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An Adventist Missiological Response to Traditional Beliefs in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

AN ADVENTIST MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO

TRADITIONAL BELIEFS IN KENYA

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

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Title: AN ADVENTIST MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO TRADITIONAL
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Problem

Seventh-day Adventist Christians in Kenya struggle to practice pure biblical teaching because many still practice African traditional beliefs. Many traditional beliefs are inconsistent with biblical teachings. This problem has contributed to syncretism that has weakened the Adventist message in Kenya. Many of the church members follow traditional beliefs because they fear to be condemned by members in society. The traditional belief that says a dead person continues to live and can communicate with the family is still strongly supported by many people in Kenya. This traditional belief contradicts biblical teaching concerning the dead.

Other traditional issues church members struggle with that are in conflict with biblical teachings deal with widow and widowers' issues, witchcraft and magic, demonization and how to deal with it, polygamy, genital mutilation, and several others. These African traditional beliefs have not been adequately addressed by the Adventist Church in Kenya. The problem has existed in the Church for decades and should be addressed because it contradicts biblical teachings and Adventist fundamental beliefs.

Method

This study looked at the background and practices of several African traditional beliefs. Books, journals, articles, and dissertations from the James White library helped the researcher understand African traditional beliefs in the Kenyan context. An Adventist biblical response to the issues of witchcraft, funeral rites, wife-inheritance, death rituals, and demonization was developed.

A critical contextualization process was suggested so that people are involved in discussing the issues and dealing with them in biblical ways. This approach empowers church members to deal biblically with challenges traditional beliefs pose.

Results

The interviews conducted in Kenya indicated that a number of the Kenyan Seventh-day Adventists still believe and practice African traditional beliefs. Many reasons for this problem include the fact that the people's worldview was not impacted by biblical thought, failure by missionaries to address the traditional beliefs of the people, fear of taboos caused by the spirits of the dead, and failure to openly discuss traditional issues.

An analysis of the traditional beliefs on the state of the dead, death rituals, widowhood and wife inheritance, soul and spirit, witchcraft, and demonization indicate that Adventists need much biblical study concerning the dead. Biblical views of soul and spirit based on Gen 2:7 and Gen 2:21-22 do not support the traditional belief that a soul continues to live after death.

While some traditional beliefs were consistent with biblical teachings, there were some which were found to be inconsistent.

Conclusion

The gospel the church proclaims is about repentance and new birth in Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:17; John 3:3) Jesus promised his followers the power of the Holy Spirit before they could become his witnesses (Acts 1:8-9). The new birth experience should result in believers following Jesus instead of these traditional practices which are opposed to biblical teaching.

Kenyan Adventists should be educated to understand the meaning of being a true disciple of Christ Jesus, and as such should not practice biblical and traditional beliefs at the same time. Such syncretism has weakened the position of the church to evangelize the Kenyan people. Therefore, there is an urgent need for church leaders to educate members on how to deal with traditional issues.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

African traditional beliefs have dominated the thinking of Kenyan Adventist Christians and non-Christians alike. Traditions have guided the lives of Africans for centuries extending to today. Seventh-day Adventists in Kenya have continued to practice traditional beliefs alongside their Adventist beliefs. Kenyans like to say they have practiced African traditional beliefs for centuries so they argue that it is not wise to do away with the old practices after they become Christians.

Traditional Kenyan belief is that when a person dies his soul continues to live and they still take part in the affairs of their families. It is believed that the dead have "eyes" so they are classified as the "living dead" who must be appeased in order to avoid a taboo.

People also believe that the dead can come back as ghosts to torment the family when death rituals are not performed. Failure to perform these death rituals may cause mental sickness and mysterious deaths among the family members. However, many beliefs and practices connected with death rituals contradict biblical teachings concerning the state of the dead. According to the Bible the dead know nothing and have no part in the affairs of the living (Eccl 9:5-6). Kenyan Adventists have often not fully appreciated this biblical truth on the state of the dead.

1

Belief in witchcraft and magic is another traditional practice that some Kenyan Adventists must overcome. Witchcraft is a pagan means of solving problems apart from God. People go to witchdoctors when they think western medicine and prayers have failed. The Lord condemned the practice of witchcraft which He equated to rebellion (1 Sam 15:23).

The third problem is demonization. Since Adventist members in Kenya are poorly equipped to deal with this phenomenon, they often go to traditional witchdoctors to find answers in how to deal with demons. When Christians use African traditional means rather than going to God to solve demonic problems, they cheapen the power and influence of the gospel. The church must teach and equip its members using biblical methods to deal with this phenomenon.

Wife inheritance practiced by the Luo tribe requires a widow to have sexual intercourse with a kinsman in the house where she lived with her late husband. A widow is considered ceremonially unclean after the husband's death. The sexual intercourse is considered an obligatory ritual cleansing. The people believe a widow who is not inherited, that is, failure to have sexual intercourse, may cause a taboo (*chira*) on her life, children, or other family members.

Kenyan wife inheritance is not the same as the Hebrew levirate marriage. Wife inheritance is a marriage whose primary purpose is to satisfy ritual cleansing demands. It is an engagement where the couple are not expected to exchange marriage vows, neither is there a bride price, nor a marriage certificate. The Adventist Church must discourage this practice and help church members to follow the biblical principles for re-marriage.

Seventh-day Adventists in Kenya wrestle with the conflict between African traditional beliefs and Adventist biblical beliefs. Since the church has not adequately

addressed these problems, the danger of syncretism can easily undermine true Christian living.

Kenyans, when confronted with traditional issues, are often not sufficiently grounded in biblical teachings to know how to deal with the traditional beliefs. It is important for the church leadership to guide church members in how to live their lives according to biblical teachings so that they can fully experience the renewing power of the gospel. The Adventist Church must openly discuss these African traditional beliefs and give biblical responses to the problems that they pose.

Justification of Dissertation

The continued practice of African traditional beliefs alongside Adventist beliefs urgently needs to be addressed. If the Adventist church members would live out their life according to biblical principles they would truly become the salt and light in Kenyan society (Matt 5:13-13). When church members fail to follow biblical teachings and opt for traditional beliefs they become enemies of the gospel. The problem of syncretism has weakened the Adventist message in Kenya and has contributed to a church that has compromised its calling.

Purpose of Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to develop Adventist principles in how to deal as a Christian with African traditional issues in Kenya. I hope local church pastors and elders will use these principles to empower church members to know how to deal with the problems that African traditional beliefs pose.

Definition of Terms

A number of anthropological as well as African traditional terms will be used throughout this dissertation. The following definitions should be helpful to the uninitiated reader:

Ancestral Veneration: A term used with reference to ancestral worship. In this dissertation, veneration means respect given in remembrance of the dead.

Tradition: The doctrines, knowledge, practices, and customs passed down from one generation to another.

Traditional: The emphasis about the acts of tradition.

Belief: Something that is trusted or believed.

African Traditional: Used in this dissertation to refer to indigenous cultural practices that has been and is still practiced in Kenyan society. The term "traditional" is used in the sense of cultural, and not as a way of looking at an issue.

Magic: The art which seemingly controls natural events and forces by means of supernatural agencies.

Magician: A person who is skilled in magic and performs magic.

Traditional Medicine: Refers to African medicine made from herbs and other natural remedies but not subject to the rigorous scientific laboratory process as is the case with Western medicine. People turn to traditional medicine when prayer and Western medicine fails to produce a solution. Cases like demonization, mental illness, and barrenness are believed to be more readily solved by traditional medicine.

Traditionalists: Refers to people, Christians included, who advocate, uphold, and fight to preserve cultural practices.

Contextualization: A process to reconstruct the gospel approaches so that it ignites a new thought process in the minds of the local people.

*Custom***:** An acceptable practice of a community or people, the usual manner of doing something.

*Customary***:** According to or based on a custom or established usage.

Customary Laws: Refers to rules and regulations that govern Kenyan indigenous people. Each indigenous ethnic group has its customary laws. Customary laws are generally oral in nature—not written. Some traditional laws carry elements of religion, while some are just there to maintain the norms within a people group.

Culture: The act of developing intellectual ability with education, a form of civilization, particularly the beliefs, arts, and customs.

Some terms used are specific to Kenya. Usually they are Luo terms.

Luo: A tribal people group in Kenya. The researcher was born and raised among the Luo tribe. The majority of Adventists in Kenya are 'Luos' (plural of Luo). Some local terms used in this paper are borrowed from the Luo vernacular language.

Chira: A term referring to a curse people believe befalls a person when he acts against traditional norms. According to the traditional way of thinking, *chira* can only be cured by traditional medicine.

Nyasaye: A term for the God of heaven—the creator.

Obong'o Nyakalaga: A term for the God of heaven.

Mungu: A Kiswahili word for the God of heaven, but used by many tribes in Kenya.

Jachien: A term for evil spirit.

Jochiende: A Luo word for evil spirits (plural of *Jachien*).

Ajuoga: A traditional witchdoctor.

Tero Dhako: A Luo term for wife inheritance.

Janawi: A person with powers to inflict harm on others. He/she could be acting out of his/her designs or paid by someone else to do so.

Jachola: A woman or man who is participating in a death ritual after losing a spouse or child.

Manyasi: A Luo term for traditional medicine to cure illnesses caused by cultural deviance (*chira*).

Limitation of Dissertation

This dissertation is not an exhaustive study of all African traditional issues and does not claim to be original work. The researcher seeks to make a contribution on topics that many Adventist members have a lot of problems with. He looks at the problem from a Kenyan, but more from a Luo perspective.

Methodology

This dissertation is an interdisciplinary study employing anthropology, theology, and missiology. As an anthropological study, this dissertation seeks to discover reasons why people continue to practice African traditional beliefs such as death and funeral rituals, widowhood and wife inheritance, witchcraft and magic, and demonization.

For the purposes of this dissertation the author conducted some anthropological surveys in Kenya. I conducted interviews with one hundred church members in Kenya. Fifty members were drawn from urban churches, while the remainder was drawn from rural churches.

Biblical responses will be developed to provide answers to church members in how to deal with their cultural beliefs from a biblical perspective.

A missiological critical evaluation of traditional beliefs and practices in the light of biblical truth will be developed. Such tools are needed to give Adventist church members the confidence to live pure lives in a confusing society. In addition to the initial field research, some information was researched from journals, books, magazines, and unpublished papers and dissertations found in the library at Andrews University.

Outline of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction and addresses the statement of the problem, justification, purpose, definition of terms (including Kenyan local terms), limitation, and methodology of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 deals with my personal, spiritual, and theological basis for ministry. It presents a picture about my biographical background, God's providential leading, early ministry, and the development of a passion for ministry. The chapter looks into my present ministry situations, personal and spiritual needs, and goals. My theological understanding for ministry, church, and ministry concludes the chapter.

Chapter 3 gives a brief historical, social, cultural, and religious analysis of Kenya. It describes Kenyan peoples' worldview, folk religions, African funeral rituals, widowhood and wife inheritance, witchcraft and magic, and demonization.

Chapter 4 deals with biblical responses to African traditional beliefs of death rituals, witchcraft and magic, widowhood and wife inheritance, and demonization. An analysis of death rituals in both the Old and New Testament is presented. A textual

analysis of Gen 2:7, 2:21-22 is presented to respond to the African belief that the dead are not dead.

Chapter 5 deals with suggested Adventist principles in how to deal with African traditional issues in Kenya. The principles will help pastors and elders educate their church members to deal with problems those traditional beliefs pose. The principles will empower church members to deal with African traditional beliefs effectively.

Chapter 6 includes a summary, conclusion, and the researcher's recommendations. This dissertation primarily seeks to build a framework from which church members are empowered to deal with African traditional beliefs. It is hoped this paper will help Adventist church members embrace biblical teachings and evangelize the Kenyan people more effectively with the Adventist message.

CHAPTER 2

PERSONAL, SPIRITUAL, AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter is divided into five major parts: (1) personal profile, (2) personal and spiritual needs and goals, (3) theological understanding of ministry, (4) church and ministry understanding, and (5) conclusion. The chapter also deals with my own personal passion for ministry.

Self-knowledge is an essential tool as humans aspire to serve God. People are shaped by their history, temperament, gifts, culture, experience, and family of origin. Who they are shapes their ministry, and forms the core upon which ministry evolves. This is more than mere formation of knowledge.

Ministry is more than theological, but requires practice. There is need to develop "Practical Theology," which brings a child of God to a point where one really longs to discover God's presence in the small space of one's personal life.[1] Such theology will lead a preacher to touch people with the love of Christ and will lead to change. Don Browning says practical theology must always be in touch with a person's inner experience. Any theology that cannot respond to the questions, "What should we do?" and "How should we live?" operates only within the confines of the outer person.

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[1]Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 12.

Browning describes five levels that bring transformation through strategic practical theology: (1) visional: a new or amended understanding of a person or community, (2) obligational: a new integration of old traditions and practices, (3) tendency-need: a more explicit way to allow people to deal with their needs in a conscious and intentional way, (4) environmental-social: a transformation of the community or the environment to more intentionally reflect theological convictions, and (5) rules and roles: concrete patterns of living are changed.[2]

Jesus wanted the disciples to be with Him (Mark 3:13-16, cf Acts 4:13). Ministry cannot be done without power and true power arises from being with Jesus. No ministry will yield power until one is with Jesus. All ministry arises from that point. When one has been with Jesus, even one's enemies can tell. To be with Jesus makes beliefs become conviction, leads to change, and spiritual exercises. Being with Jesus calls for integration of personal and community work.

Personal Profile

Brief History

I was born in Kenya in Eastern Africa. My grandparents were non-Christians. During that time, African traditional religions were practiced and this formed their worldview. My father and mother were raised under the influence of the traditional religion.

After the Adventist missionaries arrived in Kenya in 1906, my parents were converted and baptized into the Adventist Christian church. Although my parents did

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[2]Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991), 105-108.

not have much education, my father was able to read and write. He worked for many years in the post-colonial government as a veterinary technician. My parents later became good Adventist Christians. I was born and raised in this Adventist home. During my early years many of the church activities I attended did not help me gain a deep spiritual experience as I was only attending church to please my parents.

Providential Leading

After I finished high school and college, I began to ask myself the question, "Am I really sure Jesus Christ is my personal Savior?" This question bothered me. I resolved in my heart to be a committed church member. In 1978, I started attending church regularly. I decided to be faithful to God in returning tithe and offerings. Later on, I developed interest in reading Ellen G. White's books. The more I read them, the more I sensed my unworthiness. I was convinced that my life, as a sinner, needed God's forgiveness.

Early Ministry

Preaching of the gospel and the desire to witness started to burn in my heart around 1978. This was after my baptism in the same year. The local church recognized the gift of service in my new found life. It came as a surprise when I was nominated to serve as a deacon (1980-1982). In 1984, I was nominated as a church elder, and later head-elder (1996-1998). I had the privilege to serve in other capacities such as lay-activities and evangelism leader, hospital and home visitation leader, Sabbath School superintendent, and stewardship leader.

Development of Passion for Ministry

After I got married in 1982, my wife became my greatest source of encouragement and supporter in ministry. She persistently urged me to consider full-time ministry. Many other people also urged me to consider joining full time gospel ministry. I made a decision in 1998 to resign my electrical engineering profession to begin ministerial training. After completing my studies at the Adventist University of Eastern Africa, Kenya, I came to Andrews University in 2002 to pursue a Master of Divinity degree. I graduated in May 2005.

In the last semester of my studies, the cruel hand of death took away my beloved wife. She died from an automobile accident on November 8, 2004. At the time of writing this dissertation, my wife's faith and our rich shared life of commitment to God has been an inspiration, and a source of strength to me. When Jesus sounds the trumpet, I hope to meet my wife. I also hope to meet my parents who are also dead.

Temperament

Church professionals need to know what character types they are. The more they understand themselves, the more competent they will become in doing ministry. The great variety of types within any church system requires differing approaches to ministry.

Type Characteristics

The most widely used method of determining type characteristics is the Myers-

Briggs Type Indicator test (MBTI).[3] The categories of type find their roots in the writings

of the late Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist. However, it was the mother and daughter team

of Catherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers who put Jung's typology into a useful

instrument. Their research has produced vast amounts of information on the behavior and

attitudes of the types of people in a wide variety of settings. The categories of types that

have been used by them are shown in table 1.[4]

TABLE 1

PERSONALITY TYPES INDICATORS

E—Extraversion	I—Introversion
S—Sensing	N—intuition
T—Thinking	F—Feeling
J—Judging	P—Perceiving

Type Descriptions

I took the Briggs Myers Typology Test in order to discover my own type.

Knowledge of one's type is important in ministry because it helps people to know how to

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[3]MBTI and Myers-Briggs, *Type Indicator* are registered trademarks of consulting Psychological Press, Palo Alto, CA.

[4]Roy M. Oswald and Otto Kroeger, *Personality Type and Religious Leadership* (Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1988), 14.

13

relate with others. My type has the combination of INFJ, with the following percentages: Introverted at 33%, Intuitive at 38 %, Feeling at 12%, and Judging at 78%. The qualitative analysis of this means that I am a (1) moderately expressed introvert, (2) have a moderately expressed intuitive personality, (3) slightly expressed feelings, and (4) have a very expressed judging personality.

Let me describe each element of my personality type:

Introvert

I prefer to relate more to the inner world of ideas, concepts, and feelings. I like to ask questions such as, How does what is going on out there relate to me? Energy expended relating to the outer world returns when I am alone and can look inside at myself.

Feeling

With this preference I am comfortable with value-centered decisions. My feeling attribute over thinking makes me stand inside situations to decide what I like and dislike.

Judging

My judging preference identifies me as a person who wants his life ordered, structured, and planned. I like to plan my life and live out my plan.

My INFJ type makes me hold deep convictions about the weightier matters of life. My life gravitates toward roles that are sensitive to the oppressed, downtrodden, and those in distress. I aspire less for personal glory.

Though affable and sympathetic to most, the INFJ type makes one selective about friends. Friendship is a symbiotic bond that transcends mere words. My type contributes to being fluent in language and has an ease in communication. In addition, non-verbal sensitivity enables me to know and be known by others intimately. Writing, counseling,

public service, and even politics are areas where I frequently find interest. Explaining these types of people, Marina Margaret Heiss writes, "INFJs are distinguished by both their complexity of character and the unusual range and depth of their talents. Strongly humanitarian in outlook, INFJs tend to be idealists, and because of their J preference for closure and completion, they are generally doers as well as dreamers. This rare combination of vision and practicality often results in INFJs taking a disproportionate amount of responsibility in the various causes to which so many of them seem to be drawn."[5]

My type contributes to being deeply concerned about relations with individuals as well as the state of humanity at large. I am, in fact, sometimes mistaken for an extrovert because I appear so outgoing and so genuinely interested in people. I am the type who can be emotionally intimate and fulfilled with just a chosen few from among my long-term friends, family, or "soul mates."

My INFJ personality has contributed to my ability to motivate people for evangelism. Members have seen me mingle and work with them as a fellow servant and not their boss. Giving people an opportunity to contribute their ideas makes them happy and gives them the feeling that they can contribute to ministry.

The other most important contributing factor of this personality type is my empathetic ability. My 'F' element allows me to put myself in the position of other people. This helps me to reach people where they are, for I also possess a strong personal charisma which is a virtue that works to promote love and unity.

As an INFJ, I enjoy teaching and religious leadership. Psychology and counseling are other areas I enjoy. Effectiveness in counseling is essential for successful ministry. A

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[5]Marina Margaret Heiss, *www.typelogic.com* (profile: INTJ, revised: February 27, 2005, accessed April 25, 2007).

minister needs to provide counseling almost on a daily basis. My INFJ personality type allows me to help human beings and strengthen their spiritual connection with God.

After taking the personality test, I have discovered some of my weaknesses. One is the expectation of others to do things my way. There is a need to eliminate this shortfall, for it promotes selfishness and blocks people from bringing in their ideas which also could be useful for the good of the church. Success in ministry happens when all believers share ideas and act as ministers. The pastor should demonstrate a team spirit which is important for successful ministry.

Spiritual Giftedness

It is always important for leaders to be aware of the spiritual gifts they have. When people are aware of their gifts they can minister more effecively. In this pursuit, I took a spiritual giftedness inventory in order to discover my particular gifts.[6]

The result of that inventory shows that my spiritual gifts, in the order of their strength, are shepherding, miracles, evangelism, and healing. Dan Dick and Barbara Miller, the authors of the test, describe the gifts in the following way: "*Shepherding*—the gift of guidance. Shepherds nurture others in the Christian faith and provide a mentoring relationship to those who are new to the faith.

Displaying an unusual spiritual maturity, "Shepherds share from their experience and learn to facilitate the spiritual growth and development of others. Shepherds take individuals under their care and walk with them on their spiritual journeys. Many

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[6]Dan R. Dick and Barbara Miller, *Equipped for Every Good Work: Building a Gifts Based Church* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2003), 42.

shepherds provide spiritual direction and guidance to a wide variety of believers."[7] My shepherding gift is essential to providing mentoring relationships with church members when dealing with African traditional issues. In this endeavor, I need to walk with church members on their spiritual journeys. When leaders offer good spiritual direction and guidance, maturing Christians will be created. This will ultimately lead to church growth.

"*Miracles*—this is the gift of an ability to operate at a spiritual level that recognizes the miraculous work of God in the world. Miracle workers invoke God's power to accomplish that which appears impossible or impractical by worldly standards. Miracle workers remind people of the extraordinary nature of the ordinary world, thereby increasing faithfulness and trust in God. Miracle workers pray for God to work in the lives of others, and they feel no sense of surprise when their prayers are answered."[8]

Dealing with African traditional beliefs requires leaders gifted with the power of miracles. Now that I am aware of this gift, I will use it at opportune times to invoke God's power to help church members who still hold to the belief that there are problems that can only be fixed through African traditional means. Such members believe that when prayers fails they need to turn to African traditional medicine for answers.

Most Seventh-day Adventist members in Kenya, among many other reasons, are limited in possessing the power of performing miracles because of traditional beliefs practiced alongside biblical teachings (syncretism). This condition amounts to doubt. Spiritual power is directly proportional to the amount of faith one has in God.

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

Jesus clarified the point through dialogue with a man who had a son with a mute spirit. The disciples could not help the man's son (Mark 9:18). Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23). It is important to take God at his word—it amounts to faith. Faith can move mountains. Faith is the pathway through which the Holy Spirit moves to empower us to do miracles.

"Evangelism—the ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who have not heard it before or with those who have not yet made a decision for Christ. This gift is manifested in both one-on-one situations and in group settings, both large and small. Evangelism is an intimate relationship with another person or persons that requires the sharing of personal faith experience and a call for a response of faith to God."[9]

Evangelism is what the Church is called to do. The command given the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ is a holy one that calls for total surrender. People who claim the Lordship of Jesus are his true followers when they are involved in what the Lord was doing—reaching lost souls with the gospel.

Holding to traditional beliefs is an indicator of a people who are yet to discover the true meaning of salvation. Frederick Buechner reminds people that God's will resides at the meeting place of our deep passion and deep hunger.[10] The church is most effective when it attends to the needs, identity, and call of individuals, then helps link them together in community and service with one another. But before one embarks on community and service, one must truly be born of water and the Spirit, or else the labor is in vain.

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[9]Ibid., 39.

[10]Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC,* rev ed. (San Fransisco, CA: HarperOne, 1993), 119.

As Jesus commanded his disciples so he commands us. Jesus said, "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19). This gospel was to be preached until the end of the age. Because I have conviction in evangelism, I feel that it is important to labor so that church members are informed and guided to be free from the yokes of old traditional beliefs. When this is achieved, members become effective—thus reproducing themselves for rapid church growth.

Dick and Miller suggest that "the gift of healing is God's healing power in the lives of his people. Physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological healing are all means that the gift is manifested. Healing is conducted through prayers, and people should understand that it is God doing his work and not the human agent."[11]

The people of God who are called by his name have been appointed that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sickness and to cast out demons (Mark 3:14). This gift is one that the Lord has given me as an important tool to be used to demonstrate God's power over traditional methods of seeking healing. Use of African traditional methods and prayers to God at the same time is like a kingdom divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand (Mark 3:24). Such actions inhibit the influence of the power of the Holy Spirit that is necessary for healing.

Present Ministry Challenges in Kenya

The present ministry situation in Kenya calls for spiritual leaders to understand the matters of the heart, particularly their own if they are to be effective. The religious

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[11]Dick and Miller, 40.

leader will succeed when he or she has a heart for the job. As much as spiritual leaders

strive to help others maintain their hearts, they must not neglect their own spiritual needs.

The work of ministry is quite demanding. It calls upon leaders and church

members to discern God in their own lives. Church members must be guided to shape

their hearts to embrace biblical teachings and do evangelism to which they are called. For

a leader to help church members find their hearts, the leader must shape his or her heart

first. Reggie McNeal say the leader finds his or her heart when he/she maintains an

interactive partnership with God. In this pursuit, McNeal identified the following issues

that God uses to shape leaders:

1. *Culture*—the times and the environment in which a leader is raised.

2. *Call*—the leader's personal call by God to mission.

3. *Community*—the people who shape and sustain the leader.

4. *Communion*—considers the leader's personal relationship with God.

5. *Conflict*—the leader's engagement of destructive forces in life and ministry.

6. *Commonplace*—the daily choices of living.[12]

It appears that the spiritual leaders in Kenya have not understood the times and

environment in which they work. Many times it seems leaders operate as if they have

forgotten their calling. The Church is more interested in maintaining numbers and

receiving money than shaping spiritual people. Leaders are the avenue upon which God

shares his heart with his people.

The spiritual formation in a leader's life easily extends to his or her followers and

even beyond the lifetime. This was evidenced in the lives of Moses, David, Paul, and

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[12]Reggie McNeal, *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Pub., 2000), xii.

Jesus. Spiritual leaders need to develop critical self understanding in order to fulfill their divine assignment. The present ministry situation in Kenya calls upon leaders to strengthen church members so that their spirituality focuses on heart-shaping, self-understanding, and interactive partnership with God. Heart shaping is about ordering one's life in light of biblical teachings rather than allegiance to traditional beliefs. There is also a need for church members to have a sense of destiny, which is paramount for one to become a mature Christian.

People who profess Christianity and yet are still pulled back by traditional beliefs cannot have a clear sense of destiny. The journey of faith calls for community, as Moses formed community with Miriam and Aaron. Pastors and elders need to form community with one another. This calls for a sense of one mind between leaders. The people of God must have a sense of being set apart by God. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9).

Having an understanding of being set apart helps to signal part of the heart-shaping activity which is necessary for a transformation of believers. When God's people hold to traditional beliefs, it is a clear indicator of their shortfall in transformation of the heart.

Spiritual warfare maturity begins when leaders and members worry more for God's reputation than their own reputation. God does not expect those who are called by his name to depend on traditional beliefs. Rather, God wishes his people to rely on him. One's relationship with Jesus is lived out in a society in conformity with biblical teachings. Where necessary, God's children must learn to say NO to traditional beliefs. This is part of the maturing process of ordering one's life to hear the voice of God.

The most important information that people need is self understanding. It begins and ends with God, but it takes time and reflection. It is important for a church leader to understand the culture of the people, for it represents their worldview and how they perceive God. People's traditional beliefs form their culture. However, culture also serves God's purposes. He uses it to shape the hearts of spiritual leaders.

As it was in the life of Paul, his restoration of spiritual sight came only after a vision of Christ began to come into focus. Until that happened, there was only misguided zeal without real knowledge of Christ. This seems to be the situation with most Adventist Christians in Kenya. Change ought to take place in people's lives as a clear mark of departure from the old traditional values and there should be new life in Christ.

During times when one is faced with a choice between traditional beliefs and biblical teachings, the call given a believer ought to serve as one's internal navigation system. This is made possible as people internalize the promise of hope about the kingdom of God. A prerequisite to this internalized hope is a new birth experience in Jesus Christ. When the hope about God's kingdom is grasped, people voluntarily do away with the old traditional values. Through this experience, God reveals himself to people.

People whom God has called need spiritual power to walk in his ways. This walk, however, may be gradual as in the case of the disciples. The capacity to walk with God is not in one's power or wisdom, but is dependent on spiritual power (Acts 1:8). A Christian journey without spiritual power is like an automobile without gas—it cannot move. Deficiency in this power is the reason church members continue walking in the old traditional beliefs. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the

things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, set their minds on the things of the Spirit (Rom 8:5).

When conflicts come because of traditional beliefs, the goal should not be merely to survive conflict but to be conquerors. Christians need spiritual well-being. However, biblical well-being is not measured in terms of personal well-being, but in terms of *shalom*. This is translated as completeness, soundness, peace, well-being, health, prosperity, and salvation. It begins when one is reconciled to God and one's enemies. Its fruits are physical, psychological, and social health.[13]

Personal and Spiritual Needs and Goals

Personal and Social Needs

Pastors in Kenya work under what Richard Swenson, in his book *Margin* calls "Marginless Living." The condition of modern day living is at the margin. Marginless means having no time or ability to accomplish tasks.[14]

I was not able to effectively shepherd the flock for various reasons. Issues such as a lack of a computer, transportation, adequate training, and poor remuneration, are just a few of the problems I faced. Many pastors in Kenya face these challenges.

I would say pastors and a large number of church members in Kenya fall within the marginless category. Since the poverty level is high, it is putting church members and ministers with marginless living standards. When people struggle to survive they often turn to diviners, witchcraft, and magic to overcome the challenges of life.

