they established dispensaries at Jato-Aka (Turan), Mbaakpur (Shangev Tiev), Sev-av, Zaki-Biam and lastly Mbaakon (Kunav) in 1937. They also established the Mkar Christian Hospital in 1925. Medical personnel trained at Mkar provided health services at the dispensaries.

At the moment, the NKST has 7 hospitals, 11 Comprehensive Health Clinics, 25 Primary Health Clinics, 45 Health Clinics, and 25 Health posts providing health services to Nigerians across the country. The NKST Eye Hospital Mkar, which is supported by Christoffoel Blinden Mission (CBM), a none governmental organization from Germany, had a mobile outreach services covering Bauchi, Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba, Imo, Abia, Cross River and Enugu States. NKST Church has also established health institutions to train manpower in Nursing, Midwifery, and Laboratory technology.

### **NKST Media Services**

Media began as “Mkaanem” publication in 1958. Rev. J.E.I sai was its first editor- in chief. Mkaanem publication was used as a medium for preaching the word of God to those who were literate. NKST is expanding on the work started in 1961; broadcasting of weekly Tiv messages over Radio ELWA. The department is headed by a director who preaches on the Radio weekly and gives Television messages through the support of DeVerre Naasten (DVN) of Netherlands. It also produces messages on Radio cassettes and DVDs, Movies, News papers and magazines and supplies them to people.

## **NKST Women Fellowship**

The women fellowship (Mzough u Kase) began in 1941 under the leadership of Miss M. Dupreez (Atese Kemyol) Mrs. A. Brink (Atese Iyolshila) replaced Miss Dupreez who was single. Atese Nevkar was the first indigenous woman to lead the women fellowship from 1958-1962. The women fellowship is another strong arm of support to the NKST's growth and evangelism. It has shown with great strength and support for evangelizing the women, children and the less-privileged. Each year they embark on evangelism week to a place of need with all kinds of gifts to the less-privileged. They pay the school fees of the orphans and offer free treatment to the sick.

The fellowship has built a Guest House at Mkar for Christians who come to help NKST in her work of evangelism and for others. They assist almost all the departments in NKST with funds for the work of evangelism. In 2005 it donated three cars to the University of Mkar and also funds to renovate student hostels. In 1960 the membership of Mzough u Kase was 1,107. Presently, it has over 70,000 members.

NKST has other departments like Youth which cares for the youth in the NKST and trains them for future leadership. It gives Biblical and social training to the youths. NKST has an Orphanage Camp that care for and trains the destitute and kids picked from the streets to become good citizens and better Christians. Diaconal ministry and Christian Agriculture cooperative (CAC) are all operational. The NKST is preaching Christ through these departments.

NKST League is another arm of the church that supports the Church in no small way. NKST League is composed of men and women who are members of the Church and have come together members for support of the church in evangelization of the Tivland and beyond.

NKST Mission Retreat is a group that focuses mainly on evangelism. They arrange, recruit and organize conference in the Nigerian cities and villages; training teaching and preaching

the gospel. Tiv Bible Revision Project has been set up to revise the Holy Bible in Tiv to correspond with the contemporary language development. The revision commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1991 and by September, 1991 the books of Matthew and Mark were reviewed. The Revision of the Old Testament and New Testament was completed and has been given out to print. The NKST Board of Trustees does a lot in supporting and developing the Church. It is the spiritual pillar of the Church.

The Headquarters of the NKST Church is located at the Mkar, Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State. The ultramodern Secretariat complex is under construction. When completed, it will accommodate all the departments in NKST and a section will take ICT.

Until recently, the Tiv language was the medium of preaching and general communication at meetings in the NKST. Based on this, critics feel it is a tribal church. However, the English language is gaining prominence as more churches in major townships have introduced the English service to cater for those Tiv people who are not conversant with the language. Other ethnic groups are also benefitting from the English service. DRCM introduced Christianity to the Tiv in vernacular. This was to aid the propagation of the gospel at the grassroots level.

The NKST Synod Committee steers the affairs of the Church in lieu of the Synod which is the highest ruling body of the Church. The NKST church started with vernacular pastors and today, this church parade many pastors with Diplomas, bachelor degrees and Master's degrees in various fields of human endeavor. Others have Doctorate Degrees in various fields from 1957 – 2015.

### **Relationship with Ecumenical Bodies**

NKST takes a grave view of the call of Christ with regard to the unity of the church. She strives for unity with all churches that bear the true marks of the church of Christ (Belgic confession Article 29), which are the true preaching of the word of God, true administration



of the sacraments and the right practice of the church discipline. The marks should be confirmed in writing and practices.

The NKST has a standard of faith and it is in this line that it evaluates its stand and takes its decision to affiliate with any other Christian body. As a Reformed church NKST holds to the three forms of faith / unity:

1. The Heidelberg / Catechism.
2. The Canon of Dort, and
3. The Belgic Confession (Westminster Confession).

The NKST believes that the Bible is the inerrant word of God as recorded in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; both the Old and New Testaments. NKST believes in sola scriptural-in all matters of faith. She unites with the Catholic Church by the Apostles Creed. For this cause NKST is a member of:

1. Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) International
2. Christian Reformed Church NA (CRC) International.
3. TEKAN (Tarayyar Ekklesiyoyyin Kristi A Nijeriya) National.
4. Reformed Ecumenical Council of Nigeria (RECON) National.
5. CAN (Christian Association of Nigeria) National.

NKST is still observing the activities of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). NKST is observing this merger. NKST sometimes applied to be a member of International Conference of Reformed Church (ICRC). It has a close relationship with the "GKV" (Gereformeer Kerken Vrijgemaakt) The Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

The significance of NKST partnership with and members of these bodies cannot be over emphasized. It is to strengthen the unity of Churches. The ‘Unity of Churches will make the world believe in peace-and will fulfill the will of Christ. For NKST being in membership with the other Christian organizations in the world at this time in this way shows the level of its spiritual growth.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Christianity has grown in Tivland and beyond in the last 100 years (1911-2011). The seeds sown by the DRCM and the SUM-CRC missionaries have germinated and produced plenteously. The NKST Evangelistic works have continued to nurture the seeds of faith among the people. Considering the Spiritual, physical, numerical, social and attributes of growth it is evident to conclude that Almighty God Himself has chosen the NKST and has been blessing its activities.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The Lord God said to Moses in Deuteronomy 18:18, “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth” This happened to the NKST. After 1957 God put his Spirit into the first four indigenous pastors ordained to work in God’s Vineyard. They were: Rev. S.I. Sai, Rev. Nevkaa, Rev. Annum, Rev. S Ugoh and Rev. V. Ayaka. Reverends Annum went to Mkar, Ayaka to Sev-av, and Ugoh to Adikpo and Sai to Apir. They were posted to local congregations to shepherd the flocks of God in those areas in Tiv land. After the ordination of the first four indigenous pastors another class of pastors’ in training school began. This time more than four people were admitted and the church expanded to the level where she is today.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- What actually prompted the rapid spread of the gospel in Tivland?

- Mention the departments NKST is using for evangelism
- Explain the reasons why NKST belong to other Christian organizations

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**MODULE 3: SELECTED CHRISTIAN LEADERS PRESENTLY  
INFLUENCING THE STABILITY AND GROWTH OF  
CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA**

**UNIT 1:** Peter Akinola

**UNIT 2:** Williams Folunrosho Kumuyi

**UNIT 3:** Enoch Adejare Adeboye

**UNIT 4:** David Olaniyi Oyedepo

**UNIT 5:** Daniel Kolawole Olukoya

**UNIT 1: PETER AKINOLA**

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
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  - 3.2 Bishop Akinola's Contribution to the Homosexual Debate
  - 3.2 Akinola's Contribution to National Issues
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In 2006 Akinola appeared on TIME magazine's list of the world's 100 most influential people in the category Leaders and Revolutionaries. However, in 2007 TIME magazine suggests that he "has some explaining to do" in relation to his support for legislation criminalising "gay... organizations" and "Publicity, procession and public show of same-sex amorous relationship through the electronic or print media physically, directly, indirectly or otherwise". In 2007, the Nigerian newspaper ThisDay gave him

together with 17 others a Lifetime Achievement Award, stating in its citation: "Called a bigot by some in the Anglican Church, his attitudes nonetheless represent a deep-rooted conservative tradition in African Christianity that is flourishing and growing. But he has been criticised by other sections of the international press, including the right-leaning Daily Telegraph which in an editorial on 23 March 2007 characterised him as one of the "extremists" who had "hijacked" conservative Anglicanism, and as "a deeply divisive figure" who has "defended new Nigerian legislation that makes "cancerous" (his word) same-sex activity punishable by up to five years' imprisonment.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss Peter Akinola's contribution to the growth of the Christianity
- Explain Peter Akinola's position on the issue of homosexual debate
- Identify Peter Akinola's achievements and failures

## **7.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **7.2 EARLY LIFE**

Peter Akinola was born in 1944 to a Yoruba family in Abeokuta in southwestern Nigeria. Akinola was four years old when his father died, and he was sent to live with an uncle. He attended school from the ages of 10 to 16; his uncle then told him to leave school and learn a trade. After an apprenticeship in Lagos, Akinola became a successful furniture maker and patent-medicine seller, but he gave up the business to study for the priesthood. He was ordained a deacon in 1978 and a priest in 1979; he traveled to the United States, graduating in 1981 from the Virginia Theological Seminary with a master's degree. Upon his return to Nigeria, he served in the Abuja diocese, being consecrated as bishop in 1989. In 1998 he became archbishop in Islam-dominated northern Nigeria, and in 2000 he was elected primate of all Nigeria. He studied at a Nigerian Anglican seminary and was ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican Church

of Nigeria. Soon after ordination, he pursued further study at the Virginia Theological Seminary.

Returning to Nigeria at the beginning of the 1980s, Akinola was assigned to create an Anglican presence in the new capital Abuja which was about to be built. He holds it one of his greatest successes to have created out of nothing a vibrant Anglican community there. In 1989 he was ordained bishop of Abuja and 1997 archbishop of Province III of the Church of Nigeria, consisting of the northern dioceses of Nigeria. On February 22, 2000 he was elected primate of the Church of Nigeria, the second biggest church in the Anglican Communion, then numbering 18 million members. Peter Akinola is married and a father of six.

### **3.1.1 Akinola's Contribution to the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

One of his first actions as primate was to get together 400 bishops, priests, lay members, and members of the Mothers' Union to elaborate a vision for the Church of Nigeria under chairman Ernest Shonekan, a former president of Nigeria. The vision elaborated was:

"The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) shall be; bible-based, spiritually dynamic, united, disciplined, self supporting, committed to pragmatic evangelism, social welfare and a Church that epitomizes the genuine love of Christ."

Part of the program of actions were, e.g.

- on central level
  - translating the books of liturgy in further languages
  - establishing a group of 3000 leading lay personalities who will take care of fundraising and relieve the bishops of this duty
  - establish a legal support team to enforce the constitutional right of freedom of religion and worship
  - establish colleges for theology and universities

- provide internet access for the dioceses
- for each diocese
  - training fulltime itinerant evangelists
  - on the job training for priests and their wives
  - working out a social welfare program for less privileged people
  - establish a hospital with at least 30 beds
  - establish secondary schools
- on community level
  - literacy courses for adults
  - set up cottage industries for the unemployed
  -
- In October 2009, he reacted to the Vatican's proposed creation of personal ordinariates for disaffected traditionalist Anglicans by saying that although he welcomed ecumenical dialogue and shared moral theology with the Catholic Church, the current GAFCON structures already meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of conservative Anglicans in Africa.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What personal lessons can we learn from the humble beginning of Bishop Akinola

#### **3.2. Bishop Akinola's contribution to the homosexual debate**

In August 2003 he stated that if the celibate homosexual Jeffrey John was consecrated as Bishop of Reading or the non-celibate homosexual Gene Robinson consecrated as Bishop of New Hampshire, the Church of Nigeria would leave the Anglican Communion. A number of dioceses throughout the world, including the Diocese of Sydney, made similar statements. Under pressure from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. John withdrew from appointment as bishop and was subsequently appointed as Dean of St Albans. Gene Robinson's consecration went forward, precipitating a crisis in the Anglican Communion. At the end of 2003 Akinola commissioned together with Drexel Gomez, primate of the Church in the Province of the West Indies and Gregory



Venables, Presiding Bishop of the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone Claiming our Anglican Identity: The Case Against the Episcopal Church, USA, a paper for the Primates of the Anglican Communion detailing the implications of the consecration of Gene Robinson for the Anglican Communion, in the view of conservative Primates.