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[13]Paul G. Hiebert, R. Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 164.

[14]Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992), 14-15.

Ministers who struggle to survive often do not have the resources to be good shepherds. One of my needs was to obtain missiological training. At the completion of this project I hope to be equipped with knowledge necessary to strengthen Adventist members to handle conflicts that arise between African traditional beliefs and biblical teachings. With theological and missiological knowledge it is easier to plan a ministry that can minister to the conditions of the people.

The social and spiritual life of a pastor is also an aspect to consider. It is reasonable to say that a pastor's economic status can enhance his social life; however, it is important to note that a good social life is not dependent only with economic ability. But a good social life contributes to a pastor's productivity. When a pastor is happy and comfortable he or she is more likely to nurture the flock well. Church members who are spiritually well nourished are likely to rise above traditional beliefs. Because of a marginal life, pastors put less time in serving the members causing spiritual malnourishment in their lives. Marginal living is a factor that has caused people to continue their old traditional beliefs even after they become Christians.

People who are deeply rooted in culture and traditional beliefs need spiritual leaders that understand the dynamics of missiology. The situation in Kenya puts pastors in many dilemmas, none more difficult than those that deal with the relationship of the gospel to human cultures.[15]

There is a need to understand people in their cultural settings. Pastors in Kenya should not only have a solid understanding of the Scriptures, but also a deeper

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[15]Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids; MI: Baker Books, 1985), 29.

knowledge of the people they serve.[16] Kenyan Adventist pastors need anthropological

knowledge in order to help them understand that the process of conversion not only deals

with biblical knowledge, but also includes social change that should occur when people

become Christians. When social change takes place, African traditional beliefs will be a

thing of the past. Emphasis on social change is necessary because people are social

beings, influenced by the dynamics of their social environments.

<div align="center">Spiritual Needs and Biblical Integrity</div>

Pastors may be involved in many church activities—preaching, teaching, care

giving, healing, and development, but people must grasp the essence of Christianity. The

essence of Christianity is a genuine change of heart and ordering one's life after

principles of biblical teachings. One of my spiritual needs has been to walk a journey of

faith free from entanglement of African traditional beliefs. I may profess genuine

Christianity, but it is always a challenge to live among people who cherish traditional

beliefs and fail to be dragged down by their practices. It necessitates a bold resolution

on the part of a leader to walk with Jesus and follow biblical teachings at all cost.

There is an urgent need for theological and misssiological training for pastors.

This enhances the pastor's spirituality and puts him or her at an advantaged position to

understand the dynamics of serving people.

Theological and missiological knowledge are important tools a minister needs to

help guide church members, manage conflicts, and understand traditional beliefs. I was

deficient in theological and missiological training. The knowledge gained from this

project will prepare me to help Adventists in Kenya handle challenges arising from

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[16]Ibid., 10.

African traditional issues. The Adventist Church in Kenya should offer more theological and missiological training for its ministers. Currently, the Church requires an undergraduate degree for pastoral employment, but the majority of the pastors still do not have a college degree.

Another point of concern is the integrity of the church members. Integrity is lacking. One reason contributing to this state is the use of traditional methods to seek wealth, education, and power. Christians have failed to understand that progress is not only measured in terms of wealth, education, and power, but also by one's character. Most Kenyans aspire for wealth, education, and power. These things are not bad in themselves, but Kenyan Adventists need to seek them through virtue, integrity, and commitment to biblical standards.

William Wilberforce, who served in Parliament for forty-five years, was universally respected not because of his long service, but because of his integrity. Wilberforce said: "Progress could be measured by the fear and love of God and of Christ, love, kindness, and meekness toward our fellow men, indifference to the possessions and events of this life compared with our concern about eternity, self-denial and humility."[17]

Like Wilberforce, Christians living with integrity will influence their societies. Integrity is lacking because Christians have failed to live according to biblical teachings. Church leaders should promote integrity in the Church. Traditional beliefs drag people away from the practice of integrity. Church members should be given biblical lessons addressing cultural and traditional beliefs to empower the people to handle African traditional issues independently.

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[17]William Wilberforce, *Real Christianity: Contrasted with the Prevailing Religious System* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1982), 91.

Another way that traditional beliefs have robbed Kenyan Adventists of integrity is that people seek wealth, education, and power through evil means such as consulting magicians to help them achieve their objectives. It matters how a Christian achieves an end. Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou observe: "Church members must understand that Christianity is about truth and righteousness, not only in the end it seeks, but also the means it uses to achieve those ends. The medium is an essential part of the biblical message."[18] People need to seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness first, and all these things shall be added unto them (Matt 6:33). To seek the kingdom means walking with God and surrendering every part of a person's life to him.

Stress is another concern that cannot be ignored. The economic, social, and political situation prevailing in Kenya is stressful as it affects the majority of the population. Living with stress may cause one's spirituality to dwindle. When people face challenging situations such as sickness, lack of a job, death, economic hardship, and many other dilemas they are bound to be stressed. During such times people are tempted to use African traditional methods to solve their problems. Challenging situations may cause people to walk back and forth between traditional beliefs and biblical methods such as prayer. Circumstances challenging one's faith affect pastors and laity alike.

There are two high ranking stressors in Kenya today—poverty and death. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) related deaths are prevalent. More discussion on poverty and AIDS in Kenya is addressed in chapter 3.

According to Thomas Holmes and M. Masusu the scales of stress run from "no stress" to a maximum of 100 points for the death of a spouse, 73 points for divorce, and

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[18]Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou, 11.

63 points for death of a close family member.[19] The Church must develop structures to support its members to cope with stress. It must be remembered that stress is cumulative and persists long after the events that caused it have passed. Lack of long term support by the Church makes people vunerable to traditional beliefs as a way of managing their situation.

Talking from a personal experience, when I lost my spouse in 2004, I realized the importance of spiritual and material support one needs during high stressful moments. The support given me was the anchor that helped me continue the journey of faith without looking back. Everybody needs to be supported during hard times. For cases of grief, the church should have a program that runs for a period of one or two years.

People need to understand life is a struggle and a journey. My own experience with stress taught me the importance of living by faith. It is the Lord who takes care of our problems. Christians need to learn that only prayer and faith in God can solve their problems. Our Father in heaven is able to provide for our needs according to his riches in glory. My experience confirms that those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength—they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall walk and not faint (Isa 40:31). Trusting the Lord in all situations has been the anchor of my faith. When people become God's children their motto should be forward ever, backward never. The Lord has been my meditation—for the Lord rewards faithfulness.

Lack of or minimal support for people facing stress has caused many Adventists to wander away from their Christian faith and end up in African traditional belief

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[19]Thomas H. Holmes and M. Masusu, "Life Change and Illness Susceptibility," in *Stressful Life Events: Their Nature and Effects*, ed. Barbara S. Dohrenwend and Bruce P. Dohrenwend (New York: Wiley, 1974), 42-72.

practices as they seek comfort and relief. It is my goal and recommendation that every Church form a "spiritual comfort committee" tasked specifically to minister to members going through difficult moments. The committee composition may include elders, deacons, the dorcas group, and deaconesses. Each church may choose the committee according to their needs.

Theological Understanding of Ministry

It is important for anyone who would like to take a journey to understand what needs to be put in place before embarking on the journey. One must know the destination, the means, cost, and time frame. From a theological point of view, the destination for a believer is the kingdom of God. The means is Jesus Christ. The cost is a new birth, and the time frame is dying daily until he comes.

This description would be a good basis for a theological understanding of ministry. It calls for doing analysis on the new birth concept as found in the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus.[20] The new birth is the prerequisite for entering the kingdom of God.

Concept of New Birth

Nicodemus had gone to Jesus by night to ask him what he could do in order to enter the Kingdom of God, "Jesus answered and said to him, Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

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[20]Dialogue between Nicodemus, a man of the Pharisees who came to Jesus by night as recorded in the epistle of John chapter 3.

Jesus' statement "I say to you" (*lego*) acted as an eye opener to Nicodemus. It was an indicative statement about God's Kingdom of which Nicodemus had desired. Nicodemus had not known what it takes to be a candidate for the Kingdom of God.

Jesus said to Nicodemus unless one is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God. "Unless or if" is a conditional participle which was used by Jesus as a qualified negation. Nicodemus's inquiry was concerned about entering the Kingdom of God. Jesus did not hesitate to point out to him the prerequisite. He needed to be born of the Father. He had to be born from above, or from the beginning as a prerequisite. New birth is the first and major step to become a child of God.

When Jesus said a man must be born again, he meant all human beings. The Greek word for man is *anthropos*, which basically refers to man as a class. It is a generic word. So what Jesus said to Nicodemus, an individual man, is said of all people. This is one of the many universalizations of the Gospel of John. It is not only that salvation is for "whosoever," but it is also true that all people are in need of the birth from above (Rom 3:23).[21]

John sets forth a vivid contrast between the old order with all of its inadequacies, misunderstandings, and failures, and the new order that insures abundance of life that has the true and living God as its source.[22] There must be a new kind of life if one is even to see God's presence, his plan, and purpose for all people. On the new birth experience, B. F. Wescott says: "Without this new birth—this introduction into a vital connexion with a new order of being, with a corresponding endowment of faculties—no man can

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[21]"Born Again," *Beacon Bible Commentary*, ed. Joseph H. Mayfield (Kansas, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), 7:52.

[22]Ibid., 7:53.

see—can outwardly apprehend the kingdom of God. Our natural powers cannot realize that which is essentially spiritual. A new vision is required for the objects of a new order."[23]

Religion Vs. Encounter with Jesus

The story of Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus is of particular significance for those who come to Jesus "by night," or from the darkness of sin. Nicodemus's story represents sinners who are coming to Jesus. It could also include devout people, who despite their new life in Christ still struggle with old lifestyles and wander away from the Lord. Nicodemus's story is our example about the great mystery of salvation found in Jesus. Christianity is a religion that invites people to come to Jesus so that they are forgiven of their sins. Adventist Christians must turn away from the lifestyle of the Pharisees who only professed religion but lacked the change in character and spiritual regeneration which is the essence of Christianity.[24]

Seventh-day Adventist traditionalists in Kenya may, like the Pharisees in Jesus' time, exemplify reverence for God and the Scriptures, personal rectitude, disciplined devotion, and intellectual acumen. Such people are seen in society as pillars of Adventism. But they still experience darkness in their lives and often, like Nicodemus, they are afraid to let go of African traditional beliefs.[25] The only thing that will save people from their sin is to be born again—born from above. People are not to mix

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[23]Brook F. Wescott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: John Murray, 1908), 48.

[24]Ibid., 55.

[25]Lamar Williamson, Jr., *Preaching the Gospel of John: Proclaiming the Living Word* (Louisville, KY: Westminister John Knox Press, 2004), 39.

traditional beliefs and biblical teachings, and are not to serve two masters.

Before one accepts Christ, the person is spiritually dead. New birth, in other words, is recreation. It is spiritual healing. It causes re-orientation of the mind. It calls for a moving away from the old worldview into a new one. New birth ushers in a new life experience, guided by biblical teachings. When this happens, repugnant traditional beliefs will die.

The Church needs to address African traditional issues at the point when people enroll in a baptismal class to help new believers understand biblical principles in regards to African traditional beliefs. The Church has been called by Jesus to be in the world but not of the world. The key role of the Church is to make disciples. Making disciples was started with Jesus. He mandated his disciples to continue the work until the end of time. Making disciples, in other words, is Jesus reproducing himself through the ministry of those who have accepted him and are involved.

Ministry is dependent on who the people are and what they believe. Attaining a new birth promises the infilling of the Spirit. When people become Spirit filled they count all things, traditional beliefs included, as loss in order to gain the kingdom of God. Such will not be ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. In doing so, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written the just shall live by faith (Rom 1:16-17). People's spirituality becomes practical when they join with the divine partner in their walk. Spirituality should stimulate reflection and inspire people to recognize the living Wword as happened to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-15; 30, 31). The Church must make it clear to its members that to be "born of water and of the Spirit" is equivalent to being "born again," that is "from above."

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary says, "Those who are born from above have God as their Father and resemble him in character. Hence forth, they aspire, by the grace of Christ, to live above sin and do not yield their wills to commit sin"[26] (1 John 3:9; 5:18, cf. John 8:39, 44; Rom 6:12-16). When the new birth happens people will no longer yield their wills to traditional beliefs. They will aspire to be guided by biblical principles as the standard to live by

Many times people believe that the great difficulty in life is to know the right thing to do. Sometimes it is. At times, however, the difficult thing is simply having the inner resources to do what one believes is right. Seventh-day Adventists in Kenya experience a conflict between biblical teachings and the pressure to follow African traditional beliefs. This dilemma can only be overcome by a new birth and the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling God's people (Acts 1:8).

Church and Ministry Understanding

Developing a Biblically Shaped Worldview

How does the Church develop a ministry that helps church members deal with the conflict between African traditional beliefs and Adventist beliefs in Kenya? First of all the church needs to help people develop a biblically shaped worldview. To achieve this objective, a clear understanding of the church and its mission is paramount. Christians must understand the mission of the church as a continuation of Christ's earthly ministry (John 14:12). As it was Jesus' purpose to redeem men's souls so the church is called (Matt 18:11).

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[26]"Born Again," *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association; rev. 1980), 5: 928.

The church is the body of Jesus Christ on earth. Its objective is to heal people from their sin. Ministry is about making disciples and healing them spiritually (Matt 28:19). It is to move people back to God (Col 1:13-14). As healing is a process, so is salvation which is an event and a process—that includes past, present and future.[27] The concept of salvation is that every second you live, you must believe. But God's people must first be saved before they can minister to heal others, for the blind cannot lead a blind (Matt 15:14). The church is the sign and evidence of the kingdom of God on earth. It is made up of communities of faith that worship, fellowship together, and minister to one another's needs.

The church is also a mission community. It exists to bring to a lost world the message of God's salvation, and to invite all into his kingdom (Matt 28:19, cf. 4:19). Adventists must inculcate a culture of mission and understand that mission is its essence. Without mission the church is not the church.[28] Church members are missionaries in their own village, community, country, and all parts of the world.

As God called the Israelites out of Egypt to be a holy and priestly nation, so are the Adventists (Exod 19:4-6). Every person was called to be a priest of God. As missionaries, church members must give people a message that affects their inner lives. In order for church members to be effective healers Christ must heal them first. Church members must become salt and light of the earth (Matt 5:13-16).

The Christian's fundamental test of truth is the Scripture which reveals God's view of reality—for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for

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[27]Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 329.

[28]Hiebert, 47.

doctrine, reproof, and correction (2 Tim 3:16-17). Adventist pastors in Kenya need to lead the Church in a study of the Scriptures, especially as they relate to the questions of African traditional beliefs. On such occasions as burials, pastors should teach the Christian beliefs about death and the resurrection (Rev 21: 4, cf. 1 Cor 15: 54).

All humans are sinners in need of salvation and reconciliation with God and with one another (Rom 3: 23, cf. Gal 3: 22). This is possible only through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The cross and resurrection are central to salvation (1 Cor 15:21-22). God saves those who turn to him in repentance and seek his salvation. This turning, or conversion, involves a change of fundamental allegiance that makes Christ Lord in all areas of the believers' lives (Rom 8:1-8). Conversion leads to a life of discipleship that transforms all areas of human life.[29]

It is important that people understand the authority of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16). Biblical teaching concerning creation, the fall, redemption, and the restoration of God's reign in eternity is essential to help the Christian grasp the history and mission of the church. The grasp of the mission of the church goes a long way to help church members develop a new worldview about the kingdom of God. This helps people move from traditional beliefs to biblical beliefs, for Christians were chosen by Christ to go and bear fruit (John 15:16).

Eugene Peterson writes about the importance of the gospel: "This is the gospel focus: *you* are the man; *you* are the woman. The gospel is never about everybody else; it is always about you, about me. The gospel is never truth in general; it is always a truth in

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[29]Ibid., 27.

specific. The gospel is never a commentary on ideas or culture or conditions; it is always about actual persons, actual pains, actual troubles, actual sin; you, me; who you are and what you have done; who I am and what I have done."[30]

Pastors must lead church members to study Scripture in a way that can help them deal with the problems of African traditional beliefs. One approach is to use an analysis of logic and truths revealed in Scripture itself. This is where hermaneutics is useful. It helps people grasp the truth needed to develop a biblically shaped worldview and a biblical understanding of reality.

It is important that people understand that ministry is about spiritual healing. Being a Christian is much more than following doctrines. Jesus came to heal people, not to just give them doctrines to believe in. It is one's heart that indicates where a person is. One cannot give the heart to Jesus while continuing in the old ways. It seems the Church has focused more on doctrinal issues than the person of Jesus Christ. This has somehow contributed to peoples' failure to grasp biblical teachings that people need to discard African traditional beliefs.

<center>Change of Lifestyle Needed</center>

The church's present approach to ministry needs some change. Many church members somehow view spiritual life as a static possession rather than a dynamic and ever-developing growth toward wholeness in the image of Christ. Commenting on what contributes to a change of perception concerning spiritual wholeness, Robert Mulholland says: "When viewed as a static possession, the way to spiritual wholeness is

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[30]Eugene Peterson, *Leap Over a Wall: Earthly Spirituality for Everyday Christians* (San Francisco: HarperSanFransisco, 1997), 185.

seen as the acquisition of information and techniques that enhances our gain of the desired state of spirituality. When this happens, discipleship is perceived as 'my'spiritual life and is worked on by actions that ensure its possession.This view of discipleship leads to endless quest for techniques methods, and programs that we hope will maintain spiritual fulfillment."[31]

Church members should be made to understand that spiritual wholeness is a journey, which according to apostle Paul requires the believer to die daily (1 Cor 15: 31). The way to spiritual wholeness ought to be seen as lying in an increasing faithful response to the One whose purpose shapes our path, the One whose grace redeems people's detours, whose power liberates people from the crippling bondage of African traditional beliefs, and whose presence brings transformation.[32] Church members should be taught to embrace holistic spirituality which is a pilgrimage calling for a deepening response to God's control of one's life and being—counting all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus (Phil 3: 8, cf. Jer 9: 23).

In an attempt for the Church to achieve a change of perception in its members, it is important for the Church to move towards meaningful discipleship. Meaningful discipleship according to Mulholland is fourfold. He states that "spiritual formation emerges as (1) a process (2) of being conformed (3) to the image of Christ (4) for the sake of others."[33] Spiritual formation is, therefore, important if church members are to engage in meaningful discipleship.

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[31]Robert M. Mulholland, Jr., *Invitation to a Journey*: *A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 12.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid., 13.

Loyal church members need spiritual formation to help them conform to the image of Christ. It must be realized that the image of Christ cannot be found in church members whose minds are still oriented towards traditional beliefs rather than to Seventh-day Adventist biblical teachings.

Church members need to grasp the point that ministry works better when it engages corporate and social spirituality altogether. This is an aspect that church members frequently miss as they deal with spiritual formation. Before corporate and social spirituality is attained, personal transformation is needed in one's own life. It is the only foundation on which corporate and social spirituality is built. The church, being a social organization, ought to emphasize personal transformation in order to reduce allegiance to African traditional beliefs.

The journey of personal transformation must begin with church leaders. Personal transformation is allowing Jesus' character to be formed in one's life. In order for church members to embrace this change, church leaders must take the lead. Personal transformation happens best in the context of a reflective lifestyle. As Richard Foster says, "It is important for church leaders to promote disciplines essential for spiritual growth. Such disciplines include: worship, solitude, fasting, prayer, silence, and study."[34]

Adventist pastors in Kenya have not promoted programs that give church members opportunity to practice spiritual disciplines. The much needed disciplines should include solitude, fasting, and silence. Pastors have put more emphasis on the gospel through preaching and lesson study than the other disciplines. This robs the church members of the opportunity for a personal spiritual encounter with God. In this situation,

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[34]Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*: *The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1998), 11.

people often leave the church with their heads full and their hearts empty—a messege heard without effect on the heart.[35]

It must be underscored that on the one hand, most people in Kenya make religious decisions on the basis of personal encounter, emotions, and experience as opposed to proclamation. On the other hand, stressing community spirituality alone leaves people without a gospel that touches their hearts.[36] Adventist pastors in Kenya should promote both community and the personal disciplines for both are vital to religious life.

New life found in Jesus Christ comes by hearing the word of God preached (Rom 10:17). As people accept Christ, new life is ushered into their lives. One who has Jesus as a Savior recognizes the need to do away with the old ways of life (2 Cor 5: 17). Such a person orders his or her life according to the teachings of the Scriptures. As people go through the process of spiritual regeneration ((Rom 8:14-16), it is important that people open their hearts to inhale the *ruach* (spirit of life) of God in order to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.[37]

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Buechner, 119.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS

ANALYSIS OF KENYA

Introduction

This chapter presents a brief historical, social, cultural, and religious analysis of

Kenya. The chapter gives a brief overview of Kenya before and after independence. It

gives the distribution of Kenyan people groups, and touches on some social conditions

like the education system, economy, poverty, and the effect of Acquired Immune

Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Issues such as crime, insecurity, and unemployment are

also discussed followed by a brief cultural and religious analysis.

The content of the chapter will also provide understanding of the background of

African traditional beliefs. Some Kenyan Adventists practice their biblical beliefs on

Sabbath and follow traditional beliefs during the week. This is a situation many church

members are struggling with. This chapter looks at several prominent traditional beliefs

from an African view. Chapter four then addresses these issues from a biblical

perspective.

Before presenting a cultural and religious analysis of Kenya, a brief overview of

the people and country is given, including the people group distribution, population,

language, trade, and politics. Colonialism, including the struggle for independence, is

superficially covered.

Fig. 1. Kenyan Map. *Source*: http//www.kenyaweb
.com

The official name of Kenya is the Republic of Kenya. The area of the country is

582,646 square kilometers with a population of 33,947,100. The capital city is Nairobi.

Independence was achieved on December 12, 1963.

Official languages are English and Kiswahili, but there are forty other

indigenous languages. Religion is 45 percent Protestant, 33 percent Roman Catholic, 10

percent Muslim, 10 percent Traditional beliefs, and 2 percent other. The GDP stands at

US$ 360 per person with an annual growth of 1.6 percent.[1]

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[1]"Religious Distribution" http//www.cbs.gov/statistics/Kenya (accessed May 21,
2007).

The government is a multi-party democracy. The current President of Kenya is His Excellency, the Hon. Mwai Kibaki, M.P, and commander in chief of the armed forces.

Major industries include the small scale manufacturing of consumer goods such as plastic, furniture, beer, batteries, textiles, flour, agricultural processing, oil refining, chemicals, cement, and tourism. Kenya's trading partners are Uganda, Tanzania, UK, Germany, United Arab Emirates, and South Africa.

Historical and Social Analysis

Before Independence

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, written records for the interior of East Africa are very scarce, and much of the history of the people has been gleaned from archeological data and oral history sources. Christopher Ehret points out that when both documents and oral history are lacking, linguistic evidence can often fill the vacuum.[2]

Early Kenyan civilizations trace their roots to the Cushitic-speaking people from northern Africa who moved into the area that is now Kenya around 2000 B.C. Another important point about Kenya's early civilization says that,

> Arab traders began frequenting the Kenya coast around the 1st century A.D. Kenya's proximity to the Arabian Peninsula invited colonization, and Arab and Persian settlements sprouted along the coast by the 8th century. During the first millennium A.D., Nilotic and Bantu peoples moved into the region, and the latter now comprise three-quarters of Kenya's population. Swahili, a Bantu language with many Arabic loan words, developed as a *lingua franca* for trade between the different peoples. Arab dominance on the coast was eclipsed in the 16th century by the arrival of the Portuguese, whose domination gave way to Oman in 1698.[3]

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[2]Christopher Ehret, *Southern Nilotic History: Linguistic Approaches to the Study of the Past* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 200.

[3]"Kenya's Early Civilization," *The Free Encyclopedia*, http//en. Wikipedia. org/ wiki/ History_ of_ Kenya (accessed May 21, 2007).

The United Kingdom established its influence in the 19th century. A means of establishing this influence was through missionaries. Harold Nelson says the first Christian mission was founded on August 25, 1846 near Mombasa by John Krapf and John Rebmann. They were two Swiss missionaries serving with the Anglican Church Missionary Society of England (CMS) who established themselves among the Mijikenda on the coast.[4] Dr. Krapf later translated the Bible to Swahili.[5]

The colonial history of Kenya started when the Imperial German protectorate over the Sultan of Zanzibar's coastal possessions was established in 1885. But it was quickly followed by the arrival of Sir William Mackinnon's British East Africa Company (BEAC) in 1888, just after the company had received a royal charter and concessionary rights to the Kenyan coast from the Sultan of Zanzibar for a 50 year period. Incipient imperial rivalry was forestalled when Germany handed its coastal occupation to the British Empire in 1890 in exchange for German control over the coast of Tanganyika.[6]

The colonial takeover occasionally met some strong local resistance. A local leader, Waiyaki Wa Hinga, a Kikuyu chief who ruled the Dagoretti area was forced to sign a treaty with Frederick Lugard of the BEAC, having been subject to considerable harassment. Waiyaki later conspired with other people to burn down Lugard's fort in

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[4]Harold D. Nelson, *Kenya*: *A Country Study* (Washington, DC: American University Press, 1984), 12.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

1890. Waiyaki was abducted two years later by the British and killed.[7]

Following severe financial difficulties by the British East Africa Company, the British government in July 1, 1895 established direct rule through the East African Protectorate. Subsequently, the British opened the fertile highlands to white settlers in 1902. A key to the conquest of Kenya's interior was the construction, started in 1895, of a railroad from Mombasa to Kisumu, on Lake Victoria. It reached Nairobi in 1899, Kisumu in 1901, and it was opened to public traffic in 1902. This was the first piece of the Uganda Railway.[8]

In building the railway the British had to confront strong local opposition. For example Koitalel Arap Samoei, a diviner and Nandi leader had prophesied that a black snake would tear through Nandi land spitting fire. This was seen later to be the railway line. For ten years he fought against the builders of the railway line and train, until he was assassinated by the British.[9]

Early settlers were partly allowed in 1907 to have a voice in the government through the Legislative Council. Some Europeans were either appointed or elected to the Council. Most of the Council powers remained in the hands of the Governor. Soon the settlers started lobbying to transform Kenya into a Crown Colony, which meant more powers for the settlers. They obtained this goal in 1920, making the Council more representative of European settlers. Africans were excluded from direct political

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid., 16.

[9]"Local Opposition," *The Free Encyclopedia*, http//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ History_of_Kenya (accessed May 21, 2007).

participation until 1944, when the first African was admitted to the Council.[10]

In reaction to their exclusion from political representation, the Kikuyu people founded in 1921 Kenya's first African political protest movement known as the Young Kikuyu Association. It was led by Harry Thuku. This association later became the Kenya African Union (KAU), an African nationalist organization demanding access to white-owned land. In 1947 Jomo Kenyatta assumed the presidency of KAU.[11]

From October 1952 to December 1959, Kenya was under a state of emergency arising from the Mau Mau rebellion against British colonial rule. African participation in the political process developed rapidly during the latter part of that period as British policymakers sought to isolate the insurgents and their supporters. The first direct elections for Africans to the Legislative Council took place in 1957.[12]

Current Situation

After the struggle for independence, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) of Jomo Kenyatta formed an internal government shortly before Kenya became independent on December 12, 1963. A year later, Kenyatta became Kenya's first president. After independence was attained, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) representing a coalition of small tribes that had feared dominance by larger ones, dissolved itself voluntarily in 1964 and joined KANU.[13]

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[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]George Bennett, *Kenya, A Political History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 141.

[13]"KADU," *The Free Encyclopedia*, http//en. wikipedia. org/ wiki/ History_of_ Kenya (accessed May 21, 2007).

A small but significant leftist opposition party, the Kenya People's Union (KPU) was formed in 1966, led by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a former vice-president. KPU was later banned by Kenyatta who detained its leaders. This was followed by political unrest during Kenyatta's visit to Nyanza Province. The government did not allow other opposition parties to be formed as Kenya adopted a single party system under KANU.[14]

At Kenyatta's death on August 22, 1978, Vice-President Daniel Arap Moi became interim President. On October 14, Moi became President after he was formally elected as KANU's sole nominee. In June 1982, the Kenya National Assembly amended the constitution, making Kenya officially a one-party state.[15]

Yielding to local and foreign pressure, the government submitted a motion on December 1991 in parliament to amend the constitution to provide for a multi-party system. A multiparty election was held in December 1992, which gave President Moi's KANU Party a majority of seats. Although Moi was re-elected for another five-year term, opposition parties won about 45 percent of the parliamentary seats. Another election was held in November 1997 and Moi was re-elected. During that time further liberalization took place that allowed expansion of political parties from eleven to twenty six.

In 2002, parliamentary and presidential elections were held and KANU, the party which had been in power for forty years lost the elections. Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of Kenya's first president was KANU's candidate who enjoyed Moi's backing. A coalition of opposition parties called "rainbow" sponsored Mwai Kibaki. He won the

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[14]Nelson, 40, 41.

[15]"Kenyatta Succession," *The Free Encyclopedia.*

elections by a large majority. The coalition of parties failed to work as was anticipated.

<center>Social Conditions</center>

Population

Kenya's population, according to the 2006 census is 33,947,100. It is divided into eight administrative provinces (see table 1).

<center>TABLE 2</center>

<center>KENYA'S POPULATION</center>

Province	A (km2)	1979-08-24	1989-08-24	1999-08-24	2006-07-01
Central	13,176	2,345,833	3,116,703	3,724,159	3,923,900
Coast	83,603	1,342,794	1,829,191	2,487,264	2,975,400
Eastern	159,891	2,719,851	3,768,677	4,631,779	5,322,400
Nairobi	684	827,775	1,324,570	2,143,254	2,845,400
North Eastern	126,902	373,787	371,391	962,143	1,326,000
Nyanza	16,162	2,643,956	3,507,162	4,392,196	4,984,900
Rift Valley	173,868	3,240,402	4,981,613	6,987,036	8,418,100
Western	8,360	1,832,663	2,544,329	3,358,776	4,151,000
Kenya	**582,646**	**15,327,061**	**21,443,636**	**28,686,607**	**33,947,100**

Source: http//www.citypopulation.de/Kenya.html (accessed May 28, 2007).

<center>People Groups</center>

Kenya's people groups consist of Africans who constitute more than 99 percent of Kenyan nationals. The Africans are divided into more than thirty recognized ethnic groups ranging in size from a few hundred to more than 3 million persons. Small numbers of Asians (local term for those of Indian or Pakistani origin), Arabs, and Europeans are also nationals of Kenya. Appendix 1 shows Kenya's ethnic distribution.

The following information is important from Appendix 1:

<center>47</center>

1. The Luhya consist of 16 groups: Bukusu, Dakho, Kabras, Khayo, Kisa Marachi, Maragoli, Marama, Nyala (lake), Nyala (east), Nyole, Samia, Tachoni, Tiriki, Tsotso and Wanga. Population figures for these groups were not available.

2. The Kalenjin consist of a number of groups of which seven were recognized in the 1969 census: Kosygin, Nandi (including Terik), Tugen, Elgeyo, Pokot, Marakwet, and Sabaot (including Koney and Pok). Of these, the Kpisigis (40 percent) and the Nandi (with more than 20 percent) are by far the largest. Of the others, only the Tugen exceeded 10 percent.

3. The Mijikenda consist of nine groups: Giriama, Duruma, Digo, Chonyi, Rabai, Ribe, Kambe, Jibana, and Kauma.

4. Kenya's ethnic distribution is summarized (see table 2):

TABLE 3

KENYA'S ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION

Ethnic group	Percentage (%)
Kikuyu	20
Luyha	14
Luo	12
Kalenjin	11
Kamba	11
Kisii	6
Meru	5
Other	16

Source: Nelson, *Kenya A Country Study*, xiii-xviii.

Education

The Kenyan education system provides for eight years of primary, four years of high school, and four years of university studies. This is referred to as the 8-4-4 system of education. The government has introduced free primary education since 2003. Free tuition in high schools was begun in January, 2008. Currently Kenya has six public and four private universities. There are four national polytechnics, seventeen institutes of technology, and twelve technical training institutes. There are a number of international schools established by America, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and Sweden.

Passing the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination at a high level is required for enrollment in high schools. Substantially smaller proportion of students (13 to 18 years old) qualify for the high admission standards. Passing the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education with a grade of B+ or higher is required for admission to the national universities. Students who do not qualify can seek admission at the national polytechnics, technical institutes, or private universities.[16]

The school system is controlled, and to a considerable degree supported by the central government. Private schools exist at the primary and secondary levels. Many other schools are constructed and maintained by local communities under the Swahili word *harambee* "let us all pull together." Harold Nelson says*, harambee* was used by Kenyan people and communities to build schools.[17]

[16]Ibid.

[17]Nelson, 322.

TABLE 4

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS 2003—2005

EDUCATION	2003	2004	2005
Primary Enrollment	1,159,500	7,394,800	7,591,500
Sec. Enrollment	882,000	923,000	928,000
University Enroll.	82,000	90,000	92,000
Other Institutions	36,000	65,000	68,000

Source: www.cbs.go.ke (accessed June 20, 2007).

Government statistics have shown (see table 3) that student enrollment in primary, secondary, and university has increased since the government introduced free primary education in 2003. Student enrollment is expected to rise steadily as the government has started to remove tuition charges in secondary schools in January, 2008.

The government pays attention to education and training facilities for all disabled children. The Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) is the institution catering for special education needs in the country. In providing special education, the government works in partnership with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Economy and Poverty

The Kenyan economy is largely agricultural. About 75 percent of the population works on the land, contributing around 30 percent of the national output. The main cash crops are tea and coffee. Other crops that contribute to the economy are pyrethrum, sisal, sugar, and cotton. Dairy is another significant industry contributing to the economy. Hydroelectric plants meet 80 percent of the country's energy needs. Kenya also produces cement, paper, drinks, tobacco, textile, rubber, metal products, ceramics, and transport equipment. There is also a small mining industry. Tourism is the largest service sector

industry which is the country's principal source of foreign income.[18]

According to a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report, about half of Kenya's population lives below the poverty line.[19] The report says that four out of the eight provinces recorded an increase in poverty levels in 2005. At least one in every two Kenyans live below the poverty line, while the number of those living in abject poverty has deepened. These are the Kenyans without access to health care, including doctors, water, and proper nutrition.[20]

The report says that 10 percent of the richest households control more than 42 per cent of incomes, while the poorest 10 percent command 0.76 percent. The UNDP report indicate that in urban areas, approximately 1,250,000 persons or 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The rural poor are predominantly subsistence farmers and families who derive the bulk of their income from the informal sector. People working in the formal sectors, private or public and export farmers have significantly lower rates of poverty.[21]

Rural households headed by females can be said to be within the "very poor" category compared to male headed households. Ownership and access to land is a critical factor. Many parents sub-divide land in favor of their sons but not their daughters.

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[18]Ibid.

[19]"Kenya's Poverty Line" *Daily Nation Newspaper*, February 28, 2007, http//www.nationmedia.com (accessed May 21, 2007).

[20]"Big Divide: Kenya's Richest and Poorest," *Daily Nation Newspaper Report* February 28, 2007. http//www.nationaudio.com (accessed May 21, 2007).

[21]"Poverty Distribution" These figures contained in the World Bank Report No. 13152-KE: 1995 *Kenya Poverty Assessment*, Washington, DC.

Married women enjoy rights to land but widowhood brings uncertainty. Upon divorce or separation, many assets including land, becomes the sole property of the man. Destitute women often migrate to urban slums where they remain poor. Women have a heavier burden of work which cuts into rest.

The poor have lower schooling for their children, are more malnourished, less likely to be immunized, and face higher chances of dying in infancy and childhood. They also have a much lower enrollment in high school. Girls are just as likely to enroll in primary schools as boys but are more likely to drop out or be pulled out. Girls from poor households rarely attend secondary school.

Unemployment is another issue that has affected the majority of the Kenyan population. According to the UNDP report, more than two million Kenyans were not gainfully employed.[22] Lack of employment has been the result of insufficient economic growth caused by corruption, poor planning, lack of industries, retrenchment in government and private sectors, and lack of foreign investors.

Wage employment is a major source of income in urban areas, while livestock and crops are the main income sources in rural areas. In rural Kenya, the non-poor derive a large share of their income from cash crops. In contrast, subsistence farmers are among the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Because employment has became a delusion to many Kenyans, people have resorted to farming which in effect has not

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[22]Ibid.

provided any better solution. Unemployment has rendered the majority of the population to lack the ability to meet basic needs.[23]

Crime

Because of the social, economic, and political disparities raging in Kenya, there has been a steady rise in crime and insecurity. The most affected areas are urban centers together with rural areas. The majority of the population has contended with insecurity ranging from burglary, domestic theft, bank robbery, pick-pocketing, drug dealing, violence, land clashes, and killings of innocent people. Crime and insecurity is now a national concern.[24]

Health

Access to health care is a necessity for everybody in society. Poor health is seen as a cause of poverty in Kenya. The poor have few sources of basic health care. Public health institutions in Kenya are characterized by long queues of patients and are generally inaccessible to the poor. In recent times, most patients in government health facilities are required to provide stationary for prescriptions required to purchase drugs and syringes. People are forced to make "unofficial" payments to medical personnel because of corruption.

Health facilities are sometimes far away from the people. The majority of the poor use African herbal medicine as they cannot afford the cost of Western medicine. Cost sharing in health services has increased—thus making it unaffordable to the majority of the population.

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

The national HIV prevalence in Kenya has steadily grown (see table 4). As indicated, urban and rural prevalence rates are similar. It is also evident that HIV prevalence is higher in smaller towns (Busia, Kisumu, Nakuru, Meru, and Thika) than in the two largest towns (Nairobi and Mombasa). Other high prevalence areas are due to traditional belief that AIDS is not a health issue but just a traditional deviance (*chira*).

Cultural practice is a big obstacle in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Cultural practice such as wife-inheritance, and polygamy die hard. A man's funeral rites is incomplete until the widow is inherited (*ter*), which involves a sexual cleansing ritual. The 2005 UNAIDS statistics reported an estimated number of 1,300,000 people living with AIDS in Kenya.[25]

An estimated 420, 000 Kenyans have acquired AIDS since the early 1980s. According to the Kenya National Human Development Report of 2006, the poorest regions in Kenya have higher HIV prevalence. Out of the 1.05 million people aged 15 years to 49 years living with HIV/AIDS, Nyanza province had the highest number (292,000), which is 13.1 percent, followed by the Rift Valley (207,000), Nairobi (159,000), Central (124,000), Eastern (90,000), Western (85,000) and Coast (84,000).[26]

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[25]"AIDS," UNAIDS Kenya Country Page, *www.unaids.org/en/geographical +area/by+ country/Kenya.asp* (accessed May 21, 2007).

[26]World Bank Report No. 13152-KE.

TABLE 5

HIV POSITIVE MOTHERS IN URBAN TESTING CENTERS

District	1990	1993	1996	1998
Busia	17	22	28	29
Garissa	5	4	5	8
Kakamega	5	9	10	16
Kisii	2	2	16	16
Kisumu	19	20	27	29
Kitale	3	7	2	18
Kitui	1	7	4	10
Meru	3	2	15	23
Mombasa	10	16	12	17
Nairobi	6	16	16	16
Nakuru	6	22	27	26
Nyeri	3	3	9	17
Thika	2	27	13	34

Source: National AIDS/STDS Control Program, Ministry of Health, Kenya (August, 2005).

Cultural and Religious Analysis

Worldview Analysis

When presenting the gospel to a people group, it is important to understand their worldview. This is necessary because people's belief systems are reflected in their worldview. A peoples' worldview determines how much they can appreciate the gospel and how much change it can cause. Worldview is the most encompassing framework of thought that relate belief systems to one another.

Hiebert says, "Worldviews are the fundamental given with which people in a community think, not what they think about."[27] Adventist missionaries to Kenya were not aware of the people's worldview. Worldview assumptions are taken for granted, and are

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[27]Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 40.

largely unexamined. Worldview is reinforced by the deepest of feelings, and anyone who challenges them challenges the very foundation of people's lives. Kenyan Adventists have not had their worldview challenged. This is one reason why there is a conflict between African traditional beliefs and Adventist beliefs. As Clifford Geertz points out, there is no greater human fear than a loss of a sense of order and meaning. People are willing to die for their beliefs if these make their deaths meaningful.[28]

Many Africans accepted Christianity but kept the traditional beliefs alive. Thus, both Christian and African religions have been running side by side. Another aspect worth noting is the African's worldview of time which is concerned mainly with the present and the past, but has little to say about the future. That point contributes to a lukewarm conviction about the biblical teaching on the life hereafter.

Contributing to the African view of time and touching on the universe, John Mbiti says, "The universe is both visible and invisible, unending and without limits."[29] Based on the belief that the universe is unending, the African mind is not so much preoccupied with futuristic issues. The African worldview is more concerned with obeying the demands of the traditional religion. People believe that non-conformity to the traditional ways bring sickness, death, and crop failure. This belief, therefore, strengthens the keeping of the moral and traditional religious norms even after people become Adventist Christians.

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[28]Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System." In *Reader in Comparative Religion*, ed. William A. Lessa and Evan Z. Vogt (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 78-79.

[29]John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), 35.

To the African mind, taboos cover a wide range of life: words, food, dress, relations among people, marriage, burial, work, and so on. Breaking a taboo entails punishment in the form of social ostracism, misfortune, and even death. If people do not punish the offender, it is believed the invisible in the religious order of the universe will do it. The invisible beings are thought to be actively engaged in the human world. Many Africans would rather avoid the taboos of the traditional religion than obey biblical teachings.

Christian leaders in Kenya must understand the people's worldview in order to understand cultural stability and resistance to change. Kenya is more of a tribal and peasant society where people generally share fundamental beliefs and assumptions that are constantly reinforced by the group. People teach their worldview to their children, and thus assure its perpetuation. Change is often resisted because the whole society is unified in its beliefs. Individuals who adopt new ideas are ostracized.

If culture is the way the people think, feel, and act, where does the gospel fit in? People need to understand that the gospel must be distinguished from all human cultures. It is a divine revelation, not human speculation. People have failed to differentiate between the gospel and human cultures. Missionaries to Kenya somehow equated the good news with their cultural background. This led them to condemn native customs and imposed their own customs on converts. The converts accepted the gospel, but continued with their old traditional worldview. The effect was that the gospel did not produce much meaningful change in their life and the practice of traditional beliefs continued under the table. Hiebert writes, "Although the gospel is distinct from human cultures, it must always be expressed in cultural forms. Humans cannot receive it apart from their languages, symbols, and rituals. The gospel became incarnate in cultural forms if the

people are to hear and believe."[30] Three fundamental approaches, therefore, become

necessary: On the cognitive level, the people must understand the truth of the gospel. On

the emotional level, they must experience the awe and mystery of God. And on the

evaluative level, the gospel must challenge them to respond in faith. This system of

approach is the "indigenization," or "contextualization" of the gospel within a culture and

is what is needed in the Kenyan situation.[31]

<div align="center">Folk Religions</div>

Before looking at the folk religious practices in Kenya, it is important to point out

that when speaking of "religions" most people think of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism,

Hinduism, and other high or universal religions. For the most part, these religions are

institutionalized, have written texts, defined theologies, temples, prescribed rites, rules,

and regulations. They are led by trained religious specialists.

The main difference between the folk religion in Kenya and other world religions

is that folk religion refers to the religious beliefs and practices of the Kenyan people. One

point that helps to differentiate between folk and formal religions is the questions they

ask. Formal religions are concerned with: (1) ultimate reality, (2) purpose, (3) destiny of

the universe, society and self, and (4) issues of truth and logical consistency. As Hiebert

says, folk religion in Kenya is primarily concerned with: (1) meaning in this life and the

problem of death, (2) well being in this life and the problem of misfortunes, (3)

knowledge to decide and the problem of the unknown, and (4) righteousness and justice

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[30]Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 54.

[31]Ibid.

and the problem of evil and injustice.[32] The concern of folk religion has got little to do with Christ or the mission of the church.

The Adventist Church in Kenya must intensify the teaching that uncompromisingly affirms the sole authority of Christ over Christians so that they resolutely reject traditional claims to loyalty. This position is supported by the common Christian principle of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, which was the typical attitude of the first Christians.[33] Christians must be taught the true meaning of loyalty to Christ which also calls for rejection of some cultural values and practices. A clear line of separation needs to be drawn between the family of God and the world.

The world means the society outside the church in which, however, the believers live. That world is under the power of evil. It is the region of darkness into which the citizens of the kingdom of light must not enter. It is a secular society dominated by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.[34]

Folk religion in Kenya is essentially a culture that is concerned with temporal and passing values. Adventists must not continue the traditional beliefs of a world that is dying. Hence the loyalty of the believer ought to be directed entirely toward the new order, the new society, and its Lord. Christianity must bring in a way of life quite separate from culture. In every case the primary Christian reference point should be Christ. Contributing to the subject of religious experience, William James has rightly

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[32]Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religions*, 74.

[33]Louis Schneider, *Religion, Culture and Society* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), 203.

[34]Schneider, 205.

said: "The case of religious experiences, the thing by which we must finally judge them, must be that element or quality in them which we can meet nowhere else."[35] Folk religious practices conflict with the Christian's ultimate goal which is the kingdom of God. I agree with Paul Tillich when he says that "the presence of the demand of 'ultimacy' in the structure of our existence is the basis of religious experience."[36]

Looking at death at the folk religion level, the problem of death often has less to do with what has happened to the person who has died than with the pain and meaninglessness that death brings for the living. On this level the question people ask is not about how death occurred. The real questions have to do with why and why now? and how will this affect me and my family? Folk religious practices in Kenya may be summarized as concerned with the meaning of life and problem of death. People desire a meaningful life but death poses a problem for the living. People seek meaning, not in a future heaven, but in their lives as lived out here on earth. When Christians continue folk religious practices, it causes conflict when practiced alongside Adventist beliefs.

Even though death is believed to be a natural event in life, Africans believe the dead are not really dead. Many communities in Kenya hold the belief that the dead have "eyes," and are able to see events taking place in the world of the living. The dead therefore, can communicate with their family members usually through dreams. Their words or directives are revered and treated with caution, lest they cause punishment. The traditional belief that the dead are not dead is held by many tribes in Kenya and continues even after people become Seventh-day Adventist Christians.

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[35]William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Longmans Green, 1902), 10.

[36]Paul Tillich, "The Problem of Theological Method," *Journal of Religion* 27 (1947): 23.

While surviving relatives remember the departed, the spirits of the deceased are called the living dead. People regard them as being much like human beings although they are dead. If a spirit appears to members of a family, they will say that they saw 'so and so.' Mbiti says, "Up to that point it has not lost its personal name and identity. During this period, which may last up to four or even five generations, it is possible for something of the features, characteristics and personality of such a spirit (the living dead) to be noticed in a newly born child. The people would say 'so and so' has come back, has returned, or has been reborn."[37]

The living dead are manifested in dreams, visions, possessions, and certain illnesses or mental disturbances. In dreams and visions, people claim to encounter the spirits of the living dead, to talk to them, and to receive certain instructions or requests from them. People who claim to have seen the living dead do not have a clear description of what they look like. Those who see them just say they saw 'so and so' for it is assumed they appear the way they were before they died.

When the living dead appear in spirit possessions or as a cause of illnesses, the help of a diviner or medicine man is often sought in order to find out which spirit of the living it is and what it may want. In Western society, such cases are called psychiatric problems, and the person would be referred to a psychiatric doctor. If the living dead make demands which can be fulfilled, non-Christians and Christians alike normally do what is required because the dead are revered. This is one area where conflict exists between African traditional and Adventist beliefs. If the demand of the living dead is too high or impossible, then people resort to other ways of keeping the living dead quiet by working through a diviner or medicine man.

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[37]Mbiti, 119.

Sometimes the spirits of those who died away from home, or those who were not properly buried, may demand ritual transfer to their home compound or reburial of their remains. For this reason, even today, Africans who die in the cities and towns are often taken to their original homesteads for burial. Such reburials are sometimes performed according to Christian or Muslim services, as well as in African traditional ways.

After four or five generations have passed, the living dead are forgotten because those who knew them while they were living will by then be dead and their spirits are consequently lost from memory. Their identity as 'so and so' is forever eclipsed as far as people are concerned. Unless the spirit possesses someone and reveals its full identity people would not know it. In such cases the spirit is no longer a living dead but a ghost of an unknown person. It has no personal interest in any human family. It withdraws from human activities and becomes fully a member of the spirit world.[38]

When the living dead reach the level of spirit beings, they may wander about without being noticed. It is believed that they may enter and stay in trees, lakes, rivers, rocks, animals, and so on. Or they may just disappear to congregate with other spirits in the world of spirits. These are the spirits which people, including church members, fear to meet. This is because people do not know how to act in front of strange spirits. It is believed that these spirits sometimes attack people through an outbreak of possession or an epidemic. People use ceremonies to drive them away. Unknown spirits may also be used by witches and other people who wish to do harm to their neighbors.

Other spirits are used in divination and medical practices to help in the diagnosis of diseases and problems. They are also used to provide cures or solutions to problems.

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[38]Ibid., 121.

Some witches or diviners call back the spirits of the dead who are feared by people in Society; church members are no exception. Some church members continue to consult medicine men or diviners when they face problems caused by spirits because the church has not equipped its members to know how to deal with evil spirits. The next chapter will provide guidelines on how church members can handle such problems in a way that will enhance people's confidence in the Scriptures and reduce the influence of traditional beliefs.

Since many African people believe that death is not the end of human life they believe a person continues to exist in another world or hereafter. This belief leads to many practices and attempts to appease the departed ancestors. The remembrance of the dead concerns mainly the living dead, that is, the spirits of those who died up to four or five generations ago. Family heads and married adults are remembered in this way longer than children and the unmarried. It is widely believed that the spirits of people who died continue to live and can influence the life of the community. The influence could be positive or negative, depending on the conduct of the community members. Examples of such actions may arise from failure to observe any established taboos which might arouse the wrath of the dead. Breaking taboos may lead to punishment of the individual or the whole community through illness, childlessness, and sometimes even death.[39]

Some believe that when the dead person is punishing the community or an individual, the head of the family must pour beer, water, milk or some other beverage on the ground to appease the dead. When the dead person appears in a dream to an expectant mother or husband to say that they must name the expected child after him/her,

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[39]J. N. K. Mugambi, *Christianity and African Culture* (Nairobi, Kenya: Acton Publishers, 2002), 66.

to appease the dead, such demands are usually honored.

It is believed among the Luo tribe of Kenya that failure to fulfill such demands may adversely affect the child or parents. For example, the child may cry the whole night denying parents their sleep. This belief is held by non-believers and church members alike. Older women are good at detecting whether a child's cry at night is because of the dead person who wants the child to be named after him/her.

People go to great lengths not to ignore the wishes of the dead because ancestors are believed to be the custodians of the tribal laws, customs, traditions, and history. People believe the ancestors must be appeased because they are able to cause sickness or misfortune for anyone who neglects, violates, or infringes upon their wishes. Therefore, good-will offerings, thanksgiving offerings, propitiatory offerings, and mediatory offerings are still offered to the ancestors.[40]

Because church members are among those who still believe in appeasing the dead, the church is weakened spiritually. Some merely join the church as a social institution causing the church to become secular rather than being the agent of spiritual change in society. On this problem Harold Lindsell writes, "One of the great blunders of the day is the secularizing of the church, the bringing of the world into the church. This is a great mistake. It is right for the church to be in the world; it is wrong for the world to be in the church. A boat in water is good, that is what boats are for. However, water inside the boat causes it to sink."[41]

The Adventist Church must preach and emphasize the need for righteousness and

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[40]Abiola T. Dopamu, "Secular, Christianity and the African Religion in Yoruba land," *African Ecclesiastical Review* 48, no. 3 (2006): 140-156.

[41]Harold Lindsell, *The World, the Flesh and the Devil* (Minnesota: Worldwide Publications, 1973), 191.

holiness. This should be the people's foundation of faith, without which the Lord will not

be seen. The challenge is to help people put away repugnant traditional beliefs and walk

with God for spiritual empowerment.

<div align="center">Death Caused by Deviance</div>

Even though God proclaimed death on Adam and Eve after they sinned in the

garden of Eden, many African people believe that death cannot happen without a specific

cause. Death was a consequence of sin (Gen 3:19), yet every time a person dies many say

the death was "caused." God may call old people to leave this life but this is rare and only

in a few instances is such a belief entertained. People believe that death is the result of

cultural deviance (*chira*) or witchcraft, or that curses, broken taboos, or oaths caused

death. People therefore, endeavor to avoid being cursed or break oaths.

Many believe there are causes and circumstances surrounding every death. It is

surprising that even Adventists hold such beliefs. The circumstances involved include

sickness, disease, old age, accident, lightning, earthquake, flood, drowning, animal

attack, and many others. But African people believe that such circumstances are caused

by a human or other agent who has caused it by means of a curse, witchcraft, magic, and

so on. This is what Mbiti calls mystical causes of death. People go to a lot of trouble to

establish the mystical causes by consulting diviners and medicine men, or through

suspicion and guesswork.[42]

Since death is a consequence of sin, Adventists must accept the biblical teaching

and shun the traditional belief that suggests every death is caused. Biblical teaching and

the truth about the origin of death will help eliminate the influence of traditional beliefs

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[42]Mbiti, 112.

and can influence the Kenyan society for spiritual change. The Church must address the belief that cultural deviance can cause death. Cultural deviance involves the questions of what is right and good and what is wrong and evil in human conduct. African people have a deep sense of right and wrong and that moral sense has produced customs, rules, laws, traditions, and taboos that are observed in each tribe in Kenya.

People believe that their morals were given to them by God from the very beginning. This position provides unchallenged authority for the morals. It is also believed or thought that some of the departed spirits keep watch over people to make sure that they observe the traditional moral laws. Deviant people are punished. The fear of punishment causes church members to hold to the traditional demands so this is another area where African traditions and Adventist beliefs conflict.

African traditional morals are practiced in two ways—those that deal specifically with the personal conduct of an individual, and those practiced by the community. For example, one would ask whether it is right to visit the doctor or medicine man when one is sick. In a community, a greater number of traditional morals deal with social conduct that involves life of the society at large. African traditional morals put a greater emphasis on the social conduct of the community than the individual. The African view is that the individual exists only because others exist. So in answer to the question above, the community may pressure the individual to seek help from the medicine man.

Morals are there to keep the society not only alive but living in harmony. People say without morals there would be chaos and confusion. Morals guide people to do what is right and good for their own sake and that of the community and to keep society from disintegration. African cultural morals are not written but are passed on from one generation to another. In general, people do everything possible to follow traditional laws

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and find it much easier to ignore biblical laws even when they are Christians. According to many Africans, there are different causes of death, but a leading cause is cultural deviance. Death comes when one fails to do what traditional morals call for.

One example from the Luo tribe is a requirement that a dead body must stay over night in the homestead before it is buried. The people believe that deviance from that requirement could cause death. This is a strong position followed by many people, including Adventists. When death happens because of cultural deviance, the responsible family of the dead person is blamed. People will braggingly say, he or she ignored cultural practice for they say they are Christian. Now see how that person's life has ended.

<center>Death Caused by Witchcraft</center>

African people also believe that witchcraft and evil magic can cause death. When someone dies, people often try to find out who used sorcery, witchcraft, or magic against the dead person. People believe that someone is responsible for the death and in some cases the suspect may be beaten to death, fined, or thrown out of the community. Relatives of the deceased may also decide to focus other types of less open revenge upon the suspect. Witchcraft is practiced by almost all the tribes in Kenya. It is an old practice that people have not abandoned even with the coming of Christianity. In an attempt to guard against acts of witchcraft, people protect themselves using tribal medicine provided by medicine men. For example, in Tanzania the Nyakyusa believe that the hidden personal power called '*itonga*' can be used to protect members of a community from

external attack and to punish those who do not cooperate.[43]

Christians who believe that death can be caused through witchcraft are not believing in the greater protective power of God and the biblical teaching that says death is a natural consequence. Death causes fear in the believer's life. When death is looked at as 'caused' it promotes hatred among the people of a society. Hate does not promote love and unity, which are essential ingredients needed in the church to proclaim the gospel. A church where people look at each other with suspicion is divided, creates gossip, and results in members who are not different from the people of the world. This reduces the power of the gospel and desired Adventist influence in Kenyan society.

People who have nothing to do with witchcraft find it hard to live in a society where the majority believe in witchcraft. Because human beings are social beings, they need each other to live in society. Harriet Hill points out, "Living in a world believed to be full of witchcraft is a fearful experience. There is the possibility of being wrongly accused and, consequently, alienated from society. There is the possibility of committing heinous acts without intending to do so. There is the trauma of determining who caused each unnatural death or illness, resulting in an atmosphere of suspicion. Any extraordinary event is charged with supernatural significance."[44] This is exactly what exists in Kenya. The next section discusses African funeral rituals practiced by the Luo.

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[43]Mircea Eliade, *Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 59-60.

[44]Harriet Hill, "Witchcraft and the Gospel: Insights from Africa." *Missiology*: *An International Review* 24 (1996): 323-44.

African Funeral Rituals among Luos

The Luo are a tribe in Kenya. They form the largest percentage membership in Kenya. The first Adventist missionary arrived in the Luo tribal area at Kendu Bay in 1906.[45] Kendu Bay is located in what is now administratively known as Rachuonyo District. In the Eastern African Union of Seventh-day Adventists, the Kenya Lake field, the Ranen field, and the North Nyanza fields represent areas where the Luo tribe is dominant. Luos (plural) are also found in other towns because of employment, business, or migration.

When death occurs, the Luo people go through many rituals and ceremonies associated with death. Many times even church members go through the same rituals and ceremonies—practice that conflict with biblical teachings. Death marks a physical separation of the dead and the living. This is a radical change, and the funeral rites and ceremonies draw attention to the permanent separation. People are meticulously careful to fulfill the funeral rites in order to avoid offending the departed. To Christians, the ritual demands conflict with biblical teachings. But because people fear that the dead may punish them for deviance, they opt to comply.

Immediately after death has occurred, the widow or widower begins the process of '*chola*'—a Luo word for the process of going through rituals. Other tribes in Kenya conduct rituals according to their cultural beliefs. '*Jachola*' is the Luo terminology for a widow or widower who goes through ritual procedures. Some ritual requirements may involve children and other family members. Before burial, a widow wakes up at dawn to

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[45]Christopher Burghard Steiner and Roy Richard Grinker, *Perspectives on Africa: A Reader in Culture, History, and Representation* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 168.

mourn the death of the husband. She mourns for about one hour everyday until the mourning period, which takes three or four weeks, is completed.