His first reaction on the Windsor Report 2004 was outspoken and critical, but the statement from the Primates gathered at the first African Anglican Bishops Conference, headed by Akinola, was more moderate and expressed commitment to the future of the Anglican Communion. However, whilst strenuously supporting those parts of the Windsor Report which address the gay issue, he has not followed with those parts that deplore overseas interventions in the U.S. Church and has, on the contrary, set up a missionary body, the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, in order to formalise the ties between break-away Anglicans in the U.S. and the Church of Nigeria.

In September 2005, Bishop Akinola spoke out against the Church in Brazil deposition of an Evangelical bishop and excommunication of over 30 priests. On November 12, 2005, Akinola signed a Covenant of Concordat with the Presiding Bishop's of the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Anglican Province of America. Akinola refused to take Holy Communion in company with the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, both at the Primates Meeting at Dromantine in 2005 and at the Primates Meeting at Dar-es-Salaam in 2007 and, on the latter occasion, he issued a press release in order to publicise and explain his refusal and that of others associated with him

Akinola's name as chairman of the Global South Primates heads the list of signatories to a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury on November 15, 2005. In this letter Europe is described as "a spiritual desert" and the actions of the Church of England in supporting the new civil partnerships laws are said to give "the appearance of evil". Three of the bishops whose names appeared on the document at the Global South website (President Bishop Clive Handford of Jerusalem and the Middle East, the Primate of the West Indies Archbishop Drexel Gomez, and the Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone Bishop Gregory Venables) denied signing or approving the letter, and criticised it as "an act of impatience", "scandalous", and "megaphone diplomacy

Akinola was among the Global South leaders who opposed the consecration of Gene Robinson, the first openly homosexual bishop in the Anglican Communion. This group successfully pressed for the voluntary withdrawal of ECUSA's representatives from the Anglican Consultative Council's meeting in Nottingham in 2005, although representatives did attend in order to make a presentation supporting full inclusion of gays and lesbians in the life of the Church, for which a vote of thanks was passed. In August 2005 he denounced a statement of the Church of England's House of Bishops on civil partnerships and called for the disciplining of the Church of England and ECUSA on the grounds that the Church has not changed its position on same-sex partnerships. Since the Anglican Communion has historically been defined as those Churches in communion with the Sea of Canterbury, whose Archbishop is head of the Church of England and thus *primus inter pares* in the Anglican Communion, this led to speculation that Akinola was positioning himself as a possible international leader of a more conservative church than the present Anglican Communion, which would no longer recognise the authority or primacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

However, he attended the subsequent Primates Meeting in Tanzania in 2007, although he absented himself from all the celebrations of Holy Communion during that meeting. In May 2007 he flew to the USA to install Martyn Minns, a priest who had left the Episcopal Church of the USA, as a bishop of the Church of Nigeria. Akinola reportedly ignored requests not to do this from both the Presiding Bishop and the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, the timing of the requests and their intent, relative to Akinola's departure from Nigeria is a subject of contention. The newly installed bishop indicated at a press conference that the intention was to replace the Episcopal Church of the USA (as an organ of the Anglican Communion) with a structure formed under auspices of the Church of Nigeria.

Bishop Akinola is one of the principal founders of the Global Anglican Future Conference[6], an international gathering of conservative Anglican bishops planned for June 2008, and has declared that the Church of Nigeria is in full communion with the emergent Anglican Church in North America, which was founded to create a separate ecclesiastical structure to the Episcopal Church of the United States within the Anglican Communion.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What lesson's can we derive from Bishop Akinola's stands on the issue of Homosexuality?

### **3.3 Akinola's contribution to National Issues**

In September 2006, the Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria, headed by Akinola, issued a Message to the Nation, taking up ten political controversies in Nigeria, among them a bill regarding same-sex relationships: "The Church commends the law-makers for their prompt reaction to outlaw same-sex relationships in Nigeria and calls for the bill to be passed since the idea expressed in the bill is the moral position of Nigerians regarding human sexuality." The bill in question, as well as criminalising same-sex marriage, also proposed to criminalise "Registration of Gay Clubs, Societies and organizations" and "Publicity, procession and public show of same-sex amorous relationship through the electronic or print media physically, directly, indirectly or otherwise", on penalty of up to 5 years of imprisonment. The proposed legislation was formally challenged by the United States State Department as a breach of Nigeria's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Some western supporters justify the legislation on the basis that it does not support the stoning to death of homosexuals under the Sharia code.

#### **3.3.1 Reaction to Muslim cartoon riots**

In February 2006, Muslims rioting over the Danish newspaper cartoon controversy spread to Nigeria. Rioters targeted Christians and their property, resulting in a reported 43 deaths, 30 burned churches and 250 destroyed shops and houses. Included among the victims was the family of one of Akinola's bishops, Ben Kwashi, the Bishop of Jos. Kwashi's home was broken into and his wife was tortured and sexually assaulted, resulting in her temporary blindness. The rioters also severely beat Kwashi's teenage son. (Kwashi was out of the country in the United Kingdom at the time of the attack.) In response to the rioting, Akinola issued a statement in his capacity as President of the Christian Association of Nigeria: "May we at this stage remind our Muslim brothers

that they do not have the monopoly of violence in this nation." Some criticized this statement as inciting Christian counter-riots against Muslim targets in Nigeria.

For example, Christian mobs in Onitsha retaliated against Muslims, killing 80 persons, , burned a Muslim district with 100 homes, defaced mosques and burned the corpses of those they had killed in the streets, forcing hundreds of Muslims to flee the city. American evangelical leader Rick Warren, however, wrote that Akinola's angry response "was no more characteristic than Nelson Mandela's apartheid-era statement that 'sooner or later this violence is going to spread to whites.'" The phrase "monopoly on violence" is most characteristically associated with describing how, in modern states, acts of enforcement are controlled by the government in "the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence in the enforcement of its order" (Max Weber) and does not rely upon vigilantism or private security which is not legitimated by the state.

### **3.3.2 His Achievements**

Akinola was given the National Award of Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON) in December 2003. Akinola was at one time President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, an ecumenical body bringing together 52 million Protestant, Catholic, and African independent Christians. During his Presidency, the National Ecumenical Centre in Abuja was completed, which had been a building ruin for 16 years. In November 2009, Akinola signed an ecumenical statement known as the *Manhattan Declaration* calling on evangelicals, Catholics and Orthodox not to comply with rules and laws permitting abortion, same-sex marriage and other matters that go against their religious consciences.

### **3.3.3 His failures**

Akinola was voted out of his position as National President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in June 2007, and replaced by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Nigeria, who polled 72 votes to Akinola's 33 vote This followed criticism of Akinola's allegedly high handed leadership style and of his alleged failure to confront Nigerian President Obasanjo as other Christian leaders had.<sup>[13]</sup> Subsequently, his candidacy as

Vice President was rejected by the General Assembly of the Christian Association of Nigeria

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss Bishop Akinola's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Nigeria

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In September 2005, the Church of Nigeria redefined in its constitution its relationship to the Anglican Communion as "Communion with all Anglican Churches, Dioceses and Provinces that hold and maintain the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacrament and Discipline of the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. In a later press release, Akinola clarified "We want to state that our intention in amending the 2002 Constitution of the Church of Nigeria was to make clear that we are committed to the historic faith once delivered to the Saints, practice and the traditional formularies of the Church. ... We treasure our place within the worldwide family of the Anglican Communion but we are distressed by the unilateral actions of those provinces that are clearly determined to redefine what our common faith was once. We have chosen not to be yoked to them as we prefer to exercise our freedom to remain faithful. We continue to pray, however, that there will be a genuine demonstration of repentance.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have considered Peter Akinola's early life, his contribution to the stability of Christianity in the issues of homosexual debate and reaction to Muslim carton riots. We also looked at his achievements and his perceived failures.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- What personal lesson(s) have you learnt from the ministry of Peter Akinola
- Discuss Peter Akinola's position on the issue of homosexuality

- Discuss Peter Akinola's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa

### 7.3 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 2: PASTOR WILLIAMS FOLUNROSHO KUMUYI**

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  - 3.3 The growth of Deeper Christian Life Ministry
  - 3.4 A Man With a Great Heart For God
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Pastor kumuyi attributes the growth of the church which is over one million members in 60 countries worldwide to the kind of teaching the people get. He said we teach the Bible in such a way that practical problems are solved - family problems, professional challenges, and also how people should be outward looking. For example, part of the teaching is motivational, to let our members know that they have potentials, that they can achieve, that they can depend on God. We develop the faith of the people and because of that, they value themselves. We don't have the idea of "I am the never-do-well person". No. We are humble, yes; but in the Lord we can be who he says we can be.

Also when they get sick, we pray and they get healed. This manifestation of the power of God coupled with the other things has contributed to the growth of the Church. We also have a proper organisation and administration. We have, for example, the Children's Section, the Youth Section, the Campus Fellowship, the Women's Section,

Professionals and all that. We also organise many programmes that actually make people to know God and eventually become part of the Church.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of a call to ministry
- Discuss Kumuyi's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa
- Highlight qualities required from a man of God

## **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.2 EARLY LIFE**

Williams Folorunso Kumuyi was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1941 at Erin Ijesha, Osun State into an Anglican Home. His parents were Mr Gabriel Kumuyi Akinfenwa and Mrs Comfort Kumuyi. Kumuyi was his father's real name and Akinfenwa was his family name. But his father made him change his surname to kumuyi when he got to school. His father died in 1967, the same year he completed his first degree at the University of Ibadan. His mother died in the 1990s at the age of 85. William Kumuyi believed his names are very significant. According to him the full name is Ikumuyiwa, which means 'death brought this'. After I became a Christian, I realised it was the death of Christ that has brought us salvation, and also the redemption and reconciliation we have with God. So, for me, the name, Ikumuyiwa, is very significant - death has brought something good.

The death of Christ has brought us the grace and goodness of God, and the relationship we have now with the Lord. Yes. My first name, William, means "defender of the faith", and my middle name, Folorunso, puts me in the hands of God, it means "God watches over this one". And when you think of the gospel being really death of Christ bringing redemption, it means that death has brought us blessings. And now, by my first name William, I am a "defender of the faith. And while I am defending the faith, God will keep watching over me. Pastor Kumuyi grew up in a very strict Christian



home, he told Isaacson, "We would get up in the morning, read the Bible, sing hymns, and go to church regularly. When I went to secondary school I lost interest in the church because our principal taught us atheism. He completed his secondary school education in 1961, and started teaching mathematics at Mayflower in 1962. But after a while I thought again and started going to various churches in town.

Eventually, in 1963, a group of singers and preachers from a Gospel church got permission to come to the school. It was there that he was introduced to the Apostolic Faith, not Apostolic Church, and really heard about the change that Christ could make to his life when he turns from sin and believe that Jesus died for him on the cross of Calvary. I understood the Gospel message, and was born again on April 5th, 1964. I read John Wesley, Charles Finney, Spurgeon, and lots of other books. I got involved with the Scripture Union, and I grew."

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss practical lessons you have learnt from the early life of W.F Kumuyi that will help your ministry

### **3.2 Call to Ministry**

He gained a first-class degree in Mathematics at the University of Ibadan; then went back to Mayflower School to teach. After five years he went to the University of Lagos to do a Postgraduate Certificate in Education and became a lecturer there. In 1973, while serving as Math Lecturer at The University of Lagos, W.F. Kumuyi started a Bible study group in his flat at the University of Lagos with 15 university students who had come to him requesting training in the Scriptures. By the early 1980's that small group had grown to several thousand, at which time Deeper Life Bible Church was formally established. According to Pastor kumuyi the style of teaching was a very important factor, at the time it was new to a lot of people - to go systematically from verse to verse and pinpoint practical lessons applied to their lives, and their lives were really changing - people became born again, their lives were transformed, families got better united. And members of the group began to spread the message of how they

enjoyed studying the Bible. Through this voluntary spiritual salesmanship, a lot more people came to the Bible studies.

We also started sending out Christian articles, we called them "Deeper Christian Life Articles". Those who received them re-sent them to their friends, and so the message spread, and more people came. Contrary to what we see today where anybody who can read the Bible thinks they are qualified to start a Church, Pastor Kumuyi resisted early pressure to establish your Church, even after 45,000 people had attended his retreat in 1981. According to him I needed a clear call from the Lord before doing what other people were urging us to do. You see, it is not just that you are able to do something. There were a lot of things we were capable of doing, but we needed to wait on the Lord to see what was fit for us to do. You get more satisfaction and fulfillment when you wait on the Lord. That was the reason why I had to get a very definite directive from Him as to what to do. And, of course, what we see today actually justify the waiting.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Describe the emergence of Deeper Life Bible Church

### **3.3 The growth of Deeper Christian Life Ministry**

Pastor Kumuyi's own Christian life developed because he took the Bible so seriously, and so the Deeper Christian Life Ministry has developed in the same way. In Alan Isaacson's own words, he "preached Deeper Life into existence." His sermons were captivating, wrote Isaacson, "I would classify him as one of the greatest living preachers, giving a straightforward Bible-based message, his sermons thorough, and always personally challenging. He always gave a wide range of cross-references which were read in their context, supporting, clarifying and expanding his main points. He spoke clearly and authoritatively to the Nigerian situation. He dealt sensitively with African culture, but also made a firm stand in highlighting the points where local culture was incompatible with the will of God. While stressing the high moral tone which is one of the virtues of most African cultures at their best, he was at pains to specify those aspects of local culture which were unchristian and even evil. In this way he was not only concerned with some kind of personal holiness, but also genuinely

seeking the wholeness and harmony of the community at large, where truth, honesty, and justice should be the predominant characteristics.