After the mourning period is over, the widow makes a visit to her parents to spend one or two days with them. This process is called '*nindo oko*'—meaning to spend time away from the deceased's home. It signifies the morning period is over and the woman begins the process of looking for a kinsman to inherit her. It is taboo for a woman to die before she is inherited. Wife inheritance is a common practice among the Luo people.

Other rituals that a widow/er observes before burial include: (1) no work in the garden, (2) no spending a night away from the home, (3) no visitation to another home within the village, (4) no sexual relationships during the mourning period. When a father or mother dies, married sons and daughters are also prohibited from having sexual relations. This requirement lasts until '*chieng kee*'—the day family members who gathered to mourn dissolve the assembly. Normally, '*chieng kee*' comes three to five days after burial.

When an old man dies, fire is lit using a log of wood in front of the first wife's house (*od mikayi*). This fire is called '*mach mar ligenga*'and was: (1) to keep mourners warm as they spend the night in the cold at the deceased's compound, (2) to scare off wild animals, (3) to act as source to light firewood used for other cooking.

On the burial day, one bull or more is slaughtered to feed guests. Mourners are considered guests and the dead may be offended if the guests go hungry. People believe the dead person may cause a taboo to the family. One powerful Luo politician, Raila Odinga, recently said funeral costs in Luo land including bringing a body home and

feeding people is estimated at $500,000 a month.[46] This is an expensive exercise that

Christian Luo could avoid because it does not serve any useful purpose. Even when it has

to happen, the cost should be minimal so that it does not consume all the resources of

the family. The interest of the bereaved family must not be over looked in the name of

feeding mourners. Monies raised during funerals should be channeled for gainful use

such as children's education and to support the widow's other needs.

The burial site in the Luo culture is also of significance. The Luo encourage the

burial site to be at the ancestral home (birthplace). This cultural practice is also rooted in

the African traditional religion which says the dead are not really dead, so they must be

returned to their birthplace. Sometimes there are conflicts over the burial place that arise

between kinsmen of the dead person and the widow especially when the widow is from

another ethnic group after an intercultural marriage. The woman may not feel there are

good reasons to bury her deceased husband in his ancestral land, especially when the

cost is high. Some of these arguments have resulted in court cases.

One example happened in 1987. Silvanus Melea Otieno, a prominent Nairobi

criminal lawyer died. His widow who was from the Kikuyu tribe wanted to bury her

husband at a place called Upper Matasia, Nairobi. Umira Kager, the lawyer's clansmen

filed a court case against the widow asking the court to order burial in the lawyer's

ancestral land. The case, which lasted five months, was ruled in favor of the clan.

The trial judge observed the Luo cultural practices and recommended that the

dead man be buried in his ancestral home. He said the deceased did not have a home in

Nairobi, only a house. The Luo people bury the dead in a home and not a house. The

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[46]"Out of Africa Comes Change But Not Without Controversy," *The Associated Associated Press*, Tuesday, April 6, 1999.

judge further observed that cultural procedures were not performed at the deceased's

Nairobi house, thus the house could not be referred to as a home. Because of this failure,

it was not the proper place to bury the deceased lawyer.[47] People believe if a person is

buried outside the ancestral home that the spirit keeps haunting the family. This is

another area where the church has a big role to play in changing society's value system.

People seem to love a dead person more than when he or she was alive.

During the burial at the grave site, a man who was a family head is buried on the

left hand side of the main house which is an improvement from the old practice that had

the site in front of the house. For a man, the coffin is placed in the grave with the head

facing south, towards the main gate. This figuratively symbolizes continuity of family

headship even though the man is dead. A woman is buried on the right hand side of the

main house with her head facing north. This symbolizes that the woman is not the head of

the home. The Luo bury mature unmarried girls outside of the homestead. The rationale

is that a mature girl belongs somewhere else. A mature girl ought to have been married to

someone, and to bury a grown girl in the family compound is a taboo. In order to reduce

traditional cultural demands, it may suffice for Christians to establish a common burial

site in the form of a cemetery.

When people believe a death is a result of cultural deviance, they heap blame

on the dead person saying the dead ignored a cultural practice. In such situations the

church must preach that death is a natural consequence so that people grasp the concept

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[47]Ocholla Ayayo, "Death and Burial: An Anthropological Perspective," in *The S.M. Otieno Case: Death and Burial in Modern Kenya,* ed. J. B. Ojwang and J. N. K. Mugambi (Nairobi: Nairobi University Press, 1989), 30-50.

of death as a natural event in the human cycle of life.

Widowhood and Wife Inheritance

When death occurs there are traditional demands that a widow or widower is expected to meet. A woman is married to her husband and by extension to the community. In reality a woman belongs to the community because of the strong group concept. A widow, therefore, is required to conform to the cultural practices of the society. In death, African traditional beliefs are neither debatable nor negotiable.

After a husband dies, the widow, who is viewed as an outsider, cannot make independent decisions. Many decisions are made by brother in-laws including the disposal of family property. People say a woman's relationship to her husband was bought so the husband's family takes over on major decisions and the widow is expected to comply. This traditional requirement puts the widow at a disadvantage and is not sympathetic to someone who is going through a time of grief. Traditional requirements for widowers are not as demanding as for widows.

According to cultural practices, a widow is supposed to be inherited. Non-compliance is viewed as deviance, which people believe is a taboo (*chira*). Wife inheritance is a cultural practice that has bound Kenyan people for generations. The Luo, the second largest tribe in Kenya have refused to do away with this repugnant practice.

Wife inheritance among the Luo may appear similar to levirate marriage in the Old Testament, but wife inheritance is different from the levirate marriage. The reason behind wife inheritance besides being a lose marriage, is a ritual cleansing that involve sexual intercourse that must be performed in the house of the deceased man. Wife inheritance brings an additional wife to the dead man's brother and in recent times the

practice is blamed for the spread of AIDS in the community.

The Jewish levirate marriage was put in place to ensure a widow could raise a child so that the name of a deceased person would not be blotted out of Israel (Gen 38:8, Deut 25: 5-10). The purpose of the levirate marriage was to continue a name and care for the widow. It may be argued that wife inheritance also involves an aspect to care for the widow and to continue a name. However, in the levirate marriage there is no ritual sexual cleansing.

To remain single or remarry is also a controversial issue that a widow has to deal with. A widow who chooses to remain single is an enemy of the family. She is looked on as someone practicing a taboo. According to Luo cultural practice a widow is not allowed to decide whether she wants to remain single or not. But even when a widow chooses to remarry, she is told to consider a kinsman and nobody else.

In the olden days, a woman who died before she was inherited had to go through a ritual that required a kinsman to have sexual intercourse with her body. The act was a means of cleansing from the taboo. Such a woman is referred to in local terms as "*dhako motho gi kode*"—meaning one who died before she was inherited. A woman with children must be inherited or her daughters also cannot be inherited when they lose a husband.

The Luo Council of Elders, a recently formed organization, said in February, 2007that wife inheritance should be reserved for widows who are not infected with AIDS.[48] After that suggestion, some Luo politicians demanded the practice be done away with altogether in favor of "symbolic inheritance"—a brother in-law accepting

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[48]*Associated Press*, Tuesday, April 6, 2007.

responsibility for a widow's welfare, but not marrying her. Others argue that wife inheritance slows the spread of AIDS by keeping women in stable relationships. Jane Osege, a resident of Kanyuto, near Kisumu town suggests that if this cultural practice is done away with it will encourage prostitution, because a woman cannot be without a man.[49]

The traditional wife inheritance does not require a church wedding, neither is a dowry paid as is the case in formal marriages. Wife inheritance is not a marriage in itself, but a lose co-habitation meant only to fulfill traditional demands. A man who inherits a widow is called '*Jater*.' The man is in the relationship at the mercy of the woman who can throw him out at any time. The woman is customarily allowed to get rid of '*Jater*' for another "*Jater*' without permission from anybody.

Widows with less education and without jobs are the most disadvantaged when compared to widows who are educated and who can support themselves. A widow often yields to the traditional demand to be inherited by a kinsman because she is looking for someone to provide her with material support and security.

Wife inheritance is a practice which also impacts Christians. Seventh-day Adventist members encounter problems in the community when the church's position requires a widow to remain single or remarry according to biblical teaching. In many instances, a widow ends up being a second wife to a man who is already married. It is easier for an older married man to marry a widow as a second wife than for the widow to find an unmarried young man since society discourages unmarried young men from marrying a widow.

According to the Bible, marriage is between a woman and a man (Matt 19:5-6).

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[49]Ibid.

Marriage is ordained by God. The Bible teaches that marriage can only be ended because of either unfaithfulness or death (Matt 19:9 cf. 5:32). When a husband or wife dies the marriage ends. The contract was not between the widow or widower and the family of the deceased. Justice is done when a widow or widower is left alone to chose whether to re-marry or remain single. The church has a responsibility to educate society on this important subject.

Witchcraft and Demonization

Witchcraft

The African people believe that there are invisible mystical forces and powers in the universe. They also believe that certain human beings have the knowledge and ability to tap into, control, and use these forces. Such skilled people, through word or ritual, can release these forces for particular uses. Commenting on the subject, Bolaji Idowu says, "African concepts about witchcraft consist in the belief that the spirits of living human beings can be sent out of the body on errands of doing havoc to other persons in body, mind or estate; that witches have guilds or operate singly, and that the spirits sent out of the human body in this way can act either invisibly or through a lower creature—an animal or bird."[50]

While there are male witches people believe that witches are predominantly female helped by devils or evil spirits. Witches acquire their power through various ways:[51] (1) inheritance from mother or father, (2) touching or swallowing a cursed object,

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[50]E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 175-76.

[51]E. A. Ade Adegbola, *Traditional Religion in West Africa* (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1983), 318.

(3) purchasing power objects from old women who sell them cheap so even poor people can afford them, and (4) intentionally acquired from demons. Sometimes the word magic is understood to mean witchcraft. Mbiti says, "Magic is believed to be these forces in the hands of certain individuals. They may use magic for harmful ends and then people experience it as bad or evil magic. Or they may use it for ends which are helpful to society, then it is considered as good magic or medicine."[52]

Witchcraft is a manifestation of these mystical forces which may be inborn in a person, inherited, or acquired in various ways. For some people it is said to function without their being aware of it or having control over it. People believe that witchcraft and bad magic are combined and work evil deliberately or involuntarily on the part of the witch or magician. While there is not much distinction between witchcraft and sorcery, there is some difference. Witches inherit their power, sorcerers intentionally seek it. Witches use Psycho-psychical power while sorcerers use magical techniques to call on spirits. Witches draw on unconscious powers and sorcerers on conscious powers.[53] In all African countries, suspicion about the use of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a common practice.

Almost every misfortune that happens is attributed to witchcraft. Hiebert gives some examples:[54] barren women, children who die at birth, women with irregular menstrual flow, accident victims, traders who suffer losses, office workers who fail to get

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[52]Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 165.

[53]Hiebert, 148.

[54]Ibid., 150

promotions, a politician who fails to get elected, a student who fails an examination, a person who notices scratches on his or her body, a farmer with bad crop yields, a football team that loses matches—all these suspect witches as the cause of their misfortune.

How Witchcraft Works

Belief in witchcraft is common with African people. Witchcraft is used as a means of solving issues which people believe Christianity cannot fix. Church members who still hold to African traditional beliefs many times resort to witchcraft to solve their problems. People believe that there are problems which only magic can fix.

Contributing on the subject, Hill says, "In some groups in West Africa, all deaths, except those of the very old, are considered unnatural, and an 'assassin' which must be found when someone dies. Pallbearers ask the corpse to reveal to them the guilty party, and it pushes them to the right person, who is often surprised and denies the accusation. But the corpse does not lie, and the person must eventually accept responsibility."[55] Sometimes a death is blamed on someone in the community who is an enemy of the family. Thus witchcraft beliefs often generate greater tension than they allay. Geoffrey Parrinder notes,

> Witchcraft beliefs resolve certain conflicts or problems: but I do not want to say this is a good solution. The aggression invited by witchcraft beliefs is as harmful as anything a society can produce in the way of disruptive practices; the relief offered by witch-hunting and witch punishing is no more than temporary and their capacity to ally anxieties no more illusory: for if witchcraft beliefs resolve certain fears and tensions, they also produce others. When people live in fear of being a witch, and of antagonizing others who secretly may be witches, these fears lead to antagonism and hatred, which undermine community harmony.[56]

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[55]Hill, 323.

[56]Geoffrey Parrinder, *Witchcraft: European and African* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), 275.

Belief in witchcraft is one of the most disturbing elements in Kenyan society. Fear of bad magic and witchcraft are some of the greatest enemies. Every African shares in that fear. In spite of people attaining a high education and the coming of Christianity, belief in witchcraft has persisted.

The Adventist Church must teach people about trusting in God. When people have faith in God, fear of witchcraft will not continue. Faith in God ushers into the life of a believer the power of the Holy Spirit who protects from the forces of darkness. God's people must be reminded that they do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12). Christians must stand firm and uphold biblical principles and do away with African traditional beliefs that are in opposition to biblical teaching. When that is done, the gospel will transform society.

People who believe in witchcraft use it to handle interpersonal hostilities. When something goes wrong for an individual or his family, they want to know who caused it. In most cases they will suspect that someone has used witchcraft against them. Once it is perceived that someone has used evil powers, the person goes on to seek the identity of the suspected offender. Many times the offender is someone in the family, neighborhood, a relative, or even a workmate.

As was said earlier, African people believe there are invisible, mystical forces and powers in the universe. It is also believed that certain human beings have the ability to tap, control, and use these forces for harmful or good purposes in society. It is believed that witchcraft is for evil purposes. It is also believed that a witch uses incantations, words, rituals, and power objects to inflict harm on the victim. To achieve that goal, a witch may use hair, clothes, nails, or other possessions of the victim which she burns,

pricks, or thinks evil of. It is believed that by inflicting harm on what was owned by a person, that person is automatically harmed.

Another method of witchcraft application is to bury magic objects in the path where the targeted person is likely to pass, or at the gate, or in the targeted person's fields. Witches may even send flies, bees, other insects, or certain birds or animals to do harm to the victim. It is believed when such insects touch the victim or if the victim sees them, sickness will result or some other misfortune will occur.

Another belief, according to Mbiti, is that "the spirit of the witch may leave him at night and goes to eat away the victim, thus causing him to weaken and eventually die. It is believed too, that a witch can cause harm by looking at a person, wishing him harm or speaking to him words intended to inflict harm on him."[57] In some instances, the belief is held that powerful magic can cause a person to change into an animal or bird which then attacks the victim. These are the ways Kenyan people believe magic and witchcraft works. Such beliefs are held in almost every tribe in Kenya and unfortunately such beliefs do not die when people become Adventist Christians.

Reasons for Witchcraft

There are many reasons why a person bewitches another, some of which include social, wealth, and sickness related issues. People use witchcraft on others because of domestic tensions and jealousies that develop in any closely knit community. Thus, the use of witchcraft mostly happens among relatives and neighbors. It is rare to find a stranger bewitching another stranger. Disputes between neighbors or relatives are common reasons for one party to want to get rid of the other by means of mystical forces.

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[57]Mbiti, 166.

Suspicion comes when something goes wrong following a dispute or quarrelling between neighbors. Everyone will suspect the misfortune is caused by the other party through witchcraft or evil magic.

Sometimes witchcraft is used when someone simply wants to get rid of someone for the fun of it, or to inherit their property. It could even be out of misunderstanding or jealousy that one seeks revenge for the wrong done to them. Every kind of misfortune is blamed on witchcraft. Diseases such as the swelling of internal organs, wasting of the body, and AIDS are cases usually suspected to have been caused by a witch.

A polygamous home is another place where an accusation of witchcraft is common. Co-wives compete to be loved by the husband. Such cases often end up in big quarrels and hatred in the family. Instances where mothers and daughters in-laws fight over control of the son has ended in witchcraft involvement. The mother harbors jealousy with the daughter in-law because she thinks she is an outsider and should not get material support from the son more than her. The daughter in-law, too, looks at the mother in-law as an intruder because the man is her husband.

Such differences end up with each person seeking to outdo the other by magical means. A woman whose child dies usually accuses her mother in-law of being responsible. Esther Kibor adds, "If the wife falls sick, she believes it is her mother in-law who is bewitching her so that she could have all the love of her son. She further notes that old women are also accused of witchcraft because of their age. Queer ugly people—those who are socially handicapped are also liable to accusations of witchcraft. They are

usually held responsible for any outbreak of serious disease or any misfortune."[58]

Differences of this nature have been witnessed even in Adventist homes. The church must teach members more about how to deal with family conflicts using Christian principles instead of following cultural practices and turning to witchcraft. Obtaining wealth is reason people use witchcraft. Businessmen often seek the help of medicine men (witchcraft specialists) to promote their business or when a businessman loses customers to a competitor. Even when there is no witchcraft involvement by the competitor, suspicion and bad blood remain.

Where people compete for some reason, witchcraft is used. Witchcraft is sometimes referred to as "black magic", or "black man medicines" when used against others. Richard Gehman points out that both activities "focus on areas of competition for personal gain within society."[59] The practitioners use their medicine for destructive purposes.

Sickness is another reason people turn to witchcraft for a cure. Sickness is a situation that normally comes when people are least prepared to deal with its consequences. Sickness brings financial needs, which in many instances are not readily available. The sick person and family do everything possible to remedy the situation. But when there is no improvement, people say "the sickness was caused" and suspect foul play.

Diseases such as mental disorder, cerebral malaria, cancer, and heart problems

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[58]Esther J. Kibor, "Witchcraft & Sorcery: A Biblical Perspective with Implications for Church Ministry," *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 25 no. 2 (2006): 154.

[59]Richard Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* (Nairobi: East Africa Publishers, 1989), 78.

are some of the sicknesses where witchcraft is suspected. When a person has been

prayed for and no change is noticed, people resort to witch doctors. The victim seeks to

discover two things: (1) who caused the trouble, and (2) how should the problem be dealt

with. It is unfortunate that Adventists in Kenya also seek answers through witchcraft

when they experience diseases that they think can only be fixed by witch doctors. People

who join the Church and continue in their African traditional beliefs do not experience

change at the worldview level. Even though they are called Christians, their behavior at

night is different from what people perceive of them during the day. Justin Ukpong writes

regarding this:

> When several traditional worshipers become Christians, though they do not wear
> fetishes; they still believe in their power. They also dread their influence. Some think
> that white magic, which people use for protection, should be allowed. There are
> people who wear them for protection, while others hang them on the doors or garden
> fence to ward off evil spirits. The dilemma experienced by Christians is summarized
> thus: Miserable Christian, at mass in the morning, to the fortune teller in the evening,
> the amulet in the pocket, and the scapular round the neck.[60]

In the same way some Kenyan Adventists still hold belief in witchcraft practices.

Some Christians still consult witchdoctors when faced with difficult situations and use

secular methods to handle issues which otherwise could easily be solved through prayer

had they put their trust in God.

Witchcraft Cases in Kenyan Newspapers

Cases confirming peoples' belief in witchcraft have been reported in the Kenyan

newspapers. In one example angry villagers set fire to four houses of suspected witches

in Kanyasrega in Rongo District. A mob invaded the homes of the suspects around

10:00 P.M., set fire to a saloon car and 1.2 acres of sugarcane belonging to the suspect.

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[60]Justin S. Ukpong, *African Theologies, Spear Head, no. 80* (Eldoret, Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1984), 9.

The victims fled to safety when they heard the villagers approach and shouting their names.[61]

Another case was reported by Philemon Matete of Koguna village in the Central Mbita Division, Nyanza province. He says witches have evil powers which can cause harm to anyone. "I know of a witch in my village who is alleged to have caused the death of two children after he quarreled with their parents." Matete, who is a retired teacher, says the siblings died in unexplained circumstances a few days later.[62]

Then there is the story of Mfang'ano Island in Mbita, Suba District—A no go zone after 6 P.M. This is the time witches take control of the island. Some of the witches, villagers say, walk with pythons, leopards, crocodiles, and hippos. In 1999, a witch nicknamed "Sumu Dawa" was found transporting a live hippo in a public vehicle. He had a piece of luggage, which people thought was a sack of sweet potatoes. The animal sprung to life from the sack, leaving passengers shocked. It is claimed that game wardens could not kill the animal despite it being shot several times. The hippo strolled into the bush, without any sign of injury. The witch took advantage of the commotion to disappear.[63]

Mutinda Manias and Roselyn Obala reports that "shock gripped Tala High School in Kangundo District when a sack full of assorted witchcraft paraphernalia was recovered from students' boxes. The paraphernalia included bones, weird drawings and powder,

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[61]Kepha Otieno and Caroline Mango, "Villagers Burn Four Houses of Witches." A report in *The Standard Newspaper*, Monday, April 16, 2007.

[62]Dan Okoth, "Where Witches Roam the Night with Hippos." A report in *The Standard Newspaper*, Sunday, February 25, 2007.

[63]Ibid.

among other things. Priests from nearby Tala Catholic Church conducted a cleansing

ceremony and burnt the paraphernalia."[64]

In another incident, mysterious stones pelted police in Kendu Bay as they tried

to respond to a fire distress call. The fire, burned down a house and granary in Kanunga

village. The owner called for help from police based in Kendu Bay, Rachuonyo District.

Nyanza Provincial police officer, Ms Grace Kaindi said when police attempted to

respond to the call the police vehicle was hit by stones coming from the sky, forcing them

to halt the operation. The fire gutted a house belonging to a Mr. John Omundo aged 75

years. Omundo told the police he saw his house burst into flames, but nobody had lit a

fire anywhere near it.[65]

The newspaper stories are clear testimonies about the prevalence of witchcraft

practices in Kenya. This is evidence enough to encourage the Church to address the

problem. Pastors should teach church members the biblical approach in dealing with

witchcraft. Chapter four will suggest a biblical response to witchcraft problems.

<div align="center">Demonization</div>

Demonization in the Old Testament

Fred Dickason says, "The exact origin of demons is a problem since it is not

precisely stated in the Bible. Demons are not the product of an overactive imagination or

the disembodied spirits of a supposed race of men before Adam. Neither are they the

monstrous offspring of angelic cohabitation with women before the flood (Gen6:1-4).

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[64]Mutinda Mwanzia and Roselyn Obala, "Witchcraft Stuff Found in School," *The Standard Newspaper*, Tuesday, January 30, 2007.

[65]Ibid.

There is no evidence for these views."[66] The Old Testament talks about demons as spirit

beings whose activities are opposed to God and His followers. There is evidence a spirit

being spoke through the serpent and caused the fall of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:1-6).

Satan may be considered a demon, because he is also called "the ruler of the

demons" (Matt 12:24). The evil spirit that troubled Saul (1Sam 16:14) may have been a

demon. Dennis Hamm writes that, "Nowhere in the Hebrew Old Testament does Satan

appear as a distinctive demonic figure, opposed to God and responsible for all evil."[67]

The best known mention of Satan in the Old Testament is in Job—in this case Satan is

really a title: "the Satan," "the accuser" (Job 1-2). More to that, he is part of the heavenly

court—a kind of prosecuting attorney. Francis MacNutt writes, "Rather than being a

personage, he simply fulfills the function of being "the accuser." (Satan became a proper

name only in St. Jerome's Vulgate translation around the year A.D. 400)."[68]

Another place in the Old Testament where "the satan" is mentioned is in

Zechariah 3. As the accuser (again, in God's presence) he is ready to challenge Joshua's

fitness to be high priest. One of the few mentions of an evil spirit in the Old Testament is

when David was enlisted in Saul's court to play the harp when Saul was tormented by an

evil spirit (1 Sam 16:14-16).[69] The Bible records that a demon volunteered to be a

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[66]Fred C. Dickason, *Demon Possession and the Christian* (Wheaton, IL: Good News Publishers, 1987), 23, 24.

[67]Dennis Hamm, "The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data," in *Deliverance Prayer*, ed. Mathew and Dennis Linn (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1980), 51.

[68]Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), 35.

[69]Ibid.

lying spirit to Ahab (1 Kgs 22:20-22). In the time of Daniel, there were spirit beings energizing the world rulers (Dan 10:13, 20). The Old Testament has very little mention of exorcism of evil spirits as was witnessed in the New Testament.[70] Demons are angels who chose to disobey God to do the will of Satan (Ezek 28:18).

Demonization in the New Testament

More than one hundred references to demons are found in the New Testament. The Greek word *daimonion*, translated demon, occurs 63 times in the New Testament.[71] Some people today say there are no such thing as demons, that demons are merely a figure of speech. This is not true because the Bible records that the Lord Jesus cast out demons from demonized people (Matt 12:28). Jesus also gave authority to His disciples to cast out demons (Matt 10:1, 17:20 cf. Mark 9:29). A large part of Christ's ministry involved the casting out of demons.

Ellen White writes, "Evil spirits, in the beginning created sinless, were equal in nature, power, and glory with the holy beings that are now God's messengers. But fallen through sin, they are leagued together for the dishonor of God and the destruction of men. United with Satan in his rebellion, and with him cast out from heaven, they have, through all succeeding ages, co-operated with him in his warfare against the divine authority."[72] Ellen White's statement is a confirmation of the existence of evil spirits after Lucifer rebelled against God. White adds, "The fact that men have been possessed with demons,

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[70]Dickason, 22.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ellen G. White, *Cosmic Conflict: Good and Evil Wage War for Planet Earth* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1971), 451.

is clearly stated in the New Testament. The persons thus afflicted were not merely

suffering with disease from natural causes."[73]

Demons belong to a kingdom headed by Satan and populated by a very large

number of demonic associates. Jesus speaks of them as the devil and his angels (Matt

25:41). Charles Kraft writes, "These beings are out to disrupt God's workings as much as

possible. They are especially concerned to hurt God's favorite creatures—humans."[74]

Demons are wicked, hateful and destructive. Demon spirits have personalities, just like

human beings are personalities, but demons seek human bodies to enter in order to carry

on their activities. Demons will do all they can to re-enter a body they have been kicked

out of.[75]

Demons are fallen angels, "who did not keep their proper domain, but left their

own abode" (Jude 6). Charles Kraft says, "The widely held belief is that when Satan fell,

he took a large number of angels with him"[76] (Rev 12:4, cf. 2 Pet 2:4, 1 Cor 6:3). Satan

has a multitude of demons (Matt 25:41, 12:24, 26 cf. Rev 12:7).About satanic agencies,

Vaughn Allen writes, "Agencies that we cannot see, good and evil are at work to control

the mind and the will. Good angels are exerting a heavenly influence upon our hearts and

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[73]Ibid.

[74]Charles H. Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1992), 99.

[75]Ibid., 217.

[76]Ibid., 19.

minds. At the same time Satan and his angels are continually working to bring about our destruction through control of our minds." [77]

Reasons for Demonization

In this discussion, some authors have used the term "demon possession" while others have used "demonization." We will use the terms interchangeably. However, nearly all contemporary writers on demonization prefer the terms "demonized" and "demonization."[78] Karft writes, "The term "demon possession" does not appear in the Bible. Apparently it originated with the Jewish historian, Flavious Josephus, in the first century A.D. and then passed into ecclesiastical language. The New Testament, however, frequently mentions demoniacs. Usually victims of evil personalities are said to "have a spirit," "a demon," or "an unclean spirit"[79]

The reasons of demonization in a person is often complex and sometimes unclear, but certain causes for demonization seem clear. The following are some of the reasons:

1. Personal involvement. Merrill Unger suggests that the person's own attitudes or activities provide the major cause for demonization. He writes, "In the great majority of cases possession is doubtless to be traced to yielding voluntarily to temptation and to sin, initially weakening the human will, so that it is rendered susceptible to complete or partial eclipse and subjugation by the possessing spirit."[80]

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[77]Vaughn Allen, *Victory On The Battlefield: Setting Captives Free* (Brushton, NY: Masterbook Publishers, 1993), 90.

[78]Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels*, 37.

[79]Ibid., 36.

[80]Merrill F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology* (Wheaton, IL: Scriptures Press, 1957), 95.

Grayson Ensign, commenting on a person's involvement writes, "The usual cause of demonic control over some area, and usually it is only a part of a person's life that is controlled of personality, will, or body stems from that person's involvement in satanic occult activities before he became a Christian."[81] Personal involvement that lead to this include divination, magic, spiritism, or combinations of these. Divination taps secret knowledge, whereas magic taps secret power such as healing and inflicting of hurt, love and hate, magic, curses, and fertility charms.[82]

The Bible recognizes magic and attributes it to Satan and his demons. Consider Pharaoh's magicians who opposed Moses (Exod 7-11) and anti-Christ who deceives men preceding Christ's return (Matt 24:24, 2Thess 2:9, Rev 13:11-15). All magic of supernatural origin is anti-Christ and is demonic in origin (Matt 7:21-23).Spiritism involves the attempt to contact spirits of the dead or supernatural spirits. African people often seek to contact spirits of the dead because some Africans believe the dead are not dead.

2. *Ancestral Involvement*. Bondage, mediumistic abilities, and demonization are not transferred by generic reproduction. Certain inherited and/or conditioned weaknesses may contribute toward one's seeking self-satisfaction through the occult, but the bondage is not inborn. However, if the parents back to the third or fourth generation were involved in the occult or had demonic abilities, then the children may be affected or even invaded as a legal judgment from God (Exod 20:5, Jer 32:18). From Unger's experience, ancestral involvement is the chief cause of demonization.[83]

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[81]Grayson H. Ensign and Edward Howe, *Bothered? Bewildered? Bewitched?* (Cincinnati, OH: Recovery, 1984), 150.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Unger, 95-96.

3. *Spiritual Garbage*—provides a congenial setting for demonization. Where emotional or spiritual garbage exists, demons often find entrance. When a person does not deal with his or her sins, attitudes, and behaviors demons can gain an entry point.[84]

Demons commonly have names that they function under. Consider Jesus' healing of the demoniac of Gadara. He asked him, "What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is legion" (Mark 5:9 cf. Luke 8:30). Demons seldom operate singly. Often they operate in groups (Mark 5:1-4). Demons are spirit beings without bodies (Eph 6:12). They are unlike human beings. Since they have no bodies of their own, they wander through the land, seeking a body into which they can enter to carry out their mission of evil (Matt 12:43-44).

The gospel of Mark gives thirteen references to casting demons out of people by Jesus. The Gospels contain seven specific accounts of Jesus casting evil spirits out of individuals:[85] (1) the man in the synagogue tormented by an unclean spirit (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), (2) the blind and mute demoniac (Matt 12:22-29; Mark 3:22-27; Luke 11:14-22), (3) the Garasene demoniac (Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39), (4) the Syrophoenician woman's daughter (Matt 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30), (5) the epileptic boy (Matt 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43), (6) the mute demoniac (Matt 9:32-34), and (7) the woman with a spirit of infirmity (Luke 13:10-17).

Africans and Demonization

African people look at demonization as a mental disease associated with an evil act. The evil could have been committed by the tormented person or another family

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[84]Ibid.

[85]MacNutt, 38.

member. Sometimes demonization is looked at as a lineage problem (Exod 20:5) or hereditary. It is also believed that a person who was bewitched and then died could come back in the form of an evil spirit (demon) to torment other individuals or a member of his family.

Luo people associate mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, epilepsy, and other psychiatric problems with demonization. Luo terminologies for mental disorders are "*Jajuogi*," "*janeko,*" or "*wich rach*." These terminologies are used for illnesses the people consider to be demonic in nature. A night runner (*Jajuok piti piti*) or a person with an evil eye (*Juog wan'g*) is suspected to be under the control of an evil spirit. Africans do not have medical or scientific explanations for mental illnesses.

Africans believe mental illnesses can be caused by witchcraft or could be hereditary. African people suspect Western medicine is not adequate to cure mental illness. Causes of mental illness are suspected on witchcraft, magic, and sorcery. People try to find out who has caused it by using African medicine to deal with the cause of the problem. African "medicine" is used for various purposes such as to counter the mystical forces of evil. There are people in society who engage in positive mystical forces. These are the medicine men, herbalists, diviners, and mediums. The work of such a person is to counteract acts of witchcraft in the society.

A demonized person could seek treatment from a medicine man. A medicine man could find out who caused the problem and he will use herbal "medicine" to cure the sick person. The sick person receives some mystical medicine strong enough to deal with a mystical cause of mental illness. Some of the herbs could be eaten, put underneath the floor, on the rooftop, or tied on the waist. The treatment may call upon the medicine man to go to the sick person's home to apply the mystical medicine. When necessary, the

medicine man will go to the sick man's home to cast out the evil spirits.

Mbiti states that, "African medicine could be used to prevent things from going wrong, to protect a person or his belongings from harm. Some medicine is used to bring good fortune, success, favor, promotion, passing of examinations. Other people use it to win the love of their wives or girl friends, some use it to succeed in hunting or carry out business; some use it to find employment; others use it to protect themselves from any misfortune."[86] Many Adventist Church members in Kenya seek help from "medicine men" when faced with the problem of demonization. This is because the church has not guided its members on how to deal with demonization.

Religious Analysis

Western Missionaries

Many Western missionaries who evangelized Kenya operated under the influence of colonialism, enlightenment, and the theory of evolution. Hiebert writes, "Missionaries believed in progress and assumed the superiority of Western civilization. They took it upon themselves to civilize and Christianize the people.[87] They often did not take time to study the cultural and traditional beliefs of the indigenous people. It is important to note that a people's worldview is expressed in their culture and produces the traditional beliefs.

Charles Taber writes, "The superiority of Western civilization as the culmination of human development, attribution of that superiority to the prolonged dominance of Christianity, the duty of Christians to share civilization and the gospel with the

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[86]Mbiti, 171.

[87]Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 18.

'benighted heathen'—was the chief intellectual currency of their lives."[88] As much as the missionaries believed in progress, they did not develop Christian apologetics to respond to African traditional beliefs. Belief in progress influenced their way of thinking. It was thought that the superiority of Christianity would sweep away the African traditional religion and its beliefs.[89]

The missionaries missed the point that Africans knew little about the Christian orthodox beliefs and practices. The approach used by the missionaries often did not address the important point of traditional beliefs that culminated in a two-tier belief system among Africans who accepted Christianity.[90]

The missionaries often felt that African traditional beliefs and practices were primitive superstitions which could be ignored. To this John Pobee writes, "All the historical churches by and large implemented the doctrine of the *tabular rasa*, which was the missionary doctrine that there is nothing in the non-Christian culture on which the Christian missionary can build and, therefore, every aspect of the traditional non-Christian culture had to be destroyed before Christianity could be build up."[91] Consequently, the missionary did very little to study the Kenyan people's traditional beliefs. This led the missionaries to have a limited understanding of the issues that Africans attached strong belief in. The missionaries often tried to stamp out the African

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[88]Charles Taber, *The World Is Too Much With Us: "Culture" in Modern Protestant Missions* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1991), 71.

[89]Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 19.

[90]Ibid.

[91]John Pobee, "Political Theology in the African Context," *African Theological Journal* 11 (1982): 16.

traditional beliefs, but they persisted, often hidden and out of sight of the missionaries.[92]

This persistence of African traditional beliefs has continued to the present because they were not dealt with consciously. Thus, the traditional beliefs became part of the new Christian's hidden culture. This has been witnessed when marriage ceremonies are held in the Church, and the people return to their homes to celebrate the wedding in traditional ways. The people continued to practice their old ways, but made sure they did it in secret to avoid Church discipline. They added Christianity as a new layer of beliefs on top of the old, resulting in syncretism, which is the "Blending of one idea, practice, or attitude with another. Traditionally among Christians it has been used of the replacement or dilution of the essential truths of the gospel through the incorporation of non-Christian elements. Examples range from Western materialism to Asian and African animistic beliefs incorporated into the church."[93]

People continued practices such as hiding amulets under shirts, and the use of traditional medicine. Today, these underground beliefs have persisted and are causing conflicts between the old traditional ways and Adventist beliefs among Kenyan Adventists. How should the Adventist Church in Kenya respond to this two-tier form of Christianity? Condemnations and disciplinary actions do not work any better now than before. Trying to ignore traditional beliefs and hoping they will die with time only leads to weak church members and promotes syncretism.

Church leaders must approach the problem from a new direction. They must deal with the African traditional beliefs, realizing that many church members live with deep

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[92]Hiebert, 19.

[93]Scott A. Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 924.

dissonance between what the Church teaches and what they face in their every day life. Wholesale rejection of traditional beliefs without giving convincing spiritual solution only serves to create serious missiological problems. Attempts to suppress old customs generally have met resistance. The old ways simply go underground. Often, over time, these resurface in the lives of the people.

Because people's behavior is formed out of historical, cultural, and sociological settings, it is important that the gospel be made known to them in the particularity of these contexts. Supporting this idea, Eugene Peterson says, "This is the gospel focus: you are the man; you are the woman. The gospel is never about everybody else; it is always about you, about me. The gospel is never truth in general; it is always truth in specific. The gospel is never a commentary on ideas or culture or conditions; it is always about actual persons, actual pains, actual troubles, actual sin; you, me; who you are and what you have done; who I am and what I have done."[94]

Split-level Christianity

Why do Adventists in Kenya continue to practice African traditional beliefs after they become Christians? Traditional beliefs, in many areas are in conflict with biblical teachings. Despite one century of Adventist instruction in Kenya, traditional practices have persisted. These practices were condemned by missionaries and present church leaders. Church members who claim discipleship to Christ still feel compelled to practice African traditional beliefs. People still consult medicine men, herbalists, sorcerers, and diviners for guidance, and go to exorcists for deliverance from evil spirits.

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[94]Peterson, *Leap Over a Wall: Earthly Spirituality for Everyday Christians* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Son & Co., 1997), 185.

Sidney Williamson writes that, "Most Christians live on two unreconciled levels. They are members of a church and ascribe to a statement of faith. But below the system of conscious beliefs are deeply embedded traditions and customs implying quite a different interpretation of the universe and the world of spirit from the Christian interpretation. In the crises of life and rites of passage the church is an alien thing."[95]

The term "split-level" Christianity refers to church members who claim faith in Jesus Christ and at the same time practice African traditional religion. It renders Christianity only a segment of people's lives instead of occupying their whole life. The term split-level Christianity comes from Father Jaime Bulatao.[96]

The problem of split-level Christianity in Kenya is similar to what is happening in many parts of Africa. Pobee writes that, "As one watches the daily lives and activities of the people and takes account of the rites connected with marriage, birth, death, widowhood, harvest and installation of traditional offices, one learns that a great deal of the normal communal activities of the converts lie outside their Christian activities, and that for all their influence, the Christian churches are still alien institutions, intruding

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[95]Sidney G. Williamson, *Akamba Religion and the Christian Faith* (Accra: Ghana University Press, 1965), 158.

[96]Jaime C. Bulatao, *Phenomena and Their Interpretation: Landmark Essays* (Manila: Ateneo de Manilo, 1992), 57-89.

upon, but not integrated with social institutions."[97]

<center>Adventist Response</center>

The conflict between African traditional beliefs and Adventist beliefs in Kenya must be dealt with so that church members become true vessels in the hands of Christ to reach a dying world. The Church should boldly come out and provide biblical answers to the questions people face in their everyday lives.

The study of the religious background of traditional practices seems to be one area that many missionaries neglected when Adventism was introduced into Kenya. The Church has put a lot of effort into establishing systems and theology, but has neglected to learn to understand the people. Effective communication of the gospel cannot take place without a deep understanding of the culture of the people. Too often the Church has focused its attention on the message, and ignore the context in which the gospel is communicated. Consequently, the gospel often remains incomprehensible and irrelevant.

The Church needs to understand the religious beliefs and practices of the people. It must provide biblical answers within the religious and cultural context of Kenya in order to carefully do appropriate contextualization so that there is no uncritical acceptance or rejection of the old ways. Issues that the church has not adequately dealt with include female mutilation, polygamy, witchcraft, demonization, widowhood and re-marriage, the spirit world, ancestors, witchcraft, and sorcery, among many others. Church leaders must address these issues from a biblical perspective.

The church must develop a process to help church members to live a life based on

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[97]John Pobee, *West Africa: Christ Would be an African Too* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996), 2.

biblical truth,[98] to develop a deep knowledge of the Bible, and to have a theological

framework for understanding Scripture. Theological principles that are developed

however, must be grounded in a larger theology of God, creation, sin, salvation,

and Christ's return. By doing this the Church will help its members to find biblically

balanced answers to the existential questions addressed by traditional beliefs. Traditional

beliefs have robbed African people of the concept of the invisible world. It is important

for Christians to have an awareness of that invisible world while here on earth. Eugene

Peterson suggests that,

> Most of the reality with which Christians deal is invisible. Most of what make human
> existence comes through the five senses: emotions, thoughts, dreams, love, hope,
> character, purpose, and belief. Even what makes up most of the basic physical existence
> cannot be perceived unassisted: molecules and atoms, neutrons and protons, the air we
> breathe, the ancestors we came from, the angels who protect us. People live immersed
> in these immense invisibles. And more than anything else, there is God "whom no one
> has seen at any time."[99]

Until the invisible world becomes a living reality in the lives of Christians, folk

religions will not easily die. A theology of worship and submission must also be

understood by church members. At the core of traditional beliefs lie human efforts to

control life. This was the case when the devil came to Adam and Eve and convinced them

not to worship God, but to worship themselves (Gen 3:1-7). Worship of God requires

obedience. Self-centeredness and self-possession remain the greatest temptation for man.

This is the concern of traditional beliefs. People make sacrifices to gods and spirits

seeking healing and prosperity. They turn to ancestors and divination in an attempt to

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[98]See Hiebert, 22, 369-70, 386-87 for a complete description of critical
contextualization.

[99]Eugene Peterson, *Living the Message: Daily Reflections with Eugene H.
Peterson* (San Fransisco, CA: HarperSanFransisco, 1996), 89-90.

control their well-being. Many Kenyan Adventists continue to follow aspects of African traditional religion that the gospel rejects.

The center of African traditional religion are the traditional beliefs and customs, while the center of the gospel message is God and what he did and continues to do (John 3:16-17). The gospel calls on all to submit to him, and live by faith in his plan and not by attempting to control all of life through the manipulation of the spirit world (Isa 8:19-22; Jer 27:9-10; Gal 5:20; Rev 21:8). Change from self-centeredness to God-centeredness is one of the principles the church must emphasize. Yet this change is one of the most difficult for people to make.

The message of salvation as good news must be presented to the poor for it releases the captives, restores sight for the blind, and offers liberty to the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19). The Adventist Church must labor so that its members can become salt and light in Kenyan society. Adventist Church members in Kenya should live according to the teachings of the Bible. When the people are guided by biblical teachings, they will move away from a life of syncretism and become effective witnesses of the gospel in Kenya.

CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL RESPONSES TO AFRICAN TRADITIONAL BELIEFS

Introduction

In chapter 3, various African traditional beliefs and practices found in Kenya were dealt with. Biblical responses are needed so that church members learn how to deal with problems of: (1) death rituals, (2) witchcraft and magic, (3) widowhood and wife inheritance, and (4) demonization. Many church members continue to follow traditional beliefs because the Church has not provided biblical guidance to the questions that traditional beliefs pose. This chapter is divided into five major sections:

The first section presents biblical responses to African death rituals. A comparison is done between Old Testament and African death rituals. The study looks at burial activities, terms related to death, and a textual analysis of Gen 2:7; 2:21-22; and 3:19 addressing the causes of death. The second section compares New Testament and African burial rituals and provides a missiological response to African traditional issues.

The third section presents biblical responses to witchcraft and magic in light of biblical evidence.The fourth section looks at biblical responses to widowhood and wife inheritance and issues surrounding the choice of re-marriage. The fifth section discusses a biblical response to demonization and suggested strategies to deal with it, such as how to pray for demonized people, how to prepare for deliverance, deliverance teams, and what demonized person must do to experience freedom.

The discussions in the five sections give biblical responses to African traditional beliefs and are intended to build a biblical foundation to empower Kenyan Adventists to deal with syncretism and split-level Christianity which has existed in the Adventist Church for far too long.

Death Rituals

Kenyan Rituals Compared to Old Testament Practices

Activities before Burial

Death rituals practiced in the Old Testament are similar to the ones practiced in the New Testament in many ways. One important point that the Old Testament did not stress as much was the belief in the resurrection. The African traditional belief also does not stress resurrection.

During the Old Testament there were activities prior to burial. The treatment given to a dead person was a demonstration of respect by the living. It has been observed that, "the time between death and burial witnessed the intensity of respect the people accorded the deceased and the special treatment given the body demonstrated how the family viewed the dead person."[1]

The Hebrew customs to bury the dead comprised of two parts: (1) the mortuary ritual, which ran simultaneously with the burial, and (2) the physical preparation of the body, including, putting the body in its final resting place.[2] The complete mortuary ritual

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[1]Harper's Bible Dictionary (1985), s.v. "Burial."

[2]Ibid.

is not described in the Bible, however, some texts show that the dead were kept in a house (1 Kgs 17:19 and 2 Kgs 4:18-20).

Once a person died, the Hebrew practice required the eldest son or a near relative to close the eyes of the dead, "I will close your eyes when you die" (Gen 50:1 cf. 46:4). After the body was prepared, the Hebrews put the body inside a room (2 Kgs 4:21; 1 Kgs 17:19), followed by wailing and weeping which alerted the community about the death (2 Sam 1:12; Jer 9:17-18; Mic 1:8). The Hebrews had specific days of mourning. Joseph observed seven days of mourning for his father (Gen 50:10).

The Hebrews had a way to show grief. During that time the people engaged in rending their garments and putting on sack clothe (Isa 20:2; Gen 37:34; 2 Sam 13:31). Maurice Lamm writes about clothe rending as being "an opportunity for psychological relief, it satisfies the emotional need of the moment, or else it would not be permitted as it is a clear violation of the Biblical command not to cause waste." [3]

Commenting on the Hebrew practice of tearing garments and putting on sack clothe, Claus Westerman says these practices are "so old and widespread that their meaning can no longer be determined." [4] Rending of one's garment and lying on the ground acted as symbols of grief among the Hebrews. Rabbi Weiss adds, "So affective is the tearing of our garments as the visible sign of our broken hearts that our sages ruled

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[3]Maurice Lamm, *The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning* (New York: Jonathan David, 1969), 38.

[4]Claus Westermann, *Genesis 37-50: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 44.

out any compromise on this expression of our mourning."[5]

Job, a friend of God, blameless, and upright after he learned of the death of his children, not only tore his robe, but also shaved his head then fell to the ground and worshipped (Job 1:20). He said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). Job knew that man was nothing but "dust and ashes," which is a phrase that occurs in the Hebrew Bible in only three places (Gen 18:27; Job 30:19; 42:6). One important thing to learn from Job is to keep trusting God even when we mourn. How are we to talk about God in the midst of suffering? Like Job, our faith should vindicate God even when we suffer. Ernest Lucas[6] quotes Job's statement which is good for us to emulate, "Until I die I will not put away my blamelessness from me. I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go" (Job 27:5-6). Lucas adds, "It is possible for humans to have a disinterested faith in God in times of suffering." [7]

In contrast to Joseph who mourned for his father for seven days (Gen 50:10), the Luo mourn the death of a married man or woman for at least thirty days. The mourning period for a young child could be seven days. Before burial, community members and friends gather in the home of the dead to console the bereaved family.

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[5]Rabii Abner Weiss, *Death and Bereavement: A Halakhic Guide* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1991), 66.

[6]Ernest C. Lucas, *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 135.

[7]Ibid.

Another Luo practice is similar to a Hebrew one. The Luo people bury the dead at the ancestral home. However, different Kenyan tribes have different customs concerning where to bury the dead.

The Luo insist that a dead body must not enter the home through the gate. People believe another death may happen when a body enters the home through the gate. Such beliefs contradict biblical teaching concerning death and the state of the dead. Treating the dead as if they have a part in the world of the living is unbiblical. Raymond Brown, reminds believers to be wary of such practices which God despises.[8]

The Luo, Abagusi, and Luhya tribes insist that a body must spend a night at the deceased's home before it is buried. Other tribes bury the dead on the day the body is removed from the funeral home. Seventh-day Adventists in Kenya insist that the body be removed from the funeral home two days prior to burial on a Sunday. The church recommends that burials should take place any day other than a Saturday. The Luo, Abagusi, and Luhya people ensures a body must spend a night in the compound before burial. People fear that the dead will cause a taboo on the family that the practice is not followed.

When a body is removed from the funeral home on a Friday, the cost of feeding mourners which is the responsibility of the bereaved family is very high. It is also a health hazard to keep a body at an inappropriate temperature because it soon will have a bad odor. The fear of taboo caused by the dead because it was denied the opportunity to spend the night in the home is not only unbiblical but should be discouraged.

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[8]Raymond Brown, *The Message of Deuteronomy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 184-185.

The Luo practice shaving of hair as a sign of mourning which is similar to what

Job did (Job 2:13). The practice of shaving of hair originated with God (Mic 1:16; Jer

7:29). This practice however, is not practiced by many people today because of the

influence of Christianity. The difference between Job's action when he shaved his head

and tore his clothes and the Luo practice is that as much as Job grieved and mourned, he

did not forget to worship God. In his plight he recognized God as the giver of life and

owner of all that he had. In situations of distress, Job's moment of sorrow is a good

example for Christians to follow—he blessed the name of the Lord in sorrow. The Luo

engage in wailing and rending of clothe as the Hebrew people did as a sign of grief and a

broken heart.

Activities during Burial

Activities during burial for the Hebrews and the Kenyans are considered in this

section. God said to Adam and Eve, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread. Till

you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you

shall return" (Gen 3:19). The Hebrew way of conducting a burial was to have the dead

person buried in the ground the same day of death (Deut 21:23). Sperling writes,

"Death, Judaism teaches, atones for the sin of man, therefore the body should at the

earliest moment be laid to rest."[9]

A Hebrew who had committed a sin deserving of death was put to death, but the

body was not to remain unburied overnight, but was to be buried that day, so that the

body would not defiled the land (Deut 21:23).

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[9]Abraham I. Sperling, *Reasons for Jewish Customs and Traditions* (New York: Bloch, 1968), 292.

106

The Hebrew practiced burial in the land of the ancestors. Abraham purchased a ground to bury his wife Sarah and his descendants were also buried there (Gen 47: 29-30; 49:29-32; Exod 13:19). Abraham insisted on purchasing land for a burial site at a cave in Machpelah for his family and descendants (Gen 47:30; 49:29-32; Exod 13:19). Gibson says, "Hebrews people considered it a blessing to bury their dead in the family tombs beside their forbearers." [10] Gideon, Asahel, and Samson, during the time of the judges were buried in their ancestral tombs on the family land.[11] Burial in family tombs "insure and demonstrate a visible, perpetual claim to the land.[12] The Old Testament practice had the dead buried in family tombs or a family sepulcher (Gen 49:29-33).

The Hebrews also buried the dead in rock-hewn tombs. Other graves were dug under trees. Deborah was buried in such a burial place (Gen 35:8). Other people in Hebrew society were buried in pit graves away from areas of residence. When this was the case, the body was placed on a wooden bier and family members transported the body to the tomb (2 Sam 3:31). A multitude of people went in support of the family accompanying the body (1 Kgs 13:29-30, cf. 2 Kgs 23:30). The presence of professional mourners was significant as they played songs of lamentations (Jer 9:17; Eccl 5:12; Amos 5:16, Job 21:32-33).

Hebrew burial tombs have been found by archaeological excavations. Two types of burials among the Israelites are mentioned—a temporary and a permanent

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[10]John C. L. Gibson, *Genesis* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1982), 2:132-133.

[11]Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (Sheffield, England: JSOT, 1992), 115.

[12]Ibid.

one.[13] After time had elapsed, the bones were moved from the temporary burial place to a permanent one (2 Sam 21:12-15). The Hebrews had a huge fire at the funeral of king Asa, a practice that is also shared by the Luo people. But it must be noted that in Asa's case the fire was built as a memorial and was an honorific rite customarily granted to kings.[14] The origins of such fires for the dead are not known.[15]

Activities after Burial

In this section similarities and differences in activities after burial for Hebrews and Kenyans are considered. The Hebrews did not end their funeral activities with the burial. After burial and weeping and mourning the bereaved family continued to receive comfort and care. This is similar in Kenyan. The Luo and Luhya tribes also continue weeping and mourning after burial. Although the practice is not as intense as before, it is still observed by some people.

The Hebrews had seven days of intense mourning when a close relative died (Gen 50:10, cf. 1 Sam 31:13; Job 2:13). They had a "stage for intense mourning"—normally between death and burial time. During that time, even the mourners did not receive greetings of peace (Ezek 24:17). The mourning was extended for thirty days when the Israelites grieved the death of Moses. Aaron too, was mourned for thirty days when he died (Deut 34:8; Num 20:29). When Jacob breathed his last, Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. This process required forty days, during

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[13]*The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (1987), s.v. "Burial."

[14]Ibid.

[15]Sarah Japhet, *1 & 2 Chronicles* (London: SCM, 1993), 739.

which time the family mourned. In fact, the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days (Gen 50:1-3).

Kenyan people weep and shed tears during mourning. The deceased's wife carries a jacket or shirt of the dead as she wails within the compound. With the coming of Christianity, some of the old mourning practices were no longer followed such as prohibiting the widow from eating together with others for the time she had to undergo a ritual cleansing process (*chola*).

Death rituals were part of the Hebrew cultural practice. But when Ezekiel's wife died, the Lord told him not to mourn in the traditional way. The LORD said to him, "Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead, bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow" (Ezek 24:16-17).

The Lord's command to Ezekiel indicates there were ritual practices common to the Hebrews. But Ezekiel was to mourn differently because he was a light bearer for the Lord. Christians today must mourn differently and do away with old cultural practices that go against biblical principles because they too, like Ezekiel, are the light of the world (Matt 5:14). Christians must move away from worldly traditions to kingdom traditions.

The Hebrew people also had a law of property inheritance. When a man died, the first son inherited the property. In the absence of a son, daughters or the widow were next in line. When there are no daughters, the property went to the father. Brothers-in-law were next, and the nearest next of kin came last (see Num 27:5-11). Benjamin notes that this chain to inherit property denied an outsider who married a widow access to the

property.[16] This practice is similar to the Luo people's law regarding property inheritance while other tribes in Kenya practice different methods concerning property in-heritance.

<div align="center">Kenyan Rituals Compared to New Testament Practices</div>

Activities before Burial

There are a number of New Testament practices related to burial that will be compared with African practices in Kenya. Activities before burial in the New Testament are follows:

1. When death happened in the New Testament someone was to announce it in a shrill voice, followed by lamentation (Mark 5:38). After a death was announced, people gathered for the funeral. Hired mourners and flute players were present and singing was part of the funeral process (Matt 9:23; Mark 5:38).

The Luo people also have a way to announce death. Women are the ones who announce death by wailing loudly (*goyo nduru*). There is intense mourning when death is announced and on the day of burial. Upon receiving the news, relatives and friends immediately join the bereaved family to mourn the loss and continue to stay with the bereaved family until the burial. Close friends drop by to visit the bereaved family for a good number of days after the burial. This practice needs to be encouraged so that church members can continue to offer a ministry of presence which is important to a person or family adjusting to a huge loss.

2. Before burial, the body of the dead was washed and oil put on it (Luke 24:1; John 12:7; Mark 16:1).

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[16]Don C. Benjamin, *Deuteronomy and City Life* (New York: University Press of America, 1983), 246, 254.

Luo people do the washing of the body for a death that occurred in the home. Traditional herbal medicine is applied to the body to keep the body from giving off a bad odor.

3. Treatment of the body with myrrh and aloes was also practiced by the Jews before the body was wrapped in a linen clothe (John 11:44; Matt 27:59).

Luo people like a body to be buried while dressed in a nice clothe. In the old days the dead were not put in a box or coffin but were lowered into the grave wrapped in linen.

4. The mouth of the dead person was bound shut and the body lay in a room awaiting burial (John 11:44; Acts 9:37; Matt 9:23).

The Luo people shut the dead person's mouth immediately following death for they believe a taboo could befall a family member if the dead person was buried with the mouth open.

Activities during Burial

The following activities were practiced in the New Testament during burial:

1. The body was put on a bier and carried on the shoulders to the grave site (Luke 7:12-14). Jews located their burial tombs away from towns in Palestine. The Luo people also bury the dead on their ancestral land away from towns. The body is carried by men to the grave. Family members gather at the grave side to pay last respect to their loved one. Intense mourning follows immediately as the grave is filled with soil.

2. After death was announced burial had to take place within twenty-four hours (Acts 5:5-10). This was necessary because there were no scientific methods to preserve the body. Quick burials also acted as a means to reduce excessive grief and to reduce the

amount of time a dead body was kept in the house.[17] Fear of defilement by coming in

contact with a dead body was also a factor (Num 19:11-16).

In Jewish law, being in the presence of a dead body causes ritual uncleanness.

Thus a *kohein* (member of a priestly family) was not to be in the presence of a corpse,

and those who had been were required to wash their hands before entering a home,

whether or not they had touched the body (Lev 21:11 cf. Num 19: 13-14).

Most Jewish communities had a special group of volunteers, the "holy society"

(*chevra Kaddish*) whose duty it was to care for the dead. They had the responsibility to

wash the body and prepare it for burial according to Jewish custom.[18] An open casket

was forbidden by Jewish law, as this would be disrespectful to the dead. Bodies were

buried in a simple linen shroud to ensure that the poor did not receive less honor than the

rich. The body was also wrapped in a tallit.[19]

The Jewish people also had a practice of moving the bones from one part of the

tomb to another. After a body had decomposed the bones could be piled in one area or

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[17]Ibid.

[18]See "Jewish Death and Funeral Rituals," http//www. Religionfacts.com/ judaism/cycle/death.htm (accessed July 29, 2007).

[19]Tallit (Heb Tyzt, pl. tallitot) is a prayer cloth. Originally the word meant "gown" or "cloak." This was a rectangular mantle that looked like a blanket and was worn by men in ancient times. At the four corners of the tallit tassels were attached in fulfillment of the biblical commandment of Zizit (Num 15:38-41). The tallit signifies a priestly people of God. It was made of either wool or linen.

put in a box, and then shelved.[20] This practice is not followed in Kenya.

Jewish law required that tombstones be erected on graves so the dead would be remembered and to ensure that the grave was not desecrated. People who could not afford expensive rock-hewn tombs were placed in the ground. After the body was placed in the ground, earth filled the grave and a heap of stones was put on top to preserve the body from depredations of beasts or thieves.[21] Putting stones on top of a grave is also a common practice with the Luo People in Kenya to protect the body and as a means of identifying the grave after time has elapsed.