The church also stands firm on the teaching of holiness and living a practical Christian life. The teaching on holiness and exhortation of all members to live holy lives takes precedence over all other teachings of the church. The Deeper Life Bible Church is well known in Nigeria and other countries where its presence is established all over the world for its strict adherence to the teachings of Christ, His apostles and obedience to the word of God. The General Superintendent (simply referred to as) Pastor Kumuyi almost always during all his preachings exhort members and new comers alike to be born again so as to be qualified for the kingdom of heaven. By 1988 the congregation had grown to 50,000, and now numbers 120,000 members, making it the third largest Christian church in the world. Dr. Johan Combrinck reports that the Deeper Life Bible Church not only has an attendance of 120,000 every Sunday, but has planted 500 churches in Lagos, 5,000 in the rest of Nigeria (with an independent estimate of more than 800,000 members in Nigeria alone), and 3,000 elsewhere (with missionaries to 40 countries of Africa) as the movement missionary contribution. (Source: AFNET).

As the DCLM blossomed throughout Africa it also extended its missionary exploits to Western Europe, Russia, Asia, India and North America. Dr. C. Peter Wagner, in an article titled 'Those Amazing Post-Denominational Churches' wrote: "By far, the most rapidly growing segment of Christianity on all six continents is a type of church that does not fit traditional categories or classifications. Missiologists have recognized its presence for some time, but it is such a recent phenomenon that they have not yet agreed on a name for it. Perhaps one title that would fit is the term 'post-denominational. Go to almost any metropolitan area and ask to visit the largest Christian Church. Chances are it will be one of these new post-denominational churches'. In Lagos, Nigeria, it would be the Deeper Life Bible Church, pastored by William Kumuyi. On a recent Sunday I saw 74,000 adults worshipping together, with 40,000 children meeting in a separate building across the street.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What was the secret of the growth of deeper life Bible Church?

### **3.4 A Man with a Great Heart for God**

He is not tall, and does not have a larger-than-life character. He does not dominate, nor has he accrued power to himself. He walks slowly, is relaxed, and has a gentle sense of humour with a warm smile and a twinkle in his eyes. He dresses simply, eats simply...

and could have assumed titles to himself. As the Deeper Christian Life Ministry developed - most people enjoy the trappings and regalia of status which followers gladly give. But he calls his followers brothers and sisters, and treats them as colleagues. In speaking to a group of Pastors under his leadership as General Superintendent, W. F. Kumuyi said: "Our emphasis should be on the practical side of going out. If the Lord comes, let him meet us working for him. Now every time I preach I try to mention evangelism. I have told all the Lagos District Coordinators and Zonal Leaders to spend half their time on evangelism and only half their time on their members. There will always be problems in the church: don't let them take up all your time".

Concluding his book, Isaacson writes, "And, of course, Deeper Life are self-governing. Kumuyi is the founder & General Superintendent, and he carries a tremendous weight in pastoring the Gbagada (Lagos) church alone, quite apart from the (now thousands) of other congregations across Nigeria and the rest of the world. He is a remarkable leader, one of God's people for this generation. Kumuyi has received a great deal from God, but he is adept at passing along what he receives. My feeling is that what God has given his people through Kumuyi will be kept and developed long after Kumuyi is gone. This has been God's work, and to Him be the glory." Journalist Alan Isaacson talking with many members of the church was told how Christ has miraculously intervened and changed lives in response to prayer and the proclamation of the Gospel.

In Pastor Kumuyi's own words: "God, in the growth of Deeper Life Bible Church, has strategically and prudently used miracles to 'make all men come to Him' (John 3:26).

We take Christian living and holiness seriously." DLBC's [website](#) maintains a set of "testimonials," from people, which claim supernatural healings that have occurred as a result of prayers being offered by Pastor Kumuyi. These claims include the reversal of paralysis, spontaneous growth of limbs, spontaneous disappearance of mental diseases, and other such testimonies.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate the qualities of that make Kumuyi a great Man of God

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

According to Isaacson, "The history of Deeper Life is very much the personal story of W.F. Kumuyi. He is a gifted man, clear-thinking and humble. He is a dedicated Christian and deserves the title 'the man of God,' which his followers have given him.

Since he was a young man, Kumuyi has devoted his time to reading and studying the Bible. He knows the Scriptures inside out, and has struggled to understand and apply them. As he struggled to share his love for the word of God, many people have been drawn to him for advice, or simply to listen. When he preaches, his message is clear, simple, and profound. Poor street traders who can barely read sit next to university professors, all equally captivated by the way Scripture becomes suddenly relevant to them.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We considered the early life of W.F Kumuyi and looked at his call to ministry and impact on the Deeper Christian Life Ministry. We also studied his great heart for God

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- Explain the importance of a call to ministry
- Discuss Kumuyi's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa

- In your own analysis, what is the secret to the growth of Deeper Life Bible Church and is it still applicable today?

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## **UNIT 3: ENOCH ADEJARE ADEBOYE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life
  - 3.2 Qualities of a Great man of God
  - 3.3 Adeboye's Contribution to the Spread of the Gospel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Before joining the pentecostal church Adeboye was a mathematics lecturer, and worked at the universities of Lagos and Ilorin; He has a PhD in applied mathematics from the University of Lagos, hitting a successful career in the academic world. After he joined The Redeemed Christian Church Of God he began working to translate the sermons of its then Pastor and founder, Rev. Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi, from Yoruba into English. In 1981 by Divine Providence Adeboye became the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church Of God, making him leader of the Church after the death of Papa Akindayomi the previous year.

For three years he filled the role part-time, still lecturing at Ilorin, until giving up his university position to preach full-time The Church, which was not well known before Adeboye took charge, now claims branches in over a hundred countries, including more than 14,000 in Nigeria. Adeboye has stated that his aim is to put a church within five minutes of every person on Earth. In 2008 Newsweek magazine named Adeboye one of the fifty most powerful people in the world. He is married to Foluke Adeboye, also a pastor, with whom he has children.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Draw Inspiration from the early life of Enoch Adeboye
- Explain the various qualities of a great Man of God
- Discuss Adeboye’s contribution to the spread of the gospel

## 3.1 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.2 EARLY LIFE

His mother had “retired” from bearing children. With daughters and a son, the junior wife of the senior Adeboye felt she had had enough. Then tragedy struck. Her only son died. Relatives and neighbours – especially siblings of the dead son – appealed to the Ilesa-born petty trader to try and have one more issue. Who knows, it might be a replacement for the son that is gone. Their prediction proved true and on March 2, 1942, the earth welcomed a son who was destined to be a world changer of no mean stature, Enoch Adejare Adeboye. Growing up a peasant farmer’s son in the village was one thing. Attending what was then an elitist post-primary education facility was quite another kettle of fish. By the time Enoch Adeboye entered Ilesa Grammar School in 1956, the sharp difference between his socio-economic status and that of his mates was glaring.

Dr. Omole recollected, “there was a day we students decided to boycott the dining hall to protest against the pap and *akara* we were being served. The only student who went quietly to the dining hall to take his meal was Pastor Adeboye. I am sure it was not because he was so desperately hungry. Yes, he would have had difficulty purchasing what to eat. But at the same time, I think it had more to do with his loyalty to the principal, Rev. Canon Akinyemi who was his benefactor. Disadvantaged background and strict upbringing bring out different qualities in different children. No doubt, the combination of the two had done well for the man his followers love to call Daddy GO. Rose by a disciplinarian father and a hard working poor mother, Adeboye picked up the qualities that would make him what he is today quite early in life. His relationship with



late Rev. Canon Akinyemi, father of Professor Boloji Akinyemi is a pointer to his later development.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight practical lessons you learnt from the early life of Enoch Adeboye

### **3.2 QUALITIES OF A GREAT MAN OF GOD**

There are several special qualities in the life of Adeboye, which enabled him to fulfill the call of God on his life. Some of these qualities are as follows:

#### **3.2.1 Great dreamer**

When I was young, Pastor Adeboye told the crowd that had gathered to spend “a day with the GO” at the MUSON Centre at Onikan, Lagos in 1998, “a bishop visited our village. Schools were closed. Hunters lined the road firing dane guns into the air. Cocks and eggs were gathered as presents for him. I took a look at the pomp and pageantry and said to myself, ‘One day I will be a bishop. If anyone takes his PhD in mathematics as an indicator of the fact that Pastor E. A. Adeboye is a clinical practical man who does not allow dreams into his realm of operation, such a person cannot be far from the truth. Abacha for life campaign was on. A million-man march was organised for Abuja.

Half way across the globe, Pastor Adeboye was travelling in the company of two of his faithful followers in Miami, USA. There they saw a large number of people gathered at the beach for a musical festival. Why can’t we have a two-million-man gathering for Jesus?” That was the dream Adeboye’s mind produced out of the two events. The result? Lekki ’98 the first Holy Ghost Festival that up to that time was arguably the largest religious gathering in Nigeria if not Africa as a whole. The gathering now holds annually at the Redemption City and its tag has become Holy Ghost Congress. The most astounding aspect is its purpose. Adeboye believes that through the means of his annual congress, Nigeria will become the greatest nation in the world. Tall dream wouldn’t you say?

### **3.2.2 A DETERMINED ACHIEVER**

In the early days of our marriage, Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adeboye, the GO's wife once told a writer, we used to quarrel. He would return from class at the school where he was a teacher, take his meal and immediately proceed to attack mathematical problems. Whenever I tried to take the books away from him he would pretend to need to ease himself only to go and lock himself in the toilet to attend to his mathematics. From his travails as the favourite of the late founder of The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Rev. Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi, to the present day, to say uneasy lies the head that wears the crown in describing Pastor Adeboye is an understatement. Once he sets his hearth to do carry out an assignment, Adeboye simply pulls all the plugs. He wanted the International Office at the Redemption City ready under a month; he simply moved floodlights to the site and personally supervised construction workers round the clock.

Some years ago, while worshippers gathered at the auditorium awaiting the arrival of the GO at a particular Special Holy Ghost Service, the unthinkable nearly happened. As Pastor Adeboye stepped out of his office to enter the four-wheel drive that would take him to the auditorium, the gangly man of over six feet in height staggered and nearly fell. When I am fasting I am fasting and when I am feeding I am feasting," those are the words of a man who would fast up to the point that one would wonder if he was on hunger strike for one fanatical cause or the other. To him, realising his dreams is so vital that no price is too high.

Having embarked on stretch fast – fasting without breaking at the end of the day – for several days would rise every night to conduct prayer walk around the Redemption City every night. When the event he has been preparing for comes, there he is standing at the pulpit to minister as if nothing had happened. Where he gets the energy to conduct those services is definitely beyond mere human explanation. One thing Pastor Adeboye understands is that there is nothing like a free lunch. There is always a price tag. So, whatever he desires – miracles for his congregation, financial breakthrough for projects or whatever, he is committed enough to pay the necessary price to make it happen.

### **3.2.3 The warrior**

One aspect of Pastor Adeboye that is not easy to perceive is that he is primarily a man who operates with the instinct of a military man. His humble mien notwithstanding, he is one general one would not want to face with regular weapons. In the spiritual real especially and in church growth drive that reaches up the level of what business analysts would describe as mergers and acquisition, Pastor Adeboye is a dogged warrior. When you are fighting a wise man and he surrenders, he once told his ministers, know that you are finished. Strategies for conquering new territories and retaining those already in his possession are what Pastor Adeboye executes without even the closest people to him realising it. He is not a fire-fighter tactician.

Whatever brought the RCCG to where it is today did not begin today. From the formation of his ministry, Christ the Redeemer's Ministries, while Rev. Akindayomi was alive to the establishment of Christ the Redeemer's Friends Universal set up to reach out to the upper echelon of the society and other such tactical moves, Adeboye works within the framework of his vision making moves according to his long-time strategic moves. The Lord is a Man of war" is a favourite quote of his. And no doubt he does not perceive himself as a bastard. Like Father, like son, he is just as well a warrior as his heavenly Father.