Activities after Burial

One important teaching in the New Testament is the resurrection. Jesus was our example to confirm that there is a resurrection of the saints after death, and Jesus himself rose from the dead (John 5:21). Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after four days (John 11:38-44). Because Jesus believed in the resurrection, he referred to the dead as sleeping. Jesus referred to Jairus's daughter as sleeping (Matt 9:24; Mark 5:39). The Gospel of Mathew records that some of the saints who had slept were raised when Jesus rose from the dead (Matt 27:52). When Christ returns all the saints will be raised from the dead (Rev 21:4 cf. 1 Thess 4:16).When Stephen was stoned to death, the apostles referred to him as asleep (Acts 7:60).

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[20]Rachel S. Hallote, "Death, Burial, and Afterlife in the Biblical World: How the Israelites and Their Neighbors Treated the Dead," *Journal of Anthropological Research,* vol. 59, no. 1 (spring, 2003): 124-126.

[21]Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 557.

The Bible teaching confirms that the dead are not conscious and they have no part

in the activities of life under the sun (Eccl 9:5). Ellen White writes, "What say the

Scriptures concerning these things? David declares that man is not conscious in death.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish."[22]

The New Testament talks about the Sadducees, who like the non-believing Africans, did

not believe in the resurrection (Mark 12:18-27). Non-believers in Kenya do not believe in

the resurrection. Instead, such people believe the dead are not dead and they still have a

part in the affairs of their family.

Jesus taught those who would be His followers not to be pre-occupied with issues

about death such that they forget their calling. In his response to one follower who

wanted more time before he could follow the Lord, Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury

their own dead" (Matt 8:21; Luke 9:59). Ellen White adds that temporal things should not

divert attention of a minister from soul winning.[23]

<center>Theological Responses</center>

Cause of Death

In the minds of traditional Kenyan people, death is caused by either magic or

witchcraft. On rare occasions people look at death as a natural consequence that came

because of sin. The traditional belief of death, unfortunately shared by many Adventist

members is tied to the traditional belief in witchcraft, magic, and sorcery. This belief has

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[22]Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, 478.

[23]Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 2 (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1948), 541.

failed to die even after people claim to be born again. Church members must be taught

biblical truth regarding death and its origin in order to empower them to deal with the

conflict that arises between biblical teachings and traditional beliefs.

The Bible says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being" (Gen 2:7).

The meaning of *pneuma* and *nephesh* will help Christians understand the cause of death.

Death was not part of God's plan at creation. After Adam was created he was put in the

garden of Eden to care for it (Gen 2:8). Adam was allowed to eat all the fruit in the

garden, except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that he ate

of it he would die (Gen 2:17). The context of death is tied to obedience (Gen 3:4).

After Eve was tempted and ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, she

gave her husband some of the fruit and he ate it (Gen 3:6). This marked the beginning of

death. God then cursed the ground saying, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you

shall return" (Gen 3:19). But in the minds of Kenyan people, death is caused by

witchcraft and magic even though the Bible teaches that death was the result of sin.[24]

Christians must understand that death is inevitable and last enemy to be conquered and it

will not be part of the kingdom of God (Rev 21:4).

Kenyan Adventists must be guided by what Paul said, "If anyone is in Christ, he

is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2

Cor 5:17). The concept of all things becoming new must dissuade the believer from the

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[24]Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 351-354.

idea that witchcraft and magic are the major causes of death. Witchcraft and magic are not the originators of death, but should be viewed as devilish methods used against those outside the protection of Jesus. When a person is a believer, he is covered by the blood of the lamb which is able to protect from all machinations of the evil one. God's people may claim his promises, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Rev 12:11).

Kenyan Adventists face many pressures from people in the community. Because of connectedness Christians are pressured and influenced to continue their old way of life. To this, Magesa writes, "Every creature has been endowed by God with its own force of life, its own power to sustain life. Because of the common divine origin of this power, however, all creatures are connected with each other in the sense that each one influences the other for good or bad. Nothing moves in this universe of forces without influencing other forces by its movement. The world of forces is held like a spider's web of which no single thread can be caused to vibrate without shaking the whole network."[25] In the minds of the Kenyan people, nothing happens by accident, so there must be a cause.

Death as Sleep

What happens when people die? Can they continue as the living dead and have a part in the affairs of the family? The African view of death differs with what the Bible teaches. In the African mind, the dead are not really dead. Traditional Africans believe the dead can come back to life and direct the affairs in the family. People say the dead

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[25]Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (MaryKnoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 46.

have received "eyes" and can punish those who are disobedient to their desires. Because of this strong belief, it is important to do an analysis on the key biblical terms related to death.

The Bible says" For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23). An analysis of this text shows that God punished sin by death. It was the test of obedience that Adam and Eve failed in the garden of Eden (Gen 2:17). Human beings were created to have everlasting life. By falling into sin, Adam and Eve impacted God's plan for people to live forever. Sin brought death, but God's gift is eternal life in Jesus. This is salvation language. The formula of salvation can be rendered as follows:

> Repentance + Forgiveness = Salvation and Eternal Life
>
> Man's Part + Jesus' Part = Hope to Live Again

All people whether a believer or not face death (Gen 3:1-6). For a believer death is like sleep. Those who die in Christ Jesus will resurrect to eternal life. Those who did not believe in Jesus will resurrect to eternal damnation because they are already judged (2 Cor 5:10). Death as sleep is salvation language used by Jesus pointing to apocalyptic life eternal for the saints (Rev 21:4-5). Physical death is not the end for a person who dies believing in Jesus (John 11:14). The person is asleep even though he is dead. Jesus used the imagery of death as sleep when He went to Lazarus' home. He said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going to wake him up" (John 11:11).

Death, which is referred to as "sleep," can only be found in Christ Jesus for there

is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

Matandiko says, "Death is but a short rest after which activity resumes. The psalmist

hoped in salvation from death, which is a resurrection (Ps 16:11; 49:15-16; 73:23-26).

Life beyond the grave is possible only as the resurrection comes to reality (Ps 89:48,

49)." [26] In his Old Testament study, McAlpine says, "Sleep/death juxtaposition is as

much a symbol of their common elements." [27]

During burial and memorial services, the words "soul" and "spirit" have

frequently been misused. People insinuate that the dead continue to exist as living

souls. This position strengthens the African traditional belief that the dead continue to

live as the living dead. For example, a common prayer for many Christians in Kenya

says, "May the Lord rest his soul or spirit in eternal peace."[28]

Soul and Spirit

African people believe that those who die are not really dead for the soul

continues to live. This belief is widespread in Kenya and other parts of Africa. The soul is

not much talked about when a person lives, but only after he dies. The question to ask is,

What is it in a person that dies at death? Another question is What comprises a living

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[26]Cornelius M. Matandiko,"A Christian Response to Zambian Death Rituals"
(D.Min. Dissertation, Andrews University, 1996), 81.

[27]Thomas H. McAlpine, "Sleep, Divine & Human in the Old Testament," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (1978): 149.

[28]Many Christians, including some clergy pray for God to give rest and eternal peace to the soul/spirit of the dead. This distorts the biblical truth which says the dead know nothing. The dust returns to the ground, and the spirit returns to God (Eccl 12:7).

human being? By answering those two questions, it is possible to find out whether a soul continues to exist after a person dies.

The Hebrew word for man (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew word for ground (*adamah*)[29]; it is also the name for Adam (Gen 2:20). "The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (Gen 2:7, cf. Gen 1:27). This verse suggests a formula for man's composition:

Dust of the ground + Breath of life = A living Person

The Hebrew word for soul is *nephes*, from the root *naphas*. The word *nephes* means a living being, life, a person, that which breathes, the breathing substance, or being.[30] A living being, in other words, means a living soul—according to the Hebrew language. The entirety of a person is the soul. Notice textual references about the soul. When the psalmist says "My soul clings to you" (Ps 63:8), he declares that his whole being will cling to God. "My soul will boast in the Lord" (Ps 34:2), means that the whole being boasts in the Lord. The word *nephes* should be understood to mean a whole human being as it was when God created man (Gen 2:7). Schwarz says, "The word *nephes* does

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[29]Francis Brown, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1981), s.v. "Adamah."

[30]Ibid.

not mean soul in the strict sense as a separate entity, but the whole being." [31] When a

person dies, nothing remains as illustrated in the diagram below.

Dust of the ground – Breath of life = A dead Person

Commenting on the word soul, Biare says, "In all its appearances, there is no

notion that soul has an independent existence." [32] It must be understood that it is

pointless to pray for a dead person's soul for it cannot exist separately from a dead body.

The correct position is that a human being does not have a *nephes* (soul), for the person is

the soul. The word "soul," which is translated *nephes* in Hebrew, is used 428 times in the

Old Testament. It is translated "life" 119 times, "person" (30), "mind" (15), "heart" (15),

"creature" (9), "body or dead body" (7), "dead" (5), and "man," "me," "beast," "ghost,"

and other forms of personal pronouns, four times.[33] The Bible says, "For every living

soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son—both alike belong to me. The soul who

sins is the one who will die (Ezek 18:4).

The African traditional belief that says that the soul continues to live after death is

not supported by the Scriptures. The word soul has been misunderstood to mean a

separate entity within a person that lives outside a dead body. A living soul is a living

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[31]Hans Schwarz, *Beyond the Gates of Death: A Biblical Examination of Evidence for Life after Death* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1981), 25.

[32]Francis Wright Biare, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1982), 248.

[33]T. H. Jemison, *Christian Beliefs* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press association, 1959), 139.

person and a dead soul is the person who has died.

African people use the word soul and spirit interchangeably. Sometimes, people say, "may the Lord put, or rest his spirit in eternal peace." Kenyan people fondly use the word "spirit" during memorial or funeral services. In the minds of the people, spirit refers to an entity in a human being that does not die. It is important to correct this misconceived idea. The idea that God receives the spirit of a person when a person dies is not found in the Scriptures.

A prayer for God to keep a dead person's spirit in eternal peace contradicts biblical teaching concerning the resurrection. The logical question would be, "What part of a person will be resurrected when Jesus comes?" A biblical answer would be: God will resurrect the same person who died. Those who died in faith will be resurrected in the same form of Adam at creation—sinless and destined to live with God forever. The notion that a person's spirit continues to live after death is the basis for the African traditional belief concerning the living dead.

The Hebrew word *nephes* is translated "breath," "life," "person," "emotions." The Greek word *psuche* is translated "breath," life principle," "living creature," "person." In its first occurrence (Gen 2:7), the Hebrew *nephes* denotes man, who was given existence when the divine spark of life was injected into a physical body formed from the dust of the ground.[34] In the New Testament, the word *pneuma* has occurred 385 times, 105 times in the Gospels, 69 times in Acts, 21 times in the earlier Pauline writings, 140 times in the later Pauline writings, 27 times in the apostolic epistles, and 23 times in the

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[34]S*eventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary* (1979), s.v. "nephes."

apocalypse.[35] The root for *pneuma* is *pneu*, meaning to blow or breath. The root *pneu* and

the suffix *ma*, refers to air in motion as a special substance that empowers one's being. In

the New Testament, *pneuma* has also been translated as mood (1 Cor 4:21; 2 Tim 1:7;

Rom 8:15). *Pneuma* is the power that God gives to energize, or the life principle found in

man.[36]

When Jesus was about to die, he cried out in a loud voice, He said, "Father into

your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46, cf. Acts 7:59). Jesus died echoing the words

of the Psalmist who said, "Into your hands I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O

Lord God of truth" (Ps 31:5).

Nichol comments, "The cry of Jesus brings to a sublime climax the spirit of

humble submission to the will of the Father exemplified throughout Jesus' life on

earth." [37] In the garden of Gethsemane, the same selfless spirit prompted Jesus' words,

"not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt 26:39). Happy is the man or woman who lives and

 dies in the hands of God—all is safe in his hands.

Death is clarified when the proper meaning of the word *ruach,* which appears in

the Old Testament 377 times is understood. The context in the usage of *ruach* is also

important because it has a variety of meanings. One of the meanings is wind or breath

(Judg 15:19). It has also been used to mean morality (Ezek 11:19), courage (Josh 2:11),

anger or resentment (Judg 8:3). Schwarz says that, "Spirit was perceived as God's

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[35]Schwartz, 25.

[36]Ibid.

[37]"Spirit," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, rev. 1980), 5: 878.

comprehensive enabling, enlivening and sustaining power." [38] A human being owes his existence to *ruach*—which is the divine energy that animates him. *Ruach* and *nephesh* is never the same thing. Nagakubo writes that, "*Nephes* is a combination of body and spirit, *ruach* is the breath of life that gives life to the body." [39]

The New Testament also uses *soul* and *spirit* interchangeably (Luke 1:46-47). In relation to the life of a human being, *pneuma* must be understood as the life principle found in the body when a person is alive. At death, the life principle, *pneuma*, ceases and returns back to God. *Pneuma*, returning back to God does not mean it is an entity. *Pneuma* going back to God is recognition of God's creative power. God owns life—He imparts and takes it away.

<div align="center">Missiological Responses</div>

It is essential that the biblical message is presented in a better approach. New converts to Adventism should hear the message of Christ and his death on the cross as the starting point. Usually the Adventist approach talks about issues such as justification by faith, the three angels messages, state of the dead, investigative judgment, the Sabbath, lifestyle habits, tithe and offerings, the second coming of Christ, the millennium, and others. The message about Jesus and his redemptive work should be presented before other doctrinal issues. The Savior must first be uplifted then the other Adventist fundamental teachings can follow.

The concept of trinity needs to be presented in a way that the people will

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[38]Schwarz, 27.

[39]Senzo Nagakubo, "Investigation into the Jewish Concept of Afterlife in the Beth She'Arim Greek Inscriptions" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1974), 108

understand its meaning. The African concept of God could be different from that in America. The concept of trinity is not easily grasped by the average Kenyan person. The African understanding is that there is one God who is not comprised of three persons.

Kenyan culture divides living things into two basic categories: (1) supernatural beings such as God, Satan, and demons and (2) human beings, animals, plants, and inanimate objects such as rocks and mountains. Different people groups in Kenya have different names for God. The 'Luo' tribe calls God '*Nyasaye,*' the Kikuyu tribe calls God, '*Ngai*,' and the Kisii tribe call him '*eNyasae*.' In all the tribes mentioned, God is viewed as one person, not comprising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This position is different from the New Testament trinitarian view of God—three persons in one.

Africans, like Hiebert says, divided the world into three zones: (1) the heavens, where the high God and angels lives, (2) the earth, where humans, animals, plants and matter lives, and (3) the middle zone, where worldly spirits, magic, witchcraft, and the evil eye are found. In the Western world the things in the three zones are seen as mutually independent. The African traditional religions view all things in the three zones as interdependent.[40] When the missionaries evangelized Kenya, Christianity dealt more on the God of heaven, earth, and salvation. Issues in the middle zone were not dealt with. Matters of the middle zone were seen as fairy tales—as fiction and illusion.

Hiebert writes, "The missionaries were deeply influenced by Enlightenment worldview. They retained their faith in God and the domain of the supernatural, but they also placed great value on science and reason. When people spoke of fear of evil spirits, the missionaries often denied the existence of these spirits rather than claim power of

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[40]Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 90.

Jesus over them."[41] The Kenyan people were left uneducated and are still ignorant how to deal with problems of the "middle zone." The Adventist Church must teach its members how to deal with middle zone issues.

Kenyan people joining the church from different cultural backgrounds should function in the church under the analogy of a brother and sister relationship. As Paul Hiebert writes, "A son and a daughter are children of a father and mother. If they are children of the same parents they are brother and sister, not because of what they are intrinsically, but because of their relationship to a common reference point."[42] The concept of God as the believer's common reference point needs to be clearly taught and emphasized.

One good question to ask is, What does it mean to be a Christian? Understanding how people form categories such as Christian and church could give a better answer. Forming Christian categories may be understood from the well-formed set theory. In this theory, Robert Stoll says, "A collection of objects can be regarded as a single entity (a whole) if the objects share properties that define a whole."[43] Christians need to function as well-formed sets which must have a sharp boundary. "Things either belong to the set or they do not. The result is a clear boundary between things that are inside and things that are outside the category. Fuzzy sets have no sharp

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[41]Ibid.

[42]Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1994), 111.

[43]Robert R. Stoll, *Set Theory and Logic* (San Francisco, CA: W. H. Freeman, 1963), 2.

boundaries."[44] When people join Christianity yet carry with them cultural beliefs about God which are different from the biblical concept of God, they become fuzzy sets and have no sharp boundaries. Christians who hold to traditional beliefs cannot belong to a bounded set for well-formed sets are those in which it is possible to determine whether any object is, or is not, a member of that set.

Characteristics of bounded sets is a good illustration for Kenyan Adventists to measure orthodoxy. Bruce Bauer has identified five characteristics of bounded sets: (1) a category is created by listing the essential characteristics that are needed in order to belong to the set, (2) the category is then defined by a clear boundary indicating whether an object is outside or inside the boundary, (3) objects inside the boundary share essential characteristics and are considered a homogeneous group, (4) bounded sets are static in the sense that the primary concern is whether or not an object is inside or outside the boundary, and (5) bounded sets are ontological in nature and emphasize the unchanging nature of abstract categories that lead to an abstract analytical approach to logic.[45] Bounded sets introduce the concept of order with boundaries.

Because Christian leaders cannot look into the hearts of people, they usually focus on the external characteristics that they can see or hear. Bounded set theory may help one understand a church member's concept of Adventist beliefs. Loyalty to

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[44]Fuzzy sets are analogical sets in which X may have been any value from 0 or 1. A member may therefore belong to the sets A and not -A at the same time. Excluded middle does not apply to fuzzy sets.

[45]Bruce L. Bauer, "Bounded and Centered Sets: Possible Applications for Adventist Mission," Unpublished article, Berrien Springs, MI, October, 2007, 1.

126

orthodoxy and verbal affirmation of Adventist beliefs in a specific set of doctrines,

such as the deity of Christ and the God-head affirm one's faith in biblical teachings.

When orthodoxy is mixed with traditional beliefs the behavior of a person falls in the

category of a fuzzy set and fails as characteristics of a bounded set.

Witchcraft and Magic

The detestable practices of witchcraft and magic are spoken against in both the

Old and New Testaments. The land of Canaan which the Lord promised to give the

Israelites were full of unacceptable practices. The Lord said,

> When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to
> imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among
> you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or
> sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a
> medium or spirits or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is
> detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your
> God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the
> Lord your God (Deut 18: 9-13).

The same command God gave to the Israelites in the Old Testament period is

what he requires of present day Christians. Kenyan Adventists and Christians in other

places have been called to live by the Spirit and not to gratify the desires of the sinful

nature (Gal 5:16). The Bible lists some of the obvious sinful practices such as sexual

immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft (Gal 5:20). Acts of

witchcraft are clearly condemned by God. The Adventist Church in Kenya needs to speak

out against these practices. A famous saying among Kenyans is that "Christianity must be

topped up by traditional beliefs."[46] This belief promotes syncretism and must be

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[46]This saying implies that solving problems by other means such as witchcraft and
magic is acceptable even after a person becomes a Christian.

confronted by the Church. The Lord God does not approve practices of magic.

God commanded Ezekiel to warn the people against such practices. The Lord said, "I am against your magic charms with which you ensnare people" (see Ezek 13:20, cf. Rev 21:8). Even though God condemned witchcraft and magic, they were practiced in many cultures there in the Old Testament. A vivid example is when Pharaoh summoned the wise men and sorcerers of Egypt to counterfeit the work of Moses (Exod 7:11). There are times when the people of God may be lured by the devil into practices which God hates. As much as the schemes of Satan may appear attractive, Kenyan Adventists must trust God because His power is above any power of darkness. A biblical example is when Aaron's staff swallowed up the snakes of Pharaoh's magicians (Exod 7:12).

When Christians are troubled with problems they do not have answers for, Nebuchadnezzar's dream is instructive on how the God of heaven can answer the Christian's problems. Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by a dream so he summoned the magicians to tell him the meaning of the dream. The magicians and the astrologers failed and said, "There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks. What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men" (Dan 2:2, 10-11). Daniel in his answer to the king said, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about. But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries" (Dan 2:27-28).

Daniel trusted God and he lived to exalt his kingdom. Daniel had no desire to exalt himself above the wise men. He aimed, rather, to impress upon the king the futility of trusting his wise men for counsel and help. He hoped to turn the king's eye to the great God in heaven, the God whom Daniel worshiped, and the God of the Hebrews, whose

people had been conquered by the king. [47]

Church pastors must teach Christians the futility in trusting magicians or seeking counsel and help from them. Christians must turn to the great God in heaven—the God whom Daniel worshiped. There is no merit for Christians to hang on to traditional beliefs or to seek help from magicians and witchcraft when there is a God in heaven to help them.

Widowhood and Wife Inheritance

Wife inheritance practiced by the Luo people involves ritual cleansing for the widow. It requires a widow to have sexual intercourse with a man in the house of the deceased. In return the man was to take care of the widow. Wife inheritance is not a marriage that involves a church wedding. It does not require a man to pay dowry as is the case in recognized marriages by the Luo. Wife inheritance is a lose marriage because the legal requirement such as a marriage certificate is not signed by the couple. The woman can terminate the relationship at any time even without giving a reason. People believe a woman who is not inherited can cause a taboo (*chira)* to the widow, her children, or other family members.

A widow runs into problems with the family of the deceased husband when she does not accept the traditional demands. Widows need the freedom to choose to remain single or re-marry. To this, the apostle Paul's counsel is, "But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, it is good for them if they remain even as I am, but if they cannot exercise

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[47]"Wise Men," T*he Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary,*" ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, rev. 1980), 4:770.

self control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Cor 7:8-9).

When a widow chooses to remarry, the family of the deceased husband should honor her wishes to marry a man of her choice. The deceased husband's family must not insist that a widow marry a brother in-law. The Jews had a way of taking care of widows. The law for levirate marriage was put in place to ensure a widow could raise a child so that the name of a deceased person would not be blotted out of Israel (Gen 38:8, Deut 25:5-10). The Hebrew levirate marriage is different from wife inheritance practiced by the Luo people of Kenya (see chapter 3).

A similarity between wife inheritance and the law of levirate was that a widow was encouraged to marry within the family circle, though the widow could marry an outsider—a stranger. The purpose for a levirate marriage was to continue a name and care for the widow. Matandiko says, "Marriage was involved in the levirate—it was not mere sex. The levirate marriage was not an act of cleansing" [48] (Deut 25:5-6).

Issues concerning widows have not been addressed by the Adventist Church in Kenya. The Church must confront African traditional beliefs regarding widowhood and wife inheritance. The traditional practice that requires a widow to be inherited is of less value and lowers the dignity of women in society. A justified walk with God calls upon Kenyan Adventists to reject the cultural practice of wife.

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[48]Matandiko, 105.

Biblical Responses to Demonization

A Demonized Person

The problem of demon possession is a very real one in many African societies and needs to be addressed by the church. What are demonized people? Just as diagnosis is the beginning of all medical treatment, so is discernment. It is the ability to diagnose a spiritual sickness and is the starting point for all healing prayer.[49] One of the gifts the Holy Spirit gives us to build up the Christian community is the ability to discern spirits. This gift that enables us to recognize spirits is the seventh of the nine spiritual manifestations Paul has listed (1 Cor 12:8-10). Discernment is the God given ability to know, on occasion, whether an evil spirit is present.[50]

From the etymological view point, demonization comes from the Greek word *daimonizomai*, meaning "to be possessed by a demon."[51] Demonization is always presented as a spirit inhabiting a human. This is evidenced by expressions such as "for many demons had entered him" (Luke 8:30 cf. Matt 12:43-45).

A demonized person has symptoms such as projection of new personality, unusual physical strength, resistance to spiritual things, and alteration of voice (Mark 5:2-13). Fred Dickason writes "Demonization is not merely a term for schizophrenic illness, which is caused by chemical imbalance in the brain and is aggravated by circumstances so as to lead to abnormal thinking, emotions, and behavior. Genuine schizophrenia may

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[49]MacNutt, 75.

[50]Ibid., 81.

[51]William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: Unger of Chicago, 1952), s.v. "daimonnizomai."

be relieved by the application of proper drug therapy."[52] Kurt Koch, from his counseling

experience, noted the following symptoms: resistance to prayer or Bible reading, falling

into a trance during prayer, reaction to the name of Jesus, exhibition of clairvoyant

abilities, and speaking in unlearned languages.[53]

A German psychiatrist, Alfred Lechler lists these symptoms: passion for lying and

impure thoughts, restlessness and depression and fear, compulsion to rebel against God or

blaspheme, violence and cursing, excessive sexual or sensual cravings, resistance and

hatred of spiritual things, inability to pronounce or write the name of Jesus, appearance of

mediumistic or clairvoyant abilities, inability to act on Christian counsel, resistance to a

Christian counselor, inability to renounce the works of the devil, seizures or spells of

unconsciousness, speaking in unlearned languages, extraordinary physical strength,

molestation with pain unrelated to illness or injuries.[54]

Francis McNutt says, "Affected people usually know not only that something is

wrong, but that their problem might be caused by evil spirits."[55] People who are

demonized experience evil in all sorts of ways. McNutt says, "Some hear voices,

which typically impel them toward suicide or hate, especially hating themselves.[56]

Other demonized people see visions or have nightmares. Others feel impelled

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[52]Dickason, 41.

[53]Kurt Koch, *Occult Bondage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 1969), 64-67.

[54]Alfred Lechler, "Distinguishing the Disease and the Demoniac" in *Occult Bondage and Deliverance*, ed. Kurt Koch (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 1970), 136-53.

[55]MacNutt, 76.

[56]Ibid.

to do things they would never ordinarily think of doing. McNutt adds, "No matter how this demonic control manifests itself, a significant number of people will tell you—if they feel you will listen and can help—that something is radically wrong and that they believe evil spirits are involved."[57]

Satan and his hosts are dreadfully real and represent the powers of darkness. Commenting on the powers of darkness, Walter Kaiser writes, "Demons are part of the cosmic or spiritual conflict going on behind the outward actions of preaching, teaching, and healing. Demons fit into the New Testament picture of what the reign of God means and the fact that salvation is not simply deliverance from physical sickness or political oppression or poverty, but also a root of deliverance from final judgment, from spiritual sin and from the oppression by evil spiritual forces connected to these things."[58]

Other symptoms of demonization could include isolation from others, fear of crowds, inability to function up to capacity in daily life and work, dual personality, hard to get along with, lack of initiative, anger without cause, withdrawn, physical or verbal abuse of others, use of vulgar or blasphemous language, suffers from deep depression and despair, and suicidal tendency.[59] These symptoms could also be present among the mentally challenged so discernment is needed to distinguish between demonization and mental illness.

When an unclean spirit is active, victims may feel as if they are being strangled or suffocated or feel tightness around the chest. The evil spirit in people may cause them

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[57]Ibid., 77.

[58]Walter C. Kaiser, Peter H. Davis, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 81.

[59]Allen, 122-124.

to fall down and act as if they are dead. The spirit may also swear, shout or laugh at the believer. This is an attempt by Satan to discourage the believer and to cause doubt as to one's authority in Christ over his power (Luke 4:35; 9:39; Mark 9:18, 20, 26). To this, McNutt, quoting the Church father Origen, says,

> Christians have nothing to fear, even if demons should not be well-disposed to them, for Christians are protected by the supreme God who sets His divine angels to watch over those who are worthy of such guardianship, so that they can suffer nothing from demons. God is able to give to those who serve Him a power by which they may be defended from the assaults directed by demons against the righteous. For He has never beheld the efficacy of those words, "In the name of Jesus," when uttered by the truly faithful, to deliver not a few from demons and demoniac possessions and other plagues.[60]

A demonized person may also try to bite, scratch, kick or hit. We read in the New Testament, "The evil spirit shook the man violently" (Mark 1:26) and "He would cry out and cut himself with stones" (Mark 5:5). Concerning King Saul: "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. Therefore, Saul took a sword, and fell upon it" (1 Sam 16:14; 31:4). Demonized people can be filled with thoughts of guilt, unforgiveness, and bitterness. Consider Simon, who had a spirit of sorcery: "For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness" (Acts 8:23).

Some demonized people have a violent temper and are easily upset. The Bible says "And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, and Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin, and David fled, and escaped that night" (1 Sam 19:10, cf. 1 Sam 16:14). People under demonic bondage often suffer from mental conflict and confusion.[61] Note what the Bible says, "In whom the god of this

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[60]MacNutt, 142.

[61]Allen, 15.

world hath blinded (Greek, *poroo,* which means to render stupid) the minds of them which believe not" (2 Cor 4:4). Demonized people can also claim to see "the small little man," what the Luo people of Kenya call "*mudho,*" "*tipo,*"or "*lang'o mager.*"

<div align="center">How Demons Act</div>

Demons can speak, but the idea that demons always speak in loud voices is a belief not based on fact. Demons talk through their human victim's mental and speech faculties, in the same way that people talk using their tongues and vocal cords.[62] There are biblical records indicating that demons speak, "And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, 'You are the Son of God'"
(Mark 3:10, 11 cf. Luke 4:40, 41).

Jesus taught them as one that had authority—and there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, 'Let us alone; what have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy one of God.' And Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Hold you peace, and come out of him' "
(Mark 1:22-25). These scriptures confirm that demons can speak through their victims.

Demons know their future. When Jesus met two demonized men coming from among the tombs and when He was about to cast them out, they cried out, "What have we to do with you, Jesus, Son of God? Are you come to torment us before our time?"
(Matt 8:29).[63] What did the demons mean by saying, "Are you come to torment us before our time?" Of what time were they speaking? Demons know that hell is prepared for the

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[62]Allen, 57.