### **3.2.4 Empire builder**

When his friend, fellow Ijesa man co-lecturer at the same department and Christian Brother W. F. Kumuyi needed a location for his midweek Bible study and miracle service events, Adeboye did not hesitate to seek the help of his spiritual mentor, Rev. Akindayomi. When Kumuyi moved his mostly youthful crowd-pulling programmes away to go and establish the Deeper Life Bible Church contrary to his early expressed vision of only running a teaching ministry, Adeboye saw it not as a setback but as a stepping stone. Through his own ministry, he began his midweek services. One of the qualities of empire builders is that they convert disadvantages to stepping stones. Pastor Tunde Bakare started the first "model parish" for the RCCG. When he moved on with the entire congregation of over a thousand worshippers but for twelve to start Latter Rain Assembly, Pastor Adeboye simply picked up the pieces to build the success story

the model church has become today. His vision of a parish of the church within every five minutes walking distance within Lagos has been surpassed. He is reaching out for greater heights.

### **3.2.5 Authority**

Pastor Adeboye grew up under a father who was an authority figure in the true sense of it. He too does not care about hiding the fact that he believes in absolute loyalty to authority. As a student, the school Principal Rev. Canon Akinyemi who happened to have been from his Ifewara hometown helped him by allowing him to stay on in school even when his school fees were not paid. No doubt, the Anglican reverend gentleman must have played a role in securing a loan for Adeboye from the local Anglican Church. As a result, he would not join students to protest an act of the principal no matter how justified his colleagues were or what repercussion he might face later. Up till this day, Adeboye expects total loyalty. If anybody has any illusion of sharing of power in the RCCG hierarchy, the person should just seek out the mission's organogram.

Pastor Adeboye, the mathematician that he is, has fashioned out an ever-changing system that ensures nobody is in the position to challenge his authority. When Pastor Tony Rapu, one of the most outstanding "captains" in "General" Adeboye's army was growing too big, he ended up out in the cold – literally. His Freedom Hall parish was quartered and shared among four assistants while he was "exiled" to Europe. He ended up leaving the mission to start This Present House. The last Deputy General Overseer retired in 1998 and has not been replaced.

No Assistant General Overseer (AGO) knows what to expect from the GO who would move a retired secondary school principal from the position AGO Training to AGO Family Matter, whatever that means, and replace him with a retired carpenter! What used to be the highly exalted position of State Pastor is now Provincial Pastor with as much clout as the then Area Pastor. No matter what anybody says, such firm grip has helped Adeboye forge ahead with his plans for the ministry. Even the seeming anointed successors in the waiting of a few years ago had been sent to Siberias of missionary fields in past years.

### **3.2.6 A different person**

Attempt to blend in makes a man nothing different from other people. Pastor Adeboye is a man who does not fear being different. While his contemporaries pursued glamour, he took the Gospel message to the world with humility and gentle men. Here is a man whose pen – one of the things he treasures in life – would pay for the glamorous fellow’s entire attire, yet he would carry it in a way that displays no outward self aggrandisement. Sometimes ago, Pastor Adeboye had just three cars. One was a Lexus jeep, another Lincoln Navigator and the third a Lincoln Town Car, a sedan that requires servicing once in four years. Yet nobody would perceive him as being ostentatious. A sharp wit that cracks wonderful jokes, Adeboye does not really talk. He would rather communicate with even his immediate staff through notes – notes that are full of abbreviation that a new staffer has to learn his code! This sets him free to spend time in prayer and meditation, two things he does literally “without ceasing.”

Over the years, Pastor Adeboye has brought a lot of changes to the church he inherited in 1981. At the same time he has devised several ways and means for reaching the perishing world with the Gospel which is what he sees as his primary assignment. In all such pursuits, he does not shy away from being different. A state chief executive who is a Moslem invited him over to minister annually. He was always there to use the platform. However, some had had cause to criticise him for carrying along wrong fellows in the name of church growth.

Some glaring unchristian behaviours by some leaders had been overlooked while others paid highly for less sins – that is if there is anything like less sin. There was a year when the second wife of a prominent monarch and the second wife of a state chief executive were ordained in a church that is avowedly opposed to polygamy. However one looks at it, Pastor Adeboye takes it all in the stride and heads in the direction he feels God is leading him. Like all heroes of all times, he is not perfect. But in him is a mix of qualities that has helped him build what is probably the largest Pentecostal church in Africa. He yet dreams of making it the biggest in the world!

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List and briefly discuss the qualities of a man of God in the life of Enoch Adeboye

### **3.3 ADEBOYE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL**

In 1981, when Adeboye took over, the ministry had a few dozen parishes. It is currently Nigeria's most ambitious evangelical project, establishing, according to the church, three parishes daily. It has an estimated 200 parishes in the USA. It also has in about 90 nations across Africa and Europe. It is easily the fastest growing church in the world. Last July, the church announced its plans to build a 10,000-capacity sanctuary in Floyd, Texas, USA. There is to be built on 500 acres of land bought at a cost of \$1 million. The land will also have two lecture theatres, a dormitory, cottages, lake and a Christian the med park. Back home, the church's might is unmissable. There is a parish within every five-minute drive, or in some cases less than that radius. But the church's most famous landmark is the Redemption Camp, a monstrously vast acreage located on the Lagos/Ibadan expressway.

It also has a good network of roads and other utilities. It is the site of the Redeemer's University of Nigeria (RUN) and a secondary school, Christ The Redeemer's School Movement, both owned by the church. Today, there are over 5000 Parishes of RCCG worldwide. RCCG is present on six continents except Antartica. There are over 300 parishes in North America. The most phenomenal programs of the RCCG are the Holy Ghost Night, and the Holy Ghost Congress, all-night prayer, worship, healing and miracle services, which take place at the Redemption City' near Logos, Nigeria. The Holy Ghost Night, a monthly event attracts on overage attendance of 500,000 people.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight four (4) major contributions of Pastor Enoch Adebayo to the growth of Christianity in Africa

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Of what use is being able to dream if one is not committed to pursuing it to logical conclusion? Late British Prime Minister Winston Churchill once spoke of an outstanding quality of the bulldog. When the bulldog grabs an object, one of its unique virtues is its ability to keep on breathing without letting go. From his childhood dreams to catching visions for growth for the mega church he leads, one of the secrets of Pastor Adeboye's success is his ability to dream of great things.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we considered the early life of Enoch Adejare Adeboye and the special qualities which has made him a great man of God. We also looked at his contribution to the stability and growth of the gospel in Africa

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- What useful lessons did you learn from the humble beginning of Enoch Adeboye
- List and discuss the various qualities that made Adeboye effective as a man Of God
- Discuss three (3) major contributions by Adeboye to the stability and growth of Christianity in Africa

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4: DAVID OLANIYI OYEDEPO**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life
  - 3.2 Call to Ministry
  - 3.3 Oyedepo's Contribution to the Spread of the Gospel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

David Olaniyi Oyedepo, affectionately called Papa by his followers is a Nigerian Christian author, Preacher and the founder and Presiding Bishop of Living Faith Church World Wide also known as Winners Chapel and its affiliated International churches known as Winners Chapel International, with headquarters in Ogun State, Nigeria. He is also the senior pastor of the acclaimed Faith Tabernacle, a 50,000 seat church auditorium reputed to be the largest church auditorium in the world by the Guinness Book of Records. He has been referred to as one of the most powerful preachers in Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Challenge yourself to do great things for God
- Discuss Oyedepo's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa



- Articulate the need for using education to stabilize and grow Christianity.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 EARLY LIFE**

On September 27, 1954 David Olaniyi Oyedepo was born in Osogbo but is a native of Omu Aran, in Kwara state. He was born into a religiously mixed family: his father, Ibrahim, was a Muslim healer and his mother, Dorcas, was a member of the Eternal Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement (C&S), a branch of the Aladura movement in Nigeria. He was raised by his grandmother in Osogbo, who inculcated into him the virtues of Christian life via the early morning prayers which she does attend with him. He taught him the importance of tithing. David was “born again” in 1969 through the influence of his teacher, one Ms. Betty Lasher, who took special interest in him during his high school days. He studied architecture at Kwara State Polytechnic and worked briefly with the Federal Ministry of Housing in Ilorin before resigning to concentrate on missionary work. Oyedepo also gained a Ph.D in Human Development from Honolulu University, Hawaii, United States of America.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What lessons can we learn from Oyedepo’s early life?

#### **3.2 CALL TO MINISTRY**

According to David Oyedepo, he received a mandate from God through an 18 hour long vision in May 1981 to 'liberate the world from all oppression of the devil through the preaching of the word of faith'. This is the inaugural vision that led to the founding of the LFCWW, first called Liberation Faith Hour Ministries, in 1981. Two years after, on 17 September 1983, Pastor Enoch Adeboye, General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, ordained David and his wife, Florence Abiola Akano (now known as Faith Abiola Oyedepo) to become pastors also officially commissioned the newly started church of Oyedepo. Five years after, Oyedepo was ordained a Bishop.

After the ministry was commissioned on September 17, 1983, church operations commenced in Kaduna the same year. Church services started with four members. Within a period of three years, the church multiplied greatly and attendance grew to thousands. Today that same church in Kaduna has well over 25,000 worshippers, holding multiple services on a 13-acre facility called the Garden of Faith in Kaduna, northern part of Nigeria. At the beginning, in a unique vision-sharing meeting of the Power House (a team of men and women that stood in the gap interceding for this great ministry at the onset), precisely on April 10, 1982, God gave Brother David, as he was known at that time, the following profound prophetic verdicts, which were declared to the people:

God said, "This ministry is not out to debate over doctrines, but to prove the power of the Holy Ghost." That is a power ministry connoting a flow of Signs and Wonders. Today, signs and wonders have become the trade mark of this ministry worldwide. Testimonies of the supernatural acts of God are shared in all our meetings everywhere. In September 1989, Bishop Oyedepo moved to Lagos in obedience to God's instruction to: "Get down to Lagos and raise me a people." The Lagos church started in a rented hall at 1A, New Era Road, Iyana Ipaja. From there, it moved to its own acquired 2.7 acre facility at 38, Raji Oba Street, Iyana Ipaja. There, a 3,000 capacity auditorium was built, which soon became inadequate for the ever-increasing worshippers at the Church. In January 1995, while praying in England for a larger space to accommodate the people, Bishop David Oyedepo received this word from God: "Why are you asking me for another land when you have not used the one I gave you?" So, the existing bungalow structures were pulled down and a four-storey L-shaped overflow facility and seven-storey office complex were built in their place. The buildings were all dedicated on Saturday, December 30, 1995.

These facilities were still not adequate to accommodate the people and canopies were erected to create more room for people. Yet, in no time the people spilled over to adjacent streets. To cater for them, multiple services grew up to five on Sundays and two on week days. The force behind the phenomenal growth of the ministry is epitomized in the anointed, proof-producing and life-applicable messages. This is in

fulfilment of the instructions given to Bishop David Oyedepo early in ministry when he was bothered about the slow pace of the church growth.

The Lord told him, "Keep sowing the seed, (the word), and keep the grass green and the sheep will come to lie down there, for he make me to lie down in green pasture. By divine direction, the ministry established a number of outreaches in Lagos to spread the Word of Faith to liberate men, as God commanded in 1981. These multidimensional outreaches have made a lot of impact on the body of Christ worldwide. Such outreaches include publishing of books and other periodicals such as The Winners' World, Signs & Wonders Today, and training through the Word of Faith Bible Institute (WOFBI) that is committed to ministry and leadership training and through the church network in the home and foreign missions. Due to the increasing flow of people into Winners' Chapel, Lagos, with crowds spilling over to adjacent roads, and on decks of uncompleted buildings nearby and people standing for hours to listen to God's word, it became necessary to search for a larger place.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the uniqueness of the call of God on Bishop Oyedepo and discuss the importance of a call to anyone who wants to join the service of God.

### **3.3 Oyedepo's Contribution to the Spread of the Gospel**

Oyedepo's church started in Kaduna, but moved to Lagos, the former capital of Nigeria in September 1989 to start a new branch of His Church, after receiving an instruction from God to reach out to the population in Lagos. This Church has gone on to become the International head quarters of His Church. Due to the increasing flow of people into His Church with crowds spilling over to adjacent roads, and on decks of uncompleted buildings nearby and people standing for hours to listen to His teachings, it became necessary to search for a larger place. This led to the building of the renowned Faith Tabernacle.

In 1998, Oyedepo set forth to build a new building to accommodate the increasing number of worshippers. This resulted in his Church's acquisition of the facility, known

as Canaan land, which serves as the headquarters of His Church. Canaan land is in Ota, a suburb of Lagos and is presently the 5,000-acre (20 km estate and campus), that houses the 50,000-seat capacity auditorium, (the 'Faith Tabernacle', which is reputed to be the largest Church auditorium in the world. This was featured or also recorded by the Guinness Book of Records.), the church secretariat, the church's youth chapel, a primary school called Kingdom heritage model school, a full boarding mission secondary school called Faith Academy, with over 1,500 students and the its University facilities which accommodates over 7,000 students, fully resident in ultra-modern hostel facilities, with fully equipped faculty buildings and numerous staff housing facilities.