[63]Ibid., 14.

devil and his angels. They know the day will come when the devil will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev 20:10; 21:8). Demons know that the day is coming when they shall be tormented, day and night, forever and ever. They know that they will no longer torment humanity, because their time will have come.

Charles Kraft has divided demonic strength into different levels:[64]

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+-----------------------------------------------+
|                                               |
|        W e a k      M e d i u m     S t r o n g |
|                                               |
|        1    2    3    4   5   6   7   8   9   10 |
|                                               |
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The lower or higher the level equals the degree of demonic attack. Demons at: levels 1-2 are very weak and have very little control over a person, though they can be pesky in their harassment. Demons in this class may cause a person to cough, feel sleepy, yawn, and feel pain in some part of the body. Demons at this level when commanded to go may easily leave in a short time.[65]

At levels 3-4 demons can exert more control over the person and resist surrender. They can cause uncontrollable anger, and fear. People with demons at this level frequently ask themselves, "Whatever made me do that?" They can experience an occasional, disturbing incident that causes them to question their competence and perhaps

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[64]Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels*, 132.

[65]Ibid., 133.

even their sanity. Thoughts of suicide are not uncommon, nor are recurring physical ailments.[66]

Demons at levels 5-6 specialize in compulsive behavior. These demons have greater control over their hosts and for longer periods of time. Demons at this level often try to convince their hosts that they are crazy. Strong thoughts of suicide and, for some, weak attempts to end it all are also characteristic. When challenged, demons at this level can put up quite a fight. They can throw people around and perform moderate feats of strength.[67]

The eighth chapter of Mathew, the fifth chapter of Mark, and the eighth chapter of Luke describe the story of Jesus chasing out the legion of demons from the maniac. The context of these passages reveals the following: (1) the demons actually professed to worship Christ so they sought to prevent the Lord from being too stern with them (Mark 5:6), (2) Jesus commanded them to come out of the man (Luke 8:29; Mark 5:8), (3) the demons begged him that he would not torment them, but when Jesus spoke to them, the demons became fearful (Luke 8:28), (4) Christ demanded of them, "What is your name?" (Luke 8:30), (5) the demons responded, our name is Legion: "for we are many" (Mark 5:9), (6) when Jesus insisted that they depart, the demons, shocked at being expelled from their habitation in the man's body, "begged him much that he would not send them away out of the country" (Mark 5:10, cf. 5:12).

Demons at levels 7-8 are able to exert a lot of control over their victims, sometimes for longer periods of time. A demonized person at this level may seem to have

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[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., 134.

two or more quite different personalities. It is common to observe in a demonized person a disturbing glaze to the eyes, as well as violent or other unusual behavior that the person may be ashamed of later. At this level, if the demons are challenged, violence can result. Acting out may take place at this level.[68] It is remarkable how demons resent surrendering their place of possession. But God has given authority to his servants to deal with demonic bondage. Christ said to His disciples, "I give you power and authority over all devils" and in my name you shall cast out devils" (Mark 16:17; Luke 9:1; 10:19).

At levels 9-10 all the characteristics of level 7-8 are found and often escalated—demonic control is greater and occurs more often. Challenging demons at this level is a real task. Fasting and prayer, and helping the victim to work on spiritual growth, strength of will, and root issues should be part of the strategy to win the battle.[69] At this level demons resist the order to leave and call for reinforcements.

Demons calling for reinforcements were witnessed during Jesus' time. He taught a most revealing lesson about demons in the twelfth chapter of Mathew: "When an unclean spirit leaves a person, he walks through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, I will return to my house from which I came out, and when he is come, he finds it empty, swept and garnished. Then he goes and takes with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first" (Matt 12:43-45). It is possible for demons, which have been cast out, to call other demons for reinforcement and re-enter the person out of whom

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[68]Ibid., 135.

[69]Ibid.

138

they have been cast. This happens when the person delivered fails to fully consecrate his life to Christ.

Demons recognize and obey those who have power over them (Acts 19:13-16). Kraft says, "Often the mere presence of the Holy Spirit flushes out and causes demons to act strangely. This may happen as the result of simply inviting the Holy Spirit to take over in a ministry session. Or demons may manifest in response to God's presence in worship, personal devotions, or blessings in Jesus' name. Visible manifestations of demonic presence may also occur in response to challenging demons to manifest themselves. They may also show themselves at other times when the authority of Jesus' name is used."[70]

Jesus said, "These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils" (Mark 16:17). Mary Magdalene was possessed of seven devils, yet one man, anointed of God, cast out all seven devils. On the contrary, there were seven men, none of them God's anointed servants, and all seven men could not cast out even one devil, but one devil overcame all seven men so that they fled naked and wounded (Acts 19:14-16). This story proves that natural strength and wisdom is helpless before the devil, but when believers have Jesus, God's servants are strong.

It is important to note that demonization does not mean possession. People who are under demonic influence may not be totally possessed. According to McNutt, "Possession implies that Satan has taken over and possesses the very core of a human personality. But this is not what ordinarily is there."[71] Scott Peck comes to the same

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[70]Ibid., 182.

[71]MacNutt, 68.

139

conclusion, and says, "It is because there is a struggle going on between an intact human soul and the infesting demonic energy that Martin correctly states[72] that all cases of what we call possession ought more properly to be referred to as "partial possession" or "imperfect possession."[73]

A better word for what people commonly experience is demonization, or infestation, and not possession. The Greek word used in the New Testament can be best translated as "to have a demon" or to be demonized" rather than "to be possessed." This correct translation makes all the difference because it is quite possible to have a demon yet not be possessed.[74]

<div align="center">Biblical Steps for Deliverance</div>

Prayer for Deliverance

Prayer for deliverance for a demonized person calls for confession of sin before one enters into prayer. If a person has serious unconfessed sin, the evil spirits know the past and are capable of embarrassing the person in public by exposing unconfessed sins. A person involved in deliverance ought to be of piety, prudence, and integrity of life, ought to be of mature years, and revered not because of office, but for moral qualities.[75]

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[72]Malachi Martin, *Hostage to the Devil* (New York: Readers Digest Press, 1976), 442.

[73]Morgan Scott Peck, *People of the Lie* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 191.

[74]MacNutt, 69.

[75]Ibid., 147-148.

McNutt says, "The exorcist should be the rare kind of person who combines simple faith with an awareness of difficulties, some one who can join knowledge of psychology and human frailty with the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit."[76] Prayer and fasting are part of the preparation which Jesus mandated (Mark 9:29). But the Gospel says nothing about how long the disciples needed to pray and fast in preparation, or how they were to pray. Praise and worship may precede deliverance, during which time weaker demonic spirits will depart. However, the more powerful spirits may be far harder to dislodge and may require more preparation.[77]

The other preparation after time and place has been decided, is whether a team is going to be needed. There is strength in community and it is ideal to form a team because praying for deliverance with a team is the best way to pray. There are four main reasons: (1) preventing the possibility of scandal—a man should not minister to a woman, or vice-versa, (2) giving one another rest—it helps to turn the prayer over to someone in case deliverance takes longer, (3) restraining the demonized person—in case the person becomes violent, and (4) utilizing a variety of gifts—we need each other to share different spiritual gifts.[78]

In the NT, community was used in casting out demons. In the four Gospels, these included Jesus, the twelve apostles, the seventy and one other (Luke 9:1; 9:49; 10:17).

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[76]Ibid., 149.

[77]Ibid., 151.

[78]Ibid., 152-154.

[78]Ibid., 156.

In Acts, the apostles Peter and Paul and the evangelist Philip were involved in demonic encounters resulting in the demons leaving (Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:18; 19:2).

Deliverance teams also may be formed to help demonized people. The ideal deliverance team is probably made up of five or six people who work easily together—who love and trust one another. The great and genuine love between team members is in itself a tremendous force for deliverance.[79]

The first thing to realize when praying for deliverance of a demonized person is that deliverance prayer is different from prayer for healing. In fact it is not prayer at all, it is a command. Deliverance prayer is not directed to God as prayer is, but to an evil spirit, ordering it to get out. This command is backed up by God's authority, in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:18; Luke 4:32; Mark 9:25). On the other hand, healing prayer is directed to God.[80]

The deliverance team must have the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the person uttering words of command that brings deliverance to a demonized person must also have that anointing. It is the anointing that breaks the yoke of Satan over a person's life (Isa 10:27). Jesus says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to proclaim deliverance to the captives" (Luke 4:18). The anointing of the Holy Spirit empowers us through the authority in Jesus' name (Acts 10:38, cf. Matt 12:28).

The Bible warns Christians to watch for pride. Believers are warned not to stumble into pride as God uses them to drive out demons. The Bible says, "However,

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[79]Ibid., 167.

[80]Ibid.

142

do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

Guidelines during Prayer Session

During the prayer session, it is important to exercise compassion towards the counselee. It is important to speak in a calm voice. McNutt says, "If you really have authority and know who is in charge, you can command quietly. If the demons sense that you are calm and in charge, they will, like children, obey your commands."[81]

Demons are able to sense if you are insecure. In such a situation, it will take longer to drive the demons out. Shouting and blustering at the demons simply demonstrates our own insecurity. Some may get loud because they are angry at the demons. The danger is that the victim may not sort out that anger from anger directed personally to her/him.[82]

The prayer team may decide whether to lay hands on the victim or not. Some hold that you should not touch the person if you do not have to, that it is contaminating and possibly dangerous. Experience confirms that the power of the Holy Spirit seems lodged in the person by laying of hands. The evil spirits cannot stand being close to us, and the laying on of hands increases the pressure on the demons to get out. By touching the victim Christians increase the spirits' discomfort and hasten their departure.[83]

There is need to follow up after deliverance. The delivered person should be committed to the healer, Jesus Christ. The person should be armed with portions of

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[81]Ibid., 169.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Ibid., 171.

143

Scripture to memorize so he can resist the devil when he tries to return to attack him (Luke 11:24-26; Gal 5:1). It is essential that the delivered person live a clean, holy, separated life of total commitment to God (Rom 12:1, 2).[84]

Deliverance Team

The deliverance team leader is one of the most important aspects of a successful deliverance ministry. The other important task is finding team members. The apostle Paul's recommendation may offer some guiding principles (1 Tim 3:1-12). Team leaders and members must: (1) be above reproach, (2) not be a polygamist, (3) be temperate, (4) be self-controlled, (5) be respectable, (6) be hospitable, (7) be gentle, (8) not be given to drunkenness, (9) not be quarrelsome, (10) not be a lover of money, (11) have a good reputation, (12) manage his family well, and (13) have faith.

Once the deliverance team is formed, they must be trained. Team members must: (1) put on the full armor of God, for without it, they are powerless (Eph 6:13-18), (2) have faith, which is the shield to stop the arrows fired by Satan, and (3) wear the helmet of salvation. The deliverance team must destroy in the name of Jesus rings, necklaces or amulets because these will obstruct a person's deliverance and walk with God. A person seeking help from demonic bondage must also seek repentance. The person must repent of every act he has committed that has led to involvement with the occult. He must break off contact with mediums (Lev 19:31), and destroy charms.

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[84]Ibid., 214.

Summary

Those who are chosen and called by God's name are to be different from those who are of the world. God's people are in the world, but they must not be of the world. In the Old Testament the Israelites were commanded by God to be different from the Canaanites. The Lord commanded them not to practice death rituals which were against their faith in God. As the people continued to settle in Canaan, they adopted some practices of the Canaanites which God had condemned. Just as the Lord warned the Israelites not to indulge in the evil practices of the Canaanites so Christians in Kenya should not practice the evil ways of culture. When Kenyan Adventists continue in the old traditional practices they degenerate spiritually and weaken the propagation of the gospel.

CHAPTER 5

AN ADVENTIST RESPONSE ON AFRICAN TRADITIONAL ISSUES

Introduction

What should people do with their old cultural ways when they become Christians, and how should the church respond to African traditional beliefs and practices? Often, as in Kenya, the gospel is preached to people who already have a system of beliefs and practices that make sense to them, about the world, and about ultimate realities.[1]

This chapter looks at the African traditional beliefs discussed in chapters three and four with the view to formulating an Adventist model for African traditional issues in Kenya. The chapter is divided into five sections: (1) causes and the danger of syncretism, (2) understanding traditional worldviews, (3) dealing with cultural beliefs, (4) how to evaluate culture, and (5) a new Adventist approach.

Under the new Adventist approach I will look at functional substitutes for death rituals, widowhood, and wife inheritance, witchcraft and magic, and demonization. The functional substitutes[2] are suggested new rituals or ways that will help the people replace their old African traditional beliefs and practices with methods that follow biblical principles. The substitutes will help to re-orient the minds and thinking of the

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[1]Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 171.

[2]Functional Substitutes—are biblically appropriate replacements for cultural ceremonies, customs, celebrations, and procedures that replace the pre-Christian practices in order to avoid creating a cultural void or cultural vacuum.

people so that they can embrace biblical teachings. It is assumed that a lack of functional

substitutes is part of the reason why church members have continued to practice dual

allegiance even after they become Christians. Critical contextualization[3] will be used to

deal with African traditional beliefs.

Causes and Danger of Syncretism

Some Kenyan Adventists continue the practice of African traditional beliefs

alongside Adventist beliefs (syncretism) because of reasons such as:

1. *Lack of spiritual power*—When the people find "little or none of the spiritual

power they crave for meeting their needs for healing, blessing, guidance, even

deliverance from demons" the result is that they continue in "their pre-Christian practice

of going to shamans, priests, diviners, temples, shrines and the like for spiritual power,"[4]

or, "when people add to their Christian commitment a dependence on occult powers such

as: Freemasonry, New Age, Easter Martial Arts, fortune telling, astrology, horoscopes,

and psychic healing"[5]such people have a dual allegiance.

2. *Wholesale condemnation*—Because missionaries to Kenya rejected most of the

old customs as pagan without critical analysis, Christianity was often seen as a foreign

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[3]Critical Contextualization—is an approach "whereby old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without examination. They are first studied with regard to the meanings and places they have within their cultural setting and then evaluated in the light of biblical norms," Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 186.

[4]Charles Kraft, "Contextualization in Three Crucial Dimensions," in *Appropriate Christianity* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2005), 361.

[5]Charles H. Kraft and Marguerite G. Kraft, "Communicating and Ministering the Power of the Gospel Cross-Culturally: The Power of God for Christians Who Ride Two Horses," in *The Kingdom and the Power*, ed. Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 345-356.

religion. It is no surprise that Christianity was often misunderstood. Suppression of the old cultural ways led the Kenyan people to practice them underground resulting in Christopaganism—a syncretistic mix of Christian and non-Christian beliefs.[6]

Another problem that the wholesale condemnation of traditional cultures brought is that it forced church leaders to police their members. In so doing, church members did not find the reason to do away with old beliefs. The people should have been given a chance to discuss old beliefs in the light of biblical teachings. Church members were denied the chance to make their own decisions on cultural issues. Hiebert says, "A church only grows spiritually if its members learn to apply the teachings of the gospel to their own lives."[7]

3. *Lack of contextualization—*When the gospel is preached it calls individuals, the society, and the cultures to change. This call for contextualization, which means the gospel must be communicated in a way that the people understand and in ways that must challenge them individually and corporately to turn from their evil ways.[8]

If Christians continue in beliefs and practices that stand in opposition to the gospel, these in time will mix with their new found faith and produce various forms of neo-paganism. This has been the case in Kenya when new converts bring with them most of their past traditional beliefs. Even people who have been in the church for a long time need to examine some of their old beliefs in the light of biblical truth. It is important,

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[6]Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 184.

[7]Ibid., 185.

[8]Ibid.

however, that the church members be involved in the study and interpretation of Scriptures so that they will grow in their own abilities to discern truth.[9]

4. *Lack of open discussion*—In order to realize meaningful change in the lives of Kenyan Adventists about African traditional beliefs, it is important that both new and old church members be involved to critically evaluate their own past customs in the light of their new biblical understandings and to make a decision regarding their use. It is important that the people themselves make the decision, for they must be sure of the outcome before they will change. Church leaders must avoid forcing decisions on the people. When traditional issues are discussed and decisions arrived at corporately, there is little likelihood that the customs the people reject will go underground and be practiced in secret.

Understanding Traditional Worldview

The missionaries' worldview[10] when they came to evangelize Kenya was influenced by the enlightenment, and the theory of evolution. They believed in progress, and assumed the superiority of Western civilization. They saw their task to civilize and Christianize the people they served.[11] The African traditional beliefs associated with magic, earthly spirits, living dead, witchcraft, sorcery, divination, and the evil eye were seen as superstitions that could be eradicated by the introduction of scientific knowledge. The doctrine of *tabular rasa*—the missionary doctrine that there was nothing in the

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[9]Ibid., 187.

[10]Worldview—is "the basic assumptions about reality which lie behind the beliefs and behavior of a culture," Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 45.

[11]Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 18.

pre-Christian culture for the missionary to build on was widespread.[12]

Concerning the Western missionaries' worldview, Bruce Bauer says that, "there are many causes for the development of dual religious systems, but an underlying problem has been the very different worldview of those who brought Christianity as compared to those who received Christianity."[13] Bauer adds, "The missionary condemned the African traditional beliefs without putting in place functional substitutes—biblically appropriate replacements for cultural ceremonies, customs, celebrations, and procedures that replaced the pre-Christian practices in order to avoid creating a cultural void or cultural vacuum"[14] (see the discussion concerning functional substitutes on the next page under "Dealing with cultural beliefs").

Because there was no biblically appropriate replacements to African traditional beliefs, a vacuum existed which caused many Kenyan Adventists to add Christianity as a new layer of beliefs on top of the old. The result is syncretism which church members have lived with for many years.

The African worldview is more concerned with the present and how to deal with pain and suffering, while Christianity has been presented as the answer to the quest for eternal life. The African traditional worldview can grasp change when the people are taught that the kingdom of God is here and not just a futuristic place yet to come.

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[12]Pobee, "Political Theology in the African Context," 168-172.

[13]Bruce L. Bauer, "Biblically Appropriate Functional Substitutes: A Response to Dual Allegiance," paper presented at Global Mission Issues Committee, Silver Spring, MD, April 4, 2007, 2.

[14]Ibid.

To re-orient the African peoples' worldview, the kingdom of God must be preached in the present and continuous tense. The kingdom is both present and future. The life we hope to live in heaven must begin here on earth. That is why Jesus said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The people must understand that Kingdom life call for surrender of all old ways of life and requires people to live their lives according to biblical teachings. The new life experience is an event and an experience for one's life time.

People coming to Christ must understand that confession of sin includes traditional beliefs that run contrary to biblical teachings. The new believer must come to the point where the old belief system is challenged by the new found faith in Jesus. Ellen G. White says, "When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature."[15]

Dealing with Cultural Beliefs

Critical Contextualization

Dealing with African traditional beliefs in Kenya could be handled in three ways by using the approach as illustrated in figure 1. The church either denies the old (rejection of contextualization), or deals with the old (critical contextualization), or uncritically accepts the old (uncritical contextualization).

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[15]White, *The Desire of Ages*, 324.

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Denial of the         _____ The Gospel is Foreign      _____ It is rejected
old (Rejection
of contextualization) _____ The old Goes Underground _____ Syncretism


Dealing with           (1)          (2)         (3)          (4)
the Old (critical      Gather       Study       Evaluate     Create
Contextualization)     information  biblical    the old in   a new      _____ Conte-
                       about the old teachings  light of     context-         xtuali
                                    about the   biblical      ualization      zation
Uncritical acceptance-              event       teachings
of the old
(uncritical     ____Syncretism
contextuali-
zation)
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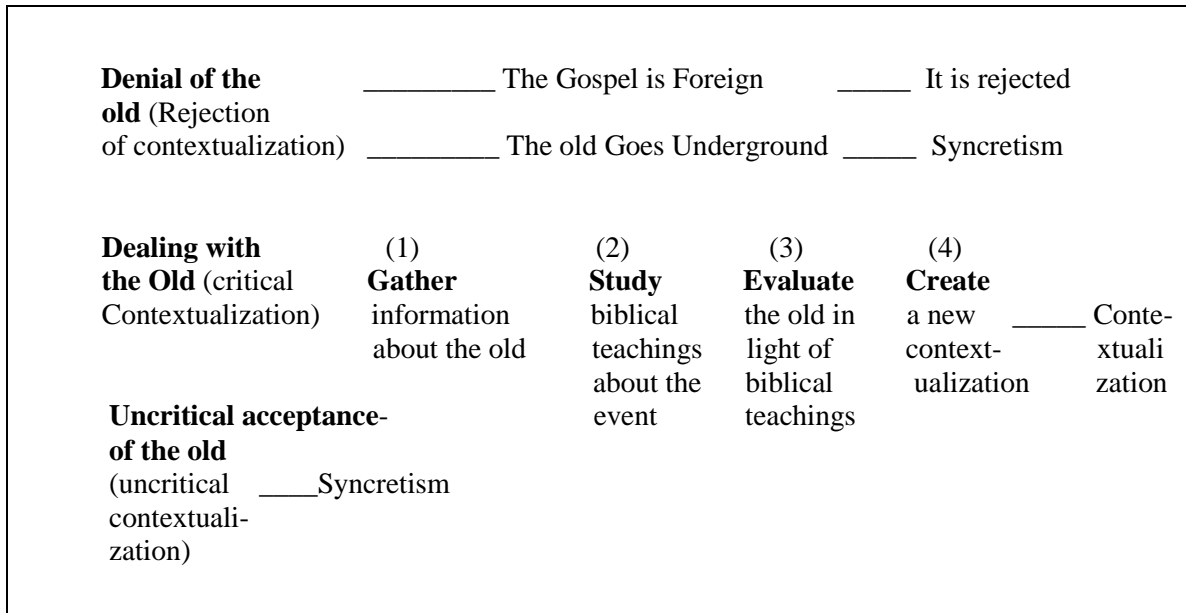
Figure 2: Possible Methods of Dealing with Old Ways. *Source:* Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: 1985), 188.

The starting point to discuss traditional customs may be initiated either by individuals or the church after it is realized there is a need to deal biblically with all areas of life. This awareness arises when members in a church are faced with births, marriages, or death rituals and need to decide what Christian birth rites, weddings, or funerals should be like. Or it may emerge as people in the church recognize the need to examine certain culturally based customs.[16]

It must be remembered, however, that when the church fails to deal with old cultural practices it opens the door for the pre-Christian practices to enter the Christian community unnoticed. However, faith in Christ calls for new beliefs and a changed life.[17] Traditional beliefs in Kenya may be handled by a four step critical contextualization approach. This method allows church leaders and members to discuss old customs and

[16]Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 186.

[17]Ibid.

make collective decisions. The four steps are:

1. *Gathering information*—The process begins with gathering information about the cultural issue. At this stage the church neither rejects nor accepts old beliefs and customs. Traditional beliefs are first studied with regard to the meanings and places they have within the people's cultural setting.[18]

Local church leaders must lead the congregation in uncritically gathering and analyzing the traditional customs associated with issues at hand. For example, in dealing with funeral rituals, the people should analyze their traditional rites—describing each song, dance, recitation, and rite that makes up the ceremony and then discussing its meaning and function within the overall ritual. The purpose is to understand the old ways, not to evaluate them. Criticism should be avoided at this point in order to allow the people to openly express themselves.[19]

2. *Conducting Bible study*—Pastors should lead a Bible study related to the questions that old customs and traditional practices pose. For example, the pastor can use the occasion of a wedding or funeral to teach the Christian beliefs about marriage or death rituals. This is an opportunity for the pastor to present biblical truth. The pastor may also choose to conduct the Bible study on a Sabbath afternoon or Sunday so that the congregation can be actively involved in the study.[20]

3. *Critical evaluation*—This gives the congregation an opportunity to critically evaluate their own past customs in the light of their new biblical understandings and to make a decision regarding their use. Hiebert adds, "It is important here that the people

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[18]Ibid., 186.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid., 187.

153

themselves make the decision, for they must be sure of the outcome before they will change. At this point leaders can only share their personal convictions and point out the consequences of various decisions, but they must allow the people to make the final decision."[21] When decisions are corporately arrived at, there will be little likelihood that the customs the people reject will go underground and be practiced in secret.

4. *New contextualized practice*—At this point the congregation may respond to the old beliefs and practices in several ways. The people may decide that old beliefs which do not go against biblical principles can be retained. Other customs will be rejected as unbecoming for Christians. Sometimes the people will modify the old practices to give them explicit Christian meanings. For example, popular African tunes may be given Christian words. Similarly the early Christians used the style of worship found in Jewish synagogues, but modified it to fit their beliefs. They also met on pagan festival days to celebrate Christian events such as the birth of Christ.[22]

The local church may substitute Christian symbols or rites borrowed from another culture for those in their own that they reject. For example, people could adopt the funeral practices of the missionary or from a biblical context rather than retaining the practices which go against biblical principles.

The people may also create new symbols and rituals to communicate Christian beliefs in forms that are indigenous to their culture. Hiebert says, "Having led the people to analyze their old customs in the light of biblical teachings, the pastor must help them arrange the practices they have chosen into a new ritual that expresses the Christian

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[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid., 189.

meaning of the event. Such a ritual will be Christian, for it explicitly seeks to express biblical teachings. It will also be indigenous because the congregation has created it, using forms the people understand within their own culture."[23]

Biblical teachings for critical contextualization of African traditional beliefs in Kenya should include understanding what new life in Christ means. An analysis of 2 Cor 5:17 and the understanding of how to evaluate culture are important for people if they are to experience new life in Christ.

New Life Experience

The lack of a new birth experience is one reason why people continue to follow African traditional beliefs even after they become Adventist Christians. When a new birth takes place, a person's life is guided by biblical teachings instead of traditional beliefs. Without a new birth experience a person cannot see the kingdom of God. That is the reason why Jesus told Nicodemus; "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3: 3). Steps necessary for people to achieve a new birth will be discussed later in the chapter.

Even though missionaries did much good as they evangelized Kenyans, it must be noted, however, that "conversion is a complex, multifaceted process involving personal, cultural, social, and religious dimensions."[24]

Conversion may be triggered by a particular event, which could result in a sudden experience of change, but usually it takes place over a period of time. I agree with

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[23]Ibid., 190.

[24]Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Edwards Brothers, 1943), 165.

contemporary theologians who say that genuine conversion transpires over an entire lifetime.[25] There is no time one can say he has had enough conversion. Genuine conversion should create a thirst for more in the life of a believer.

When new converts join the church and they find little or none of the spiritual power that meets their needs they often continue in their pre-Christian traditional practices. Church members however, must be reminded that spiritual power in the life of a believer calls for total surrender. Without genuine life change, the convert will miss the baptism and power of the Holy Spirit, which is essential in the life of a believer (John 1:33). A person who fails to fully surrender his life to Christ inhibits the receiving of the Holy Spirit. A Church member who lacks the Holy Spirit is powerless and vulnerable to continue in pre-Christian traditional practices.[26]

The church must teach people the essence of the Holy Spirit in the journey of faith. This is the reason why Jesus told His disciples, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; cf. Luke 24:49). When a believer fails to receive spiritual power, the life principles and worldview is the same as before. It is therefore, necessary for the new convert to properly understand the meaning of a new birth in Christ. The new birth creates a new perception about the kingdom of God and the world through the power of the indwelling spirit.

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

156

Assurance of Salvation

The Bible says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor 5:17). If anyone claims to be born again, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. All things have become new.

A person coming to Christ in baptism is a new creation. His mind, heart, and spirit are turned around by the power of the Holy Spirit. A new believer ought to surrender all his old baggage to Christ. The baggage that people bring to Christ should include traditional beliefs which were in the old life. When this is done, all things become new. Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who labor and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matt 11:28-30).

People seeking salvation must understand that old things must pass away. Norman Kraus says, "Salvation in the Bible is not merely a future hope. It is a real—although at present incomplete—change in the human condition including all its dimensions—spiritual, social, and physical."[27] Salvation includes the present realities in the life of the church and the believer. Salvation is both present and future.

Kraus adds, "Salvation is also not exclusively a spiritual matter. Unlike the Western worldview, which differentiates between spirit and body, and spiritual and material realities, the biblical worldview presents humans as whole beings in which

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[27]Norman C. Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord: Christology from a Disciples Perspective* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1987), 172.

spiritual, moral, social, mental, and physical attributes are inextricably intertwined. People must understand that salvation involves all of these."[28]

The dominant emotion of Kenyan people is fear. They carry this fear even after they become Christians. People fear witchcraft, arbitrary spirits, hostile enemies, magic, ancestors, and invisible forces that plague everyday life. Salvation must include being saved from the powers of evil and the problems, hardships, misfortunes, injustices, sicknesses, and death people experience in this world.

Making a point on fear, Van Rheenen writes, "Sin in animistic contexts is understood to destroy the balance and harmony of life. When harmony is disrupted, people experience suffering and misfortune. The need for salvation becomes apparent to the animist when illness occurs, a wife remains barren, or catastrophe strikes one's business or herds."[29]

The Adventist Church in Kenya needs to assure people that their lives are secure in the hands of the Almighty who overcomes evil and who cares for His people. However, people must not look at salvation as only a means to eradicate suffering in their lives. The church needs to teach people that the salvation that God offers has to do with the restoration of true health and wholeness both here and in the future.[30]

Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou add, "This salvation has immediate consequences for people in their everyday lives, for God does care for their needs. They also need to discover the far greater salvation found in Scripture. If they do not, they are in danger of

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[28]Ibid.