Canaan land campus also has for profit establishments operated by the church such as a bakery, a bottled water processing plant, a petrol station, various restaurants and shopping stores, several residential houses that provide for the over 2,000 church employees, and guest houses. Four banks are also present on this Estate, three of which are branches of external commercial banks and one which is a community and micro-finance Bank and operated by the Church. The speed of the construction of Faith Tabernacle was breath-taking, considering the size of the building. Construction of this gigantic project was completed within 12 months, which experts claim could only have been a miracle, because such a project should normally take a minimum of three years to complete. Reports also claimed that this building was built debt free. This 50,000-seat edifice was dedicated in September 18, 1999 under the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

### **3.3.1 Christian Ministry**

The teachings of Oyedepo have put him in the category of what is commonly called the Word of Faith Movement. He has referred to principal exponents of the Faith Movement such as Kenneth Copeland, Gloria Copeland, the late Kenneth Hagin, T.L Osborn, Smith Wiggles Worth as well as renowned Nigerian preachers Enoch Adeboye and the late Benson Idahosa as mentors. The teachings of Oyedepo are grouped under a range of topics called '12 pillars of faith', which include: Faith, The Word, Prosperity, the Holy Spirit, Praise, Consecration, the Supernatural, Wisdom,

Prayer, Success, Vision and Healing. The Overall focus of His teachings centre around Faith in God's, Prosperity and Miracles. He teaches that faith in the word of God is the key to a life of God's blessings and security of the works of the devil. His teachings on prosperity are aimed at empowering people to live free from poverty, particularly the African continent. He describes his own teaching on prosperity as “covenant software for programming yourself into victories and triumphs.

His Church (Winners Chapel) also operates a Bible training programme known as Word of Faith Bible Institute for members and non-members alike to develop knowledge of Christian principles and to develop leaders and future pastors. This institute is run in major branches of the Church. Oyedepo who operates like the “Chief Executive Officer” of a conglomerate, is the President of David Oyedepo Ministries International (DOMI). DOMI is the umbrella organisation comprising Living Faith Church World Wide (a global network of churches), World Mission Agency (WMA); the global missionary arm of the church's operations, Dominion Publishing House; the publishing arm of the church, Covenant University, and the Social Development Missions projects (made up of hospitals, maternity homes, schools, etc.

### **3.3.2 Criticisms and controversy**

Oyedepo has received much criticism from many in the Christian community as focusing on prosperity.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the major factor(s) behind the growth of Living faith World Wide

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Oyedepo's socio-economic endeavours include founding educational institutions based on Christian principles for primary, secondary and tertiary stages of formal Education to empower the young generation develop the human capacity and improve the educational system in Nigeria and Africa. This has led to the establishment of kingdom heritage model schools in different cities in Nigeria for primary education, Faith

Academy; a missionary full boarding secondary school and Covenant University .Covenant University was opened to students on October 21, 2002 and was adjudged to be the best private university in Nigeria as of 2005. Today, they have mission stations in about 68 cities and towns spread over 30 nations on the continent of Africa, where great Churches have been built with large followership. We have also established Churches in Britain and United States of America.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we looked at the early life of David Oyedepo, his call to ministry and his contributions to the growth of Christian in Africa especially in the area of education

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- What motivated you most in the life of David Oyedepo
- Discuss David Oyedepo’s contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa
- Explain how education can be used to grow Christianity in Africa

## **7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Oyedepo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Oyedepo)

<http://davidoyedepoministries.org/about>

## **UNIT 5: DANIEL KOLAWOLE OLUKOYA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life
  - 3.2 The Spread of Mountain of Fire and Miracles
  - 3.3 Olukoya's Contribution to the Spread of the Gospel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Dr. Kolawole Daniel Olukoya is anointed by God with an uncommon gift and finds expression as a prophet, evangelist, teacher and preacher of the word of God. In addition to his over 80 scientific publications, he has written more than double that number of spiritual books, 150 of them, most of which are bestsellers. PRAYER RAIN, a prayer manual which has become a companion of not a few Christians across several denominations, has sold millions of copies. Besides, Dr. Olukoya has 70 Christian songs that he has composed. His amiable life and that of his wife, Pastor Shade and their son, Elijah Toluwani, are living proof that all power belongs to God.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Draw personal motivation from the humble beginning of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church

- Describe the contribution of Daniel Olukoya to the growth of Christianity in Africa
- Explain what makes Mountain of Fire and Miracles unique

### **3.1 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.2 Early Life**

When Dr. Kolawole Daniel Olukoya was born some forty five years ago, little did his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Olukoya, know that they had taken delivery of an exceptional child ordained by God to fulfill a destiny that would in turn, positively affect the destiny of others? Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries began in an unusual way. Twenty-two years ago, Dr. Daniel Kolawole Olukoya summoned a prayer meeting, which was attended by 23 interdenominational Christians on a Wednesday, in a not-too-large living room of one of them, their combative spirit just wanted to pray and nothing more. The location of their routine meeting neither promised nor portrayed the possibility of a vibrant church emerging from the sheer commitment of twenty-four like-minded Christians. Back in 1989, after the initial cradle and host of the meeting became too compacted, it was relocated to 60 Old Yaba Road.

The first Wednesday meeting was summoned, but later on, the voice of providence kept calling for subsequent meeting and history was set to be made as the voice of few Christians were to later amplify and multiply into a roar of thunderous prayers across the world. Soon after the informal inauguration of the prayer meeting, the power of God brought down through prevailing prayers began to work verifiable miracles in the lives of men. Neighbours started responding to the appeal of power display during the meetings and the supernatural manifestation among these Christians became hot news, spreading like the harmattan fire. Naturally, the power of God evangelized the environment, pulled the crowd and kept the group going and growing. The location became too small to accommodate seekers and beneficiaries of God's miracles. What started in a living room became an exercise that obstructed traffic flow in the environment as teeming crowd grew in amazing proportions.



The prayer meeting was not only a menace to the powers of darkness whose palpable hold upon the lives of men met and surrender to the superior onslaught of divine power, the local Government authority in the area was jolted to the looming awareness and impact of the Wednesday meetings. As frantic search for an alternative place of their meeting continued, with so many besetting hindrances such as lack of resources to acquire available options, respite seem to come their way when a slum was offered for their use. The slum was a fairly large piece of land with irregular dimensions. Sprawling around the second gate of the University of Lagos, it was abandoned for its notorious records. The slum was a hideout of criminals and the last home of reptiles whose natural habitat in the environment had been demolished by construction workers. The criminals were poised to defend their illegal territory and the reptiles were prepared to give their last, killing bite to anyone who ventured into their midst. As the snakes were ready to inject the last drop of their venom into any foot, the scorpions were ready to sting any hand and the criminals were equipped with killing threats and dangerous weapons.

The conquering spirits of the power of God, whose impact had drawn a crowd, would not surrender to any threat or recoil from any danger. They relished in the power of their prayer and took over the land, dislodging men, demons and animals. The young man whose living room hosted the Wednesday meetings was Dr. Daniel Kolawole Olukoya and the slum the group purchased at that time has transformed into the International Headquarters church of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM). The name of the church was revealed to Dr. Olukoya during normal prayer. He later became the General Overseer (G.O) of the church, which had its first service on April 24 1994, at 13 Olasimbo Street, Onike, Yaba, which is now the headquarters. The crowd kept coming to the prayer meeting at the new location and their population kept increasing, leaving the twenty-four original members with the challenge of crowd management, growth and expansion management.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the practical lessons to be learnt from the early days of Mountain of Fire and miracles?

### **3.2 The Spread of Mountain of Fire and Miracles**

Mountain of Fire (MFM) evolved a strategy of networking to start new branches in every state capitals, local government headquarters, senatorial districts and localities. Across the world on weekly basis, MFM branches spring up as one of the fastest growing churches of this time. International branches first started in London, moving to the Americas USA and Canada, with the new thrust in Eastern Europe and the Caribbean. On every continent, MFM is profoundly visible and greatly impact full. The smooth running of the church owes its success to the administrative responsibilities of four Assistant General Overseers (AGOs). Supporting the AGOs are 8 Senior Regional Overseers, 41 Assistant Regional Overseers across the country's geo political zones and twenty others oversee the church's mission abroad.

Besides, MFM has a number of senior pastors and other ministers who cater for the spiritual needs of the ever-growing church. The church teaches do-it-yourself way of praying where individuals are trained to pray and receive answers on their own. Its peculiar style of operation generated great misconceptions by Christians in many other assemblies until they gradually began to imbibe its aggressive way of praying. Criticism attended its method of praying aloud and bodily movement, which many described as too unconventional to Christian norms in the art of praying. However, MFM teaches that such aggressive way of praying is an aid to spiritual focus and a check against being overwhelmed by the flesh. About the most notable feature of the MFM is deliverance. From the nooks and crannies of the country, people from all works of life: Non Christians, Christians, men and women of high social status, academics, illiterates, business professionals, to mention a few, throng the church on daily basis to undergo deliverance programmes.

All over its branches, deliverance ministration is cardinal to the operations of MFM and the church's prayer city provides greater opportunity for seekers of deliverance. A

couple of tribal deliverance programmes also hold on monthly basis as the church holds the 'Oge Nnaputa Ndi Igbo' (Igbo Deliverance Programme) at 5 p.m every second Thursday of the month while the Yoruba Deliverance Programme , 'Wakati Idande' , is held the same time on the third Thursday of the month at the at the International Headquarter church. MFM believes and teaches that everyone needs deliverance of some sort, depending on background and exposure to sinful activities. For any degree of liberation required, what it takes to undergo deliverance in MFM is willingness to be free and a vowed aggression against the adversary; no fees are charged.

MFM has set up various schools to train members and non-members specific areas of human capacity development. After all, Dr. Olukoya himself is a renowned academic whose outstanding success has become a reference point in the hall of fame. Before their recent autonomy in 2008, MFM was running 19 ministry related schools under the church's Institute of Spiritual Warfare (INSWAR). Fifteen of these schools are run with curricular guide to prepare men and women for the service of God while the Mountain Top Nursery and Primary Schools and Mountain Top Secondary School, as well as Mountain Top University in view, provide a balance of sound academic training with the fear of God. Dr. Olukoya is instilling the culture of reading in his members; he encourages them to read at least one book a month. The church membership as it is everywhere is heterogeneous. Top government officials, scholars, renowned business moguls, professionals and people with vocational training sit together with the uneducated to learn at the feet of the Lord.

The simplicity of the General Overseer has moulded the worshipers into a life of humility such that personal status and achievements are not advertised in a show of superiority. But from a distance, some observers erroneously assume that the church is a congregation of the un-educated. Also at the prayer city another interdenominational programme branded 'Power Must Change Hands' holds on every first Saturday of every month to allow for wider participation. It is a solution evangelism programme that came into existence according to the scriptural provision in Mathew 17:21. Although, most MFM programmes are with fasting, this is particularly different because a whole day fasting is recommended; participants eat their last meal on Thursday night and break after the prayer programme on Saturday. 70 days prayer and fasting is an annual

programme of the church in which every member is encouraged to participate. According to Dr. Olukoya, 'some mountains will not fall unless they are bombarded with the artillery of prayer and fasting.

The prayer city started as a fulfilment of prophecy. Besides, Dr. Olukoya wanted a place where prayers could be offered round the clock without disturbance. Conceived as a prayer retreat ground, the prayer city on kilometre 12, Lagos Ibadan Expressway began with the purchase of 54 hectares of land. Overtime more pieces of land have been acquired by the church activities and ongoing construction work at the location is on the increase. The first service was held on the ground of the prayer city in July 1995. At the prayer city, prayer and deliverance go on simultaneously round the clock. The city means many things to many people: a place of refuge, a level ground for prayer exercise, miracle spot and a meeting point for armies of heaven and mortal warriors.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List and discuss five key factors that influenced the growth of Mountain of Fire and Miracles

### **3.3 Olokoya's Contribution to the Spread of the Gospel**

The music ministry of MFM is like an industry of professionalism, high level of commitment and rigorous training. The church sings contemporary songs, classical, jazz blues, acapella, negros and solos to create a balanced music ministry under the directorship of Sister Banke Ademola. The G.O and his wife, Mrs. Shade Olukoya also a pastor, are specialist musical performers and once in a while on special occasions, they do joint songs to the admiration of the congregation. Shade is a great soloist who performs as the spirit leads and on special occasions. Although the MFM does not use drums and other local musical instruments, its use of the organ, the guitar, the piano and several other stringed instruments has perfected its music for soul wining and edification of the body of Christ. In his commitment to the music ministry, the G.O purchased an Allen organ at about \$200,000 which has been reputed as the biggest of its kind in Africa. The six step musical organ took the agents of the world's famous

manufacturer from US some weeks to assemble at the international headquarter, Onike, Iwaya, Lagos.