[29]Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 297.

[30]Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou, 225.

equating salvation with a healthy, prosperous life on earth, and of ignoring the far greater and eternal consequences of reconciliation and fellowship with God."[31]

Kenyan Adventist pastors must teach the people to move away from a split-level Christianity in which they turn to God for salvation from sin, but turn to local gods, ancestors, sorcerers, magicians, and witchcraft to answer their everyday life problems. The Israelites were in a similar situation when they worshiped Yahweh, but repeatedly turned to local Baals and Ashteroth for help when they were sick or defeated (2 Kgs 17: 33).

In an attempt to deal with traditional beliefs, the Adventist church in Kenya needs to help people understand what it means to be born again in Christ. The church must put traditional issues on the table and openly discuss them. The Church must also provide answers to people's immediate questions, but the answers must be rooted in the Bible.

How to Evaluate Culture

Neutral Cultural Traits

David Barrett has described society as "a moral and stable union of many people aspiring with their actions to one common end."[32] Cultural practices are what define and hold a society together. Paul Hiebert defines culture as "the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings, and values and their associated patterns of behavior and

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[31]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]David B. Barrett, George K. Mambo, Janice McLaughlin, and Malcolm J. McVeigh, *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity* (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1973), 106.

products shared by a group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel, and do." [33]

Cultural issues are not new in the history of the Christian church. In the book of Acts, serious questions arose when the Gentiles began to enter the church (Acts 15). They did not have to follow Jewish practices in order to become good Christians. No society, therefore, has a culture superior to any other. Cultural practices which are not opposed to biblical teaching can be left intact.

Some Kenyan cultural practices are not repugnant or against biblical principles. Africans enjoy worship which is accompanied by instruments. Too often, the Adventist Church style of worship has had little appeal because it appears joyless and colorless compared to the African style of worship the people are familiar with. The Adventist Church in Kenya needs to enrich its worship by allowing African Christians to express themselves through cultural forms of music, art, literature, drama, drums, and dance. Even these good things that enrich the African style of worship need to be done in moderation for Christians are different from the world.

The missionaries introduced Africans to a style of worship based on Western culture. African cultural ways of worship were condemned by the missionary. No matter how good traditional prayers and songs were, they were not allowed to be integrated into the African Christian way of worship. Any association with the old customs was viewed with negativity. The missionaries took it upon themselves to change the most fundamental cultural values of Kenyan society. This attitude, and refusal to adapt any

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[33]Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 30.

African cultural forms, has caused some Kenyan Christians to resent some aspects of Adventist teaching.

The missionaries must be congratulated for giving the people the Word of God in their own language. The New Testament was published in the Kamba language in 1920, in Luhya/Ragoli in 1925, in Kikuyu and Luo in 1926.[34] But the missionaries should have been just as sensitive to the issues of culture. Culture is what an individual acquires from his society. Culture includes beliefs, customs, artistic norms, food-habits, and crafts which come not by one's own creative activity, but as a legacy from the past, conveyed by formal or informal education. [35]

As much as I believe that African people should worship God in their cultural context, I agree with Calvin Redekop when he says, "The true believers should show in act and deed that they believe, are born of God and spiritually minded. They should lead a pious, unblamable life before all men. In short, they must order their lives, in their weaknesses, according to all the words, commandments, ordinances, spirit, rule, example, and measure of Christ, as the Scriptures teach, for they are in Christ and Christ is in them."[36]

<center>Non-biblical Cultural Traits</center>

The gospel on one hand belongs to no culture. It is God's revelation of Himself and His acts to all people. On the other hand, it must always be understood and expressed

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[34]Barrett, et al., 111.

[35]Ibid., 106.

[36]Calvin Redekop, *The Free Church and Seductive Culture* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1970), 3.

within human cultural forms.[37] However, any cultural practice that reduces biblical

values or weakens allegiance to Christ should be regarded as inconsistent with the Bible.

Jesus proclaimed the Good News of the kingdom of God whose foundation is

righteousness. The laws about the kingdom stand in contrast to those of the earthly

kingdoms. Jesus calls His people to follow Him. To be a Christian is to give one's

ultimate allegiance to Jesus, anything else is idolatry.[38]

Christians know that Jesus is the Son of God. But knowledge alone is not enough.

Knowledge and feelings must lead us to worship and submission so that Jesus is the Lord

of one's life. Kenyan Adventists must teach that truth and walk in righteousness. People

need to respond to the gospel not because they are rationally persuaded, but because they

are freed from fears or experience forgiveness and joy in salvation. A fundamental

question the people should always ask when dealing with African traditional beliefs is,

how does this cultural practice add to or reduce the value of God's kingdom?

Church members should only look at Jesus Christ as their reference point. Any

belief system that reduces Christ is repugnant. If measurement is considered, it is correct

only if it has a reference point. Without a reference point, it is hard to tell the accuracy of

a measurement. For the Christian, the reference point to evaluate culture is the Lord Jesus

Christ and the Word of God. The central theme of the gospel is salvation through Jesus

Christ. Salvation is possible though repentance, which calls for a life of obedience to

Christ's commandments (Matt 19:17 cf. Deut 6:17, 18).

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[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid.

Moses declared to the Israelites, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deut 6:4-5; 11:13). Church members cannot claim that they love the Lord when they have divided loyalty—loyalty for God and traditional beliefs at the same time. The Bible says, "Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. Do not follow other gods, the gods of the people around you" (Deut 6:13, 14).

The Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with unclean hands?" (Mark 7:5). They implied the tradition of the elders was to eat food with clean hands. But Jesus responded, "You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." He said to them, "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions" (Mark 7:8, 9). In a similar way, Kenyan Adventist church members have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe their traditional beliefs. Thus the people nullify the Word of God by observing traditional beliefs handed down to them by their ancestors.

Adventist church members in Kenya need to be freed from African traditional beliefs through a life with Christ. Just as church members received Christ Jesus as Lord, they should continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as they were taught. The Adventist Church must be careful that no one makes them captive to hollow and deceptive philosophies or to African traditions, or to the basic principles of this world rather than to Christ (Col 2:6-8).

Kenyan Adventists need to adopt rules for holy living. The Bible says, "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

163

For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry" (Col 3:1-5).

New Adventist Approach

Christ the New Ritual

In order to empower new believers joining the Adventist Church to confront their pre-Christian traditional beliefs, there is a need to emphasize Christ as the new ritual which has replaced the old. In practice the church has put more emphasis on the Adventist fundamental beliefs than the person of Jesus Christ. The power and place of Christ does not come out strongly and clearly enough to enable new believers to replace and deal with pre-Christian practices such as going to shamans, priests, diviners, witch-doctors, and the like for spiritual power.

A Visible Church in Society

Missionaries and present church leaders missed the point that human beings are intimately connected with the world in which they live. The church in society is the vehicle through which the preaching of the gospel creates a desire for conversion.

The Adventist Church in Kenya needs to remember that people and their environment are inseparable. However, it seems as if the church is splitting the person and his environment. Rambo says, "We forget that the political, religious, economic, social, and cultural worlds are shaped by people. Conversely, people are shaped by the socialization processes of the wider world. The networks of relationships and the

cumulative effects of education, training, and institutional structures all influence the potential convert."[39]

The Adventist Church in Kenya has emphasized ministries in the religious dimension of life to the exclusion of the personal, cultural, and the social dimensions of life. The gospel message must be promoted in society not only through the preaching of the word, but also by the church participating in other activities that affect people's lives. When this is done, the church enlightens the personal, cultural, and social dimensions of people's lives. When the church understands people in these areas, it is easy to put in place an all-inclusive approach to minister to them. Such an approach increases people's understanding of what the new birth in Christ means for they realize that it impacts all areas of life. The church needs to be visible in the society by participating in the community activities. The pastor and church members are sent to the community and not just to the believers.

<center>Christian Functional Substitutes</center>

Widowhood and Wife Inheritance

Widowhood is a situation that puts many Kenyan Adventists in conflict with biblical teachings. People believe that the dead continue to live after they die. One traditional requirement after the death of a husband is that his wife must be inherited. A ritual demanding that the widow must have sexual intercourse with a man in the house where she lived with her late husband is required. Non-compliance is not tolerated by the

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[39]Ibid., 166.

family or the community. People believe that a widow who is not inherited could bring a taboo to herself, children, and/or family members.

Hiebert says, "Rituals are powerful enactments or dramas in which members of a community play society formally, and in so doing, express and renew their deep ideas, feelings, and values. On the cognitive level rituals make visible the worldview underlying cultural understandings of reality, and communicate fundamental beliefs."[40] Rituals have two important dimensions—what they 'say' and what they 'do.'[41]

The ritual that goes with the Luo practice of wife inheritance "says" a widow must be inherited by a kinsman and what it "does" is to cleanse the widow. A functional substitute to this traditional ritual is a biblical dedication ceremony where bread and wine symbolizing Christ's body and his blood is served. The pastor may conduct the service using the following procedure:

1. Reading from 1 Cor 11:23-29 and singing the hymn "I surrender all."

2. A special communion service could then be conducted in the home of the widow. This should be a week or two after burial. The service reminds the Christian widow of the atoning death of Christ for sins, including old traditional beliefs and practices and the cleansing in Christ's blood.

3. The pastor then leads the widow to publicly declare her intention to take Christ as the new ritual to replace the traditional one. The widow repeats the following words after the pastor: I_____ (name) believe that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross has released me from the penalty of sin and has set me free from the fear of traditional beliefs

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[40]Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 292, 293.

[41]Ibid.

and practices. This bread and wine which I am about to partake of is my new ritual to set me free from the old traditional ritual demands on a widow. Lord, help me to keep my body pure from sexual impurity. Guide me through the Holy Spirit to remain faithful to you until you come to take me home. I ask these favors in Jesus' name, Amen.

4. A prayer of dedication is conducted immediately following the declaration of intent. The widow, her children, and family members should kneel as the pastor and church elders pray.

5. The church family and other people who witnessed the occasion may join in having refreshments immediately after the service. This may be optional depending on the wishes of the widow's family. African people enjoy eating a meal or refreshments on special occasions which is symbolic of African brotherhood and fellowship.

6. Remarriage—it may be a good idea for the church to encourage young widows who are under sixty years of age to remarry (1 Tim 5:9). The Bible says, "Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (1 Tim 5:14).

A widow may remarry a close relative (Ruth 3:12, cf. 4:13, 14, 15) or any other person she may choose (Ruth 4:4), but the biblical principle to marry only within one's faith community should be followed. A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives, but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whomever she wishes. A widow may also choose to marry a widower and vice versa since their spouses have died. On the other hand she may be happier if she remains as she is (1 Cor 7:39, 40). It must be remembered, however, that God's ideal in marriage is between one woman and one man rather than a plural marriage. Traditions and culture should never be used as an excuse to encourage a Christian widow to enter into a polygamous relationship.

Witchcraft and Magic

Belief in witchcraft and magic is almost universal in Kenya and produces the greatest fears among people, including Adventists. Witches are widely believed to have great power which they can use against others. People believe witches prey on others in private and their main purpose is to work havoc. As already discussed in chapter three, Kenyan people explain everything in terms of human actions. People do not believe in accidents, chance, or natural causes as every misfortune as well as death is blamed on some person, and that person is believed to have caused it by means of magic or witchcraft.[42]

Witchcraft has been a problem for the church since its beginning for church leaders assumed that these practices would die out as people became more grounded in their Christian faith. However, some Adventist Christians still continue to hold belief in witchcraft and the fear of being bewitched. How should the church respond to this persistent problem? Hiebert has suggested the following approaches:

1. The church should take witchcraft seriously, and minister to those who believe they are bewitched. This must not be ignored, nor should it be treated as merely superstition. Belief in witchcraft is very real in the minds of those who believe. To deny its reality only drives the belief underground. The church needs to teach believers that God's power is greater than any other power they may face, and that he can deliver them from curses.[43]

2. The church must speak out against the evil that witchcraft can create

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[42]Ibid., 150.

[43]Ibid., 173.

(Deut 18:10). Witchcraft is not something that can be accommodated in the church. The church, during revival meetings such as weeks of spiritual emphasis and camp-meetings should teach about these retrogressive practices and the people should be encouraged to "set things right" with God and with one another. The Adventist Church like some African independent churches may address the problem by using rituals that encourage church members to confess their sins of hatred, jealousy, witchcraft, and magic, and to offer them cleansing and forgiveness.[44]

As one African said, where there is jealousy, envy, and hatred, there is witchcraft. When these are removed, love and fellowship in the church is renewed.[45] The church must also deal with the worldview, already discussed, that underlies beliefs in witchcraft. The church must teach about Christian rituals in such a way that they are seen as new and more powerful protections against witchcraft and other attacks of one's enemies.

Demonization

Demonization is a problem that the Adventist Church in Kenya has not done much to help the people deal with. When encountering a demonic spirit the Church must be prepared to pray to God to deliver the victim. Biblically, it is clear that demons are real and that they plague people, but they must submit to the authority of Christ. A church should have an intercessory team to handle cases of demonization. Suggestions on how to deal with demonization follows:

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[44]Ibid., 174.

[45]Hill, 337.

1. A team that will be involved in dealing with people who appear to be oppressed by demons must seek discernment.[46] In dealing with cases that may suggest demonization, it is good for the pastor to involve a team comprising a doctor, counselor, psychiatrist, and psychologist. David Augsberger suggests that exorcism should not be the first approach to a problem, but should come only after ruling out other biophysical causes.[47] This is important because discernment of demonization is a difficult exercise since there is complexity in the human personality. People who are psychologically ill frequently suffer from delusions of being demonized.[48] However, Francis McNutt writes, "The first and most common way we find out a person needs deliverance is that he tells us. Affected people usually know not only that something is wrong, but that their problem might be caused by evil spirits."[49]

2. The second step to deal with demonization is to be prepared through intercessory prayer. Deliverance ministry should never be done merely out of curiosity or to experiment. Demons know the hidden sins and inner secrets about people (Acts 19:13-16), so it is important for each team member to have a right heart before God with no unconfessed sin, resentment, or an unforgiving spirit that may block God's ministry.[50]

3. A ministry of intercession must be surrounded by prayer for protection and discernment. Because humans are powerless, it must be remembered that it is God who

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[46]Hiebert, 171.

[47]David Augsberger, *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 307.

[48]Ibid.

[49]MacNutt, 76.

[50]Augsberger, 307.

drives out demons. Consequently, the team should speak primarily to God not to the

spirits. During deliverance it is Jesus and the Holy Spirit who does the work. Therefore,

the use of special words or right gestures is not what matters. After deliverance it is

important to incorporate the person who is delivered into a Christian community for

support and instruction in a way that does not stigmatize the person.[51]

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[51]Ibid., 172.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

For many centuries, Kenyan people were involved in complex traditional practices that involved traditional religion, magic, and the supernatural. These practices that were to appease the gods were believed to relieve people of their pain and suffering, and to heal them of their illnesses and diseases. The reverence for and fear of a traditional god brought health, whereas indifference or hostility brought illness and disease.

When a state of disequilibrium, illness, disease, or discomfort was experienced, individually or collectively, help was sought through traditional religion and magic. Whereas magic was used to negotiate on behalf of individuals with supernatural forces, religion attempted to deal with the broader social and cultural issues confronting the community. This may seem to suggest that religion and magic in the society are separate processes. This may be the case in the West, but not in the Kenyan culture where the two have always been historically connected.

For thousands of years the Kenyan people understood religion to be the worship of supernatural beings. The African mind was used to solving problems through magic. According to R. Stark, the term magic "refers to all efforts to manipulate or compel supernatural forces without reference to a God or Gods or to matters of ultimate meaning.

Put another way, magic is limited to impersonal conceptions of the supernatural."[1] People

join the church but continued traditional practices of solving problems, resulting in a

conflict with Adventist Christian teachings. Under circumstances where Christians are

rooted more in their old traditional practices, the church's main objective to preach the

gospel is weakened.

The purpose of this study was to sensitize church members about the need to deal

with traditional beliefs and accept Adventist beliefs which are rooted in the Scriptures.

Church leaders are challenged to present biblical response to traditional beliefs. This has

not been effectively done. Church members must be taught that Christianity is about truth

and righteousness. This is not only in the ends it seeks, but also the means it uses to

achieve those ends.

It is clear that old traditions did not die out, but rather remain hidden from

public view. Christianity is an overlay, and the two coexist in uneasy tension. People

affirm faith, but consult witchdoctors, shamans, diviners, and healers in secret for fear of

condemnation by church leaders.

The Adventist Church in Kenya needs to reach the point where the focus is not to

make people professional Christians, but to transform churches into living

communities where the gospel is heard and applied to all of life.

Church members need to grasp the point that ministry works better when it

engages both corporate and social spirituality. This is an aspect that church members

frequently miss as they deal with spiritual formation. Before corporate and social

spirituality is attained, personal transformation is needed in one's own life. It is the only

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[1]R. Stark, *Exploring the Religious Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 116.

foundation on which corporate and social spirituality can be built. The church, being a social organization, ought to emphasize personal transformation in order to reduce allegiance to African traditional beliefs.

Conclusions

The conflict between African traditional beliefs and Adventist beliefs is as old as the Adventist Church in Kenya. Syncretism or dual allegiance can be traced back to the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17). This brought death to the human race. The Israelites also practiced dual allegiance which caused them to wander in the wilderness for forty years. The call that God gave to Adam and Eve, the Israelites, and Kenyan Adventists is about obedience and love (Deut 5 and 11).

The problem of dual allegiance, or syncretism among Kenyan Adventists was caused partly by Western missionaries who took it upon themselves to Christianize African people. Everything had to be seen from the Western perspective. The missionary's culture was "good," "advanced," and "normative." Other cultures were "bad," backward," and "distorted." Christianity was true, other religions were false.[2] The missionary's attitude caused Christianity in Kenya to be perceived as a foreign religion identified with Western culture. Those who converted to Adventism were expected to adopt a Western style of doing things.

A second problem caused by the missionary's attitude was that old beliefs and the customs of the Kenyan people did not die out because they were not consciously dealt with. Instead they went underground. Converts knew they should not let the missionary

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[2]Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections,* 80.

174

be aware of their old traditions lest they incur the missionary's anger. The old ways were, therefore, kept as hidden culture. Wedding ceremonies were held in the church, and the people returned to their homes to celebrate the wedding in private at night. Africans continued to wear amulets under shirts, and they also consulted the village shaman.[3]

In the long run, this uneasy coexistence of public Christianity and private "paganism" led to syncretism. Non-Christian beliefs and practices infiltrated the church from below. The foreignness of the gospel was a barrier to evangelism and syncretism was not prevented. It ended with the missionary acting as police, enforcing on the people what they believed were good Christian practices.[4]

There was a need to contextualize the gospel and theology in Kenyan cultural forms to produce what Charles Kraft calls a "dynamic-equivalent" response to the gospel message. Kraft reminds the church that in the Bible "to believe" is not simply to give mental assent to something, it is to act upon it in life.[5] In Kenya, Christians face numerous challenges because of the African traditional beliefs which the church needs to address. Christians face questions for which the church must give biblical answers.

From the interviews conducted in Kenya, the outcome shows that the majority of Adventist Christians still follow African traditional beliefs. The reasons for such behavior include different worldviews, poverty, fear of the spirits of the dead, fear of traditional

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., 181.

[5]Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbit, 1979), 85.

deviance, lack of forums to discuss traditional beliefs, and lack of biblical material to guide church members.

An analysis of the traditional belief on the state of the dead in the light of the Bible reveals that the dead know nothing and therefore, have no part in the affairs of the living. Ellen White writes, "The thoughts of the dead have perished, they have no part in anything that is done under the sun, they know nothing of the joys or sorrows of those who were dearest to them on earth."[6] An examination of the words "soul" and "spirit" (Gen 2:7 and Gen 2:21-22) confirms that these words do not support the traditional belief that there is existence of a soul outside the physical body after death.

In contrasting African traditional beliefs and biblical teachings as presented by the Adventist Church, it was observed that there are some traditional practices such as belief in the supernatural God that agree with biblical principles, while others conflict with the Bible. The results of this study identified areas of need relating to the subject of death, death rituals, and demonization, widowhood and wife inheritance, and polygamy issues.

The Kenyan Adventist Church has rarely discussed African traditional issues. This has led to the continued practice of these beliefs being mixed together with Christian beliefs. When these traditional issues and beliefs are put on the table and openly discussed, people will realize that to become a Christian is to become part of a new history, a history that must be learned.

The fundamental test of faith is the Scripture, which gives us God's view about reality. The church must lead its members in a study of the Scriptures so that it addresses

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[6]White, *Cosmic Conflict*, 487.

176

African traditional issues. When this is done, Christians will benefit from the answers the Bible gives them when struggling with traditional beliefs.

As a chosen people, Adventists are commanded by the Lord not to practice death rituals that go against their faith in God. Wife inheritance practiced by the Luo people involves ritual cleansing for the widow and requires the widow to have sexual intercourse with a man in the house of the deceased. In wife inheritance, the marriage does not involve a church wedding, dowry, neither is there a marriage certificate. People's belief that a woman who is not inherited can cause a taboo (*chira)* to the widow, her children, or to other family members does not have biblical backing.

The Lord God does not approve practices of witchcraft and magic. In the Old Testament, God commanded Ezekiel to warn the people against magic practices. The Lord said, "I am against your magic charms with which you ensnare people" (Ezek 13:20). As much as God condemned witchcraft and magic, there are still traces of such practices among Kenyan Adventists. There are times when the people of God may be lured by the devil into practices which God hates. As much as the schemes of Satan may appear attractive, Kenyan Adventists must trust God because his power is above any power of darkness.

Christians are called to preach the gospel and to heal the sick. Adventists must believe in the power of prayer. There is power in prayer. The Adventist church in Kenya has not empowered its members to pray for people who are demonized. Many Church members are ignorant on how to pray for demonized people.

Adventists should boldly come out and use the power of prayer to help demonized people. Church leaders must teach the members how to be involved in intercessory prayer. Once church members are empowered they become channels through which God

will administer healing to the demonized (Matt 10: 8). Kenyan Adventists must be guided by Apostle Paul's teaching, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor 5:17).

As much as I recommend contextualizing the gospel and discussing traditional issues in Kenya, the church must guard against compromising or cheapening the gospel. It must ensure that biblical truth is preserved. William Willimon has written, "The persistent problem is not how to keep the Church from withdrawing from the world but how to keep the world from subverting the Church. In each age the Church succumbs to that constantinian notion that we can get a handle on the way the world is run."[7]

Recommendations

In order to deal with the old traditional beliefs and practices in Kenya thoroughly, a four level seminar approach is recommended:

1. *The Researcher's Seminar:* The researcher will conduct seminars for pastors and church elders in the East African Union. The seminar will give the researcher an opportunity to reason with church leaders on how to deal with African traditional issues in Kenya. Seminars could be held during Sabbath afternoons, Sundays, or any other day of the week. Issues on witchcraft and magic, widowhood and wife inheritance, re-marriage, death rituals, and demonization ought to be discussed one at a time. Seminar/lecture lessons could be drawn from what was discussed in the preceding chapters. Material for each topic could be circulated to the participants prior to or during the seminar. It is important for church leaders to study the local culture phenomenologic-ally. This should be the first step. Before judging a people, it is important to understand

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[7]William Willimon, "A Crisis of Identity," *Sojourners* 15 (May 1986): 24-28.

their beliefs because it is on the basis of beliefs and values that people act.[8]

The journey of personal transformation in the Adventist Church in Kenya must begin with church leaders. Personal transformation is allowing Jesus' character to be formed in one's life. In order for church members to embrace this change, church leaders must take the lead.

2. *Seminars by Pastors:* The next level to deal with African traditional issues is for church pastors to conduct seminars for the church elders. This will empower church elders to educate church members in the absence of the pastor. Because of lack of adequate pastors, many Adventist churches in Kenya are run by elders. The elders could be more effective to help church members deal with traditional issues because they are part of the society.

3. *Campmeeting seminars:* The researcher considers campmeetings as a good forum for church leaders to discuss African traditional issues. A good number of church members and non-believers attend campmeetings in Kenya. Since a camp-meeting is a week event, one topic could be presented each day. Where possible, members could be provided with copies of the material on the day's topic.

4. *Institution seminars:* The researcher could present lectures/seminars to theology students at the University of Eastern Africa at Baraton, Kamagambo, and other Adventist institutions in Kenya.

The Adventist members must be different not only in what they teach and believe, but also in the life they live in society. Adventist Christians are God's chosen. God has called Adventists in Kenya to be different from those who are of the world. God's people are in the world, but Kenyan Adventists must not be of the world.

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[8]Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion*, 21.

APPENDIX 1

KENYA'S ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION

Group	Population	% of Total
Kikuyu	4,455,865	20.78
Luhya	3,083,273	14.38
Luo	2,653,932	12.38
Kalenjin	2,458,123	11.46
Kamba	2,448,302	11.42
Kisii	1,318,409	6.15
Meru	1,087,778	5.07
Mijikenda	1,007,371	4.70
Masai	377,089	1.76
Turkana	283,750	1.32
Embu	256,623	1.20
Taita	203,389	0.95
Tesso	178,455	0.83
Ogaden	139,597	0.65
Kuria	112,236	0.53
Basuba	107,819	0.50
Samburu	106,897	0.50
Mbere	101,007	0.47
Degodia	100,400	0.47
Tharaka	92,528	0.46
Boran	60,160	0.37
Gurreh	80,004	0.37
Pokomo	58,645	0.27
Bajun	55,187	0.26
Kenyan Asian	52,968	0.25
Orma	45,562	0.21
Somali	45,098	0.21
Gabra	35,726	0.17
Kenyan Arab	33,714	0.16
Indians	29,091	0.14
Other Kenyans	28,722	0.13
Ugandans	27,267	0.13
Hawiyah	27,244	0.13
Ajuran	26,916	0.13
Rendile	26,536	0.12
Dorobo	24,363	0.11
Tanzanian	19,325	0.09
Not Recorded	16,716	0.08
Njemps	15,872	0.07
British	15,608	0.07
Other African	14,358	0.07

Taveta	14,358	0.07
Swahili	13,920	0.06
Boni-Sanye	10,891	0.05
Sakuye	10,678	0.05
Other Arabs	7,881	0.04
Others	6,308	0.03
Bulji	5,975	0.03
Other Asians	5,264	0.02
El-Molo	3,600	0.02
Kenyan Europeans	3,184	0.01
Tribe Unknown	2,411	0.01
Gosha	2,081	0.01
Pakistanis	1,862	0.01
Dasnachi-Shangil	418	0.00

Source: Based on information from Kenya, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract* (Nairobi, 1981), 14; and Irving Kaplan et al., *Area Handbook for Kenya* (Washington DC: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1976), 86, 87, 91.

APPENDIX 2

<u>SEMINAR OUTLINE</u>

An outline to discuss African traditional issues during seminar presentations is given. The researcher or Church pastors and elders will be guided by the outline. The Seminar shall comprise of four lessons/lectures. The lesson material is covered in chapters three to six of the dissertation. During seminars, where necessary, the researcher may use material outside this dissertation for purposes of clarification on a subject.

<u>Lesson 1: Death Rituals</u>

<u>Problem:</u>

Death rituals practiced by church members. People fear the dead person can cause a taboo when the ritual is not performed. This practice is unbiblical because the dead cannot participate in the affairs of the living after death.

<u>Goal:</u>

Study biblical evidence that the dead know nothing and to show that they cannot participate in the affairs of the living.

<u>Lesson 2: Widowhood and Wife Inheritance</u>

<u>Problem:</u>

The Luo people practice wife inheritance. A widow must be inherited because it is believed a widow who is not inherited can cause a taboo on herself or children. Wife inheritance involves sexual intercourse in the house the widow lived with her husband.

<u>Goal:</u>

Present biblical evidence that a widow or widower can re-marry following the death of a spouse. The bible says marriage is ended by death. A widow should have the freedom to choose a man she wants to marry.

<u>Lesson 3: Witchcraft and Magic</u>

<u>Problem:</u>

The Luo and other Kenyan groups practice witchcraft and magic as a means of solving their problems. People believe there are some problems such as mental illness, failure by a woman to get pregnant, deaths, and others are caused by evil people in society. People including Adventists, use witchcraft to solve these problems.

Goal:

Present biblical teaching on prayer and faith in God. When people have faith in God there is no mountain that prayer cannot bring down. Adventists must practice a life style that confirms their faith in the living God. The practice of witchcraft and magic and Adventist beliefs at the same time is syncretism. It must be avoided at all cost. Adventists must have new birth experience in order to realize the blessing of God.

Lesson 4: Demonization

Problem:

Demons are real. Adventists in Kenya are ignorant about how to pray for people who are demonized. Many people seek help from witchdoctors and medicine men when they face a problem of demonization.

Goal:

Present biblical teaching about demonization and how to pray for demonized people. Characteristics of a demonized person will be presented. How to form deliverance team will be presented.

Activities during presentations

Introduction of seminar facilitator/s	5 Minutes
Song service	10 Minutes
Devotion	10 Minutes
Prayer session (two members)	5 Minutes
Lecture by researcher	40 Minutes
Question and answer time	60 Minutes
Break	30 Minutes
Closing remarks – researcher	10 Minutes
Action voted – by participants	15 Minutes
Closing song – participants	5 minutes
Prayer	3 Minutes

Total   4 Hours 53 Minutes

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