### **3.3.1 Olokoya's Love for Youth**

Concerning the youth in the country, Dr. Olukoya was burdened by their sense of loss of focus. Hence, the church has embarked on repositioning them. According to the G.O, "The youth have lost focus and the devil may harvest them if left to their ways as a lot of them indulge in various shades of crimes and vices". He said the Holy Spirit directed him to embark on a 70-point agenda to reposition the youth, which started in 2007, and most of the programmes on the 70-point have started yielding results. The football team of MFM, tagged D. K Olukoya Football Club played a friendly match with the national under-23 team that ended with a draw. At the end of the match three of the club's members were called into the national team. Some other members of the D. K Olukoya Football Club have been offered international football contracts by foreign clubs. The youth who were dissipating their energy in wrong and wasteful endeavours have now found focus and fulfillment in profitable ventures. Not only in football are the new converts making waves; they are also breaking ground in all other areas of the 70-point agenda. Some of the programmes on the agenda include cooking, talent hunt, singing/music, bible quiz among others.

Realizing the need for a special attention to the youth's spiritual life, in April 2008, MFM set up its youth church of which services run simultaneously with the adults' church regular service at different venues in the same neighbourhood. The idea is fast spreading in the Lagos region of the church where many branches are now putting their youth church in place. Again Dr. Olukoya's visionary and distinctive leadership style has proved the church's embrace of dynamism, within scriptural confines, in a world of fast changing values. Critiques of the church's mode of services and disposition to relevant and scriptural changes have been proved wrong. Presently, the population of the youth is about 4,000 and the fold is still increasing in number.

Breaking the church into groups, teams and department defined by functions, age bracket and mission is a profitable strategy of church growth in MFM. For instance, the

church's Women Foundation, headed by Pastor (Mrs.) Shade Olukoya, has many groups of women under it. The church's welfare group caters for the needy in the society, coordinates the collection and distribution of gifts and donation to the widows, the less privilege and prisons. Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, is a Do-it-yourself full Gospel Ministry dedicated to the revival of apostolic signs and wonders, Holy Ghost fireworks and the unlimited power of God to deliver to the uttermost.

### **3.3.2 Achievements**

And in pursuit of that destiny, Dr. Olukoya laid down an academic blueprint whose pedigree remains outstanding. At Saint John's CAC Primary School, Akure in Ondo State, and Saint Jude's primary School, Ebute Metta, Lagos where he completed his primary education, excellence was his watch word. Rather than occupy himself with exuberance that was a common feature among the, youths, he developed a passion for God. Dr. Daniel Olukoya's academic profile took a leap while at Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos, where he graduated with Grade One Distinction and was the best student in his set. Not one known to rest on his oars, he took his academic exploits to the prestigious University of Lagos and, as would be expected, the genius in him proved that all earlier outstanding academic results were no fluke, as he graduated with a first class honours degree. In fact it was the first from the department since the university was established in 1962.

Dr. Olukoya's thirst for more academic laurels found expression at the University of Reading, UK, where, with a Commonwealth scholarship, he studied for a PhD in Molecular Genetics, which was completed in record time, making him probably the first Nigerian to obtain a Ph.D. in this subject area. With such an intimidating academic resume! It was only natural that opportunities would beckon. But not even the pressure. To stay back in England could sway him from returning to Nigeria. His first port of call on arrival was the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR), Yaba. He was a lecturer as well as external examiner to a number of Nigerian universities, among them the University of Lagos, UNILAG and university of Benin, UNIBEN. Dr. Olukoya is on record as having been the first scientist to establish an indigenous Molecular Biology and Biotechnology laboratory in Nigeria. One important contribution by Dr. Olukoya to

biotechnology and health care delivery is the creation of a new type of Pap (Ogi), named Dogik, a weaning food that has improved nutritional qualities that can control diarrhoea.

The laboratory also ranks among the first to done genes in Nigeria. Dr. Olukoya has supervised over 20 Ph.D. students, most of who are doing well in their chosen fields. As a researcher, he has over 80 scientific publications to his credit. Notwithstanding his exploits on the academic turf, he devotes much of his time to God through preaching, delivering papers at seminars, singing etc. That Dr. Olukoya would become a mighty tool in the hands of God to serve as a vehicle of deliverance for his generation manifested in 1989, when Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries was given birth to in his sitting room at Yaba, with 24 worshippers. And like the story of the acorn seed that metamorphosed into the great oak tree with several branches providing nests to all birds of varied proportions, Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, with only 18 years presence, has exponentially own to be found in several, arts of the world, even as 2007 has been expressly declared by the General Overseer as the year for evangelism.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

MFM has thousands of branches spread across Nigeria, Africa and Asia. A huge percentage of branches are also located in the United States and Europe. The Ministry is noted for its unique, powerful prayers that are fast redefining the major strategic input that puts the devil and his cohorts in the most bemused of confusion. It is a ministry devoted to the revival of apostolic signs. Holy Ghost fire, miracles and the unlimited demonstration of the power of God word to deliver to the utmost. Absolute holiness is preached within and outside as spiritual prerequisite for heaven.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we considered the early life of Daniel Olukoya, the spread of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church and the contribution of Daniel Olukoya to the spread of Christian in Africa.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

- What was the major reason for the growth of Mountain of Fire and Miracles
- Discuss Daniel Olukoya's contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa
- Discuss how you can use Olukoya's personal achievement to motivate the youths in your church

## **7.1 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS**

Four Million Dollars Crusade: How Benny Hinn embarrassed me, Enoch Adeboye.  
Onlineneigria.com, 17 August 2005

The Global Elite. 49: E. A. Adeboye, Lisa Miller. Newsweek 20 Dec. 2008

African instituted churches, Rufus Okikiolaolu Olubiyi Ositelu. LIT Verlag Berlin-Hamburg-Münster

## **UNIT 6**

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAKURDI DIOCESE AND MOST REVEREND ATHANASIOUS ATULE USUH**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 3.2 Main Content
  - 3.1 Brief history of Christianity in North Africa
  - 3.2 The continuity of Christian presence in Africa
- 4.2 Conclusion
- 5.2 Summary
- 6.2 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.2 References/ Further Readings



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit is set to give a brief history of the beginning of Catholic Diocese of Makurdi and the pioneer indigenous Bishop.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this study you should be able to:

- ❖ Give a brief history of Catholic Diocese of Makurdi, Benue State
- ❖ Give details of the profile of Bishops Usuh, Shanahan and Ganaka

## **3.0 Main Content**

The ecclesiastical province which is at the moment called Makurdi Diocese was part of the newly formed Prefecture Apostolic of the lower Niger between 1889 and 1920. The Prefecture covered the entire land area within the east of the River Niger and to the South of River Benue. In 1920, its status within the Catholic Church was raised to that of Vicariate Apostolic of Southern Nigeria though sustaining its boundaries and from then on developments set in.

The missionary priests who initially evangelized in this area were French Holy Ghost Fathers in 1880. They were joined by Holy Ghost Priests and brothers from Ireland, and it was the latter who from 1911 began to make contact with the Benue in the Northern part of the Vicariate.

The approach to evangelize the lower Benue was hinged on the view of the Tiv Mission. The idea was to commence an evangelizing drive from Ogoja in Cross River State. In February 1917 Propaganda Fide appointed Pere Dourvry Apostolic Administrator for the whole of Cameroon, a frightening task which he nevertheless carried out creditably well. Dourvry was however always anxious to return to Nigeria to carry out a project that seems to have haunted him for many years, that was to bring the gospel to the Tiv people. He returned to Paris in

August 1920 and resigned as Apostolic Administrator. Joseph Shanahan, the Vicar Apostolic, for the Tiv project visited Pope Benedict XV in September 1920 and presented Pere Douvry who the Holy Father gave exceptional blessing for the Tiv Mission. Father Douvry was succeeded by Father Eugene Groetz.

In 1929 Father Joseph Soul one of the General Councillors, came to the Vicariate for an official visitation. At the end of his visit he found time to spare, so he visited Obudu and from there moved into Tivland. Soul spent a short time among the Tiv, but impressions he had did not leave him when he returned to Paris. He kept thinking about the neglected state of the Tiv and all other people of Northern Nigeria. Father Soul's visit to Tivland was nevertheless advantageous. The unintended visit resulted in the Spiritans lastly deciding to make some grave attempt to evangelize the people of the lower Benue, the Tiv, Idoma, Igala and other smaller groups. The duty was taken up by German Spiritans, and by 1930 the first group of four priests and two brothers arrived, unerringly 45 years after Joseph Lutz and his companies established themselves at Onitsha. Their Apostolic zeal and energy were such that by 1934 the areas of the civil territory of Benue province, Northern Nigeria was made into the Prefecture Apostolic of Benue with its centre first at Makurdi, and later at Otukpo. The German priests and brothers made incredible efforts and covered the whole area from Idah on the River Niger to Wukari near the boundary of Benue and Adamawa provinces. A chief setback though came following the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 as all the priests and brothers being German nationals were obliged by British authorities to leave Nigeria. By 1945 when the German fathers were replaced by those from the English province, Bishop Heery portrays the Benue as the most promising Mission in the whole of Nigeria after Onitsha-Owerri because the people were ready to receive the gospel.

In 1959 Monsignor James Hagan, the Prefect Apostolic of Otukpo was made a Bishop and in 1960 he transferred his Cathedral seat to Makurdi, therefore becoming the first Bishop of Makurdi. The Tiv Mission project had turned into the Catholic Diocese of Makurdi. Ill-health

however, prompted him to resign in 1966. This resignation appropriately led to the emergence of Bishop Murray as the second Bishop of Makurdi diocese in January, 1968 which marked a step forward.

Then, for 21 years that Bishop Murray managed the Diocese the church experienced unique growth in various aspects of ecclesial life. This is apparent in the increase in the numbers of religious, diocesan priests, and seminarians. The hope of a truly indigenous Church became more accomplished when the then Father Athanasius Usuh was ordained the first co-adjutor Bishop of the Diocese. Since Bishop Usuh was installed on 21st October, 1989 as the Bishop of the Diocese after the retirement of Bishop Murray, the Church in the Diocese within his jurisdiction has continued to experience incredible growth in terms of manpower and universal development. This is evident in the creation of Otukpo Catholic Diocese in 1995 and Lafia Catholic Diocese in the year 2001. On November 28th, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Msgr. William Avenya as the Auxiliary Bishop of Makurdi Diocese. On December 29th, 2013 Pope Benedict XVI created Gboko and Katsina-Ala Dioceses out of Makurdi with Bishop William Avenya and Monsignor Peter Adoboh as local ordinaries. Yet there are six deaneries comprising eighteen (18) parishes, seventeen (17) Catholic Missions, and ten (10) Chaplaincies, most of them covering a vast area in the Diocese. This work of God brought developments positively.

At the moment the Diocese has a total number of Forty Nine (49) indigenous priests and five (5) deacons and thirty-two (32) Seminarians. Most of these priests work within the Diocese, while others are pursuing further studies in Rome, USA, and Nigeria. Some are teaching at the major seminary in Makurdi, the Benue State University, and colleges, while some priests have been assigned to pastoral work in Abuja FCT Archdiocese and Lafia Diocese accordingly.

On July 8, 2014 Pope Francis selected Father Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe cmf as the Coadjutor Bishop of Makurdi Diocese. He will be ordained on October 4, 2014 at IBB Square in Makurdi, the Benue State capital.

Monsignor Anagbe now has the automatic right to succeed the ailing Bishop of the Diocese, Most Revd. Athanasius Atule Usuh in the event that he (Usuh) passes on or resigns. The Archbishop of Abuja Diocese Cardinal John Onaiyekan praised Bishop Usuh for laying a solid foundation in the course of piloting the affairs of church in the state that led to the emergence of two Dioceses in the state. Cardinal Onaiyekan assured the newly ordained Bishop of his continued support and that of the church, and prayed God to equip him with the needed wisdom to lead the flock of God.

Most Reverend Athanasius Atule Usuh was born to the family of the late Pa Joseph Usuh Anachi and Mama Edna Hilemo Usuh of Mbatyough, Mbagen in Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State on 2nd May, 1942. Atule Usuh attended St. Theresa's Primary School Abwa from 1951 to 1958 graduating as a pioneer set. Most of the teachers in those days were Igbo. One of his teachers, Mr. Fabian Mwakama is still alive and in his nineties. After graduating from primary school, he went to RCM Abayol at Ukan in Ushongo Local Government Area where he taught for one year from 1959 to 1960. He was then transferred to RCM Kusuv in Mbatitiv, Yandev where he again taught for one year from 1960 to 1961. It was during this time that an old schoolmate of his who was already in the junior seminary while on holiday influenced him to join the seminary. In reply to the call to serve God in his vineyard, Atule discussed his aspiration with his then parish priest, Father Sherwood of St. John's parish Gboko, who counseled him to take the entrance examination into the junior seminary. He got the admission and studied at St. James Junior Seminary Keffi from 1961 to 1965. In the junior seminary, his talents in music and sports were apparent as he was made the choirmaster and football captain of the school. Leaving the junior seminary, he taught for a while at the then St. Augustine's Teachers College Lafia in 1966.

The urge to go on with his call to the priesthood began to come to culmination when he was admitted to the Bigard Memorial Seminary Enugu in September 1966. He recalls that all text books were in Latin and it was very taxing. His stay at Bigard lasted just three months because the eruption of Nigeria civil war occasioned his departure from the eastern part of the country in November 1966. Fr. Donald Murray had asked Fr. Rooney to go to Enugu and bring the seminarians back to Makurdi. The young Athanasius Atule Usuh received his cassock and tonsure and went back to teach at St. Augustine's Teachers Training College, Lafia. The then Northern Ecclesiastical Province face with stranded seminarians sought for consent from Rome to begin a seminary of its own in 1967.

This seminary, St. Augustine's Major Seminary began at Keffi to cater for returning seminarians. It is useful to note that the sojourn in Keffi was only provisional and just after a year, the seminary shifted from Keffi to Jos, where it stated in a primary school building at Dogon Dutse. The war had sent many families away and populations in these schools were profoundly decimated creating room for the promising seminary. Here the seminary stayed for a year and half, then moved to its permanent site at Rafinpa. At the seminary, the young seminarian Athanasius Usuh was an active football player and an avid choir master. His love and mastery of the football game earned him the school captaincy from his third year until graduation day. He was also for many years the seminary's choirmaster and music teacher with the help of Sr. Camel Dodd. While in the seminary, Bishop Usuh was made the first editor of the *Awakening Light*, the seminary magazine.

Usuh was also for many years involved in teaching at the St. Louise College Jos where he was a History and English Language teacher. He was also at this time deeply caught up in sports development in the school. The priestly ordination of Fr. Usuh took place on 19th December, 1971 at St. John's Parish Gboko. On this day, seven deacons were ordained priests {Fathers Edward Maaer, Moses Adasu, Athanasius Usuh, Stephen Beba, Benjamin Adzor, Dominic Yuhe and Simon Ivever} in their third year of theology and they had to go back to the seminary to complete their studies in 1972. The two surviving in that class are Bishop

Usuh and Father Stephen Beba. On the successful completion of his studies, Father Athanasius Usuh was posted to St. Patrick's Parish Tarku in January 1973. At Tarku, he was interested in youth activities and their formation. This interest led to his founding a football team, the mosquitoes, a team of under -13 boys who fascinated the whole state with their skills.

The life of a priest is essentially a missionary one and so, by December 1974, Father Usuh was transferred to Sacred Heart Parish Udei where he served until early December 1975. By January 1976, he was again called to take up a new challenge; His Bishop sent him to the St. Augustine Major Seminary Jos. At the seminary apart from his duties as a lecturer, he was made a dean of formation and director of music. While working at the seminary in Jos, he was also appointed as the Diocesan Vocations' Director. He spent two and half years in the seminary and was sent to the United States of America to study at the Catholic University, Washington D.C. His interest was liturgical music. Bishop Murray originally objected to this and wanted him to study religious education. So, he started studying religious education and later changed his course to music. He completed his studies in liturgical music and returned to the Diocese in 1980. In 1981, he was appointed Rector of St. James Minor Seminary, Makurdi where he stayed for five years. During this time, he was responsible for selecting and forming students who will be trained as future priests for the Diocese.

It was due to his love for soccer and his organisational skills that the Benue State Government made him chairman of the State Football Association from 1984 to 1985. More so having served well as chairman of Benue Football Association, the state placed another task on his shoulders to serve as chairman of the Benue State Christians Pilgrim Welfare Board after the tenure of Bishop Achigili of the Methodist church. In 1986, he was appointed parish priest of Holy Ghost Parish, Makurdi and was also the Vicar General of the Diocese. He had a fulfilled ministry at Holy Ghost Parish and was very happy. In November, 1987, Fr. Athanasius Usuh was chosen a Coadjutor Bishop for the Catholic Diocese of Makurdi to

replace the soon to retire Bishop Donald J. Murray, CSSp. Fr. Usuh's Episcopal ordination took place on the 6th of January, 1988 in Rome and he was consecrated by Pope John Paul II. He was installed the first indigenous Bishop of Makurdi Diocese on the 21st of October, 1989.

Bishop Usuh has a motto: "*Ter M Kuma Ga,*" "Lord I am not worthy." To him, this saying captured the conditions leading up to his becoming bishop and the forth coming challenges. It was in addition a sign of profound humility for the honour given him to serve as a bishop. He felt he was not the most gifted of his mates, yet God found him worthy to be the Bishop. So he accepted in humility to God's will in his life. From the time when Usuh took over the leadership of the Diocese twenty-five years ago, there has been exceptional growth of the Church in this part of Nigeria: the boost in the number of Catholics evident in the number of priests and bishops ordained, dioceses created and the many young people in the seminaries. During these twenty-five years, we witnessed the creation of Otukpo, Lafia, Gboko and Katsina-Ala Dioceses, with the following as bishops: the late Bishop Fidelis Ogah, Bishops Matthew Audu, Michael Apochi, William Avenya and Peter Adoboh.

The Bishop is as well acknowledged for his enthusiasm to aid other dioceses, particularly in the area of personnel; dioceses in and outside of Nigeria are benefiting from the personnel sent to them by Bishop Usuh. The bishop is appreciative for the support he has received from both the priests and the laity as chief shepherd of the diocese. In spite of the large number of priests in the diocese, there has been no major grievance of disunity amongst them. He continually advises young and old priests to learn from each other at any time he notices some tensions among priests as a result of generational gaps. On June 29, 2013, a big celebration was organised for Bishop Usuh in honour of his Silver Episcopal Anniversary and the occasion was used to raise funds to build a retirement quarters for him.

It is learnt that Bishop Usuh is facing serious health challenges recently but he remains as joyful and formidable as ever in ministering to his flock. On November 14, 2013 the bishop commissioned a new complex at Bishop Murray Medical Centre where patients can also access dialysis services. The ceremony was witnessed by Governor Gabriel Suswam, priests, religious and the general public. On November 23, 2013 the bishop performed the solemn ceremony of investiture of Papal Knighthood on 14 candidates he had applied for to the Holy Father in 2012.

### **3.2 BISHOP SHANAHAN AND GANAKA**

Bishop Shanahan (1871 - 1943) of Southern Nigeria was the only non-Igbo to be afforded this honour. His bones were disinterred and in 1955 were Laid to rest in Onitsha cathedral in the heart of the land of the Igbos. Shanahan was so beloved and honoured by the Ibos because of his missionary activities. He was given a "second burial". The solemn but joyous ceremony was performed only for the paramount chief, to ensure that his great spirit would always remain with the people, protecting them and guiding them in many ways as he had done in Life.

Joseph Shanahan was born, the third of ten children of a poor farm labourer in Co. Tipperary, Ireland. His uncle, Pat Walsh, who lived with the Shanahans, left the home in Gortnalaura in 1875 to join the congregation of the Holy Ghost, now called the Spiritans. It was an old French religious order in recent times given a new lease of life by the dynamic Francis Libermann, a convert from Judaism whose special ambition was to bring the good news of Christ to the peoples of Equatorial Africa so that they can accept Christ and be saved. The aim was evangelize.

In 1886 young Joe followed his uncle to France where he joined the Spiritans and began his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained a priest in 1900. In October 1902 his life's dream was fulfilled. He was on a boat bound for Nigeria. Thirty five days later he arrived in Onitsha, a name that would be forever connected with his own due to his vigorous missionary



work.

Joseph Shanahan joined a group of French Spiritans who had arrived in Eastern Nigeria seventeen years previously. Today he is seen as a luminary of the Church and of the Spiritans, a wonderful model for all who are called to be missionaries.

From the very beginning Shanahan made a big impact. He was big, strong, and handsome. He was friendly, kind, energetic. The Igbo people couldn't but admire and love him. And he served them with every ounce of his being until he returned in 1932. He had served for thirty years, twenty five as leader of the mission. Few Europeans could survive more than a decade in Nigeria where conditions were very primitive at that time, then many could not endure and decided to quit.

His life is one of the great success stories of missionary history. He was a truly charismatic figure, a man of exceptional courage and vision. He made trips in the country on foot, by bicycle, by canoe. He walked boldly in areas where no white man had set foot before. He saw the importance of education and built up a huge system of schools to help in educating the natives.

He recruited missionary priests, brothers, sisters and lay persons for Southern Nigeria. He founded one religious order and was the inspiration behind the invention of five others.

As is the case for all saints, he suffered greatly. He was rejected by his mission and forced into an unwanted and early retirement. He was discarded by the missionary order of sisters he founded in Ireland He spent his final years in exile from his beloved Igbos, years of irritation false accusations and loneliness.

Bishop Shanahan College Orlu; this great institution was established in the year 1949 in honour of a renowned Bishop Joseph Shanahan, born on 6th of June 1871 in co. Tipperary

Ireland, who came down to Nigeria as early volunteer missionary. He was posted to Onitsha where he devoted all His life, worked tirelessly and died in 1955 at Onitsha. To commemorate the name of this influential and hardworking Bishop, the college was named after Him. Since the commencement of this college, it has maintained its greatness in Fame, Academics, Sports and Morals, competing and comparing with such reigning schools like C.I.C Enugu, QRC Enugu, Stella Marris Port Hacourt, CKC Onitsha, QRC ONITSHA and Kings College Lagos etc.

Many great men- builders and leaders in the country passed through this college and the college passed through them. The products of Bishop Shanahan College Orlu both the living and the dead are proud to identify with this school. With records from 1949-2012 (63 years) B. S. C has produced over five hundred thousand students

Archbishop Gabriel Ganaka (1937-1999) His Grace, the Late Most Rev. (Dr.) Gabriel Gonsum Ganaka of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos, Nigeria, founded the Confraternity of the United Hearts in a moment before his death in 1999. He was a native of Plateau State, Nigeria. Archbishop Ganaka occupied important positions both within and outside this Archdiocese, including: Appointed a member of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples by Pope Paul VI; Appointed to the Canon Law Review Commission and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue by Pope John Paul II. He served as President of both the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria and the Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM). He was a leader and representative to many international pastoral events, including the World Day of Prayer for Peace and the Millennium of Christianity.

The Archbishop was known by all for his loving pastoral approach to his flock, his innovative evangelization which impacted the Church at large, and his role as the

Charismatic Renewal leader in all of Nigeria. His Grace promoted the Divine Mercy devotion and other devotions throughout his diocese, and under his care, priestly vocations soared.

In 1997, the Archbishop became acutely ill and was flown to the United States for medical treatment. One of his flock came to Maranatha Spring and Shrine, the home of Holy Love Ministries, to seek Our Lady's intercession and subsequently introduced him to Holy Love Ministries and the all-important messages of Holy and Divine Love. His Foreword graces the pages of the book *Holy and Divine Love: The Remedy and Triumph*.

Archbishop Ganaka founded the Confraternity of the United Hearts, with the international headquarters in Nigeria. He wrote the Constitution for the Confraternity before his death on November 11, 1999, exactly three months to the day from when he introduced the visionary and other Missionary Servants of Holy Love to Pope John Paul II.

It is learnt that this topical study is a fruit of the Confraternity of the United Hearts of Jesus and Mary. "United Hearts of Jesus and Mary" means the mystical union of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary that began at the moment of Jesus' conception, never to be parted. The Confraternity of the United Hearts promotes a journey of sanctification through devotion to the United Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The entire trip is based on trustful surrender through love and was established to order lives towards God's intended purpose: Eternal life in the Holy Trinity through sainthood.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The triumph of the gospel through the Roman Catholic Mission to Benue and other areas in Nigeria brought a lot of impact on the lives of the people. Pope Benedict XV in September 1920 and presented Pere Douvry who the Holy Father gave exceptional blessing for the Tiv Mission. Today the Catholic Church has become another gigantic congregation where people are seeking the face of god for their salvation.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The ecclesiastical province which is at the moment called Makurdi Diocese was part of the recently formed Prefecture Apostolic of the lower Niger between 1889 and 1920. The Prefecture covered the entire land area within the east of the River Niger and to the South of River Benue. In 1920, its standing within the Catholic Church was raised to that of Vicariate Apostolic of Southern Nigeria though sustaining its boundaries and from then on developments set in.

Joseph Shanahan, the Vicar Apostolic, for the Tiv project visited Pope Benedict XV in September 1920 and presented Pere Douvry who the Holy Father gave exceptional blessing for the Tiv Mission. Bishop Heery portrays the Benue as the most promising Mission in the whole of Nigeria after Onitsha-Owerri because the people were ready to receive the gospel. In 1959 Monsignor James Hagan, the Prefect Apostolic of Otukpo was made a Bishop and in 1960 he transferred his Cathedral seat to Makurdi, therefore becoming the first Bishop of Makurdi. Then, for 21 years that Bishop Murray managed the Diocese the church experienced unique growth in diverse aspects of ecclesial life. This is noticeable in the increase in the numbers of religious, diocesan priests, and seminarians. The hope of a truly indigenous Church became more accomplished when the then Father Athanasius Usuh was ordained the first co-adjutor Bishop of the Diocese. Since Bishop Usuh was installed on 21st October, 1989 as the Bishop of the Diocese after the retirement of Bishop Murray, the Church in the Diocese within his jurisdiction has continued to experience unbelievable growth in terms of manpower and widespread development.

Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria was the only non-Igbo to be afforded this honour. His bones were disinterred and in 1955 were laid to rest in Onitsha cathedral. Archbishop Gabriel Ganaka His Grace, the Late Most Rev. (Dr.) Gabriel Gonsum Ganaka of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos, Nigeria, established the Confraternity of the United Hearts in a moment

before his death in 1999. He was vigorous leader and a native of Plateau State, Nigeria.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- ✚ Narrate a brief history of Catholic Diocese of Makurdi
- ✚ Write a short profile on Bishops Usuh, Shanahan and Ganaka

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FUTHER READINGS**

[www.holylove.org](http://www.holylove.org)

[http://www.spiritans.org/drivers/english\\_history\\_js.asp](http://www.spiritans.org/drivers/english_history_js.asp)

[www.angelsofmaranatha.org](http://www.angelsofmaranatha.org)

## **UNIT 7: BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS (COCIN)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Objectives
- 3.3 Main Content
  - 3.1 Brief history of COCIN
  - 3.2 The Work of Rev Rindap Damina Bawado of CRCN
- 4.3 Conclusion
- 5.3 Summary
- 6.3 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.3 References/ Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit is developed to present the history of Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN), formerly Church of Christ in Nigeria, is a Christian denomination in Nigeria. It was established in 1904. It believes in the infallibility of the Bible. Its headquarters is in Jos, Plateau State. Moreover, it gives the detail of a renowned pioneer leader of COCIN, Rindap Damina Bawado.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this study you should be able to:

- ❖ Give a brief history of COCIN
- ❖ Highlight the works of Rindap Damina Bawado

## **3.0 Main Content**

### **3.1 BRIEF HISTORY OF COCIN**

The Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN), formerly Church of Christ in Nigeria, is a Christian denomination in Nigeria. It was founded in 1904. It believes in the infallibility of the Bible. Its headquarters is in Jos, Plateau State. Its current president is Rev. Dr. Dachollom Datiri. It used to have the name of Ekklesiyar Kristi a Nigeria.

The membership of this church exceeds 2,000,000. It is a member of the World Council of Churches. In addition, it is a member of the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Reformed Ecumenical Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The Church has been in the fore front of providing essential services to the people of Nigeria. These comprise education, health and agriculture. Its cluster of schools in Gindiri, Plateau state provided educational opportunities for many Nigerians of note during and after the colonial periods. These schools consist of the Famous Boys Secondary School, Girls High School, Gindiri Teachers College (Now COCIN Comprehensive College) and The School for the Blind. On the same complex it has a Theological College giving quality theological education up to the first degree level. It had a School of Nursing in Vom, but the Nigerian federal government took it over.

It has other secondary schools and vocational training institutes in other regions. These comprise the Pastors' College in Kabwir, which gave pastoral training to diploma level in Hausa, for non-English speakers. There are other diploma awarding institutions, but of special note are the following: COBATI Zamko which offers Bible and Agricultural training for pastors working in rural areas. More so, she has ETC (Extension Theological College)

which gives theological education to hundreds of students all over Nigeria by a specialized distance learning method.

The Church has two hospitals; the prominent Vom Christian Hospital (VCH) which served most parts of northern Nigeria and beyond for many years in the past. There is also a Hospital in Sabon Layin, Mangu LGA of Plateau state. Its specializes in treating physical disabilities.

The Church of Christ in Nigeria has played a major role in the education of a vast number of Northern Nigeria elites, past and present. Its educational programme has been unbiased, allowing individuals of all religious and other socio-cultural backgrounds to gain from its educational programmes. There is currently an effort by COCIN to launch a University in the locality of Vom, Plateau State, Nigeria.

### **3.2 RINDAP DAMINA BAWADO 1918 TO 1993; CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NIGERIA (COCIN) NIGERIA.**

Rindap Damina Bawado was leader of the Langtang District of Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) until his retirement in 1990. He was also the leader of the Church of Christ in Nigeria as a whole for thirty years. The COCIN is a church established by the British branch of the Sudan United Mission, otherwise known as S.U.M. At the same time, Bawado was also the leader of the Association of Churches of Christ in Nigeria (in Hausa *Tarayar Eklisiyoyin Kristi A Nijeriya* or TEKAN) for eight years. He was, undoubtedly, one of the most significant church leaders in northern Nigeria who made great efforts to bring a lot changes and growth in the church.

Rindap was doubtless born in 1918 to Pa Bawado and Mamwong in a Tarok village called Lyangjit. His second name, Damina, is Hausa and means "rainy season," which means he was born in the wet season. His first name, Rindap, is Tarok and means "Orim (the Tarok deity) is leader."

The Tarok, primarily farmers, lived in the hills and on the plains southeast of Plateau State in

Nigeria. Several theories have been promulgated on their origins as a people that immigrated from places outside their present location. Famous among these theorists are Stephen Banfa, Selbut Longtau, A. B. Matthews and Elias Lamle. Nevertheless, it shown through more fresh scholarship that most of Jos Plateau peoples are indigenous to the particular area.

When Rindap was born, his parents were profoundly involved in Tarok traditional worship. Pa Bawado was polygamous and remained so even after he had become a Christian in 1925. He was therefore not baptized till his death. But he personally took Rindap to the Mission House in Langtang in 1926 so his son could attain the "wisdom" of the white people. By this time, Langtang had become the leading Tarok town and the mission headquarters. Consequently, as Rindap grew up in a Christian home, he would not have known much about the Tarok traditional religion. But he grew up at Langtang and never knew any of the old fetish customs of our tribe.

Almost immediately Rindap found favour by the early missionaries in Tarokland, first by the Coopers and afterward by the Richmonds. He served both families as a houseboy. Rev. H. J. Cooper registered the young Rindap in the Class for Religious Instruction (C.R.I.),--as the elementary schools run by missions were called. Here he learned to read and write in Hausa and, with the help of the missionaries, he also learned to read and speak English very well.

Rindap said he was moved to accept Christ as his Saviour by an elder in the Langtang church in 1932. Joy flowed into his heart and instantly Rindap made a public declaration of his conversion in the Langtang church. Subsequent to finishing the C.R.I. training in Langtang, Rindap came home to Lyangjit. His father made him become skilled at shoemaking to keep him active. Rindap took time to go out preaching in the villages in the companionship of other local converts. In 1934 Rindap was given admission into the recently opened mission teacher training school called Evangelists' Training Institute in Gindiri, another S.U.M.



station about one hundred kilometers northwest of Langtang. He completed the teachers' training in 1943, spending most of that six year period as a trainee teacher in the Langtang primary school. After his education, he returned to Langtang where he continued working as a teacher and he loved doing his all the times.

Rindap furthermore cherished to preach. One area he attacked in his preaching was Tarok traditional worship, characterized by the manifestation of masked dancers which were predominantly dreaded by women. At one time, the masked dancers, fed up with Rindap's steady attacks, kidnapped him and took him to their sacred groves. Undoubtedly, he would have been murdered easily devoid of the speedy interference of a missionary named Captain J. Wilkie.

Rindap never forgot this episode. Afterward, he combated the traditionalists for constituting themselves into a public nuisance by seizing their sacred drum until they promised him they would never encroach on church premises. Prior to Rindap training as a pastor, he was posted to Garkawa as a head teacher in the mission primary school there. Rindap wedded Fakat Damaris Kyembai in March 1938 in the Langtang church. The marriage was blessed with ten children. Out of these children eight have survived. With his new marital standing, Rindap began to get ready himself for baptism. In those days, one could not be baptized single. He was baptized in 1938.

In 1945, Rindap entered Pastors' Training School in Gindiri for one year. At the graduation of the training, in 1946, Rindap was licensed as a pastor and ordained in 1948. He was one of the three ordained pastors of the S.U.M. (British Branch) that time. Consequently Rindap became the second Tarok to be ordained after Bali Macit. Bali Macit had been the first Tarok convert. Rindap's potential as a pastor was detected before time, whereas he was still in Pastors' Training School, when he was asked to preach at the conference of the S.U.M.

churches in Ancho in December 1945. After his ordination, Rindap was posted to Mban where he was a pastor of the local church there for seven years. Rindap also doubled as supervisor of mission schools (C.R.I.) at Garkawa, Kbwai and Mban. While still in Mban, he was voted treasurer of the Langtang church in 1947. He proved so reliable that he was appointed acting superintendent of the mission in Langtang for a few months between the time Captain and Mrs J. Wilkie retired and left for home and the advent of their successors, Rev. and Mrs H. E. Jump.

Rindap moreover became a part-time chairman of the Langtang District Church Council in 1948. In this capability, his pastoral duties were not restricted to Mban but extended all through the Langtang district. He traveled around the district churches to dedicate children, solemnize weddings, give Holy Communion and offer counseling. While acting as chairman of the Langtang district, Rindap Bawado was elected chairman (afterward the name of the position was changed to "president") of the Church of Christ in Nigeria in 1951. This meant that he supervised the four COCIN districts of Langtang, Kabwir, Panyam and Foron respectively.

In January 1954, Rindap was transferred to Langtang and became the first Nigerian to assume full leadership of the Langtang district headquarters church. Accordingly he became the full leader of the Langtang district church of the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) as well to his responsibility as chairman of all of COCIN. Over and above these responsibilities, Rindap Bawado was elected chairman of the Association of the Churches of Christ in Nigeria (better recognized in its Hausa rendering as *Tarayyar Ekklisiyoyin Kristi A Nijeriya* or TEKAN) in 1962. Consequently, from this time until he was relieved of the TEKAN chairmanship in 1970, Rindap was the busiest church leader in northern Nigeria, wearing three leadership hats. But he paid his attention more often than not on his responsibilities as pastor of the Langtang church and leader of the Langtang district, soon after changed into a region. His

works were always memorized.

In 1965, Rev. Rindap Damina Bawado and Rev. Istifanus Deshi travelled the United Kingdom to give account on the progress of the COCIN and to visit churches and institutions that support S.U.M. missionary work in Nigeria. Certainly, this was a rare chance at this time. Rindap had the freedom of speaking to a Christian congregation in Cambridge and prayed for a British couple to have many children by God's grace. They both visited one of the Keswick conventions as planned.

Rindap Bawado's contribution to the development of the Langtsng district of COCIN was in raising indigenous leadership, pastors, which the church required urgently. One of the young men he encouraged to go into the ministry is now COCIN president, Rev. Alexander Mamdib Lar.

Rindap Bawado stepped down as president of COCIN in 1981 and was succeeded by Rev. Luther Cishak. He at last retired as minister in the church in 1990 and moved to his village of Lyangjit. Lonesome and with nothing much to do, Rindap become psychologically deranged just before he died in 1993. Rindap was really a vessel God used in COCIN church.

COCIN and TEKAN remember Rev. Rindap Damina Bawado as a leader who worked vigorously to uphold church unity.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study we learnt that COCIN is a Reformed Church in the North which her headquarters is based in Jos, Plateau State. Rev Rindap Damina Bawado was the first indigenous leader who worked tirelessly to uphold church unity. Today COCIN has made a lot of progress in Nigeria in terms of building the kingdom of Christ.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN), formerly Church of Christ in Nigeria, is a Christian denomination in Nigeria. It was founded in 1904. It believes in the infallibility of

the Bible. The COCIN is a church established by the British branch of the Sudan United Mission, otherwise known as S.U.M. Rindap Damina Bawado was leader of the Langtang District of Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) until his retirement in 1990. He was also the leader of the Church of Christ in Nigeria as a whole for thirty years. Accordingly, from this time until he was relieved of the TEKAN chairmanship in 1970, Rindap was the busiest church leader in northern Nigeria, wearing three leadership hats.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- ✚ Narrate the history of COCIN briefly
- ✚ Highlight the achievements of Rindap Damina Bawado

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FUTHER READINGS**

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